

The Universal Shopper Journey

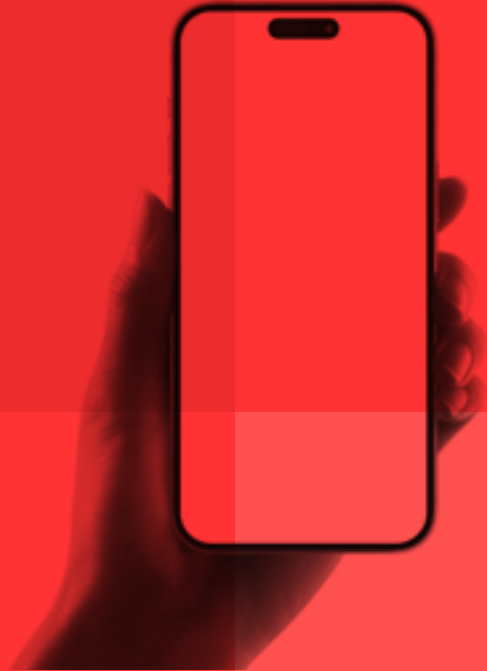
Shopping App Usage in the UK



SPECIAL ——— REPORT

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To help fuel the insights being generated by our proprietary Marilyn technology platform, The Mars Agency recently surveyed over 14,000 shoppers around the globe about their shopping habits across dozens of product categories. The following article is the first in a series that will use insights from the survey, combined with other industry research, to examine key trends in shopper behaviour around the globe.

UK shoppers aren't waiting for brands and retailers to give them an omnichannel experience: they carry it right into the store with them.

Here's how: 62% of UK consumers use their mobile devices to research products while shopping in a physical store, according to recent research from Klarna/Dynata.

That figure shouldn't be surprising, given the amount of research that UK consumers are conducting online before making purchases: 94% look for deals and promotions, 90% compare prices across retailers, and 78% seek out shopping "inspiration," according to the study.

Mobile shopping apps are a major resource for obtaining this information, with 93% of UK consumers having at least one downloaded on their phone — and 33% having six or more. With so many options available, it's no wonder that

35% of consumers say they feel overwhelmed by the options and 63% are hoping for a single app that would satisfy all aspects of their shopping journey.

With usage levels so high and the desire for a simplified user experience so strong, it's evident that retailers and brands should be utilising apps to help shoppers get the information they need to make informed purchases — wherever those decisions are being made.

And given the user focus on finding deals and comparing prices — which could have them switching to value brands or own labels — this strategy is even more critical during the current inflationary period, when shoppers are scrutinising their spending more than ever and even formerly "no brainer" buys have become "considered purchases" in many homes.

Common Uses of Shopping Apps

Why did you use a shopping app in the last 30 days?



Look for special offers/promotions- 31%



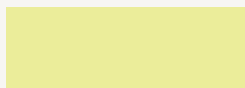
Redeem rewards- 31%



Look up the price of a product- 28%



Check store hours- 25%



Place an order for home delivery- 19%



Create a shopping list- 17%



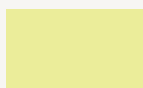
Look for meal ideas or recipes- 17%



Clip coupons- 13%



Learn more about a brand/product- 11%



Scan a barcode- 11%

Source: The Mars Agency's Universal Shopper Journey Research

Here are a few points to ponder when considering a strategy for leveraging shopping apps from Ross Halliwell, The Mars Agency's VP-Omnichannel Commerce for International Markets:

- App functionality, content and media should be developed with omnichannel shoppers in mind.
- Consider contextual content that offers relevant product information and deals during the pre-shop “research” stage, then makes a more direct call to action at the opportune time during the in-store trip.
- Add features that enable apps to interact with in-store communications or even products themselves. Integrate augmented reality and QR code readers to keep shoppers in your app whilst their in-store
- Deliver inspiration. In addition to saving money, shoppers are using apps to find meal ideas and recipes to cook for their families.
- Could the retailer serve price matches or other offers in real time as shoppers compare prices in-store?
- Just as ecommerce shoppers have the option to pick up orders at a store, could retailers let in-store shoppers purchase items for home delivery, perhaps adding them to their next scheduled home delivery (assuming the shopper can wait)? This could be a great remedy for avoiding sales lost from out-of-stock situations.
- Promote events. Use the app to drive footfall to any sampling or experiential activities taking place in the local store.

Above all, apps should be used to serve a truly personalised experience that responds to the individual shopper's unique needs based on their own behaviour history.

With UK consumers having so many options at their fingertips, shopping apps must demonstrate clear, tangible value or they will quickly “gather dust” on phones — or be deleted altogether. Marketers need to understand how shoppers are using apps to give them an experience that helps simplify and enhance the omnichannel experience they need. ■

About the Author



NATHAN PALMER Vice President, International Growth

Nathan joined The Mars Agency's London office in 2018, initially leading key accounts such as Mars Wrigley, Perrigo and Bacardi. After helping those relationships expand beyond borders, he took responsibility for leading the agency's international growth agenda in early 2022. Nathan has more than 18 years of experience in the connected commerce space working with a variety of clients at several leading agencies.

THE MARS AGENCY

The Mars Agency is an award-winning, independently owned, global commerce marketing practice. With capabilities embedded around the world, we connect people, technology and intelligence to create demand and drive profitable, sustainable growth. Our growing international practice, which spans Europe, Asia-Pacific and Canada, is based in London under the direction of Darren Keen, CEO of International Markets.

