



SOCIAL COMMERCE:

Drive growth through social connections.

Customer expectations for commerce are changing faster than ever. Technologies and methods of digital engagement that once seemed cutting edge have become commonplace across industries. The result? Today's *next big thing* is tomorrow's *no big deal*.

In this environment, your brand's commerce strategies, channels and capabilities can't just move at the speed of business. They need to move at the speed of *want*.

In a new series of articles Deloitte Digital explores six trends in digital commerce that are helping brands become more indispensable for customers—and more agile and resilient as businesses. Social commerce is one of those trends.

Social commerce

From sharing memes to sustaining friendships to discovering home improvement hacks, social media is a place where people seek and make connections. Winning brands not only understand the value of this kind of authentic engagement on social media, they're tapping it for commerce in new ways.

These brands are going beyond algorithm-fueled ad placements. They're creating compelling content that can be adapted to different social platforms and audiences. They're collaborating with creators who have avid social followings—and in doing so, earning authenticity by association. And they're measuring the impact of social commerce in holistic ways that honor consumer privacy expectations and regulations.

With a winning social commerce strategy, you can be much more than a company that sells things to your customers. You can be part of their valued circle.

Seizing the momentum in social.

Commerce on social platforms requires a deft blend of strategy and creativity. Here's more on three ways to make the most of social commerce:

- **Adapt to different platforms.** Each social platform is unique, with new ones popping up all the time. So brands need the agility to adapt and repurpose content based on different platforms' specifications, aesthetics and audiences. Length and orientation of video, image aspect ratios, character counts—and much more—all vary by platform.

But that's just the specs. To truly resonate with your customers across different platforms, creative delivery should vary too. Content needs to reflect your brand ethos and campaign strategy, while being flexible enough to embrace the distinctive tone and

style of each platform. A handheld, user-produced tutorial may be just the thing on one platform, for example, while a polished, agency-produced video for the same product may resonate better on another.

- **Get close with creators.** Fortunately, you don't have to make every creative decision alone. Successful brands are strengthening their collaborations with creators who share aligned interests. To identify creators who fit your brand like a glove, you need to understand what your customers care about and how they spend their time on social media. For example, a company selling reusable sandwich bags might partner with a creator who chronicles his zero-waste lifestyle in 20-second videos. The value of authentic creator content can't be overstated. About half of surveyed consumers said they always spend more time watching user-generated content

than they had planned (a number that jumps to 70% among Gen Zs).¹

And remember that compatibility isn't a one-way street. In our recent research, 70% of surveyed creators said their top priority in partnering with brands is relevance to their followers.² When creators are passionate about what you offer (beyond a paycheck), their enthusiasm will likely amplify the value of your partnership.

- **Measure impact while respecting privacy.** Of course, content only matters if it resonates with customers. Problem is, social-driven sales are notoriously hard to quantify with traditional measurement methods. Over 30% of companies said

they struggle to capture social media in their marketing attribution, placing it atop the list of difficult-to-measure channels.³ And it's growing even more challenging as new privacy regulations are enacted and consumers opt out of data sharing on apps and platforms.

That's why forward-thinking brands are now embracing agile, holistic measurement approaches like granular media mix modeling (granular MMM) that honor consumer privacy by using a wider array of data types to correlate overall spend and impressions to sales and other actions, using artificial intelligence. Its benefit is that every exposure that occurs on social media is counted but not personally identifiable.

Grow through authentic engagement.

Getting social commerce right can be complex ... but aren't all relationships? And that's the real power of social commerce: it helps you cultivate authentic relationships with customers, not just one-off purchases.

With social commerce expected to grow globally by 25% in 2023, topping \$1 trillion,⁴ there's no better time to tap the momentum. That will mean being agile enough to produce and repurpose content on the fly, build high-impact partnerships with creators and accurately measure the performance of social campaigns. Do this, and you're well on the way to "likes" and, more important, to sustained engagement with customers.

Collaborate with creators from the get-go.

58% of surveyed creators say securing brand partnerships is difficult. Brands can make it easier by strengthening their outreach efforts, especially with creators with smaller followings who have the potential to grow alongside the brand. Brands can also publish clear guidelines for inbound creator inquiries, listing expectations and requirements for potential collaborations.⁵



Sources

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