

On-Site Insight

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The *Tripping* Point: Hold on to Your Marketing Plans!

Are we reaching the point where the device defines the shopping trip?

Students of memetics are familiar with the notion of the tipping point – that magic moment when a social behavior crosses a threshold and spreads like a volcanic eruption. A notion made famous by Malcolm Gladwell in his book of the same name.

It appears that we are in the middle of such a revolution, specifically with regard to what constitutes a shopping trip. Think of it as the “tripping” point - the moment in time where the shopper has taken control, and become their own epicenter for the acquisition of goods and services. Last year, according to the National Retail Foundation, holiday shoppers were just as likely to have shopped from the comfort of their homes that from the inconvenience of a crowded retail store.

Enabled by the advent of smart devices, shoppers can now truly get what they want, when they want and where they want it. It is no longer just about ecommerce, using your computer to buy stuff, it's bigger than that. Walmart has reported that 70% of its cyber traffic now emanates from mobile devices.

Does this foreshadow the end of brick-and-mortar shopping? Not at all. According to RetailNet Group forecasts, 80% of transactions in the year 2020 will still be made at a traditional cash register.

But it does usher in a new retail reality, as Macy's chief executive officer Terry Lundgren recently explained to Fortune. “Consumers are not only going to shop online,” he said, “they’re going to start their journey on their phones, they’re going to enter our stores, they’re going to interact with our sales associates, learn more about product ... They may not buy it in store that day. But without that store interaction, it’s likely the sale [won't] occur.”



It won't be long before cyber shopping trips will equal in-store trips, and ...



... cyber trips will be increasingly made from a mobile phone or tablet.

The reality is that in-store marketing will have to change. But how? It starts with brands and retailers working together to address shopper needs head-on.

Consider the trend toward in-store category showcases, permanent fixtures that offer shoppers the opportunity to discover. The concept is emerging in updated retailer formats from Rite Aid to Best Buy. Brands who make themselves a part of this evolution will be the winners.



Procter & Gamble's Pampers has long understood the need to go beyond product-focused marketing to create stronger bonds with consumers by addressing the needs and emotions behind their product usage. Pampers.com provides a library of valuable information for new parents. Visitors to the site can explore an informational "World of Love, Sleep and Play" while browsing Pampers' full portfolio and other relevant P&G products.



Walmart has been building an "Every Little Step" marketing platform for its baby care department that's similarly designed to present the retailer as a reliable source of information and solutions for new parents. The effort includes a dedicated microsite on walmart.com, a baby registry operated through the retailer's mobile app and a themed "one-stop baby shop" in stores. It also features prominent placement for partnering brands like Pampers that can give the retailer's program greater credibility.

