

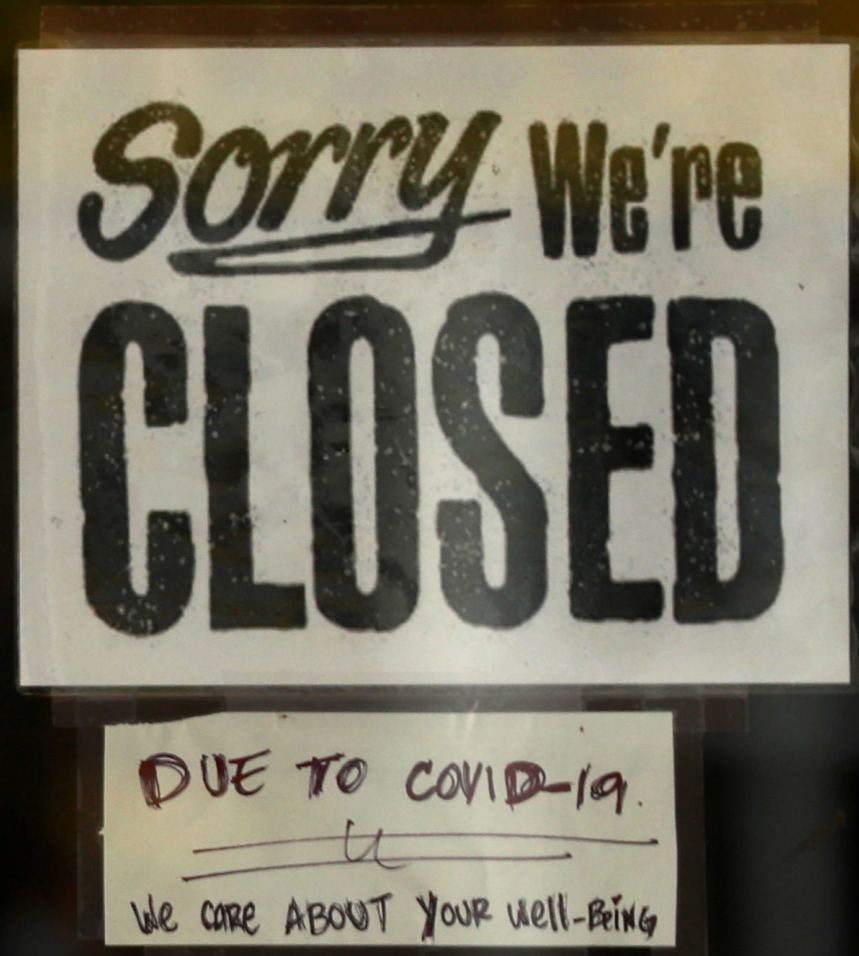


ChannelSight®

Know more. Sell more.

# 6 Ways Brands Can Maximize eCommerce Conversions in 2021





As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, eCommerce has become a priority for both brands and consumers. 2020 saw unprecedented growth in the sector, with worldwide [eCommerce sales up 27.6%](#). The average value of online transactions also [increased by 74%](#).

While many are increasingly optimistic about 2021, an unclear future poses considerable challenges for brands. However, it is clear that eCommerce will continue to be a driver of sales moving forward.



# Opportunities and challenges for eCommerce in 2021

While businesses need to prepare for volatility in the year ahead, they can also continue to up their eCommerce game knowing that it will reap rewards and bolster revenue.

[Research by Deloitte](#) suggests that newly-formed consumer habits will persist post-pandemic. After the outbreak of SARS almost a decade ago, Chinese eCommerce was accelerated and more consumers shopped online than ever before. Examining these past trends confirms that their behaviour changed permanently.

In 2020, many brands pivoted their plans to focus on online channels. This year, they will need to align their messaging across all of these platforms. They will need to reinforce their brand guidelines to ensure consistency and consumer trust.

On top of this, they need to manage all the data coming from these channels. This isn't just about oversight, but also about audience targeting. In order to optimise conversion rates, brands need to take advantage of all the data available to them. In sectors

where budgets have been cut and media campaigns cancelled, this is particularly important.

Performance marketing is the way forward. But as Google and Apple move away from the use of third-party cookies, brands also need to prepare for big changes in the way they run their advertising campaigns.

While few of these challenges are new, they have grown in complexity and are more important for sales success than ever before.



# 6 Ways Brands Can Maximize eCommerce Conversions in 2021

Even if you already have a smooth running eCommerce presence, there are always ways to improve conversions. You can launch new channels, try out new technology or simply optimise what's already in place.



**Here is  
our six-item  
checklist for  
growth in the  
coming year:**





# Provide a seamless eCommerce consumer journey

D2C brands have been shaking up eCommerce in recent years. Their freedom to innovate and add value has empowered them to build authentic relationships directly with their customers.

Taking out the middleman provides huge opportunities to create loyalty programmes, email campaigns and personalised communications. Brands can also collect in-house customer data.

All this contributes to conversions and retention so, if you haven't set up your own D2C web store yet, now is the time.

However, you shouldn't just rely on your own store for sales. While D2C eCommerce brands have seen continued success throughout the pandemic, your brand should have a presence on popular marketplaces and retail sites too.

## COMBINE D2C, RETAIL AND MARKETPLACE SELLING

While some consumers may be willing to head directly to your store to make a purchase, others will prefer to go to their favourite eCommerce sites instead.

Loyalty programmes, familiarity and trust can all play a part here. Some consumers may favour Amazon because they have a Prime subscription, while others

will want to purchase your item as part of a larger retail order. The convenience of not needing to create an account or enter payment details can be a factor too.

Consumers choose to buy from third-party websites for all sorts of reasons so it makes sense to sell through D2C platforms, marketplaces and retailers.

In the competitive world of eCommerce, power lies with the consumer. They expect to find a product when and where they want it. In order to maximise conversions, you need to accommodate their chosen path and provide a service that works for them.

Did you know, for example, that with a Where to Buy solution powered by ChannelSight, you're able to add a customized 'Buy Now' button which takes consumers to their chosen retailer or marketplace?

## INCREASED VISIBILITY, INCREASED SALES

Expanding beyond D2C channels is also beneficial for brands. It provides opportunities to reach new audiences and reduce costs.

Around [half of US shoppers](#) typically start their online search for products on Amazon. [A recent survey](#) of consumers in Europe and Australia suggests that their starting points vary from product to product. 63% have begun searches on Amazon, 33% have started

on a retailer site and 25% on other marketplaces. Only 21% said they had started a product search directly on a brand's website.

As a result of this behaviour, brands that are present on retailer sites have greater visibility. And this can benefit D2C store conversions too.

A [recent study](#) indicates that marketplace participation led to webstore growth for 92% of sellers within the first year. Interestingly, 25% of brands saw their sales triple, while 50% saw sales increase at least four-fold.

Brands can also partner with traditional retailers to create cost-effective click-and-collect solutions. They can collaborate on special promotions too.



## NEW ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITIES

Most marketplaces and leading retailers have introduced ads to their websites, apps and other online platforms. This provides brands with an opportunity to let consumers know about their products as they shop. This is an influential and convenient moment to reach consumers so these ad placements can really drive conversions for your brand.

Retail sites often collect in-depth data on buyer behaviour through loyalty programmes and account histories. This means they offer a distinct advantage when it comes to personalising and targeting ads. With the death of third-party cookies fast approaching, it makes sense for brands to invest in this kind of advertising.

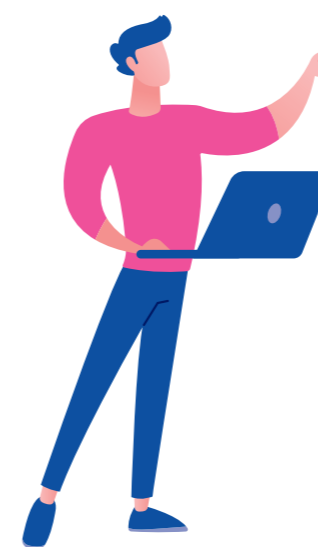


## MAKE IT SEAMLESS

Diversifying your sales channels can drive conversions, improve the customer experience and open up all sorts of promotional opportunities for your brand. So instead of limiting your business, create as many paths to conversion as you can.

Yes, D2C stores have all kinds of benefits. But you should make it easy for buyers to purchase your products wherever they want. Facilitate a seamless customer journey by adding [‘Where to Buy’](#) information to your website. This way visitors can see where your products are in stock and convert on the platforms that are most convenient for them.

This is also a great way to drive sales if you haven’t added eCommerce functionality to your website yet.



**Key takeaway:** Sell your products through D2C, marketplace and retailer channels so consumers can convert on their preferred platforms.

# Take advantage of every marketing channel you can

As well as having a presence across a diverse set of selling channels, brands should use a variety of promotional channels

While it can be tricky to keep up with the ever-expanding options available, it's important that you follow your target audience wherever they hang out online.

## HOW MATURE IS YOUR ECOMMERCE ADVERTISING?

If your brand is still finding its feet, it can only invest limited time and money in marketing. You need to carefully and strategically choose which channels to invest in and concentrate on getting them right.

But if your brand is well-established and invests heavily in a range of advertising channels, you should continue to expand your digital presence. [Understand where your brand](#) stands on the eCommerce marketing maturity curve.

You may be happy with your performance on Facebook, Google and Instagram. But you need to keep adding new channels and content to your campaigns. In 2021, there are lots of emerging channels and advertising mediums to take advantage of - if you haven't already.



## CONSIDER OTT ADVERTISING

Investment in OTT ads [rose by 70%](#) last year and many more brands will introduce them to their marketing this year.

OTT advertising is delivered through video streaming services and devices, like Tubi, Hulu, YouTube TV and Amazon Fire TV. It is similar to television advertising in terms of format, but the targeting and personalisation capabilities are more precise. It's cheaper too!

Because of the pandemic, more people are at home streaming content – and they're doing it for longer periods of time than ever before. This means OTT advertising offers a lot of potential to brands who want to reach their audience and increase sales.



## CREATE SHOPPABLE VIDEO

Shoppable videos allow consumers to click on a product in-stream and buy it. If you use 'Where to Buy' technology, they don't even need to leave the video to complete a purchase.

These interactive videos come in various formats, but they always offer shoppers a convenient path to conversion. The ability to buy products through live eCommerce streams is becoming more commonplace too.

TikTok users can click on product pins in a video to add items to their cart. Instagram facilitates in-app shopping across content, including its live streams, stories and videos. Members of Amazon's Brand Registry can use Amazon Live to engage with shoppers too.

Shoppable videos are a great way to imitate the in-store experiences that aren't available online. For example, clothing labels can model their products from every angle and electronic brands can provide product demos. This helps to remove any doubts that may prevent shoppers from purchasing a product online.

## TAKE ADVANTAGE OF EMERGING CHANNELS

TikTok is the fastest growing social network and, with [689 million active](#) users worldwide,

it offers brands the opportunity to reach new audiences in new ways.

Right now, TikTok has a self-serve ad platform, shoppable video features and a creator marketplace that connects brands and influencers.

In 2020, TikTok also partnered with brands to launch 'Small Gestures'. This campaign allowed users to send virtual gifts to their friends on the app. These included free subscriptions, trials, products and discount codes. It's unclear if this campaign will return for a third run. But it shows that TikTok is experimenting with innovative marketing methods.

It's also worth noting that podcasts are continuing to see significant growth. Although they've been around a while, figures from the US show that the number of podcast listeners has [increased 37.5%](#) over the past three years - and each fan listens to an average of six podcasts per week.

Depending on your resources and industry, it may be time to consider creating a podcast or getting your products featured on one.

## KEEP UP WITH THE LATEST TECHNOLOGY

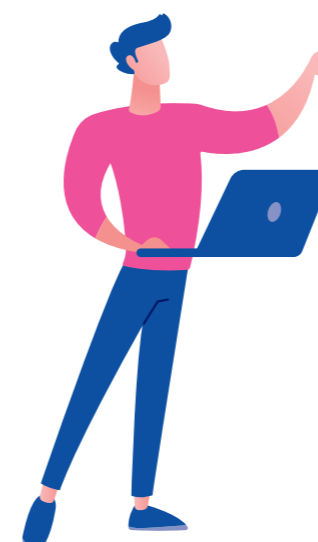
A [new report from Google](#) shows that 90% of Americans currently use or would consider using AR to shop online. Of those who already use AR to shop, 98%

of them said it was helpful.

It's also seen as a must-have eCommerce feature for beauty and automotive brands. Just under half of smartphone shoppers expect brands in these sectors to provide an AR experience.

With in-store shopping way down, immersive experiences provide an alternative way to attract, engage and convert prospects. Plus, it would appear that AR is worth the investment. According to [data from Shopify](#), products with AR content have a 94% higher conversion rate than those without.

With smart speaker ownership [continuing to grow](#) and [VR device orders](#) on the rise, brands should consider investing more in voice search and VR content too.



**Key takeaway:** Brands can stay relevant by taking advantage of new social platforms and technologies. In 2021, brands should consider adding TikTok, OTT ads, AR shopping, voice search, VR content and shoppable videos to their marketing strategies.

# Create compelling product pages

# 3

Almost half of online shoppers say that being unable to physically examine a product is the worst part of shopping online.

One of the best ways to recreate this experience online is to provide high quality photos, videos and product descriptions. Though it isn't the same as holding a product, this content can give shoppers the information they need to convert.

## PRODUCT DESCRIPTION BEST PRACTICES

A product description should be accurate, truthful and jargon-free. Brands should provide as many details as possible so shoppers can make informed decisions. List critical information first and use short, scannable bullet points to list key features.

Each description should cover a product's size, weight, material, colour, benefits, uses and any other relevant specifications. If any assembly is required, this should be mentioned too.

Brands should also incorporate the keywords that people are most likely to use when searching for a product online. This means your product will be easier to find and should appear in more product search results.

Once a product description is written, it should be continually updated and revised to improve the listing's performance. It's a good idea to monitor

customer queries and returns so you can update misleading information or add helpful FAQs.

You can also run an A/B test to maximise conversions. Tweak titles, keywords and other elements of your copy to see what works best.

While this advice can help with all product descriptions, you should tailor content to suit each individual sales channel. The likes of Amazon has its own unique listing requirements.

## PRODUCT IMAGE BEST PRACTICES

Images play two important roles for brands. They drive traffic to product pages and they communicate product information.

You should ensure that your main image is attractive, enticing and speaks to your target audience. Then you can use other images to address shopper FAQs.

Where necessary, include close-ups, size guides and product assembly images. It's also a good idea to demonstrate how big your product is by shooting it alongside another item for perspective.

Lifestyle photos are a great way to show your product in use. They enable brands to communicate their values too. This can help shoppers relate and connect to your company. [Research also shows](#) that

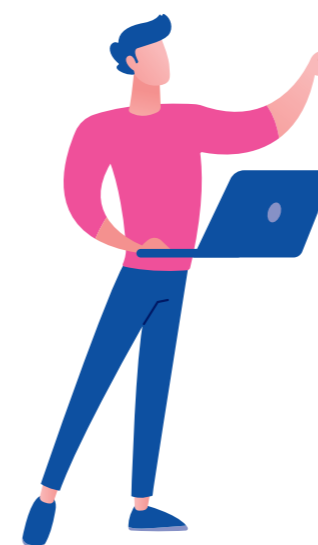
photos which feature people are more likely to drive conversions.

Videos can be used to show your product in action and 360-degree images are a great way to show off every angle. They can increase conversions [by 14%](#) too.

Brands should also be mindful of image sizes. If they are too big, they will increase the loading time of your web pages. This can negatively impact user experience and search engine rankings. An image compressor can minimise your files while also maintaining quality.

Like with product descriptions, you should take note of the image requirements associated with all the third-party websites you sell products on.

Following these best practices should grow conversions and reduce returns for your brand.



**Key takeaway:** Product descriptions and images influence page traffic, rankings, conversions and product returns so it's important to follow best practices. A/B testing can help optimise conversions too.

# 4 Ensure your retailers are using the right brand collateral

Many brands spend huge amounts of time crafting brand assets that appeal to their target audience. It's worth the investment because these assets strategically support sales and market positioning.

However, on third-party marketplaces and retailer websites, brands don't always have full control over their product listings. For this reason, it is necessary to have a strategy in place which can ensure the right assets appear alongside your products.

## HOW CONSISTENCY IMPACTS CONVERSIONS

If your logo, images, product descriptions or other brand assets vary from platform to platform, this can baffle consumers and prevent conversions.

Consumers won't know which listing is accurate and up-to-date. Conflicting information also makes your brand appear unprofessional.

On the other hand, consistent brand content can boost recognition, authenticity and trust. One study even suggests that it [increases overall revenue by 23%](#).

Plus, modern consumers have come to expect consistency. Ensuring all your eCommerce channels are on-message is key to sales success.

## SUPPORT AND COMMUNICATE WITH RETAILERS

To ensure retailers use the right brand collateral, plan your product pushes and campaigns in advance. This way retailers will know when to expect new content. It will also give them plenty of time to implement it.

Create a checklist of retailer sites and their image requirements. Then, whenever you change your brand collateral, you can make sure every channel is updated.

You should ensure your brand collateral is easily accessible too. Label each item clearly and don't hide folders within folders.

Brands should support retailers by providing a point of contact who can deal with issues or queries. It is also a good idea to educate retail partners about product features and benefits. This can be done by preparing fact sheets for customer service reps and training for in-store clerks.

## USE COMPLIANCE TOOLS

On Amazon, brands can gain some control over their image by signing up to its Brand Registry programme.

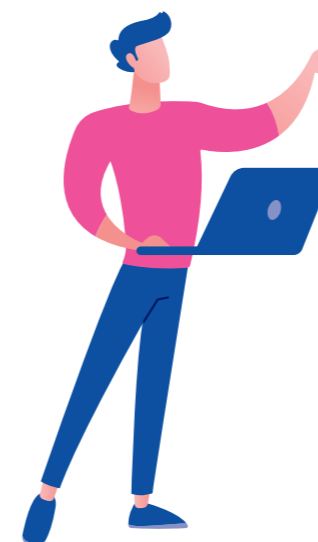
Once registered, brands can update their product content. Amazon will also automatically remove any

content that appears to be inaccurate or in breach of your intellectual property rights.

Brands can also report violations manually, create a storefront and add images to their product descriptions.

For oversight across other retailer sites, brands can enlist the help of a [content compliance tool](#). This will ensure product details, features and images are complete and correct across all retailer sites. It also checks that each product is listed in the right category, so consumers can find them easily.

Employing automated tools and checks can enforce brand consistency across all selling channels. In turn, this should reduce returns and increase eCommerce conversions.



**Key takeaway:** Having consistent content across all sales channels can positively impact revenue. With planning, proactive communications and compliance tools, brands can make sure their brand collateral is always the same.

# Maximise customer lifetime value

# 5

Customer lifetime value indicates how much a customer contributes to revenue during their relationship with your brand. It is impacted by order values, repeat sales and loyalty. To maximise lifetime value, brands need to implement strategies to drive retention, repeat purchases, upselling and cross-selling. Getting past customers to convert again usually costs less than driving sales among prospects who are unfamiliar with your brand. There may even be opportunities to turn loyal customers into advocates for your products.

## REMARKETING CAMPAIGNS

Remarketing ads and emails allow D2C brands to target past customers based on their email address or phone number. This can facilitate repeat sales, upselling and cross-selling.

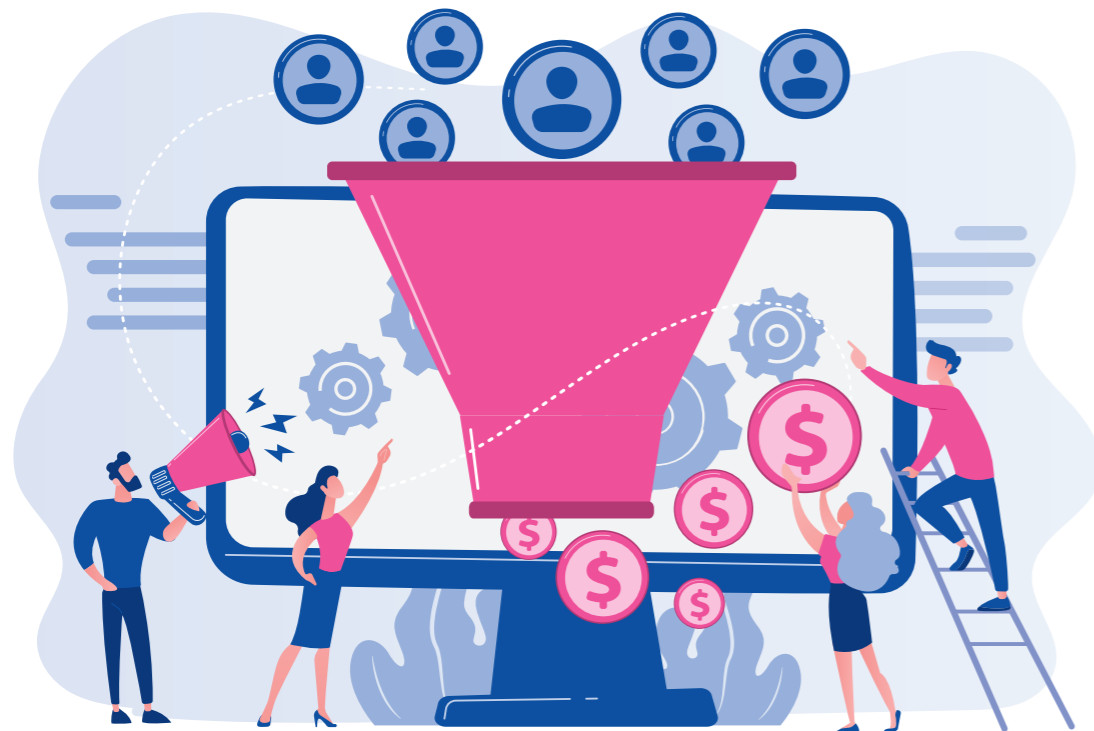
If you know what someone bought in the past, they can be presented with a selection of complementary products or luxury upgrades. Or, if you sell fast-moving goods, you can simply remind customers to stock up again once they've run out.

You can create a customer list in Google Ads, Facebook Ads or any other advertising platform. Then, you can present your customers with specific, targeted messages. You could also create email campaigns or integrated strategies using a CRM or marketing automation platform.

## SUBSCRIPTION PACKAGES

A great way to increase customer lifetime value is to encourage customers to sign up for a long-term subscription. Offer special discounts and perks to get subscribers on-board.

If your brand is active on Amazon, you can also enable the 'Subscribe & Save' feature on your product pages. Pair this with retargeting ads to let past customers know that they can set up automatic deliveries of your products.



## PROMOTIONS BASED ON LIFE EVENTS

Great eCommerce marketing is about reaching the right person, at the right time with the right message.

Brands can segment customers and provide them with hyper-targeted promotions. This could simply mean sending someone a free gift on their birthday when they want to treat themselves. Or it could delve deeper and make use of carefully crafted email sequences based on past behaviour.

For example, over a series of months, a brand specialising in baby products could send promotions for cribs, car seats and baby walkers to a customer who has bought maternity clothes. Clever campaigns like this can significantly impact customer retention and repeat purchases.





## LOYALTY PROGRAMMES

Loyalty programmes are nothing new, but eCommerce brands are using them in new and innovative ways to drive loyalty and lifetime value.

Customers can collect points which they exchange for the likes of cash discounts, free gifts and charitable donations. Some brands have even partnered with each other to offer exciting rewards outside of their own product lines.

Members of your loyalty programme are also ideal candidates for receiving free samples and early product access. This results in happy customers, but it can also help drive conversions for newly released products.

## PRODUCT BUNDLES

Putting together enticing bundles is a great way to cross-sell products and get stock moving. Even if you offer a generous discount for multiple purchases, this will still increase your average order value and help max out your customer lifetime value.

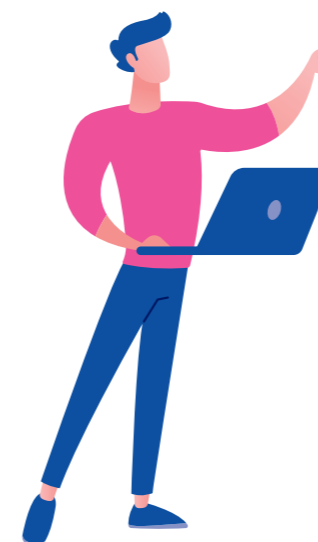
## PREMIUM CUSTOMER SERVICE

A [2020 consumer poll](#) revealed that 96% of consumers say they will desert a brand that has bad customer service. So before you invest in other loyalty strategies,

it's a good idea to make sure your service is up to scratch first.

Brands can make loyal customers feel special by sending them gifts or deals based on their past behaviour.

When a problem does occur, make sure to respond to incoming messages quickly and proactively address the problem. It's a good idea for brands with D2C platforms to have a reliable CRM system too. This means customer data is readily available and agents can address issues faster.



**Key takeaway:** Upselling, cross-selling and building customer loyalty is a powerful and cost-effective way to increase eCommerce conversions. With more data available to brands than ever before, there are countless ways to keep customers coming back.

# Be truly data-driven

# 6

Online conversions can be monitored and closely analysed. This is one of the biggest benefits eCommerce holds over traditional retail. Yet, many brands don't take full advantage of the data at their fingertips.

Data should be used to inspire or assess every marketing campaign, promotion and strategy your business undertakes. Any brand that wants to maximise conversions in 2021 needs to track, analyse and implement the data available to them.

When it comes to eCommerce conversion optimisation, brands can learn important lessons by monitoring the final stages of the customer journey.

## CUSTOMER ACQUISITION METRICS

Understanding the behaviour and circumstances that lead to conversion can be used to optimise future content and campaigns. When looking at how you acquired customers, consider:

**Device type:** Knowing whether customers convert on desktop or mobile tells you a lot about their mindset while shopping. Mobile users have small screens and may be on-the-go. This makes convenience and scannable content a priority. Whereas, desktop users are more likely to be at home or work, so they'll have time to check out videos, reviews and other in-depth content.

**Channels:** Knowing the conversion rate of each traffic channel allows brands to invest their marketing budget wisely. They can spend more on high-performing channels and change strategies for those that underperform. This is a smart way to make decisions and drive growth.

**Customer acquisition cost:** Knowing how much it costs to acquire a new eCommerce customer allows brands to make informed decisions about marketing budgets, PPC bids and product pricing.

## CUSTOMER CONVERSION METRICS

Shopping cart data tells you a lot about your customers and their behaviour. It also says a lot about those who don't convert.

Brands invest so much time and money bringing shoppers to this critical point, so it's essential to understand what makes or breaks a sale.

**Shopping cart abandonment:** Visitors who abandon a basket on your website are aware of your brand and interested in a product. With some targeted marketing, many of them will eventually convert. Reducing shopping cart abandonment is a cost-effective way to maximise eCommerce conversions. For this reason, it is an essential KPI for brands to track. Monitoring this metric will alert you to website glitches

and other issues that prevent conversions. It can also tell how changes to shipping fees, payment methods and checkout design are impacting sales.

**Average order value:** Knowing how much the average customer spends on each transaction will tell you how effective your brand's bundle deals, 'related product' placements and free shipping thresholds are. You should compare it with your customer acquisition cost too.

**In depth basket-level data:** To get big picture insights, brands can use a 'Where to Buy' solution on their website. If a visitor clicks through to a third-party retailer to buy your product, you can track their behaviour and the entire customer journey. With this data, brands can analyse their competitors, identify complementary products, pinpoint their most valuable partners and understand customer habits, tastes and motivations.

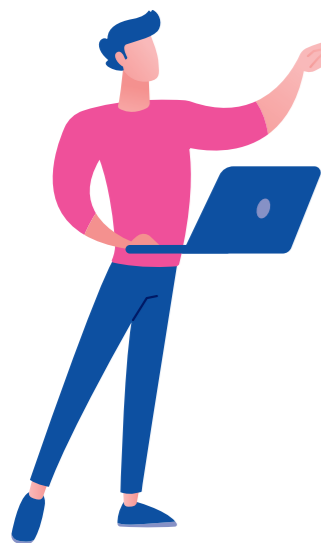
## POST-PURCHASE METRICS

As we explained above, getting past customers to buy products again and again is a great way to maximise eCommerce conversions. So here are some data points that will provide insights and track your brand's performance post-purchase:

**Customer Lifetime Value:** This is a valuable piece of data to track - especially if you're using loyalty

programmes, subscriptions or product bundles to boost conversions. It also reflects other metrics like order value, conversion rate and customer retention. So it offers an insight into your store's overall performance.

**Cross-sells and Upsells:** Upselling and cross-selling are fantastic ways to increase eCommerce conversions. So it's important to gather data on what influences this kind of customer behaviour. Brands can look at average order value to evaluate cross-selling performance. To get detailed basket and product level insights, a Where to Buy solution



**Key takeaway:** For many brands, data is an untapped or underutilised source of opportunity. In 2021, they can change this. By tracking just a few metrics, they can identify what drives conversions. They can then use this information to make smart decisions for future campaigns.

## Final thoughts

Despite all the challenges and uncertainties facing brands right now, eCommerce is set to perform strongly throughout 2021 and beyond.

The Covid-19 pandemic accelerated the introduction of eCommerce. But brands need more than just an online presence to drive conversions. To compete in the increasingly crowded and competitive world of eCommerce, they need to put consumers first.

Convenience and customer service are key. This means brands need to be present on every sales channel and marketing platform that their audience uses. They need to provide great service and insightful content through them too.

Although it's a lot to take on, brands that can meet these growing consumer expectations are sure to see conversion growth.

## About ChannelSight

ChannelSight's 'Where to Buy' technology enables brands, publishers and broadcasters to transform the customer experience and generate new revenue streams from all digital channels. The advanced performance insights that ChannelSight offers, empowers marketers with the data to understand which channels and retailers are having the highest impact on the bottom line.

Brands use ChannelSight's technology to make all digital content 'shoppable', capturing consumer engagement across all channels, devices and platforms, and offering easy options to purchase products with a couple of clicks.

ChannelSight can also provide brands with visibility of the prices, inventory levels, product descriptions and images of their products currently being sold on retailer websites. This makes it easy to achieve consistency and content compliance across the digital shelf.

[Book A Demo](#)





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