

Technology Influencers and CE Retail

A study by the Consumer Electronics Association (CEA®) and CNET

In the age of social media, it is not only important to understand who your target is, but also where they get their information. Influencers are a key group to know and understand – in this case, it’s about technology influencers, who you’ll find on CNET.

Technology influencers represent the early majority when it comes to purchasing and using tech and consumer electronics. Trends show their habits appear in the general population about two years out, so understanding what they own, where they get their information and what they care about in a shopping experience can help both manufacturers and retailers plan for the years ahead.

With this study, CEA and CNET provide insight into how to influence the influencer and how to be prepared for where the market is going.

Who are technology influencers?

Technology influencers match very well to the demographics of the traditional early adopter. They are young, male, and are in higher income brackets than the traditional consumer. Perhaps most relevant is that they are more likely to own any given tech than the US population, and they spend almost twice as much each year on gadgets (\$1,855 vs. \$1,000). Ownership data by category is available.

Extending from ownership to advocate

The average CNET consumer is consulted an average of 6 times each month by friends or family members who are looking to buy consumer electronics or computer-related tech products or services.

Where do the influencers go to know?

Technology influencers have a hunger for product information. They spend almost 8 hours researching a product, vs. the average of the US adult of 3.5 hours, and 70% of this is online. They predominantly look to professional product reviews (91%), with manufacturer websites (61%) and retailer websites (58%) close behind. While Blogs are the trend du jour, they come in at only 17% for internet research.

They love shopping online, but they still buy in stores

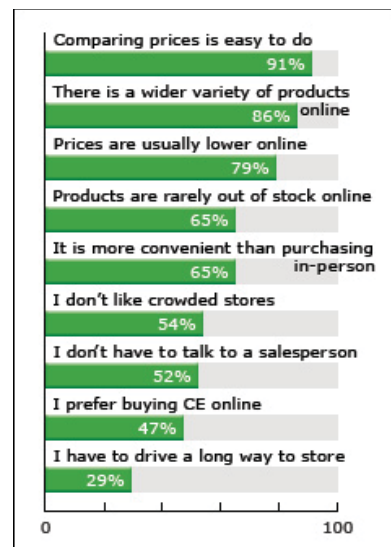
The reasons Tech Influencers gravitate towards the online shopping experience are simple, including easier price comparisons (91%), greater variety (86%) and lower prices (79%). And, they consistently rate retail experiences online higher than in-store experiences 88% to 67%.

Internet Sources for Information (Percent using all or most of the time)



Base: U.S. adult CNET audience who conduct research online

Reasons for Buying Online (Percent Agreeing with Statement)



Base: U.S. adult CNET audience who have purchased online

But, the group reported making the majority of their purchases in stores citing instant gratification as the deciding factor. Technology Influencers main complaints about brick and mortar stores are that they lack product information and variety as compared to online stores. The study also explores store loyalty online and with brick and mortar stores, including the impact of the In-store pick up feature.

Summary

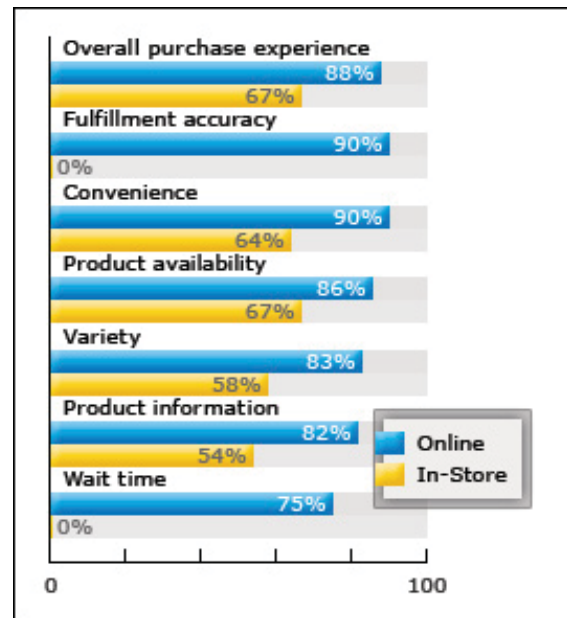
Technology influencers still prefer to shop online and buy in store, which opens up an opportunity for brick and mortar stores to take a closer look at their online ad strategy on sites where tech influencers/consumers go for product information. This study also indicates that brick and mortar stores could increase satisfaction by providing additional product information in the in-store experience.

Relationship overview

For more than five years, CNET and CEA have been working in partnership to evaluate and understand the habits and perceptions of key segments of consumers as they relate to electronics consumption. Together, we have taken a closer look at those technology influencers that comprise the CNET Audience. Comparing this information to CEA research of the US Population provides valuable insight into the direction of the market.

For more information about this report, please contact your CNET Sales representative or CEA Market Research at info@CE.org.

Ratings of Experiences Online and In-Store



Base: U.S. adult CNET audience who have purchased CE in the past 12 months

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