



THE STATE OF RETAIL

BRICK-AND-MORTAR STILL MATTERS



Introduction

There's been a seismic shift in how people find and choose retail businesses. Our research shows that people are judging, selecting, and sharing information on retail businesses based on the quality and trustworthiness of their digital profiles across devices and media channels.

Retail discovery and selection is driven by smart devices—from mobile devices to internet of things (IoT)—across a variety of media touchpoints including Google, Facebook, Yelp, and voice search assistants like Siri and Alexa. Respondents made it clear that they are less reliant on traditional media and websites to find and learn about retail businesses. They require instant gratification with relevant and engaging business information and content.

In order to attract, acquire, and retain customers across store locations in this complex digital environment, retail brands need to focus on three key areas:

- 1 Managing brand presence across business locations, devices, and media channels
- 2 Optimizing the business content critical to driving the customer path to purchase
- 3 Monitoring customer reviews and ratings across channels to improve brand reputation

To gather these insights, we analyzed 5 major retailers across 560 locations, and surveyed 837 people and 288 business executives to better understand how consumers find, trust, and choose retail brands.

Brick-and-Mortar Still Matters

It may come as no surprise that local retail continues to play an important part in people’s lives, despite the seemingly ubiquitous growth of ecommerce. A majority of respondents (56%) report frequently shopping at local retailers, with very few (2%) citing that they’ve abandoned shopping locally. See Figure 1.0.

FIGURE 1.0
**FREQUENCY OF CONSUMER SHOPPING
 AT LOCAL RETAIL STORES**



Survey question: How often do you shop at local retail stores?
 Survey sample: 837 consumers and 288 retail business executives.
 Source: Synup, September 2022

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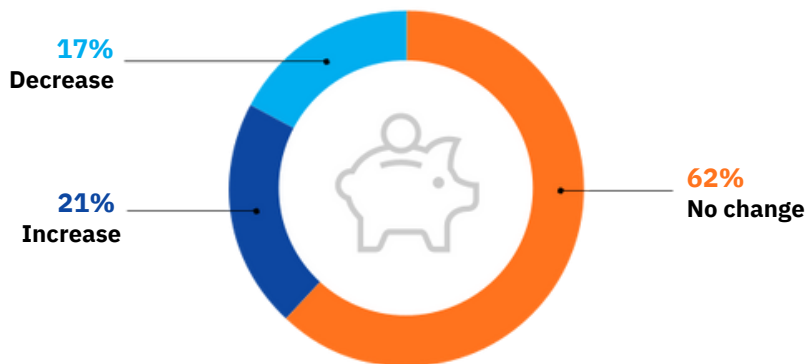
New and established retail brands need to think and act locally now more than ever.



Clearly, local retail still has clout. In fact, 62% of survey respondents say they will not change the amount they spend on shopping at local retailers in the next month and 21% indicated their local retail patronage will even increase.

New and established retail brands need to think and act locally now more than ever. To capture this consumer demand (see Figure 1.1), as we'll see in the next section, it's important to be found across the various media channels and devices now available to local audiences.

FIGURE 1.1
**CHANGE IN CONSUMER RETAIL BUDGETS –
 NEXT 12 MONTHS**



Survey question: How will the amount you spend shopping at retail stores change in the next 12 months (approximate)?

Survey sample: 837 consumers and 288 retail business executives.

Source: Synup, September 2022

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Concluding Remarks

As this report has outlined, today's largely digital consumers require a different marketing approach than many, if not most, retail brands are accustomed to taking. There's been a lot of chatter about omnichannel marketing over the last few years, yet most of it misses the mark for retailers with multiple locations or service areas. One of the persistent challenges faced by these types of organizations is bridging the gap between their national (or global) and local-marketing strategies.

National advertising, while great for brand awareness building, does very little to help retail brands acquire and retain customers in their local markets. Without being easily discoverable—in a consistent and engaging way—across various media channels and devices available to local audiences, retailers have lost the omnichannel race before it even began.

As this report makes clear, consumer behavior has changed, and retail business discovery and selection has changed along with it. Consumers visit digital profiles across sites like Google, Bing, Waze, and Facebook five times more than they do corporate websites. Think of the last time you visited the website of a local retailer (e.g. not ecommerce). If you're like most people, you rarely do.

Business profiles surface across a dizzying array of media channels including traditional search, voice search, social media, review sites, travel sites, maps, and chatbots. Additionally, an overwhelming majority of searches today¹ are mobile, and approximately 76% of smart speaker owners report searching locally every week.²

But it's what consumers do after they perform the search that is interesting. Approximately 88% of consumers searching for local businesses on mobile devices want to take an action—like visiting a store—within 24 hours.³

Retailers with multiple locations need to get at the heart of consumer intent by showing engaging local content to a prospective buyer at the point of discovery, when purchase intent is at its highest. This requires tighter controls over customer experience and the journey from discovery to the point of conversion. It's about connecting the dots between national advertising and local customer acquisition.

To do this, retail brands need to better leverage and optimize their data and content to match the needs of customers regardless of business location, media channel, or device. By taking these steps, retail marketers can have a real, sustainable, and measurable impact on customer experience and sales at the local level, where it matters most.

¹ [“Mobile search - Statistics & Facts.”](#) Statista. Clement. September 10, 2019.

² [“Voice Search for Local Business Study.”](#) BrightLocal. Murphy. April 26, 2018.

³ [“88% of consumers making local searches from a mobile device take an action, such as calling a business, within 24 hours!”](#) Engage121. Ernst. June 20, 2018.

About The State of Retail 2022

Mission

The State of Retail 2022 is an objective source of information that seeks to help retail brands more quickly adapt to the most pressing marketing challenges they face to improve bottom line results across all their business locations.

Methodology

SURVEYS

We surveyed and interviewed a large pool of retail consumers and retail executives. Individual survey data and participant lists are held in strict confidence.

SURVEY ADMINISTRATION AND SAMPLE

- Consumer Survey – US consumers who frequent retail stores
 - » The survey fielded from May 31, 2022 to June 4, 2022
 - » The survey was completed by 837 total respondents
- B2B Survey – US-based retail executives, director-level and above
 - » The survey was fielded from June 26, 2022 to July 7, 2022
 - » The survey was completed by 288 total business executive respondents

MEDIA ANALYSIS

A team of Synup data scientists analyzed the accuracy and consistency retail business profiles across 50 major media channels (e.g. Google, Facebook, Yelp, Bing) for 559 retail business locations representing 5 global retail brands.

RESULTS INTERPRETATION

- The margin of error for this survey is 4% at a confidence level of 96%.
- For ease of viewing, the results displayed in Figures within this report are rounded to the nearest whole percent.

Lead Author

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Previously, House was a Vice President at Nielsen. He spent 4.5 years transforming eXelate, a martech start-up, from a data-as-a-service (DaaS) product into a highly successful enterprise SaaS business acquired by Nielsen. Post acquisition, he launched the Nielsen Marketing Cloud, the Nielsen Auto Cloud, the Nielsen DMP and Nielsen AI across US, EU and APAC markets.

About Synup

Synup, the leading Intent Marketing Cloud, transforms a brand's ability to deliver relevant and trustworthy business content across all locations, devices, and digital media channels. Brands can now analyze and optimize how consumers engage with their businesses—from reviews to chatbots, videos to voice search, menus to product recommendations—with an easy-to-use SaaS platform. Synup clients can adapt their local business content and information—on the fly—to match consumer buying behavior. This increases local brand awareness, customer acquisition, and loyalty.

Today, thousands of companies use Synup to drive better business results. Synup is headquartered in New York City with operations in APAC, EMEA, Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the UK. Learn more at www.synup.com.

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