



The Future

of Shopping and Shopping Innovation

The onset of digital innovation has changed our lives forever. The change in our way of life has been profound. Core human activities such as playing, working, and communicating now come in entirely different forms. And the change seems to have happened suddenly, catching many of us by surprise.

We have been catapulted into the **digital future** by three forces

1. Technology
2. Information
3. Communications

These three incredible forces are reshaping not only the way we live but the way we think. Our expectations, our outlook, and our dreams are now partly digital in nature. Just as these three forces have changed our lives, they have also changed shopping.

At GfK we have been uncovering, documenting and monitoring the impact of these three forces. The result is GfK Future Buy, a multi-faceted research and insights exposition.

Revealing this New Era of Shopping and the new generation of passionate, value-driven consumers, allows GfK to understand today's increasingly complex retail marketplace and the shoppers who navigate it best.

Perhaps the most insightful findings come down to two expressed behaviors:

“*The internet has become a highly useful shopping resource for me.*”

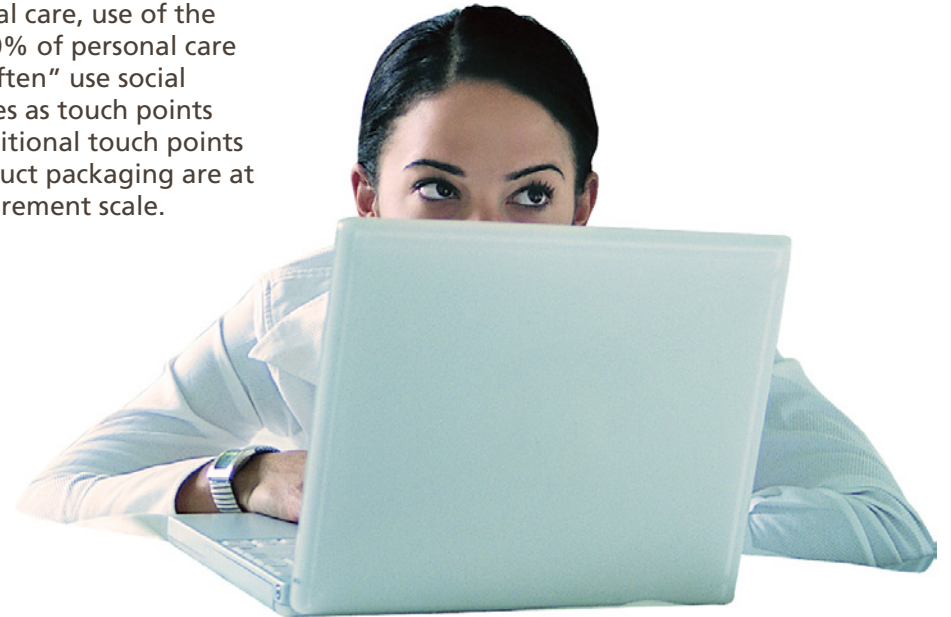
“*I'm using new information sources and new ways to shop to find the things I need.*”

The explosion of options

Interestingly, the internet usage throughout the shopping process (which in itself has been transformed) is greater now than what most realize. We now have near perfect information (comparative features, benefits, prices and other decision information readily available online) and an absolute explosion of options (channels, products, brands, and value-adds). With this, the consumer is in control of a personalized process of sourcing, selecting and ultimately choosing where they will purchase.

New pathways to purchase have enabled shoppers to individualize their shopping process by category and shopping occasion. They have become adept at utilizing both mega channels, in-store and online. The extent to which they synergize between in-store and digital venues is growing.

Even for categories like personal care, use of the web has soared. As many as 30% of personal care shoppers say they “always or often” use social media and local community sites as touch points in their shopping process. Traditional touch points such as store circulars and product packaging are at about 50% on this same measurement scale.



Capturing the new digital shopper

In keeping with the grand tradition of consumer marketing, there are scores of new and innovative programs in place designed to capture the new digital shopper. Consider the following word cloud that describes current shopper marketing strategies among brands, e-tailers, and retailers.



Yes, marketers still must sort all this out, but they're making progress and are now well into the first stage of their strategy. The environment has never been more complex, however, as big brands are going direct online and retailers are bolstering their online e-Commerce platforms. Many specific examples of new shopper marketing digital programs are featured in GfK Future Buy presentations, available on our [website](#).

For more information please contact:



Michael Kassab
SVP of Innovation
GfK Custom Research
North America
mike.kassab@gfk.com

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