



October 23, 2024

Omnichannel Presence and Diverse Consumer Shopping Habits Drive Home, Garden and Furniture Brands to Embrace Innovation, BigCommerce Report Reveals

Survey results indicate home furnishings brands need to optimize the customer journey across various touchpoints and gain insight into what products consumers buy online to maximize sales and drive growth

AUSTIN, Texas--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Oct. 23, 2024-- BigCommerce (Nasdaq: BIGC), a leading open SaaS, composable ecommerce platform for fast-growing and established B2C and B2B brands and retailers, today announced the findings in its latest consumer report, *The Omnichannel Customer Journey: The New Buyer Experience for Home Furnishings Shoppers*. The survey, which gathered insights from over 3,000 U.S. consumers, highlights the diverse shopping behaviors that are motivating consumers to purchase home goods, making it crucial for home furnishings brands to better understand how and where their customers prefer to shop.

"Today's home furnishings shoppers are more informed and selective than ever, blending in-store and online experiences to make confident purchase decisions," said Melissa Dixon, director of brand and content marketing at BigCommerce. "These findings highlight the importance of a robust omnichannel strategy, complete with flexible payment options and highly personalized customer engagement—key drivers not only for boosting sales but also for fostering deep, long-term brand loyalty."

The survey results reflect that a robust omnichannel strategy that blends both online and in-store shopping is the golden key for home furnishing brands to meet customer expectations, and remain competitive and resilient in a quickly evolving market. Meanwhile, promotions, emerging technology, sustainability and in-store experiences show potential for fostering long-term brand loyalty.

Where, What and How Consumers Prefer to Buy

While the pandemic fueled a surge in online shopping, its aftermath has recovered interest in traditional in-store experiences, with houseware retailers seeing steady foot traffic throughout 2023. In fact, 48% of consumers prefer to purchase home furnishings in-store, while 28% favor online shopping and 24% have no preference.

Despite the majority favoring in-store purchases, more respondents prefer to find inspiration for how they furnish their home digitally, with home improvement shows (48%) and home decor websites and blogs (47%) more popular than in-store browsing (40%). However, when it comes to today's digital touchpoints, social media (48%) reigns supreme in product discovery, likely because of the abundance of content available on platforms like Instagram and TikTok that have the power to inspire viewers.

The report also revealed that 66% of shoppers purchased bedroom essentials online, followed closely by home décor (56%) and storage solutions (49%). Online marketplaces and big-box store websites are also the favored choice for purchasing (54%), with most consumers opting to buy mid-priced items (\$100 – \$499) from these channels. It's notable that shoppers prefer these channels over a brand's direct website (39%). Big-box store promotions or features like Amazon's free two-day shipping could drive this preference.

Flexible return policies, such as free pickup services, provide the reassurance shoppers need to make a purchase. Over 60% of respondents said they were more likely to purchase from an online home furnishings brand that offers free return shipping, while no restocking fees (37%), extended return windows (36%) and return pickup services (34%) showed to be key factors most likely to influence an online furnishings purchase.

Buy Online, Pick Up in Store (BOPIS) is No Longer a Perk – But An Expectation

In the past year, 69% of shoppers have used BOPIS, while 36% have used BOPIS 2-5 times. A whopping 80% of shoppers reported they purchased additional items when picking up orders, while a surprising 31% have never used BOPIS before, giving home furnishings brands new opportunities to drive more sales and increase repurchase rates.

Big-ticket items respondents were more likely to purchase using BNPL are indoor furniture (42%), bedroom essentials (32%), outdoor furniture (28%) and home decor (26%).

Consumers Using Emerging Technologies Are More Confident in Their Purchases

While a majority of respondents (42%) have not used emerging technologies, 27% have used virtual showrooms, 24% tried augmented reality (AR) 3D displays, and 18% have taken advantage of in-store virtual reality (VR) installations to interact with, and view, products. It's worth noting 47% of consumers reported more confidence in their purchasing decisions when utilizing these emerging technologies, indicating that consumers are poised to start relying on these new tools to inform their purchases as they become more integral in the shopping experience.

Offering online AR preview placements can help shoppers better visualize products in their own homes. Similarly, VR tools can allow shoppers to explore a brand's offerings through in-store installations or connecting their headsets to an online virtual showroom. Brand's like [UPLIFT Desk](#) gives shoppers the ability to view 3D configurations of their desks in their own homes to help them feel more comfortable with their purchase.

"When you buy online, you don't know what the product is going to look like in your space. As we move into a world with augmented reality, we're able to build the tools and products that help a customer visualize and understand it," explained Daniel Burrow, vice president of growth at UPLIFT Desk, a BigCommerce customer.

Promotions Channels and Types Heavily Influence Where Consumers Shop

A compelling promotion can often persuade consumers to switch from their preferred buying method. In fact, 82% of respondents who prefer in-store purchases will likely buy online when an online-only promotion is offered. Similarly, 76% of those who favor online shopping will likely purchase at a physical store if presented with an in-store-only promotion.

It's worth noting that fewer online shoppers would switch to in-store shopping, even with a promotion. This is likely because many of these shoppers prefer the convenience of being able to purchase at any time of the day (43%). With 61% of in-store shoppers and 58% of online shoppers reporting promotions would attract them to try a different buying method, it would be worth home furnishing brands to consider prioritizing promotions such as percentage discounts, BOGO and free gifts with purchase to attract and retain customers.

Meanwhile, email marketing remains the most effective promotional channel, with 55% of consumers preferring to receive promotions via email.

Sustainability Matters, But Not at Any Cost

As more consumers prioritize going green, there is a growing preference for sustainable products. For instance, while 39% of respondents look to buy energy-efficient items and 34% look to buy products with minimal or recycled packaging, the majority of consumers are not willing to pay more than 10% extra for products that align with their sustainability preferences. Most are unwilling to pay any additional cost.

To attract eco-minded shoppers, home furnishings brands should explore cost-effective ways to incorporate sustainable practices into their products. Highlighting energy efficiency and environmentally friendly packaging on product pages and shipping materials can help differentiate them from competitors. A great example is [Molly Mutt](#) who showcases their commitment to sustainability through a dedicated page on their ecommerce site, raising customer awareness of their green initiatives.

For home furnishings businesses to thrive in this challenging landscape, it's crucial to understand how their audiences prefer to shop and what they value in a brand. With this insight, brands can make strategic adjustments to their business models that differentiate them from competitors.

BigCommerce works with leading home, garden and furniture retailers including [Chair King](#) Backyard Store, [Designerie](#), [Jennifer Taylor Home](#), [Wovenbyrd](#) and [Burrow](#), who are leveraging these strategies to elevate their customer shopping experiences and accelerate growth.

[Click here](#) to download the full report and learn how your home and garden brand can captivate customers with a beautiful storefront that can help sell more, scale and convert. To see how leading home, garden and furniture brands are succeeding on the BigCommerce platform, visit [here](#).

Methodology

BigCommerce conducted a consumer survey in August 2024. There were 3,007 participants total across the Northeast (792), Southwest (382), West (316), Southeast (883), and Midwest (634) of the United States. The survey required all respondents to be 18 or older and to have purchased at least one home furnishings product online in the last 12 months.

All data referenced in this report is sourced from BigCommerce's consumer survey unless stated otherwise. Unless indicated differently, the report highlights aggregated data.

About BigCommerce

BigCommerce (Nasdaq: BIGC) is a leading open SaaS and composable ecommerce platform that empowers brands and retailers of all sizes to build, innovate and grow their businesses online. BigCommerce provides its customers sophisticated enterprise-grade functionality, customization and performance with simplicity and ease-of-use. Tens of thousands of B2C and B2B companies across 150 countries and numerous industries rely on BigCommerce, including Burrow, Coldwater Creek, Francesca's, Harvey Nichols, King Arthur Baking Co., MKM Building Supplies, United Aqua Group and Uplift Desk. For more information, please visit www.bigcommerce.com or follow us on [X](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

View source version on [businesswire.com](https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20241023080092/en/): <https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20241023080092/en/>

Dana Marruffo
dana.marruffo@bigcommerce.com

Source: BigCommerce