

/ State of Retail Media Engagement

How Shoppers Engage With Retail Media

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bizrate insights

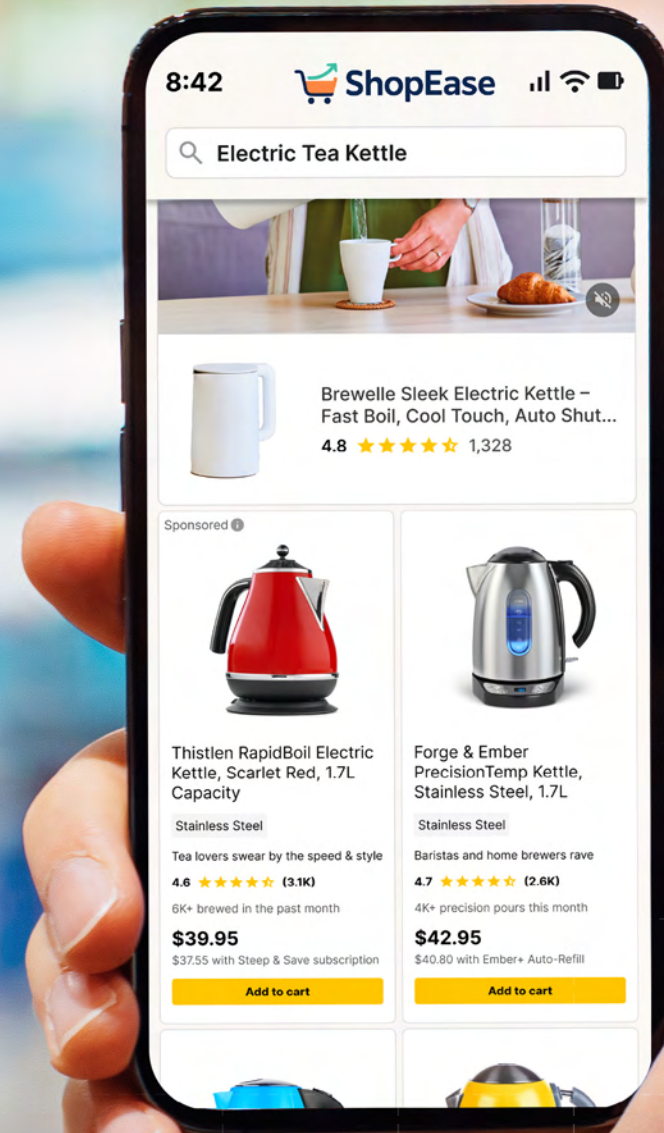


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Introduction

Retail media networks (RMNs) are one of the fastest-growing areas of digital advertising today. In 2025 alone, global retail media ad spending is projected to top \$24 billion,¹ as brands shift away from less-reliable third-party data in favor of the rich, first-party insights retailers can offer. Retail media allows brands to reach shoppers while they're actively browsing and buying, and often with better tracking and attribution than traditional ad channels.

With this meteoric rise of retail media come opportunities for a wide range of businesses. While the RMN landscape has primarily benefited large retailers and consumer brands, smaller businesses can also get in on the action, whether

by hosting on-site ads through third-party ad platforms, collaborating directly with brands, or launching white-label product lines. There are creative ways for all players to ride this next wave of retail.

In this report, we explore how shoppers are experiencing retail media ads: where they're seeing them, how they're responding, and what gets them to click (or buy). Dive in to get a clearer view of how you can sharpen your retail media strategy.

¹[Retail Media Networks Global Market Report 2025](#), The Business Research Company.

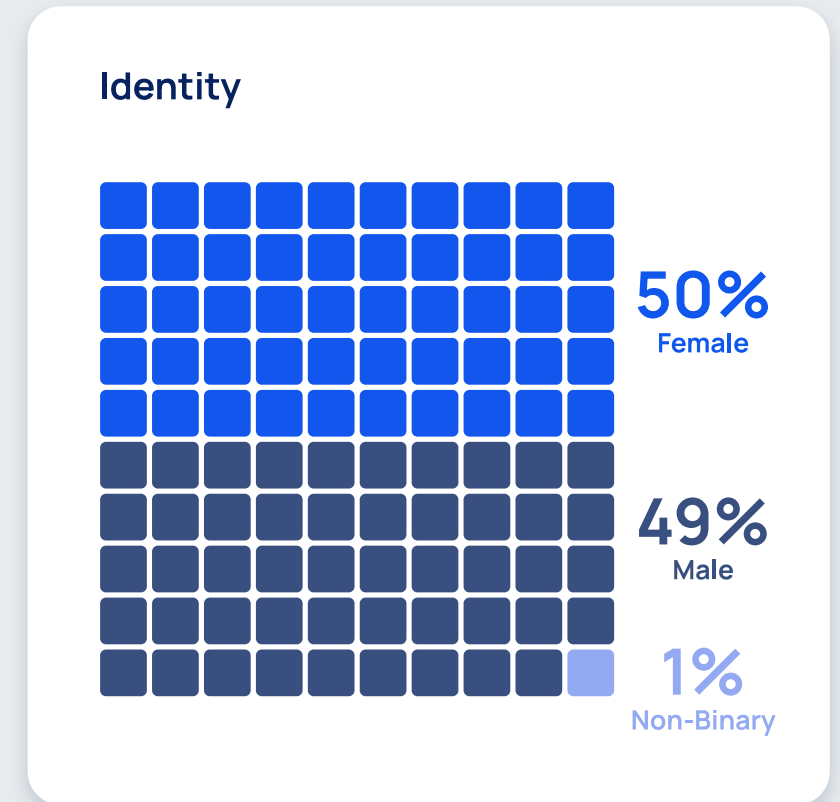
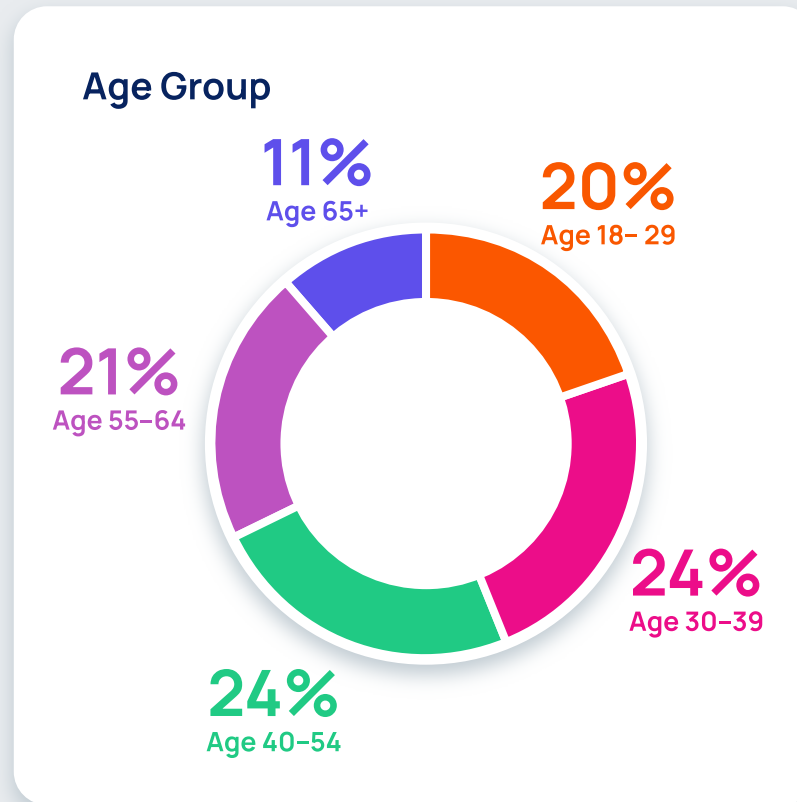


Methodology

Bizrate Insights surveyed a nationally representative sample of 1,023 U.S. online shoppers aged 18+ in April 2025 to explore awareness and influence of retail media networks on consumer behavior.

1,023

U.S. Shoppers Surveyed





01 /

Retail Media Ads: The Familiar Stranger

Never Heard of It, Still Clicking It

Most shoppers haven't heard of "retail media," with only 24% familiar with the term. But that doesn't mean they aren't interacting with it all the time.

In fact, 70% of consumers say they've seen ads while browsing a retailer's site or app in the past month—meaning that even if the terminology hasn't stuck, the experience clearly has. They aren't just passively scrolling, either; shoppers are taking action.



Only **1 in 4**
shoppers have
heard of the term
"retail media"



70%

have **seen an ad**
on a retailer's
website or app in
the past month

61%

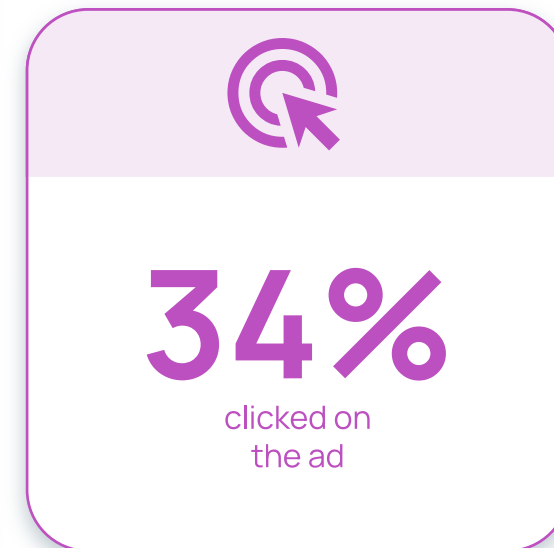
of shoppers **sometimes**
or **often** buy products
because of retail media

From Ad to Action

While it might not be a household name, retail media is directly influencing purchases and powering along the shopper journey, with most consumers (61%) saying they buy products because of these ads. Just in the past month, after seeing an ad on a retailer's app or website, 37% of shoppers have looked up the product or brand, 34% clicked the ad, 23% went ahead and bought the product, 21% added it to their cart or wishlist, and 16% shared the ad or product with someone.



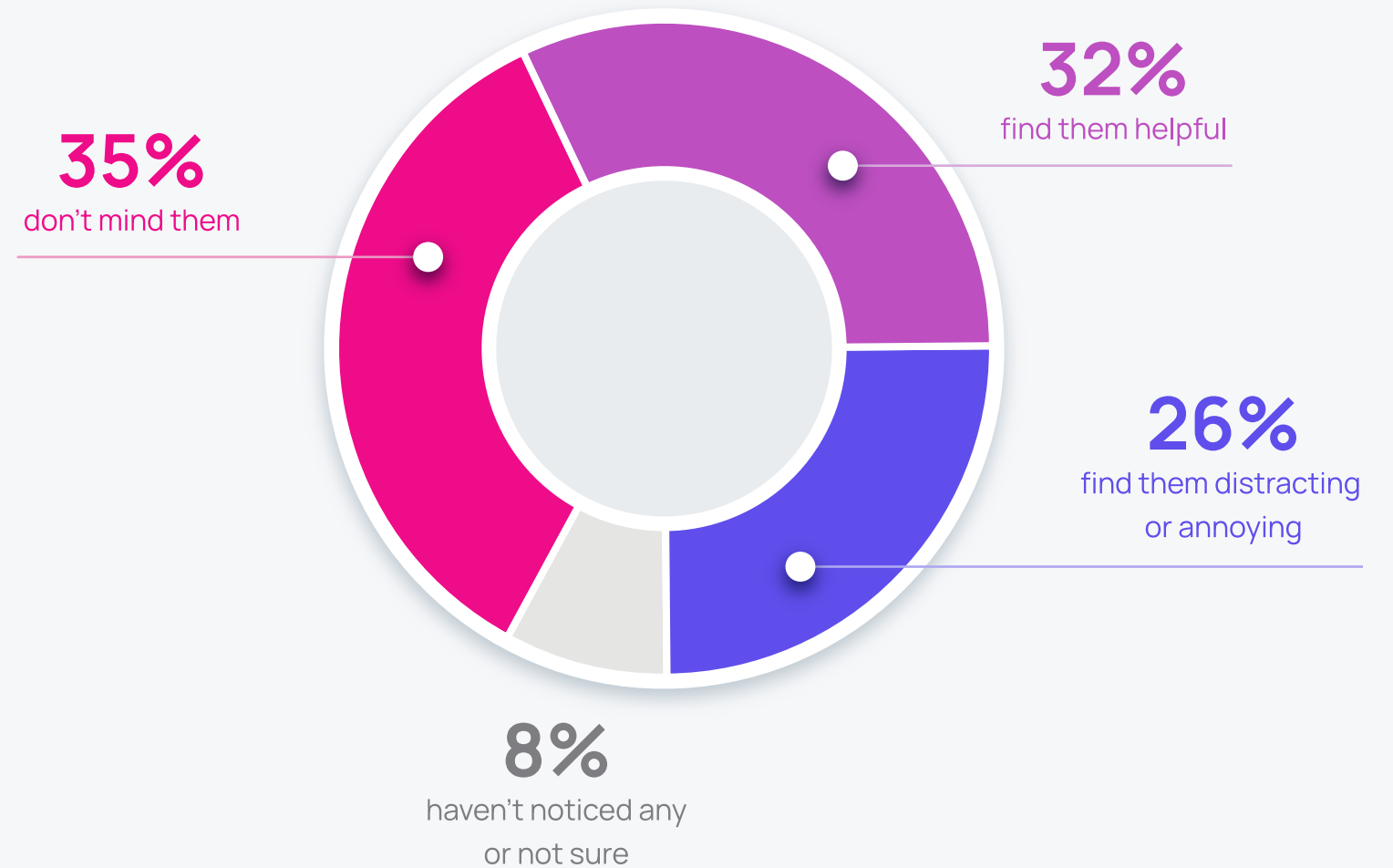
In the past month, what **actions** have you taken after seeing an ad on a retailer's app or website?



Shoppers Aren't Mad About Retail Media

It turns out that most shoppers aren't too fussed about retail media ads. In fact, about a third (35%) don't mind ads shown by retailers, and 32% even find them helpful. That said, about a quarter (26%) still find them distracting or annoying, underscoring that execution matters. Relevance, timing, and placement can make or break the shopper experience.

How consumers **feel** about retail media ads



59%

of shoppers consider
retail media ads as
“**normal** and **expected**”

“Wait, Who’s Advertising to Me?”

Consumers are a bit unclear on who’s actually behind the ads they see while browsing retailer websites. About a third (32%) think the retailer is running the ad, 31% think it’s a team effort between the retailer and the brand, and 24% think it’s just the brand advertising through the retailer’s platform.

Even though there’s no strong consensus, most people aren’t losing sleep over it. For the majority of consumers, these ads just feel like a standard part of the online shopping experience. Fifty-nine percent say retail site ads are “normal and expected,” while only 28% see them as something new or different.

Consumers are split on **who’s** behind the ads



Think the ads are from the **retailer** themselves



Think it’s **both** the retailer and the brand



Think it’s a **different** brand advertising on the retailer’s platform



02 /

What Makes Retail Media Work

Trust Makes the Difference

Consumers are more likely to trust ads that come from retailers they already know and shop at. While over half (54%) trust these ads about the same as others, 26% actually trust them more.

That trust nearly doubles for frequent shoppers, with 49% of daily shoppers saying they trust retailer ads more than other ads.

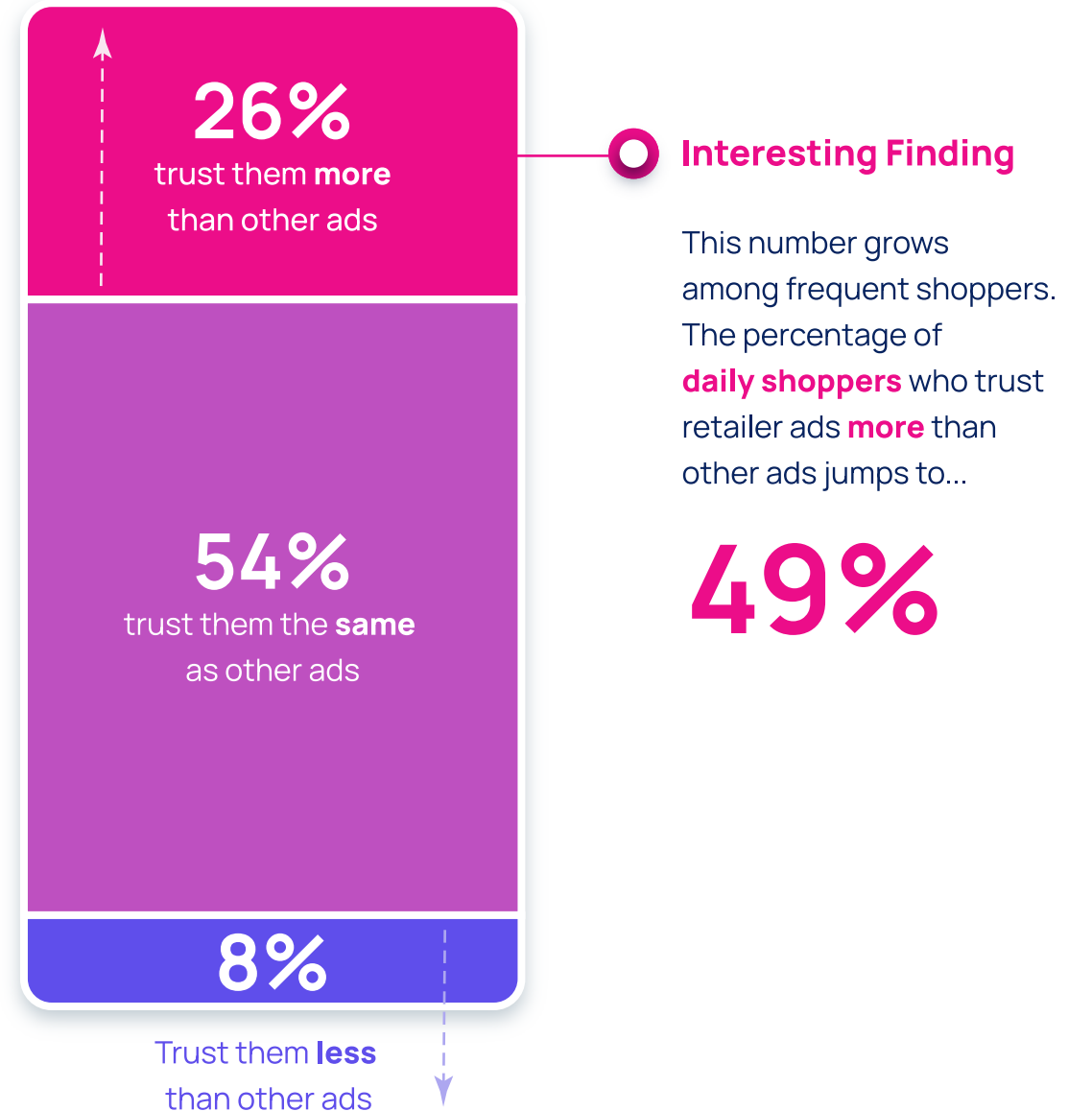
As with most things in life, trust drives action. People are more likely to click, buy, and share when the ad and environment feel familiar and credible.

QUICK TAKEAWAYS

Target frequent shoppers. Since daily shoppers tend to trust retailer ads, build on this loyalty and deepen brand relationships with exclusive deals, personalized recommendations, and rewards for repeat shoppers.

Move “sometimes” shoppers down the funnel. Build trust and nudge occasional buyers with retargeting campaigns. Leverage urgency triggers (“limited stock,” “ending soon”) and social proof (reviews, popularity indicators) as motivators.

How much do you **trust** ads from retailers you regularly shop with?



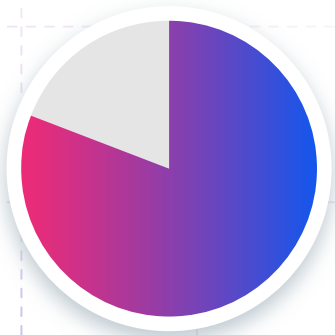
Shoppers with **positive** attitudes towards retail media do **more**



77%

buy more

vs. 29% of those with negative attitudes



81%

recall ads more

vs. 57% of those with negative attitudes

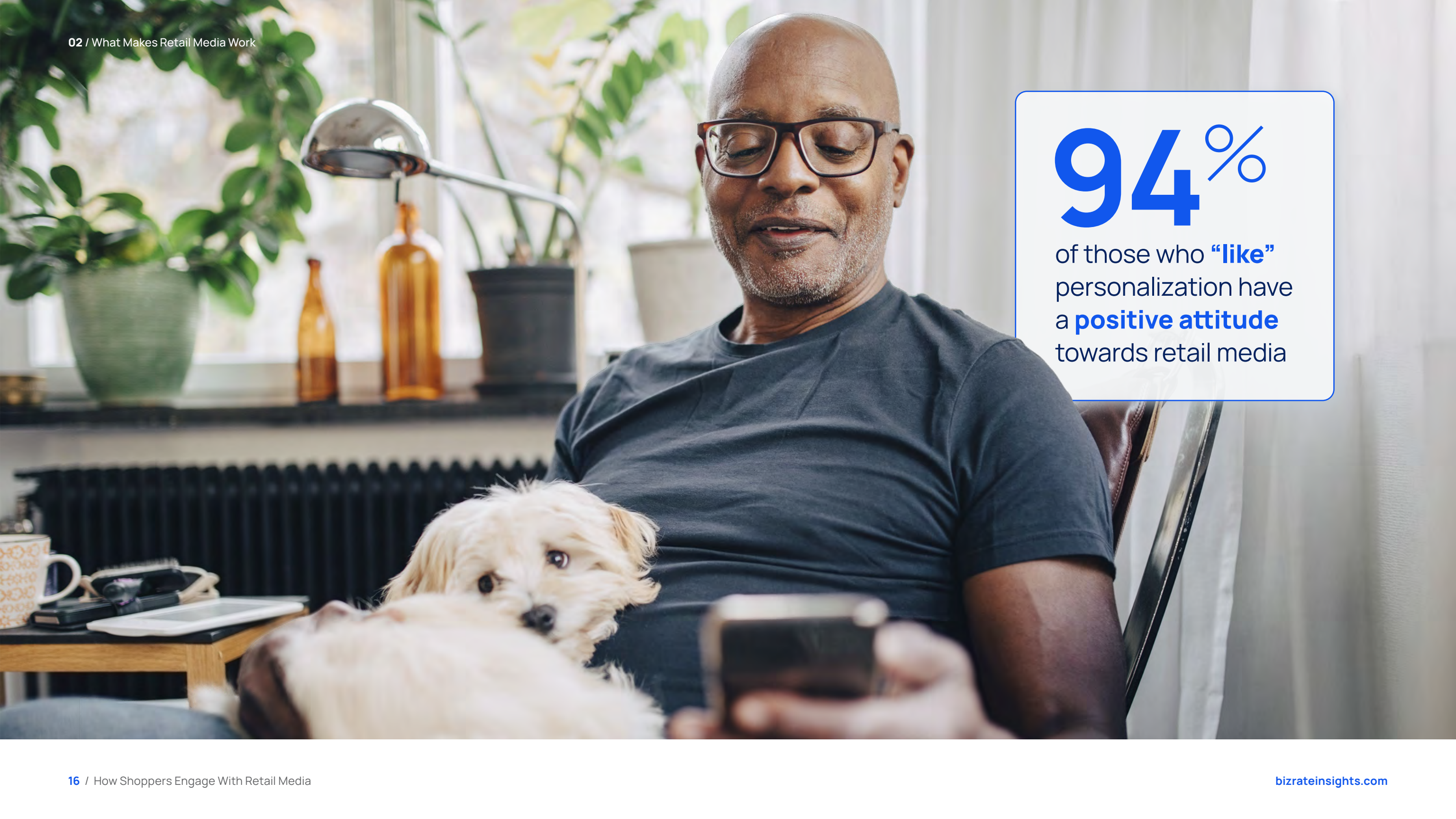
Good Impressions Lead to Purchases

Positive sentiment and greater trust naturally drive purchases. Consider how 77% of consumers with positive attitudes toward retail media (specifically, those who don't mind them or even find them helpful) say they sometimes or often buy from those ads. Compare that to just 29% of people with negative attitudes toward retail media ads (who find them distracting or annoying).

Plus, when people feel generally fine about ads, they're more likely to remember them. Shoppers with positive views recalled seeing retail media ads at a much higher rate than those with negative opinions (81% vs. 57%).

QUICK TAKEAWAY

Build trust through branding and value. Use clear branding and visible trust signals (e.g., verified buyer reviews, guarantees, or "top rated" labels) to enhance ad credibility, improve performance, and avoid coming off as spammy.



94%

of those who **“like”**
personalization have
a **positive attitude**
towards retail media

Personalization Pays Off

Personalization is the key to winning over shoppers through retail media. Most consumers (70%) accept personalized ads based on their shopping history (specifically, 44% are okay with them, and 26% like them). Only 25% of consumers dislike it when retailers use their past purchase data to personalize ads.

Notably, of the people who “like” personalization, a tremendous 94% have a positive view of retail media ads.

If your ad feels tailored and relevant, it’s way more likely to land well and lead to a purchase.



How shoppers feel about retailers **using their purchase data** to show personalized ads



44%

think retail media ads are shown to **a lot of people**

34%

think they're chosen **specifically** for them

Make It Clear These Ads Are Custom

Even though people say they like personalized ads, not everyone realizes they're actually seeing them. Just 34% believe the retail media they see is chosen just for them, while 44% think everyone's seeing the same ads.

That indicates there's still work to do in showing shoppers that these ads are relevant to them, which can pay off in engagement and greater brand affinity.

QUICK TAKEAWAY

Segment for relevance. Partner with retail network platforms that offer audience segmentation and first-party data capabilities to deliver relevant ads at the right time in the shopper journey. Maximize your return on personalized ads through ad copy and creative emphasizing product relevance, exclusive deals, or curated selections.

Conclusion: The Retail Media Opportunity

As our findings show, the secret sauce for a successful retail media strategy comes down to two things: trust and personalization. If an ad feels relevant, and it comes from a brand or retailer the shopper already knows, it's far more likely to spark action. Continuously iterate on your campaigns, and ensure they support your broader marketing strategy to reinforce brand identity, build trust, and create a more cohesive shopper experience.

Key Takeaways

Segment campaigns by shopper type and attitude.

Prioritize segments that already have a positive view of retail media ads. At the same time, test softer, educational, more helpful messaging for ad-skeptical audiences to warm them up over time.

Integrate retail media ads with the rest of your marketing.

Your retail media messaging should echo what shoppers see in your emails, on social, and on your site. Coordinate campaign execution across other owned and paid channels. The more cohesive the experience, the more trustworthy and compelling your brand becomes.

Measure and optimize continuously.

Monitor cross-channel attribution and performance, continually tracking how your retail media ads impact broader marketing KPIs (overall sales lift, engagement, repeat purchase rates, etc.). Run A/B tests, experiment with formats, and always be optimizing based on what's working.

/ We Can Help

Build a Winning Customer Experience Strategy

Deepen customer trust at every stage of the shopping journey, from browsing to post-purchase, with tools that help you:

- | Listen to your customers
- | Understand their needs, preferences, and concerns
- | Deliver meaningful experiences that resonate

We deliver reviews, ratings, and customer verbatims to help you build a deeper, more emotional connection with shoppers that will keep them coming back for more.

See how Bizrate Insights can work for you at bizrateinsights.com