

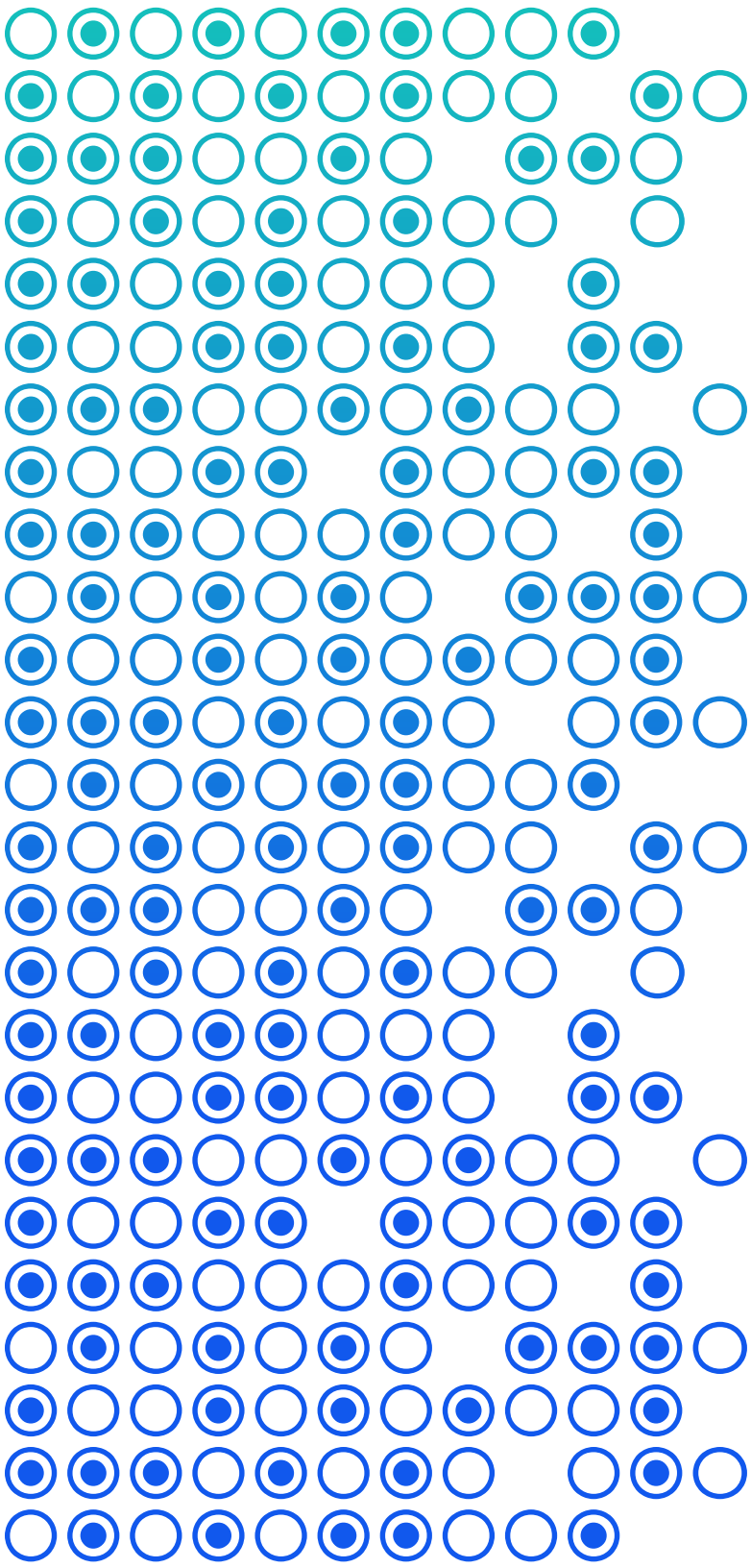
CONSUMER INSIGHTS Q2 2024

# The State of Social Shopping

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Q2



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# Introduction

As online shopping has become a lasting lifestyle for today's consumers, social media has grown into our virtual shopping mall. Users chance upon new products, encounter influencer recommendations, seek reviews, make purchases, and engage with friends, creators, and brands—turning these platforms into an all-in-one destination blending entertainment, connection, and commerce.

Social media is now a central marketplace encompassing—and blurring—all phases of the shopping journey. Brands that understand where and how consumers are navigating this experience, from inspiration to post-purchase engagement, will stand out among the rest.

To help you achieve that goal, we surveyed over 1,000 consumers for insights you can use to reach and engage customers in this evolving social landscape.

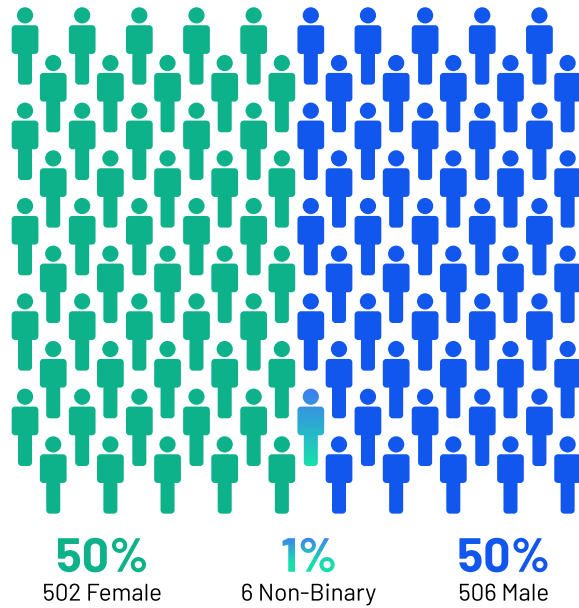


**1,014**  
U.S. Shoppers Surveyed

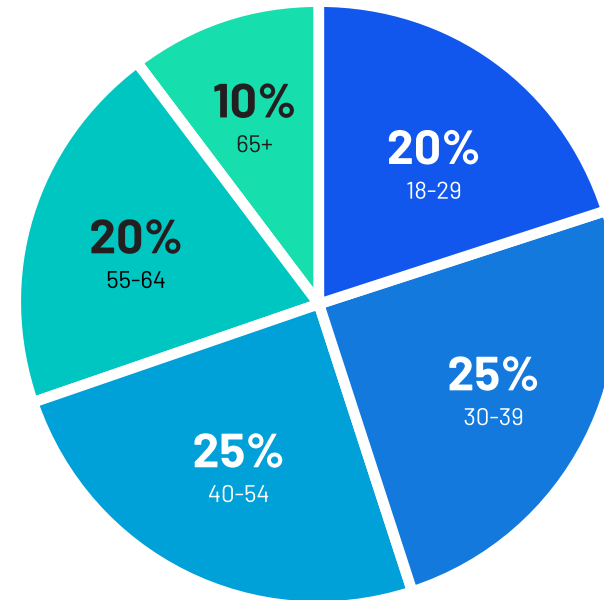
# Methodology

Bizrate Insights surveyed 1,014 U.S. social media users in July 2024 to understand their attitudes and behaviors toward social commerce.

### Identity



### Age



# 01 A Comprehensive Role in Modern Shopping

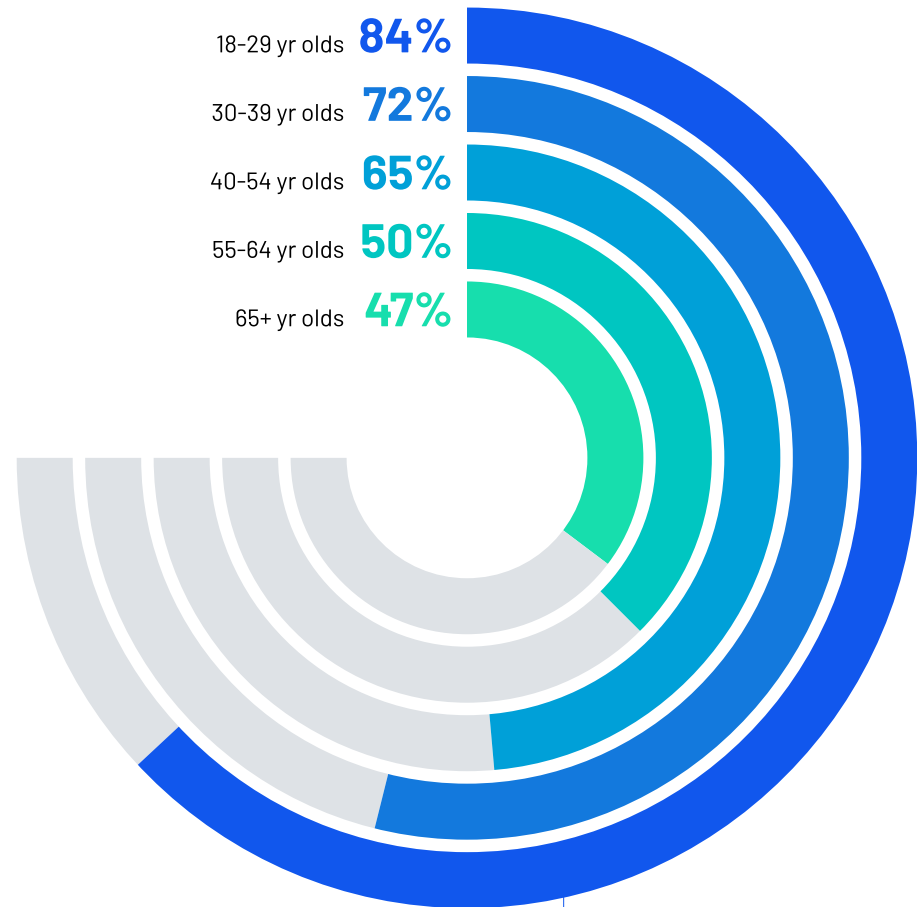


## The Shopping Tool From Start to Finish

Social media influences the entire customer journey, from product discovery to post-purchase behavior. Nearly all consumers (90%) discover new products on social media, and the majority of social media users (66%) have completed a purchase through a social platform.

There's a clear generational divide in purchase habits, with 84% of those aged 18 to 29 having purchased through social media, compared to 47% of customers over 65. In fact, about a third of shoppers aged 18 to 29 make purchases through social media at least weekly.

Percentage of Shoppers Who've Purchased Through Social Media by Age



**32%**

of those aged **18 to 29** make purchases through social media on a **daily or weekly basis**



# 90%

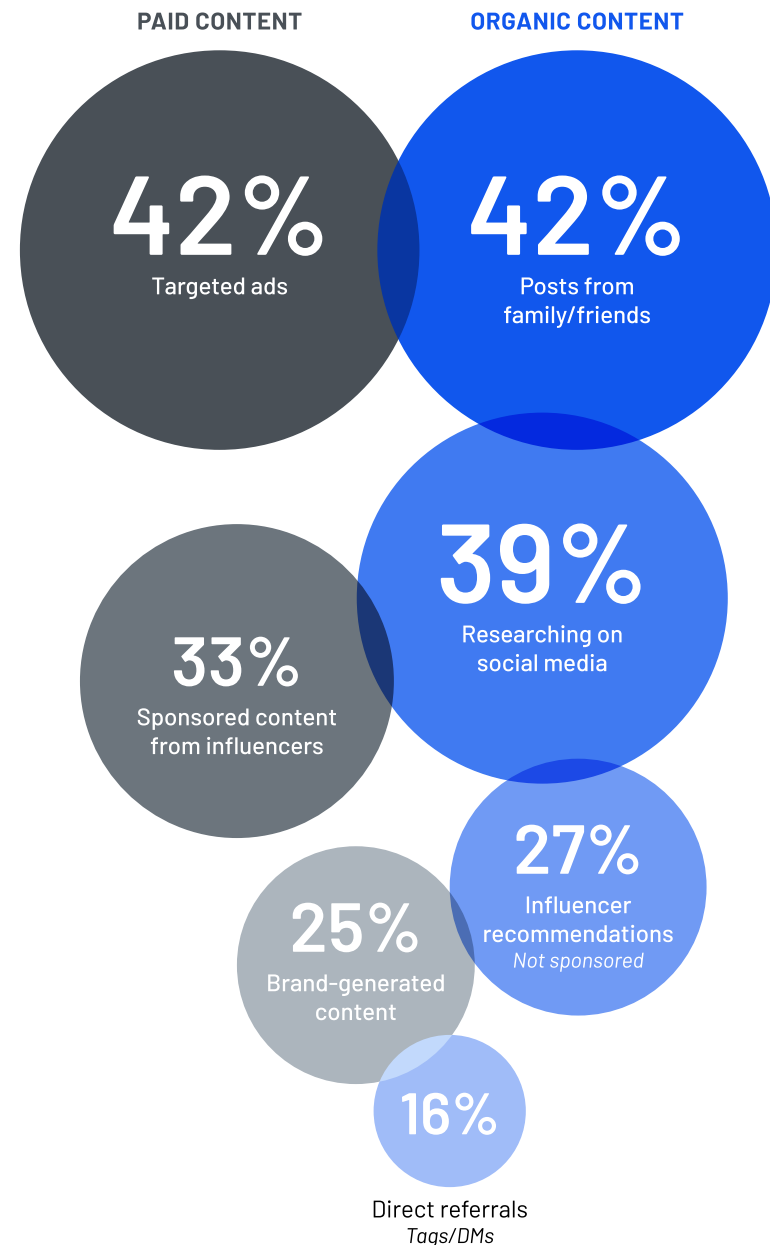
of shoppers discover  
new products on  
social media

## Most Common Ways Consumers Discover New Products

### Use a Multi-Pronged Approach to Reach New Customers

Shoppers encounter new brands and products through a variety of sources, and brands that leverage a hybrid (paid and organic) strategy, as well as multiple types of content, can boost their chances of gaining attention.

When shoppers were asked how they most commonly discover new products on social apps, the two answers tied for number one were targeted ads, and posts from family and friends (42% each)—an interesting juxtaposition of a paid and organic approach. Self-research came in next (39%), followed by sponsored content from influencers (33%), influencer recommendations that are not sponsored (27%), and organic content posted by brands (25%).



## Social Media Is the New Search Engine

Consumers are increasingly using social media in the same way they'd use Google. Nearly half (44%) of Americans search for reviews on social media to investigate products or brands, while over a third use it to search for and research new products (39%), compare prices (35%), and hunt for discounts (35%).

Younger generations are driving this trend in social search. Consumers under 29 are more than twice as likely to use social media for researching products compared to shoppers over 65.

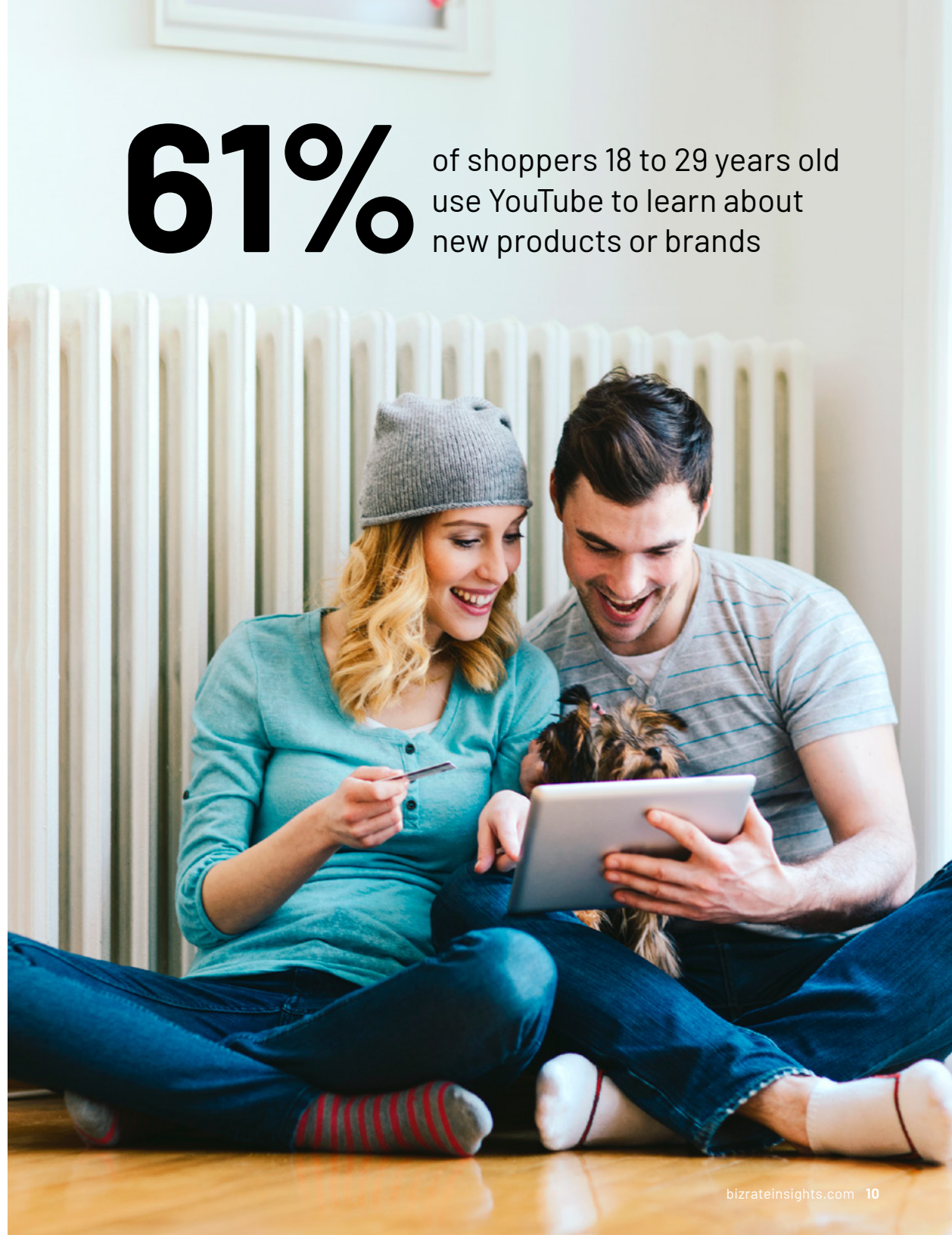
### Top Ways Customers Use Social Media While Shopping



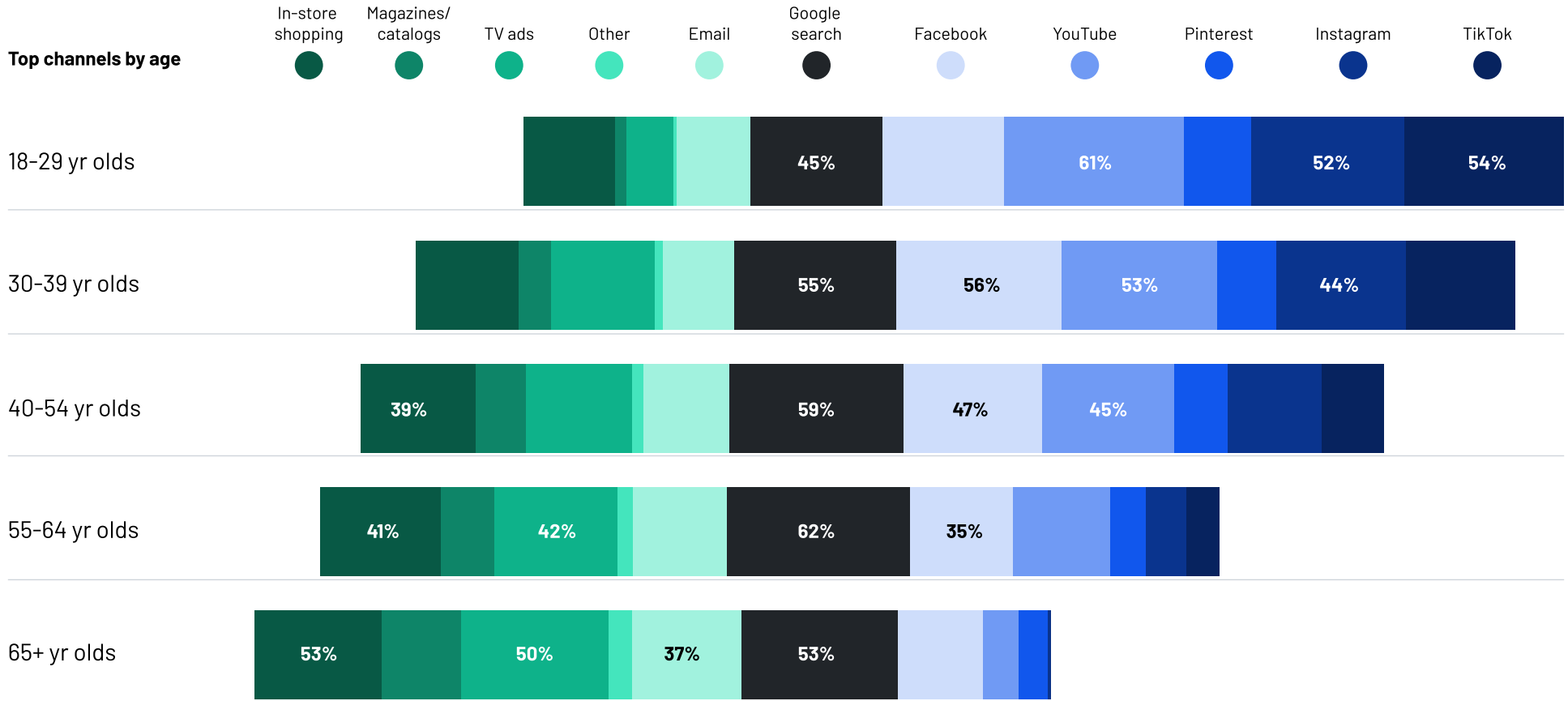
**61%** of shoppers 18 to 29 years old use YouTube to learn about new products or brands

In fact, shoppers under 29 primarily use social media over Google to learn about new brands or products. YouTube (61%) is the number-one channel they use to learn about new products and brands, followed by TikTok (54%) and Instagram (52%). This demographic is also more than twice as likely to use TikTok and Instagram for discovering new products compared to consumers over the age of 55.

More traditional channels, like TV and browsing in store, are still in the mix for how older generations (over 55) tend to learn about new products, which requires a more integrated marketing approach for brands targeting this demographic.



## Where Do You Most Frequently Learn About New Brands, Products, or Services?



\*Percentages are the top channels per age

## A Little Less Instant, a Bit More Research

Upon discovering your product, it's likely shoppers are taking a beat (if at least a short one) to do more research before deciding to buy. The majority (63%) say it takes seeing a product 2 to 3 times on social media before they decide to purchase, while 29% say it takes four times or more.

The greatest factor in a shopper's decision to buy is "brand reputation or familiarity." Next are promotions, comments and reviews, and recommendations from family and friends.

## How Many Times Do Shoppers See a Product on Social Media Before They Buy?



## Top Factors Influencing Social Media Purchase Decisions

RANKED MOST  
INFLUENTIAL

- 
- 1 Brand reputation or familiarity
  - 2 Discounts and promotions
  - 3 Comments, reviews, or feedback
  - 4 Recommendations from family/friends
  - 5 Privacy/data security
  - 6 Brand advertisements
  - 7 Influencer recommendations

LEAST  
INFLUENTIAL

### QUICK TAKEAWAY

As more shoppers conduct their own research, aim to educate and build trust by offering valuable, informative content on preferred apps, engaging with reviews and users, and layering in sales or special offers to incentive consumers to purchase.

# 02

## The Influence of Friends and Family



## Nothing Beats Your Personal Circle

Influencers play a sizable role in the shopping journey, but the opinions of friends and family on social media are unmatched in generating product interest, trust, and ultimately, the decision to purchase.

A whopping 81% of consumers say their perceptions of a product are influenced by seeing it liked or shared by friends or family. Over 40% say it encourages them to learn more about the product, over a third (36%) say it increases their trust, and over a quarter (29%) say it makes it more likely they'll go ahead and buy it.

## Seeing a Product Liked or Shared by a Friend or Family Member...

42%

Encourages me to learn more about the product

36%

Increases my trust in the product

29%

Increases the likelihood of me purchasing the product

26%

Makes the product feel more relevant to me



**81%**

of consumers say their perceptions of a product are influenced by seeing it liked or shared by a friend or family member



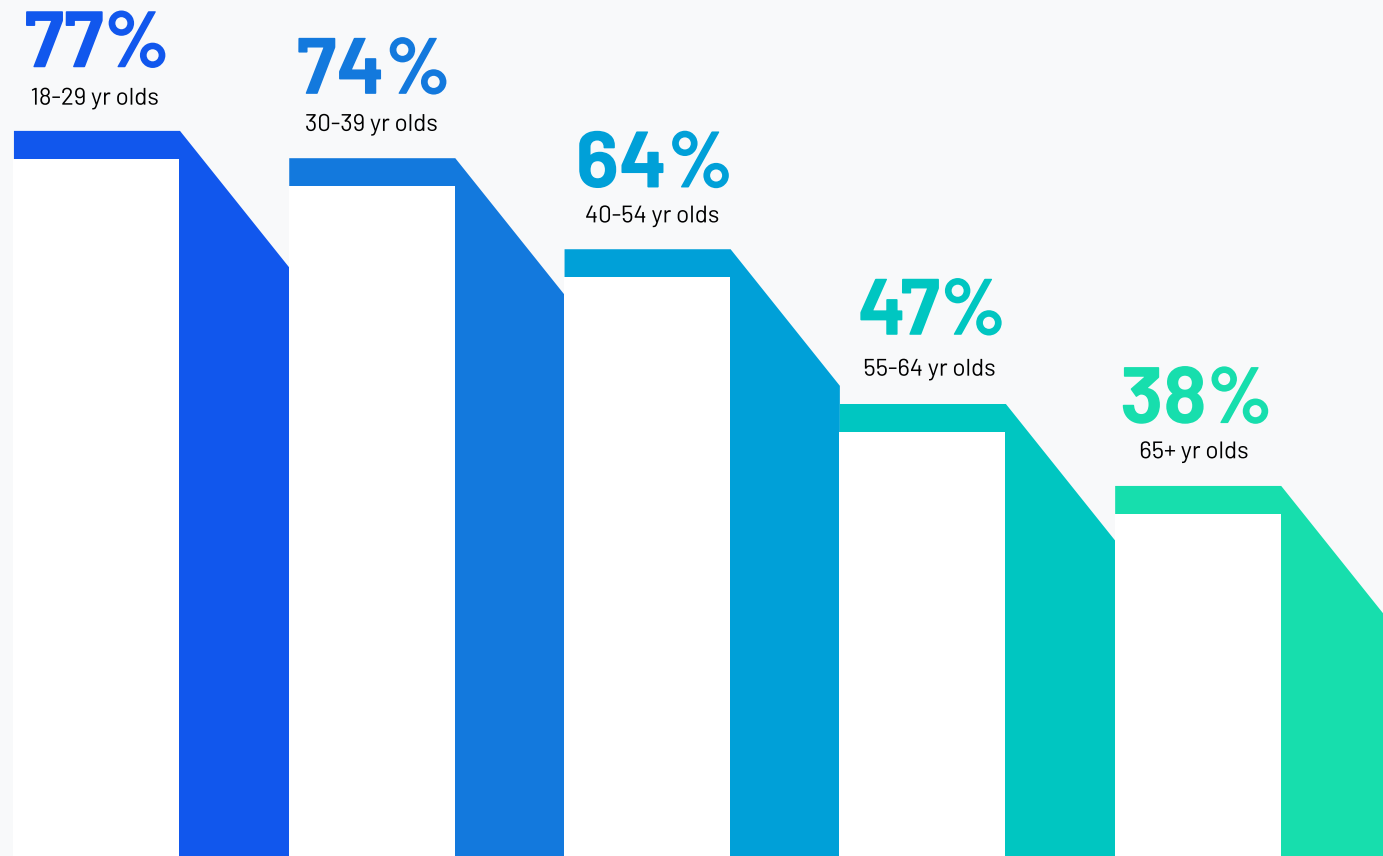
## Friends and Family Get Shoppers to Buy

Most importantly, the majority (63%) of consumers regularly decide to buy based on the activity of friends and family on social media (e.g., posted recommendations, comments, tags, or shares). This is especially true for younger consumers, with 77% of ages 18 to 29 and 74% of ages 30 to 39 doing so.

As for the types of content from friends or family that get them to buy, seeing the product in real life is the most influential, followed by discount codes, evidence of a positive impact on their lifestyle, and comparisons with other products.

### How Often Do You Make a Purchase Based on a Friend or Family Member's Activity on Social Media?

(% Always/Often/Sometimes)



## Most Influential Content From Friends and Family on Purchase Decisions

RANKED MOST  
INFLUENTIAL

- 
- 1 Posts showing the product in a real-life context
  - 2 Discount codes/affiliate links
  - 3 Posts about the product's positive impact on their lifestyle
  - 4 Comparisons with other products they've used
  - 5 Live demos/tutorials
  - 6 Posts where you're tagged or mentioned
  - 7 Unboxing videos/first impression posts

LEAST  
INFLUENTIAL

### QUICK TAKEAWAY

Consider how you might incorporate referral programs, encourage sharing among personal networks, and leverage user-generated content and testimonials from customers to enhance social proof.

## The Compounding Influence of Your Social Circle

To illustrate the snowballing power of friends and family on social media, data reveals that 65% of shoppers also follow and trust influencer recommendations from friends and family. Top reasons include this expands their knowledge (49%) they value their network's opinions (48%), it helps them discover shared interests (40%), and their friends and family know what they like (33%).

In fact, over a third of American shoppers (34%) trust influencers recommended by friends and family more than ones they've found on their own. Young consumers under 40 especially place greater trust in these influencer recommendations over ones they've self-sourced (about 43%).

*“ I trust their opinions, and they know what I like. If they're telling me about it, I probably will like it.*

- U.S. consumer (female, 30 to 39 years old)

### Motivations for Following Influencers Recommended by Friends and Family





**65%**

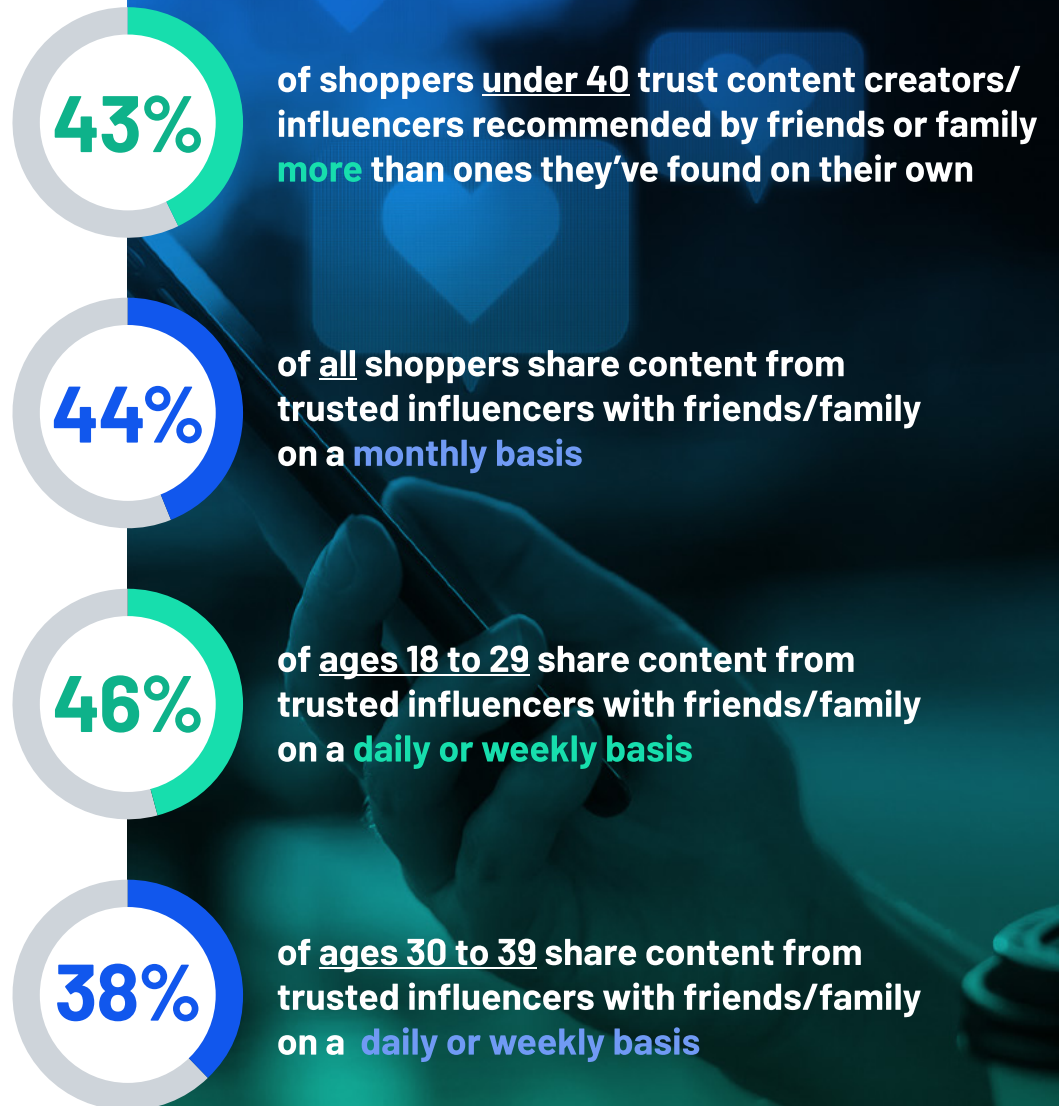
of shoppers follow or check out content creators/influencers recommended by a friend or family member

When shoppers trust a resource, they're excited to share it. Forty-four percent of shoppers share content from trusted content creators with friends or family every month, while 28% share at least weekly. This frequency hikes up for younger consumers, with nearly half (46%) of shoppers under 30 and 38% of ages 30 to 39 sharing daily or weekly.

#### QUICK TAKEAWAY

When partnering with content creators, ask that they encourage their followers to spread the word to friends and family who can benefit from your product or services.

## Content Sharing Is Caring



# 03

## Authenticity Is King



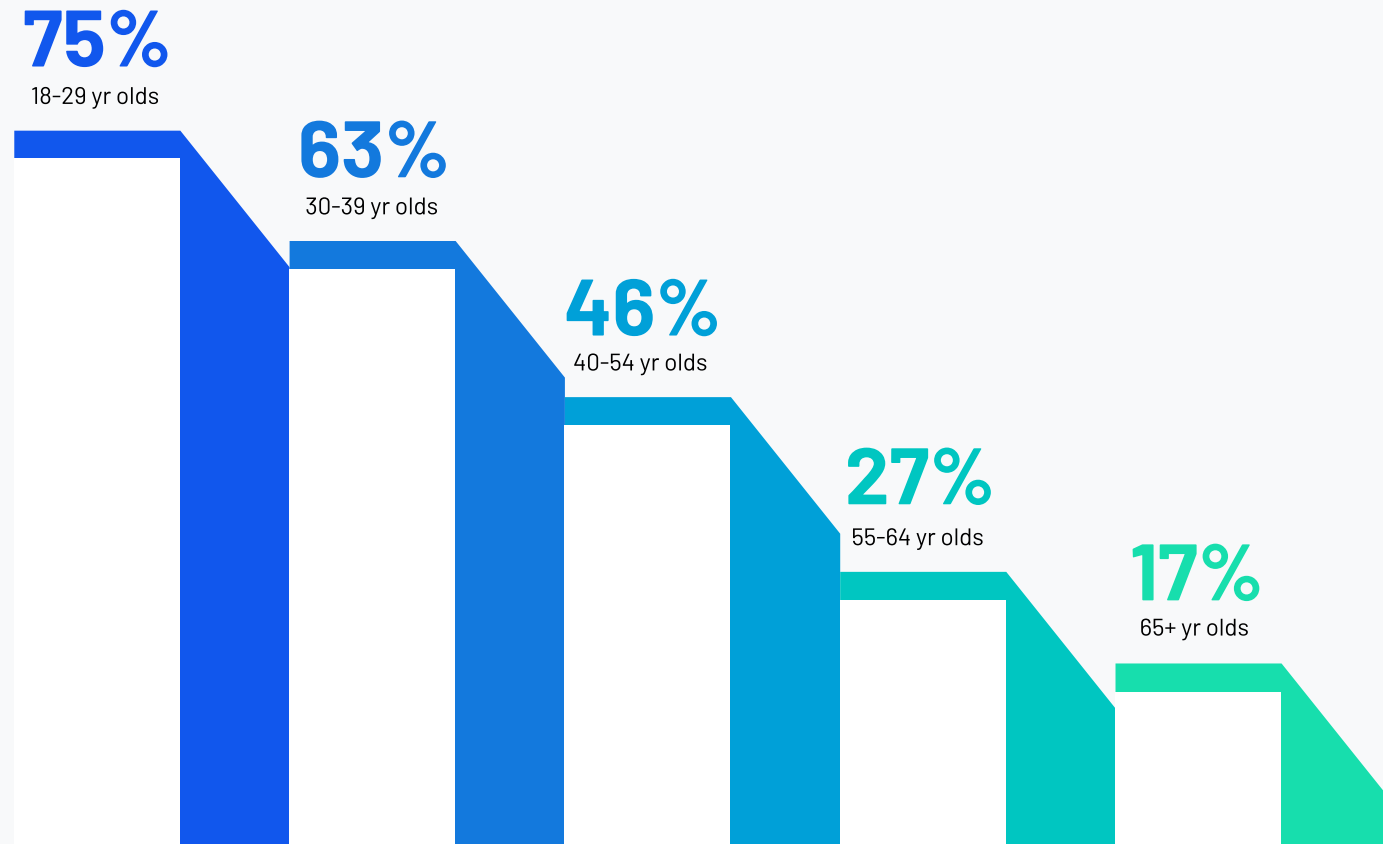
## Trust and Relatability Win Out

About half (49%) of shoppers make purchases from influencer recommendations. Influencer marketing has become an integral part of the buying journey for younger consumers (18 to 29), who are four times as likely as those over 65 to be “influenced.”

Take note, however, that shoppers on social media are ultimately more keen to open their wallets based on the advice of creators regarded as trusted experts and who feel relatable, rather than recommendations by celebrities. And again, data confirms that friends and family are second to none.

How Often Do You Make Purchases Based on Influencer Recommendations?

(% Always/Often/Sometimes)



**49%**

of shoppers make purchases based on influencer recommendations



## Key Influencers on Social Media Purchase Decisions

RANKED MOST  
INFLUENTIAL

- 
- 1 Friends or family
  - 2 Subject-matter experts
  - 3 Local business or brand accounts
  - 4 Trusted individuals or micro-influencers
  - 5 Global/national brand accounts
  - 6 Community leaders or local influencers
  - 7 Popular celebrities

LEAST  
INFLUENTIAL

### QUICK TAKEAWAY

When creating content or working with partners, prioritize authenticity by leaning into user-generated content that builds trust and feels authentic and relatable.

## Invite Customers to Participate in Community

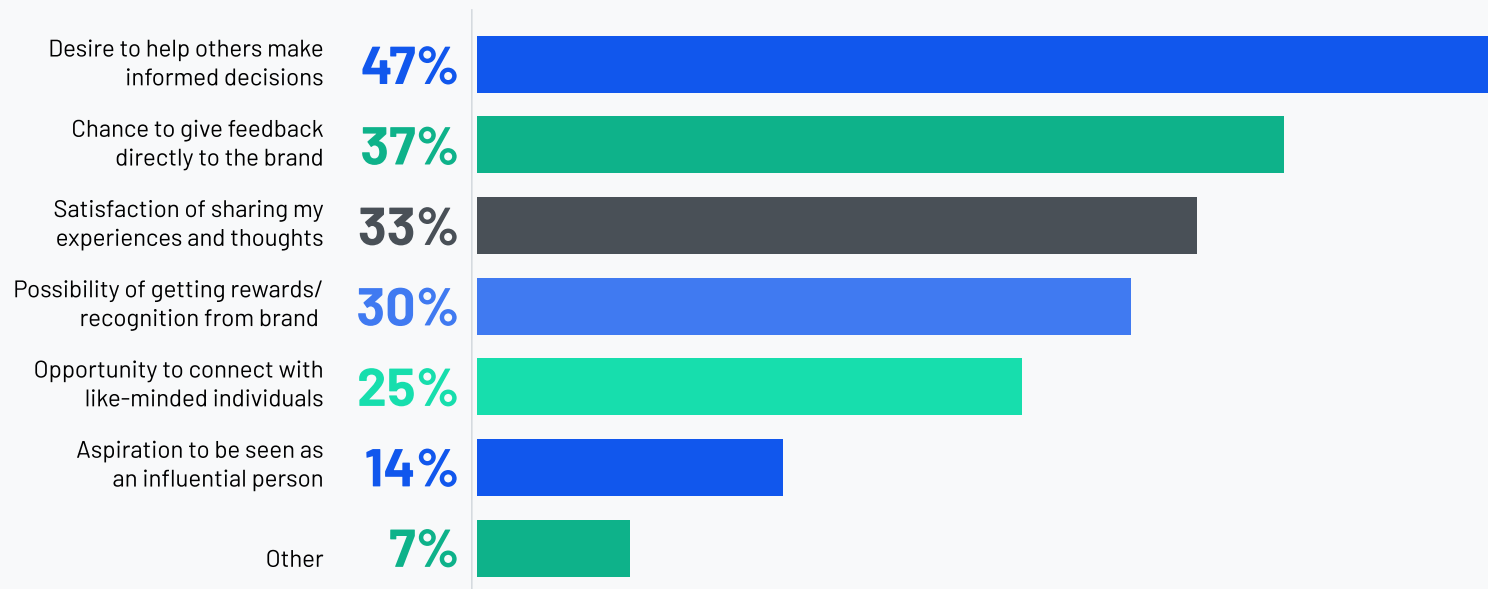
Social media is the hub that not only facilitates, but also feeds back into the shopping journey, which means post-purchase engagement is a crucial part of the modern sales and marketing strategy. Given the power of reviews, UGC, and recommendations from within one’s personal circle, brands must tap into what motivates shoppers to share about their personal experiences online.

In the spirit of connectedness, altruism emerges as the top motivator for shoppers, with nearly half of consumers (47%) saying they’re driven to share their shopping experiences because they want to help others make informed decisions. Over a third (37%) enjoy the opportunity to give direct feedback to the brand, 33% are excited to share their personal thoughts, and 30% are incentivized by rewards or recognition from the brand.

### QUICK TAKEAWAY

Engage customers by inviting them to share their feedback and contribute their valuable thoughts to their online community.

Motives for Post-Purchase Sharing and Brand Interaction on Social Media



# 04

## Security and Privacy in Social Commerce



## Security Remains a Top Priority

When it comes to making a purchase on a social media platform, over 70% of consumers express concerns about scams or fraud. Over half (54%) are worried about product quality and authenticity, and 47% are uneasy about data privacy.

Concerns about being scammed significantly increase with age. Consumers over age 55 are twice as likely to be concerned about scams or fraud than consumers aged 18 to 29.

### QUICK TAKEAWAY

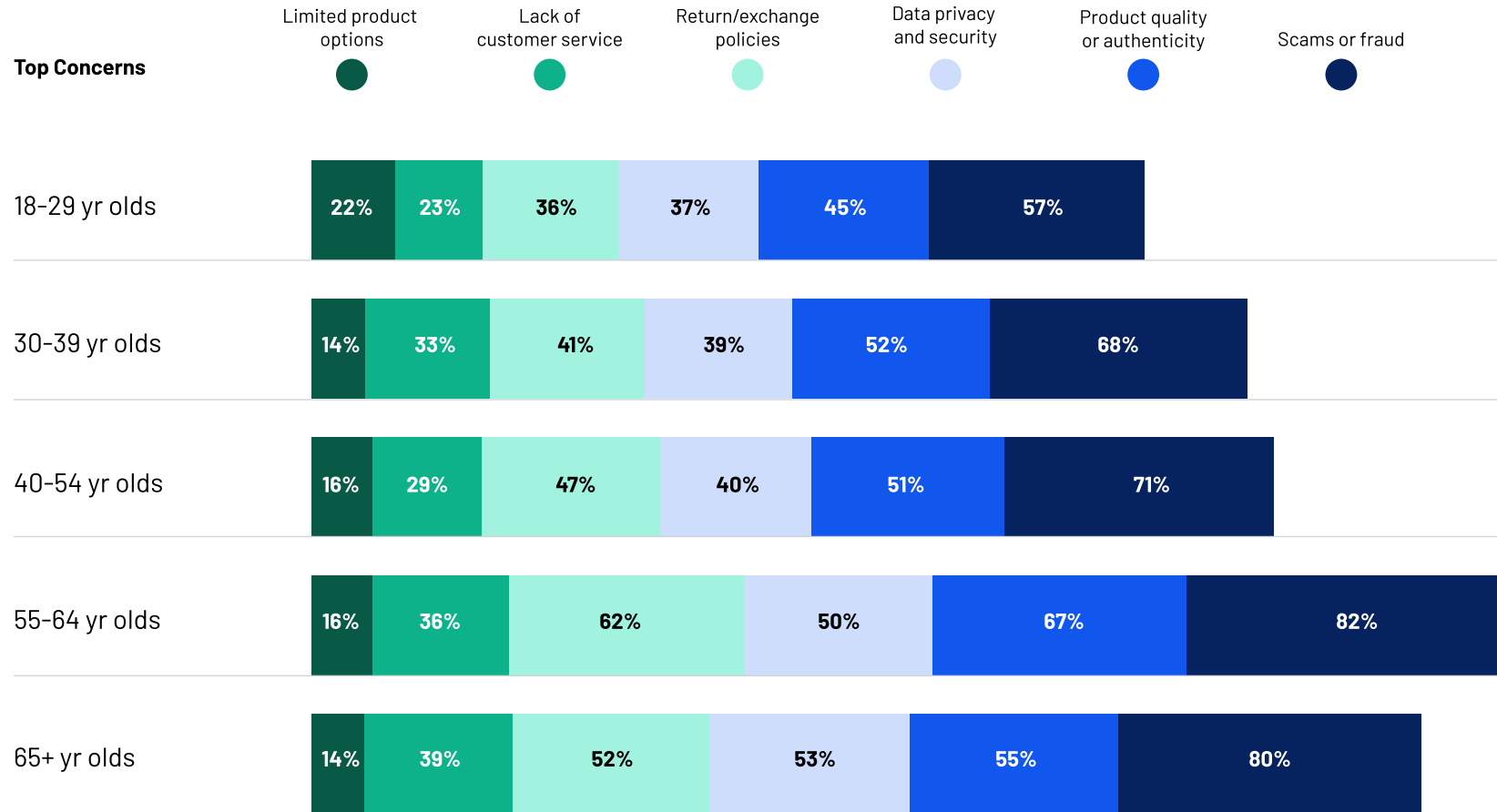
As social shopping only continues to grow, and bigger brands likely win over older customers through brand familiarity and reputation, these levels of trust may evolve as well. Put shoppers at ease now by implementing robust security measures, such as verified purchase badges, secure payment options, and transparent data policies. Clearly communicating your security policies can gain your brand a competitive edge.



# 71%

of shoppers are concerned about scams or fraud when shopping on social media

## Top Concerns Around Buying on Social Media



# Conclusion: Meet Shoppers Where They Are

Today's brands must not only meet consumers where they spend their time, but also understand how they're navigating this space. Optimize your social media presence for every stage of their shopping journeys with the right steps, including the following.



## Integrate

Incorporate paid and organic tactics in your social media marketing strategy, as both are crucial and complementary in reaching new customers.



## Educate

Offer informative, compelling content on YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, and Facebook to reach younger consumers who are researching products on these platforms.



## Showcase

Maximize UGC and testimonials to increase social proof. Highlight content demonstrating the product in real life, and activate partners to share discount codes or affiliate links through their content.



## Incentivize

Develop a robust referral program that encourages sharing among friends and family, as nothing beats word of mouth from one's own social circle.



## Reassure

Clearly communicate your transparent data policies, secure payment options, verified purchase badges, and any other measures to reassure social shoppers about your product quality and attention to security.

# Build a Winning Customer Experience Strategy

Brands must nurture trust through authenticity at every stage of the customer journey.

Now is the time to ensure you have all the tools in place to:

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

We deliver reviews, ratings, and customer verbatims to 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/demo](https://bizrateinsights.com/demo)**