

**NIELSEN BRANDBANK**

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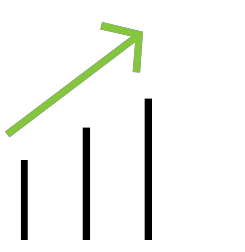
**A GUIDE TO OPTIMISING  
YOUR DIGITAL PATH TO  
PURCHASE**

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# A GUIDE TO OPTIMISING YOUR DIGITAL PATH TO PURCHASE

## INTRODUCTION

The global pandemic has caused the migration to digital technologies accelerate at a phenomenal scale and speed to respond to the evolving needs of shoppers who are developing new mindsets to operate in the new normal.



**RESEARCH STATES THAT THE SHIFT FROM PHYSICAL STORES TO ONLINE SHOPPING HAS BEEN ACCELERATED BY FIVE YEARS.**

Shopping experiences are now being shaped by the ‘need it now’ desire, serviced by an ever growing retail landscape of brick and mortar stores, ecommerce channels and social shopping platforms. In a time of change, it is important for retailers and brands to recognise the recent expansion to shopper touchpoints as the omnichannel shopper has very much changed their expectations of what a shopping experience should be.

Today's shoppers are less worried about the actual act of purchasing and instead are more focused on the omnichannel powered browsing experience that enables them to make informed purchasing decisions. With shoppers armed with the power of choice and tools to navigate and refine their shopping experience, the expectations are ever evolving, causing retailers and brands to review their strategies to ensure they are actively differentiating themselves and guiding the path to purchase for all shoppers.

Shoppers are now more likely to research and purchase products online than ever before and as a result they are more willing to switch brands if there is a lack of product information, unavailable, too expensive, different to find and has negative reviews. Brands cannot let this happen to them. Brands have just seconds to stand out on the digital shelf. If the shopper is not engaged at the first glance, their opportunities to convert could be lost.

The only way brands can optimise the shoppers path to purchase is to turn complex data into valuable insights that enable them to compete successfully and win the digital shopper.

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**DO NOT DISAPPOINT SHOPPERS, MAKE SURE PRODUCTS ARE ALWAYS AVAILABLE**

Put simply, shoppers expect availability. By being able to consistently deliver on this expectation, through in store or the wider omnichannel strategy, the key to converting the everyday spending of shoppers is through availability. Particularly during moments of crisis as the global pandemic showed, having available stock is a fundamental principle of effective retail execution and is foundational for shopper loyalty. In fact, during the pandemic, 79% of shoppers made changes to their purchasing habits that as a result impacted their loyalty.

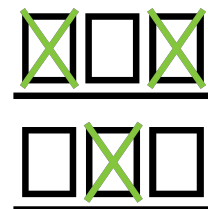
**79%**

**OF SHOPPERS MADE CHANGES TO THEIR PURCHASING HABITS**

The impact of the pandemic caused a surge in online demand, putting an enormous pressure of ecommerce supply chains. In times like these, it is imperative that brands have instant alerts on their out of stocks to benchmark their performance regularly and understand their product availability across all trading partners at store level. In such a competitive industry, brands cannot afford to disappoint their shoppers and must make sure products are always available.

Not only that, availability does not only impact sales, but often impacts retailer search algorithms. So for those brands that have spent a lot of time and hard work attaining a high search ranking, this could be lost if the product is unavailable.

**FOR BRANDS LOOKING TO WIN AGAINST COMPETITORS, MONITORING PRODUCT AVAILABILITY ACROSS A FULL ASSORTMENT IS FUNDAMENTAL TO FUTURE PROOF SUCCESS.**



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## WIN WITH BETTER SEARCH PERFORMANCE

When shoppers look for products it is the search and discovery experience that triggers the opportunity to engage and explore further on the path to purchase. If a shopper is unable to find a product, they can't buy it. With more products available than ever more, brands need to ensure their products are discoverable and visible to the shopper. Brands need to make it easier for shoppers to find their products versus competitors.



**PAGE ONE OF SEARCH RESULTS IS WHERE YOU WANT AND NEED TO BE.**

In fact, break that down further, you need to be ranking in the top 10 in search results. By getting as many products to page one, brands will be able to benchmark their share of the page across multiple trading partners, highlighting any products that are not placing high in search results.

As everything, there are many factors that contribute to the success of search results, including product titles and descriptions, keywords, reviews and ratings and more. Brands need to influence the retailer search algorithms through constant monitoring and improvements to their products content health and defending their keywords against competitor activity to boost their discoverability and visibility and ultimately drive sales and conversion.

## REMAIN COMPETITIVE WITH PRICING AND PROMOTIONS

As expected within such a competitive landscape, brands need to keep an eye on their pricing and promotions strategy, whilst also gaining insight in what promotions competitors are utilising and how this could impact sales. It is fundamental for brands to gather competitive intelligence to establish what products are currently on promotion, how long for and how much discount is offered to protect brand equity and maximise revenue opportunities.

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## LEVERAGE THE STRENGTH OF RATINGS AND REVIEWS

The way brands present product content online forms the foundation of a deeper shopping experience. When shoppers are engaged, they are more likely to explore more information and look into ratings and reviews to gain valuable insight into the public opinion to enable a more informed purchasing decision.



**SALES, TRAFFIC AND CONVERSION ARE ALL IMPACTED BY RATINGS AND REVIEWS ACROSS BOTH ONLINE AND OFFLINE CHANNELS.**

Many think it is the number of reviews that is important, but in fact brands also need to focus on how recent the reviews were given and the quality - the less negative reviews the better! The power of ratings and reviews are phenomenal. Brands need to implement a strategy and benchmark success.

## WHAT'S NEXT?

As a brand is important to understand that you are unique and every brand is at a different stage of ecommerce maturity. Whilst it is important to compare against competitor brands it is critical to understand that a one size fits all approach does not cut it when analysing ecommerce data. Monitoring online performance across multiple trading partners manually is no longer viable due to the pace of change in the industry. Brands must evolve from suppliers to retailers business partners and in order to achieve this, brands need to understand what is happening, why it is happening and have the ability to react quickly. **Remember brands have just seconds to stand out on the digital shelf.**