



# THE ROLE OF SOCIAL SHOPPING IN THE GROWTH OF SOCIAL COMMERCE

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More and more companies seek to contact customers through various channels, provide new forms of interaction, allowing the customer to have integrated experiences, have access to products and services without great effort, and preferably be able to acquire them without having to change platforms or open a new window in the browser. Therefore, it is not surprising that the concept of social commerce, created in 2005 by Yahoo, will present a new breath in 2022 and, also contribute to the realm of another concept, another concern of marketers, which is the development of an omnichannel strategy.

According to Statista (2022), the worldwide sales volume through social commerce between 2021 and 2025 is expected to show annual growth of about 30% and in 2026 a growth of 35%, from a sales volume of 792 billion dollars in 2021 to 2,900 billion dollars in 2026.

Social commerce involves

using social interactions and user-generated content to promote through social media the purchasing and selling of items and services. So, social commerce occurs, for example on a social media platform through price comparators, taking from the experience that the customer has on this platform and integrating a simplified purchasing process. It differs from e-commerce, which takes place on a company's digital store, branded app, or in a marketplace. Or, looking at social commerce in another way, it is the e-commerce supported by social media marketing and can be categorized into evaluations and reviews, recommendations and references, blogs, social networks, communities, forums, aggregators of content, price comparators, participatory commerce, social cashback and social shopping.

Social Commerce presents advantages for the seller, for the consumer, and also for other entities, promoting, for

example, the emergence of new applications or new forms of payment. In relation to the advantages for the seller, we can mention, for example, increased sales, improved customer relationships, allowing for ultra-precise audience targeting, increasing brand reach, improving SEO, and providing a focus group with convenient, frictionless buying. Also, it offers a seamless shopping experience, provides a social experience and facilitates feedback from other buyers.

One of the strands of social commerce that made news in August 2021 was social shopping, due to the beginning of the use of the social network TikTok, based on an agreement with Shopify to allow consumers to make purchases in a simple way, by clicking on the option "Shopping", lighting a mini window that is connected to the online store. But the potential of social commerce increased even more when purchases at TikTok were also made possible through Square,



Ecwid, Prestashop (still waiting for Wix, Shoptline, OpenCart, and Base). The integration of the catalog directly into TikTok and the possible use of it as organic content will further enhance the business.

In addition to TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Pinterest, and Snapchat, it will not be surprising if Twitter, LinkedIn, and Reddit develop more initiatives in social commerce in the future, although this movement depends on the interest of its

users.

Social shopping sites make the presentation more personal by giving members the ability to create catalogs associated with their personal style, product lists, and search. The goal is to build a community that functions as a tribe, creating dynamics that encourage members to talk about products and/or services, and make suggestions for sharing, that spreads among social contacts, increasing the desired market penetration but also widening the brand's

area of influence.

Thus, one of the trends in 2022 will be the continued development of social commerce, with new experiences, new social media propensities, and in particular, social networks will incorporate new technologies and new features that allow them to make the customer experience increasingly unique. For this, it is necessary to continue to develop and improve a customer journey that also integrates the possibility



of the customer interacting with the brand through social commerce, specific content, but taking into account marketing trends, such as inclusive marketing. Inclusive marketing can be used in various aspects of offline and online marketing, but as a result of the ability of viral marketing to act more immediately and with other repercussions on social media and more specifically on social networks, it can be combined with the objective of boosting buying immediately, but also increasing brand awareness through social commerce. As examples of inclusive marketing, we can mention the use of communication in a comprehensive way of the race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, language, nationality, education, income, beliefs, and upbringing. Thus,

in 2022, there will be the possibility of incorporating inclusive marketing into social commerce, making it more human and bringing the brand closer to its followers and customers.

In addition to the communication campaigns, it is also expected that brands develop specific sales promotions supported by the various features of social media, namely using storytelling more oriented to each medium, but also bearing in mind the phase of the sales funnel in which the customer is seeking to monetize social commerce as much as possible.

Also in social commerce, in 2002, it was possible to follow other trends in digital marketing, namely the use of video, the transmission of purely online or hybrid

events, the increase in mobile marketing, live video shopping, augmented reality, micro communication segmentation, partnerships between brands of different sectors that impact the same customer and eventually complement each other, and increased marketing budgets allocated to paid ads, which may refer to specific social commerce initiatives, thereby enhancing consumer exposure.

Social commerce will contribute to a better consumer experience and the consumer journey will be increasingly through, incorporating what they want and not what marketing wants. And, just as in 2021, the consumer wanted social commerce and is expected to continue to want more and more, regardless of the business area, although there are products that will continue to have some primacy.

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