



Web SOLUTIONS**INDUSTRIES****KNOWLEDGE**

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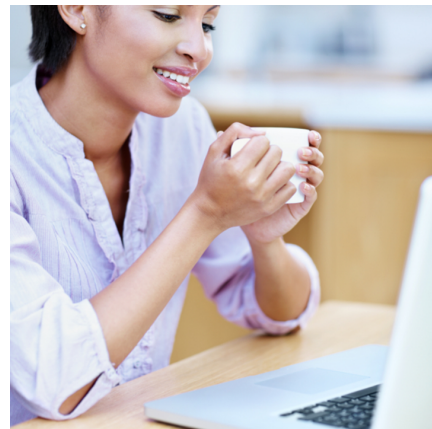


With the explosion in mobile device usage, brick-and-mortar stores have become concerned about showrooming—when consumers visit a store to research a product but subsequently buy that product online, often from a lower-priced competitor and sometimes while still in the store. It's become such an irritant that one Australian retailer **began charging a \$5 fee** to consumers who came into the store and claimed to be "just looking." Other retailers have countered showrooming by beefing up store-brand products, trying to make it difficult for consumers to compare private-label products to branded products online.

Hope for Retailers

Although showrooming has historically given brick-and-mortar stores cause for concern, a new survey indicates that all is not lost. A November 2013 **Harris Poll** showed that while 46% of shoppers admit to showrooming, a greater percent said that they do just the opposite: 69% percent of shoppers research a product online first and then purchase the item in the store (also known as *webrooming*).

Does that mean retailers should be having a conversation about webrooming rather than showrooming? Definitely. The increasingly popular pattern of researching online and then buying in-store indicates consumers' ongoing need for retailers to provide a positive in-store environment as well as a seamless omnichannel experience.



Hyperlocal Digital Ads and Today's Consumers

By 2017, **e-commerce is expected to account for just 10% of all retail sales in the United States**, which means the bulk of sales will continue to occur in brick-and-mortar stores. Between these retail sales

predictions and the rise in webrooming, it's clear that consumers will continue to buy in stores, even after first researching products online. Add to that the fact that they shop close to home (with very few exceptions) and have similar purchase patterns as their neighbors, and you have a set of consumer truths that can guide you to effective advertising strategies.

One of those strategies is hyperlocal digital advertising. By using a combination of sophisticated analytics and powerful technology, hyperlocal digital advertising helps retailers seamlessly drive consumers from the online content consumption experience to the in-store purchase experience.

This advanced technology pinpoints the neighborhoods most likely to contain a retailer's ideal audience based on the content the consumers are viewing online, their demographics, their purchase histories, and more. Because consumers see the hyperlocal digital ads best matched to their interests and location, they are more likely to click on a retailer's website for more information, and ultimately visit the store. And it's once consumers come in that the transition from the online experience to the in-store experience can begin.

Showrooming is not quite the big bad beast we've all made it out to be for the retail experience. Brick-and-mortar stores are here to stay. So, let's spend more time implementing the strategies that work for today's webrooming consumer—hyperlocal digital advertising, for example—and less time talking about showrooming, which is stacking up to be a simple distraction from the real retail story.

Are you using hyperlocal digital advertising to reach the consumers most likely to buy in your stores? Tell us more in the comments below.

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