

# Top 5 Trends To Watch In 2020

The starters pistol of 2020 has just fired and everyone in your market is vying for position... But, how do you decide where to spend your resources in the new year? Renewing your relevance and standing out in a noisy marketplace requires action. With that in mind, our experts share these 5 trends to help you stay a step ahead and improve your customer experience in the new decade.

## The Rise of Secondhand

What was once seen as a gift-giving faux pas has now become the latest trend in retail, as younger, environmentally conscientious, shoppers are looking for ways to lessen their carbon footprint. In fact, 15% of Gen Z shoppers say they are dedicated to reducing the amount of waste they create in the future. This leads to opportunity in a space that has been essentially untapped for most retailers.

Digital disruptors like [ThredUp](#) and [The RealReal](#) have taken secondhand retail and ran with it, leading a resale market that has grown **21 times faster** than the apparel market as a whole over the past 3 years. Major retailers are starting to take notice of the benefits of a strong resale program. Companies including [Patagonia](#) and [REI](#) along with fashion brand [Rebecca Taylor](#), are great examples of what is possible in the resale space. These brands have launched buy-back programs, used marketplaces, and rental programs to help limit shopping's impact on the world.

As brands continue to find ways to align their practices with the beliefs of younger generations striving to create a more circular economy—starting or improving on a secondhand program is a cost effective and responsible way to help companies close the loop in 2020.

***“Resale has grown 21 times faster than the apparel market as a whole.”***

## Unified Commerce

While Omnichannel has become a retail standard in recent years, digital and traditional sales channels are continuing to blend more closely together to create a unified shopping experience. As newer technologies, machine learning, and AI trend toward the norm, the customer experience is becoming more personal, tailored, convenient, and overall, more enjoyable, regardless of the chosen shopping channel.

2020 is the year for unified commerce. It is estimated that **81% of retailers** will deploy a unified commerce platform by the end of this year. This means that in the very near future, if you are not committed to unifying your shopping channels, you will fall behind the curve.

The top priorities of unified platforms will be centered around the identification and personalization of customer experience, aligning customer experience across all channels, and empowering associates with mobile tools to further the in-store experience. The goal for every unified experience should be, to be able to follow a customer's journey across every touchpoint whether it be from a desktop, mobile device, or in-store to deliver a seamless customer experience across all channels.

***“81% of retailers will deploy a unified commerce platform by the end of this year.”***

## Big Year For BOPIS

The world continues to transition into a unified commerce model, and the thin line between traditional and E-com channels gets even thinner. Because of this, online order fulfillment solutions will continue to be one of the main focuses for retailers, big and small, in 2020. BOPIS is not a new concept, but it's importance is growing rapidly as large online marketplaces continue to add pressure with shorter delivery times.

BOPIS is one of the quickest fulfillment methods available to consumers, today. And, its speed and convenience shined bright at the end of 2019 with **93% of holiday shoppers** making BOPIS their go-to solution. 49% of shoppers stating that speed was the main reason for choosing BOPIS.

The last mile makes up **28% of the total cost** of delivering items to a customer's doorstep. This has become an even bigger issue in recent years with retailers opting to make a move to ship-from-store instead of staffing up large warehouses. The implementation of a BOPIS program could **drop online order costs by 90%** helping to offset the higher costs of last mile shipping for your customers that would rather still choose the convenience of home delivery.



## Adding an Exclamation Point on Experience!

81% of younger Gen Z shoppers prefer shopping in-store. In-store discovery, or the practice of opting to view items in person and buy online later has become a major differentiator in the way Gen Z shops compared to the generation before. This practice, once known as “Showrooming,” was seen as a killer for big retail in the past, but with unified shopping solutions in place, it can actually drive sales for the discovery store. The catch with in-store discovery is that if your company doesn’t create a memorable experience in-store, you will not capture those sales later online.

Due to Gen Z’s desire to discover items in-store and a millennial’s reluctance to leave home—creating new ways for shoppers to explore in-store has become a fun and rewarding experience for brands that are open to change. Some experiences that will continue to see growth in 2020 include, BOPIS, personalized shopping, and pop-ups, but above all, curated shopping or collections, seems to be a fan-favorite for younger shoppers. So popular that 74% of Gen Z shoppers say they would rather have less, better-curated products to choose from while shopping.

***“81% of Gen Z Shoppers prefer shopping in-store”***

## Blending Content and Commerce

One of the major shifts in the digital commerce space will be the idea that selling and content creation will become one and the same. Many fashion brands websites, are starting to move away from their old fashioned blog, quickly replacing them with a call-to-action featuring terms such as “Editorial” or “Journal” leading you to a brand’s content hub.

Trying to sound like a newspaper isn’t by accident. These hubs read more like a fashion magazine than a store, featuring interviews with designers, celebrity fashion icons, and even sometimes featuring competitor’s items. The focus is set around educating instead of selling, placing the seller in a position of trust and building brand recognition at the same time. Take the UK based online seller, Mr. Porter, for example, they do an excellent job at blurring the lines between content and commerce.

It’s not just retail brands that are starting to see value in blending content and commerce, but also major magazines and newspapers are capitalizing on referral income through content channels. Take a look at what New York Magazine is doing with The Strategist, by creating a destination where editorial and shopping come together to help shoppers determine the right products for themselves.

Whether you plan to revamp your content strategy through your social channels like Instagram or develop an editorial channel to release regular content, content-focused commerce is a move that will help you attract new sales in 2020.

***“ 74% of Gen Z shoppers say they would rather have less, better-curated products ”***

### **In Conclusion:**

While these 5 trends cover a wide range of retail activities, they all boil down to one factor: Continuing to refine your customer experience in 2020 will be key. From the first mobile click on their cell phone to the moment they pick the product up in-store (or have a final mile carrier deliver it the same day), your shopper needs to feel like they are getting personalized, white-glove service through every channel they are shopping. So go into 2020 ready to deliver more than just your product, make sure you are delivering a great experience.



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