BIGCOMMERCE

Omnichannel Commerce Report:

Where To Engage Today's Shoppers

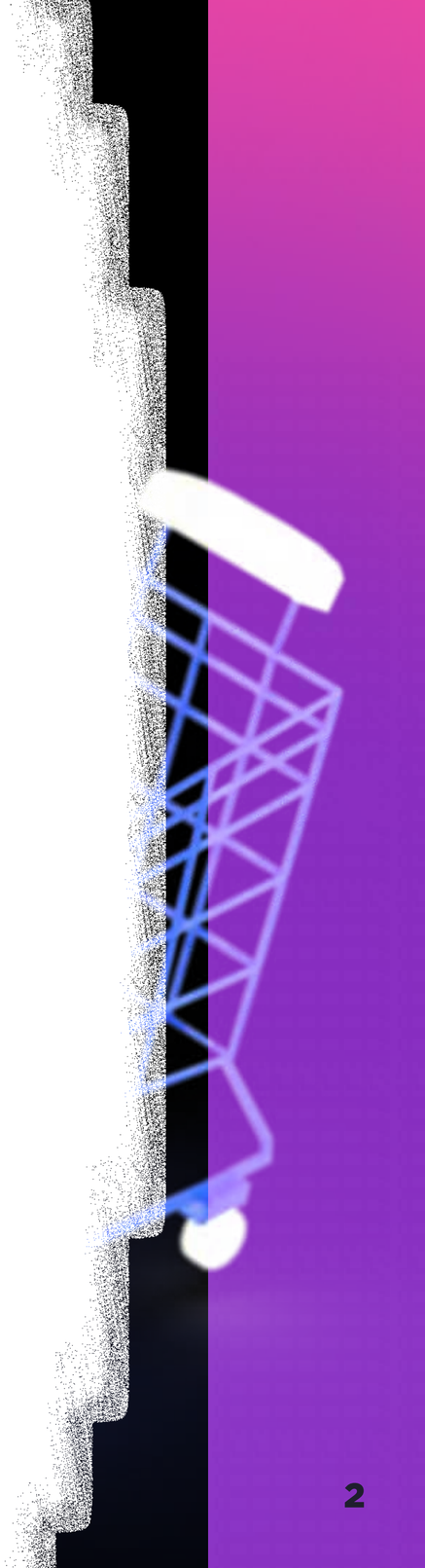


INTRODUCTION

Our 2023 Omnichannel Commerce Report provides insight into how brands can more effectively engage shoppers across online and offline channels. We compare current versus previous years' data about shopper purchasing habits to highlight evolving trends and changes.

Throughout the pandemic, many retailers invested in integrating their online and offline experiences. This strategy is still paying off. Convenience is now paramount for shoppers, and omnichannel retailers are well placed to meet and exceed consumers' expectations.

As online sales taper and in-store shopping continues its comeback, a single point of purchase that allows shoppers to balance their cemented online habits with the convenience of in-store experiences is an attractive proposition. Buy online, pickup in-store (BOPIS or Click and Collect) and cross-channel returns processes are the top two factors encouraging shoppers to spend more with omnichannel (or multichannel) retailers versus online-only retailers.





While the Beauty category holds the crown for most preferred online-only purchases, Fashion makes its mark as the most desired online category to buy from multichannel retailers. Shoppers' responses reflect the experiential advantage of re-fitting, replacing, and refunding fashion items in-store versus online-only ordering.

Social media channels provide additional opportunities for retailers to capture their shoppers' attention, with sponsored and organic posts showing 47% and 26% influence over purchase decisions.

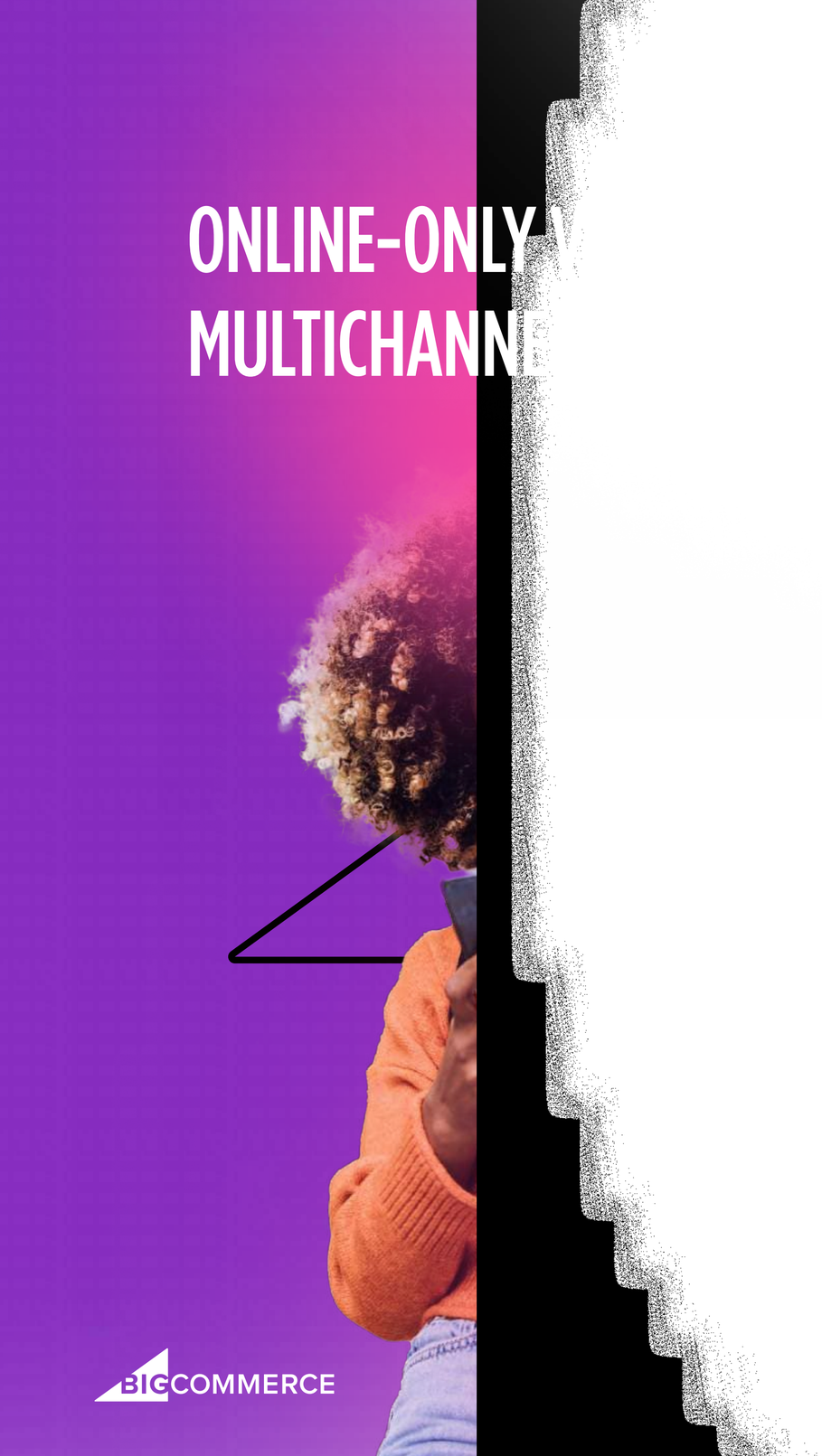
The findings in this report offer a window into consumers' online and offline shopping preferences and experiential differences that will help retailers adjust strategies and respond to changing consumer demands. For example, there is critical importance for all retailers with an online presence in 2023 to offer fast, secure website experiences. Nearly four out of five customers will go to a competitor if site load speeds are too slow, and more than nine out of ten will navigate away if they don't trust the site's security.

Read on to see how online and offline experiences are shaping buyer behaviours. Our 2023 data and comparison to previous years offer detailed findings across purchasing channels, most popular product categories, website experience, and social media impact.

Data for this report collected March - April 2023

All data in this report is sourced from surveys with approximately 1354 respondents, from randomly selected Australian and New Zealand online shoppers.

ONLINE-ONLY V
MULTICHANN



What are shoppers purchasing—and from where? Fashion holds the top spot for items most purchased online. The category also takes the crown in multichannel retailer preference (retailers with a physical and online presence), though Beauty is the most popular category for only-online purchases.

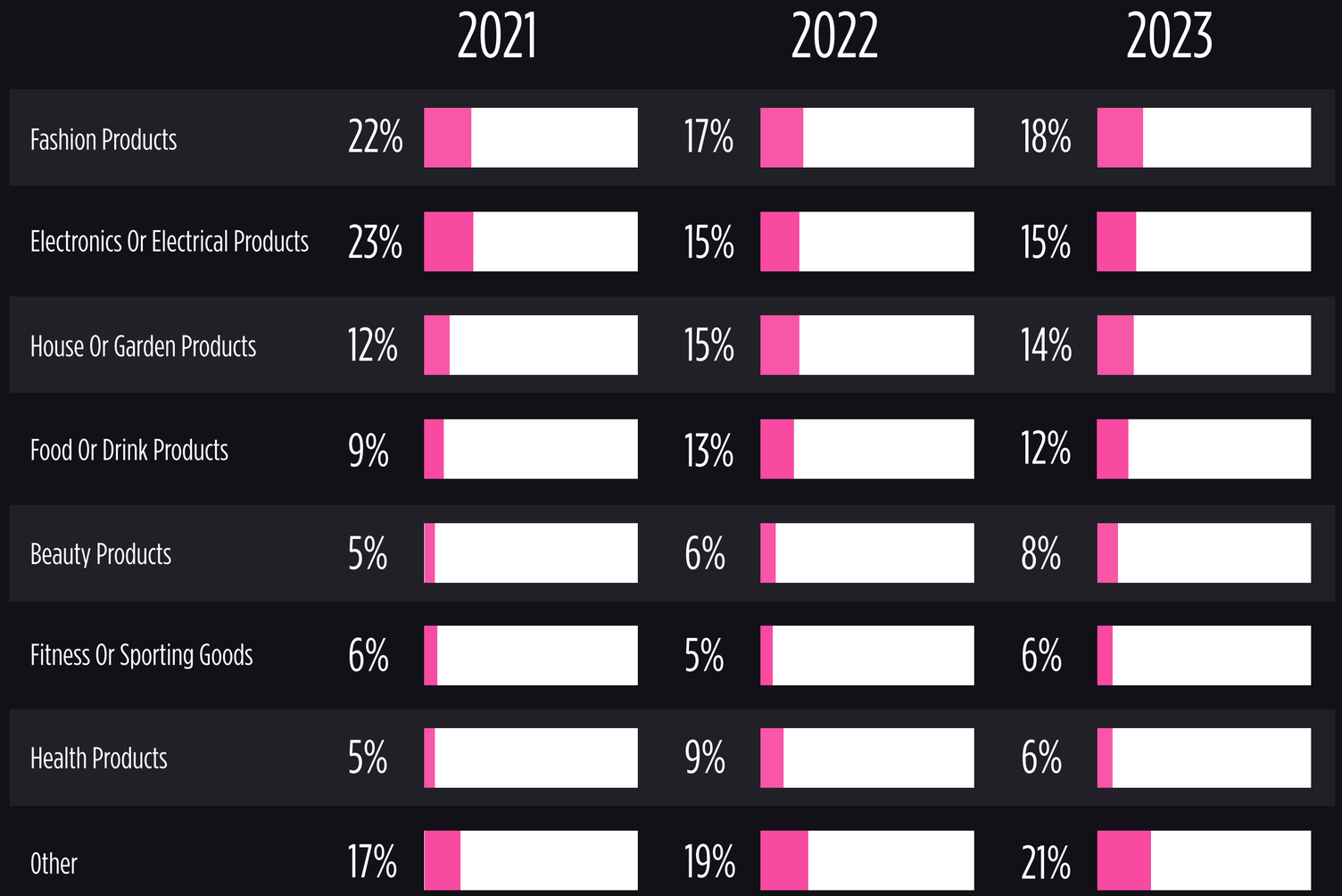
Multichannel retailers that remind shoppers of the experiential advantage of re-fitting, returning, and refunding items in-store may drive even stronger growth in the category. Online-only stores, on the other hand, continue benefiting from pandemic-cemented shopping habits across beauty, electronics, and health products.

FASHION AND ELECTRONICS HOLD THE TOP SPOTS FOR PURCHASE CATEGORIES

Fashion has held the top spot for two years as the product category ordered the most (18%). At the same time, electronics has plateaued since its sharp drop in 2022 to 15%.

The “Other” category has steadily increased, in line with the rising popularity of variety stores and online marketplaces where consumers purchase multiple product categories.

What items were in your last online order?

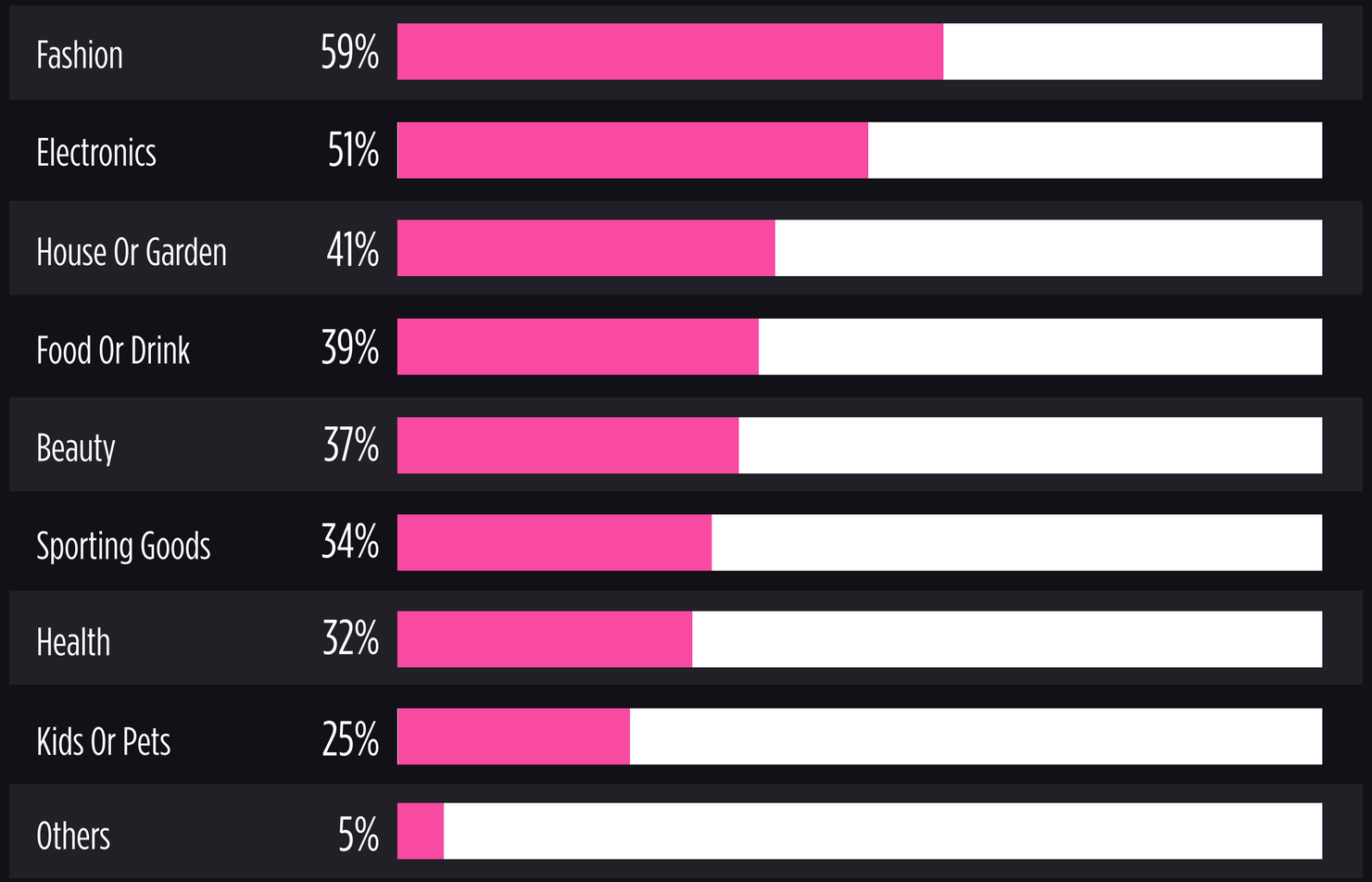


RE-FITTING, REPLACING, AND REFUNDING FASHION ITEMS PUTS THE IN-STORE EXPERIENCE AT AN ADVANTAGE

It's no surprise that Fashion tops the list of products consumers prefer to buy online from multichannel retailers, at 59%. As one of the most returned product categories, re-fitting, replacing, and refunding fashion items in-store offers a significant experiential advantage.

The Electronics category sees a slight step-down in the desire for multichannel retail at 51%, with house and garden products also dropping to 41%.

What type of product would you prefer buying online from a Multichannel retailer instead of a Pureplay retailer?

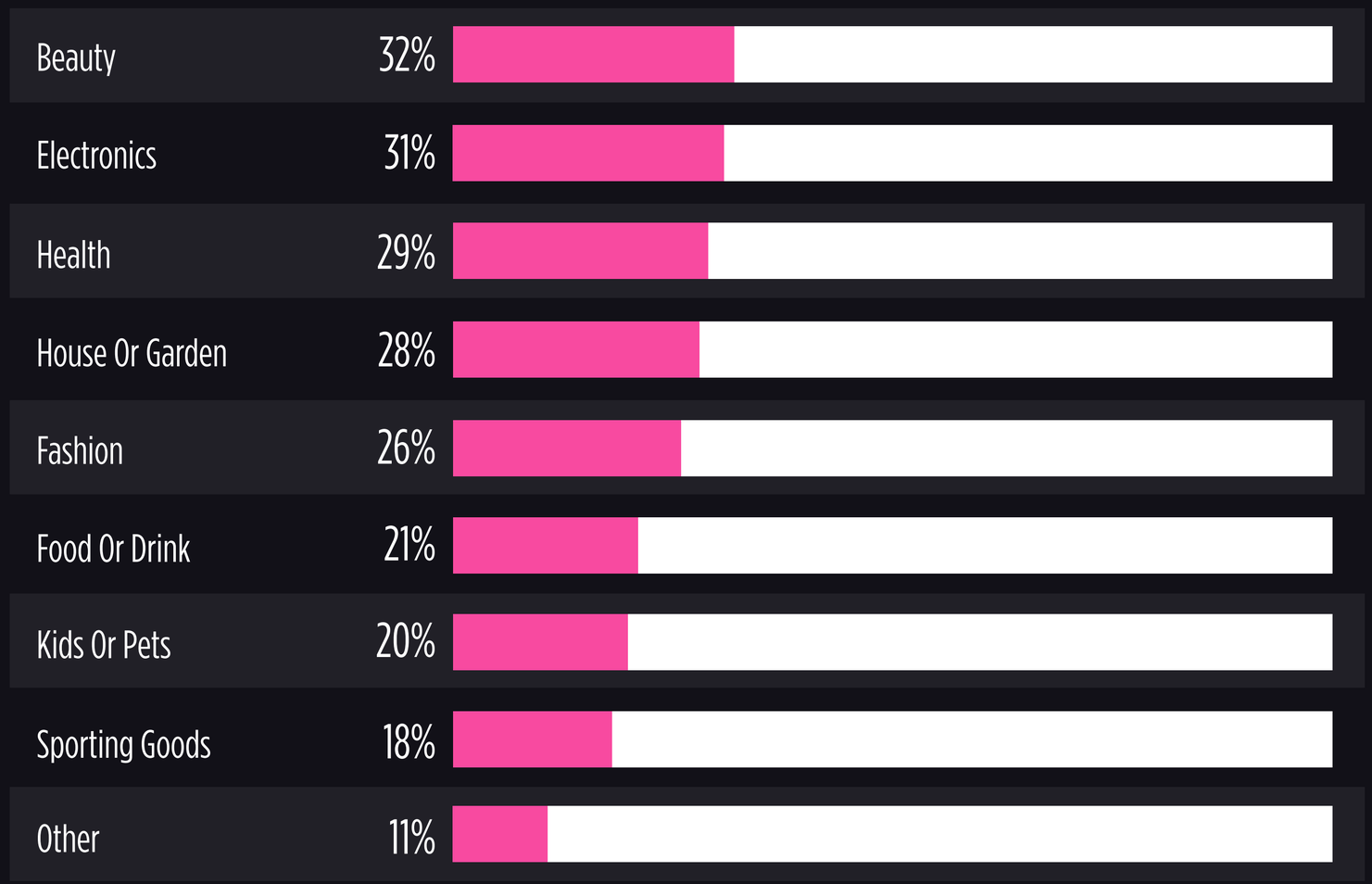


BEAUTY, ELECTRONICS, AND HEALTH TAKE THE TOP SPOTS FOR PREFERRED ONLINE-ONLY PURCHASES

Shoppers flocked online during the pandemic for products that helped them (and their homes) look and feel their best. As a result, online-only stores in Health and Beauty segments saw significant surges, as did those in the Fashion, Home and Garden, and Electrical categories.

These purchasing habits have hung around. 32% of consumers now prefer online-only retailers in the Beauty category, closely followed by Electronics (31%), and Health (29%).

What type of product would you prefer buying online from a Pureplay retailer instead of a Multichannel retailer?



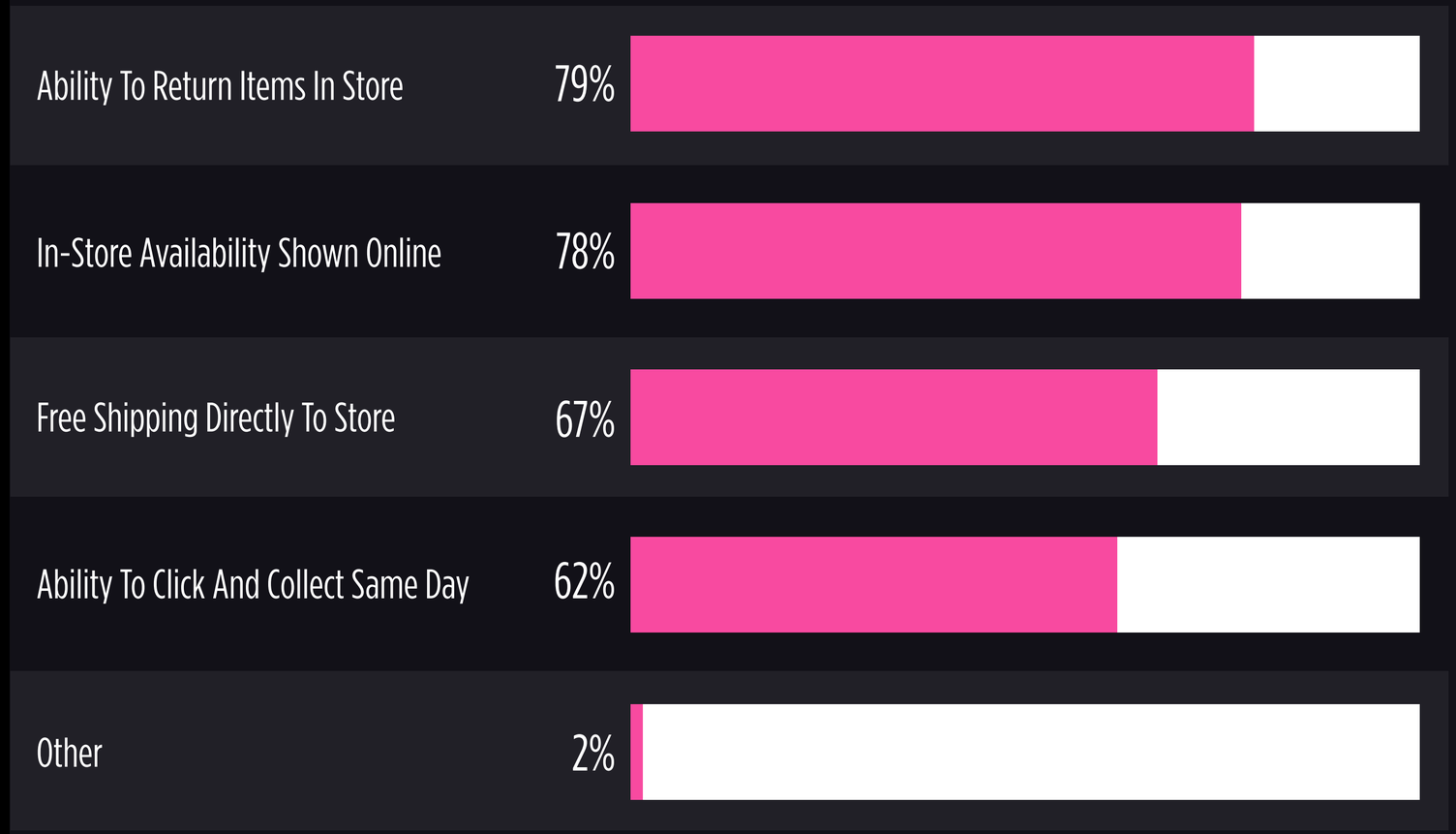
PRODUCT PICKUPS AND RETURNS GIVE THE EDGE TO MULTICHANNEL RETAILERS

The ease of in-store product pickups and returns offers a vital advantage for multichannel retailers.

79% of shoppers say they'll purchase more from a multichannel retailer when they can return items in-store. At only 1% lower, consumers will also increase their spending at stores with BOPIS (or Click and Collect).

Around two-thirds of consumers say shipping direct-to-store (67%) and same-day click-and-collect from stores (62%) also encourage them to buy more from multichannel retailers.

What factors would lead you to increase your purchases from a Multichannel retailer?



SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS

How can retailers keep shoppers digitally engaged outside of their websites? Social media has become a vital commerce channel for many merchants, and again this year, Meta (Facebook and Instagram) reigns supreme.

Sponsored posts can encourage almost half of consumers to purchase online, with organic posts influencing more than a quarter. Retailers should consider leveraging these channels to increase conversions.

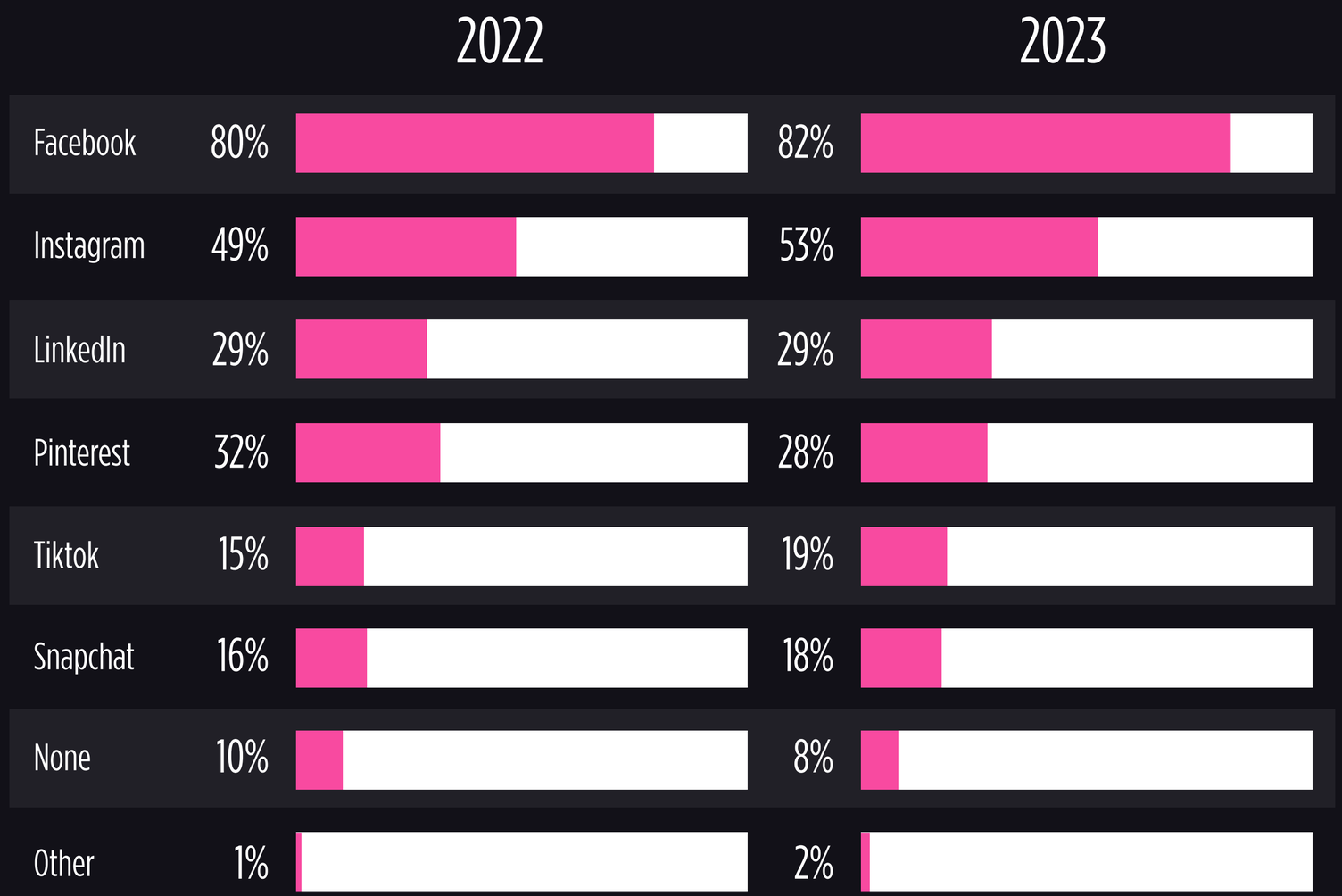


META STILL LEADS SOCIAL CHANNELS WITH FACEBOOK AND INSTAGRAM

Across social channels, Facebook still takes the crown for the platform shoppers are engaging with the most (82%). Instagram takes second place (53%), with LinkedIn coming third (29%).

Noticeable changes from last year include 4% increases for Instagram and TikTok, and a 4% decrease for Pinterest.

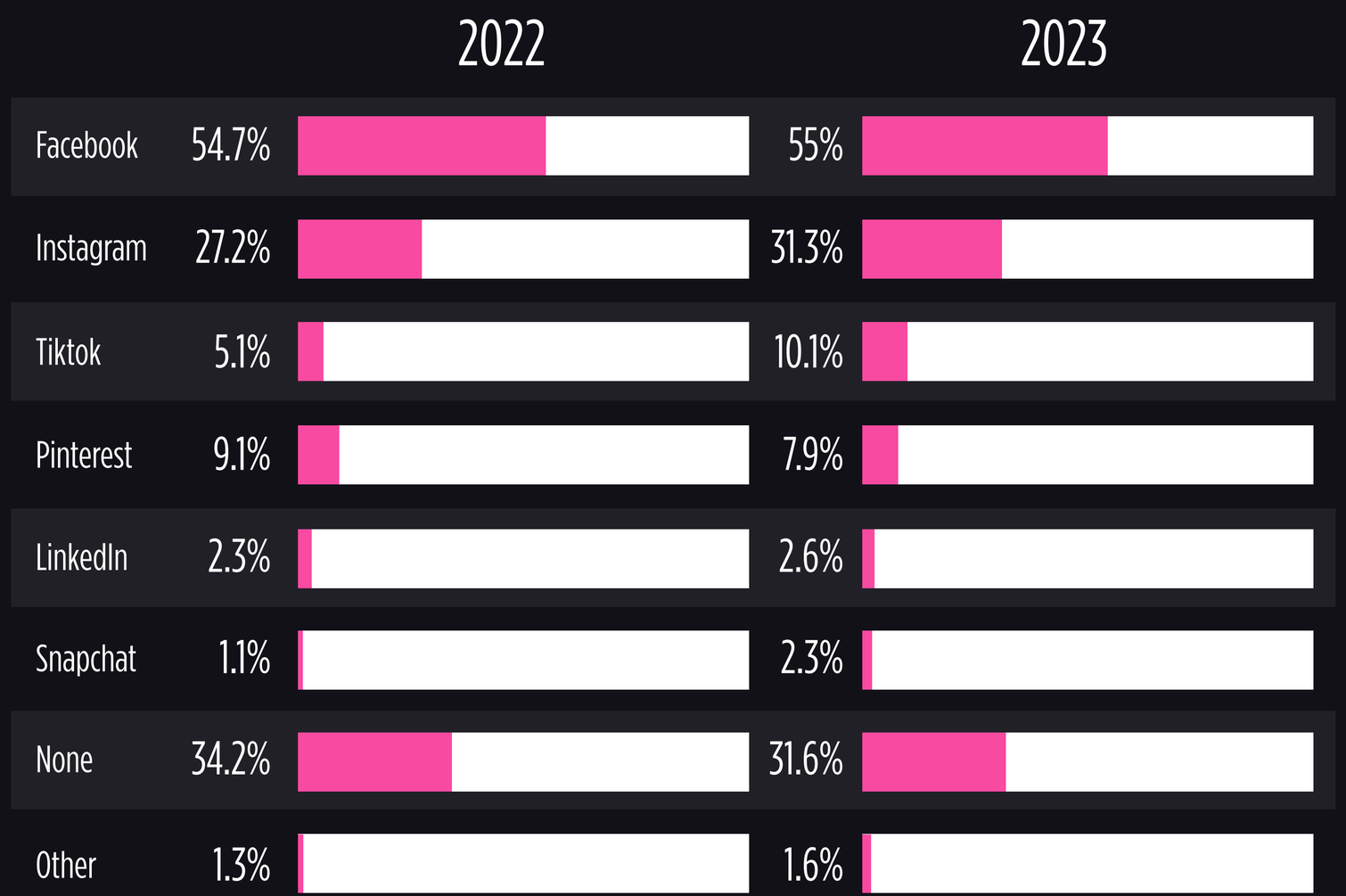
Which of the following platforms do you engage with?



META MAKES A SOLID CASE FOR SOCIAL CHANNELS, BUT MANY ARE STILL UNSWAYED

Unsurprisingly, the social leader, Facebook, has encouraged 55% of shoppers to purchase online. And while Instagram and TikTok are rising influencers (31.3% and 10.1%, respectively), 31.6% of consumers say social media did not sway them.

Which of the following have encouraged you to make an online purchase?

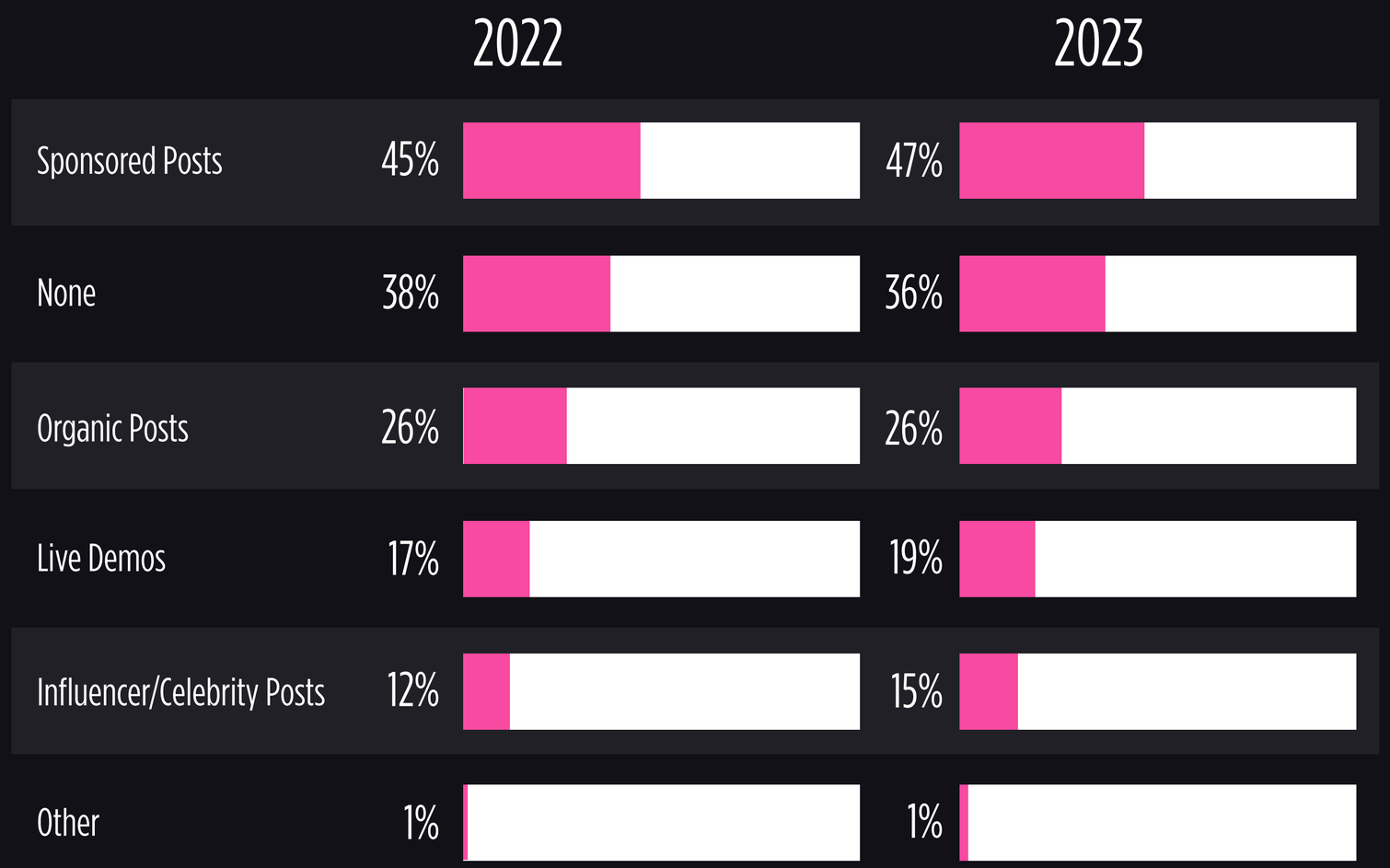


SPONSORED POSTS ARE THE MOST INFLUENTIAL

On the social advertising front, sponsored posts carry the most weight, with 47% of shoppers saying it has encouraged them to make an online purchase. Organic posts come in second (26%), with live demos in third place (19%).

However, social advertising hasn't captured everyone's attention. 36% of consumers say they were not encouraged to purchase at all from social ads.

Which of the following have encouraged you to make an online purchase while scrolling social media?





CONCLUSION

More than ever before, today's brands must put consumers at the heart of everything they do. From offering the right incentives and payment options to managing delivery expectations and mitigating cart abandonment, brands must consider consumer preferences if they want to influence shoppers' purchasing decisions.

BigCommerce's advice: stay agile while focusing on the shopping behaviours that will have the greatest impact on your ecommerce business. We hope that by sharing our proprietary survey data, we've given brands the insights they need to adapt to current consumer trends — and to start designing tomorrow's retail experiences.

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