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How trust and security put shoppers in a purchase-ready state

What do online shopping and personal relationships have in common? One word: trust.

Trust has to be earned. We deal with this idea every day in our personal lives. Our level of trust in someone affects if—and how—we choose to interact with them.

Take a moment to ponder why some people seem more trustworthy than others when speaking with them. It turns out it's not always about what someone says but how they say it.

of the other person's body language), and tone of voice have a significant impact on building trust when we engage others. These small signals have a big impact on trust. Now, take a moment to think about how shoppers interact with your online

Social Engineer reveals that factors such as eye contact, mirroring (reflection

store. Are you simply telling consumers that you're a trusted retailer? Or are you building trust at each stage throughout the buyer journey? Research from Baymard Institute places one aspect of online trust and security as the third-highest reason for cart abandonment. 25% of study

not trusting the site with their credit card information. That's one quarter more shoppers that could be placing orders with the right trust signals supporting your online store.

respondents say they decided not to complete their order at checkout due to

Let's dive into what affects trust and how you can put shoppers into a purchase-ready state.

How macro conditions affect shoppers' purchase decisions

Consumers have contended with various macroeconomic challenges for some time now. Throughout 2020-2023, massive shifts in product demand created supply chain issues unlike anything seen before.

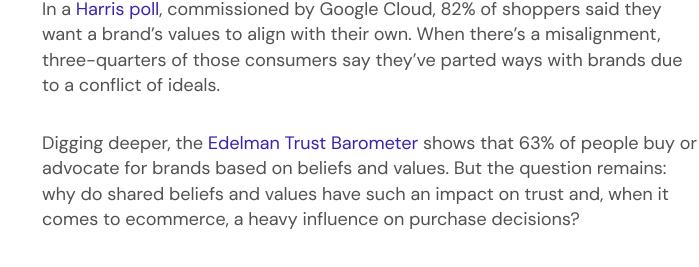
issues for global supply chains. As if that wasn't enough, inflation rose sharply, putting more cost-of-living pressures on consumers. With less purchasing power, shoppers are now showing increased signs of strategic buying behaviors. For example, many consumers are using

comparison shopping to stretch their dollars further—and it's happening across multiple channels. In North America, 72% of shoppers research price comparisons online while in-store, according to eMarketer. In Australia, 62.5% of Aussies are comparing in-store and online to find the best value for money, as reported by Amazon.

front of mind for shoppers. However, to prove value beyond the pricepoint, brands must build authentic connections with customers—by earning and maintaining their trust. % of shoppers researching price comparisons online while in-store according to eMarketer

Connect with shoppers through beliefs and values

N. America



Australia

trust: The role of shared values, It indicates that "Trust formation has been linked with social identity theory, suggesting that familiarity breeds trust. There are strong cognitive and emotional bases for trust, and familiarity breeds trust precisely because it strengthens both these bases." In short, we tend to trust people who share the same values as us.

The paper goes on to say that "It may also come from a perceived similarity and feelings of shared destiny among people," meaning that a sense of traveling the same path together, as commonly felt in close personal relationships, further establishes those feelings of trust and security.

that?

values

buyer personas for more ideas.

Once you know who your customers are—and the paths they're on—you can more effectively remind them that you're headed in the same direction and share their beliefs and values. How to communicate your brand's beliefs and

write mission, vision, and values statements. Think about how your mission, vision, and values serve your ideal customer. Do they align? Are they authentic? If you were seeing them for the first time, would they resonate with you?

new and existing customers. Start with these areas:

values and what they mean from a CS perspective?

security for online shoppers

or after their purchase.

specifically answer those questions.

Information war

fraudulent emails related to online shopping.

engagement convey your brand's identity.

Post-purchase: what happens up to the checkout is only half the story. Do order confirmation and delivery communications reinforce your brand? If something goes wrong, are you living your brand's values in how you help customers post-sale?

stage. Note down anything that isn't reflective of your mission, vision, and values as items for future improvement.

them into a purchase-ready state) faster with a few small signals. Your website holds key indicators that act as trust and security signals particularly to new shoppers. Consider how you can: • Make direct contact information clear and easy to find, including email

If these items aren't on your homepage, consider where else shoppers can find that information. For example, many consumers use a site's search function to look for non-product-related information.

warehouse, provide images or maps of those locations.

detail how and why you use your customers' information.

results tracking for Searchspring customers. How data security creates trusted relationships

Ecommerce sites can be a target for cyber criminals, given these websites process payments and hold customer data. Phishing attacks, malware, and brute force tactics are just a few of the ways that bad actors attempt to gain

access their online store accounts. The key takeaway here? Ecommerce brands have an opportunity to communicate the security of their online stores and build trust with customers. How?

Consider offering heightened security measures, which could include:

• One-time passwords sent via email, SMS, or in-app notification

• Biometrics, such as face, fingerprint, or voice identification

Authenticator or Microsoft Authenticator.

Username

Why are payment options so important? The BigCommerce Digital Payments Report shows that an overwhelming 88% of shoppers are likely or very likely to abandon their cart at checkout if their preferred payment method is unavailable. So, how do shoppers prefer to pay? Worldpay reveals in their Global

Ecommerce Payments Report that 50% of consumers want to use a digital

A digital wallet is a payment service available on your mobile or wearable

device that offers contactless payment in physical stores (tap and pay) and

wallet, followed by 22% for credit cards, 12% for debit cards, and 5% for BNPL.

Transaction value % Credit cards 22% Debit cards 12%

Spend time researching or running surveys on the most popular methods for

your particular shoppers—and focus on offering the leading results.

A2A

Buy now, pay later

add a few more items to their cart while providing transparency of costs before they reach the checkout.

header. The brand makes it clear to shoppers they can unlock free shipping after spending a certain amount. It's a clever way to encourage customers to

Keep a close eye on relevant social channels, forums, and reviews platforms. Consider how you engage with customers who leave feedback or add content. Not everything will always go right from click to delivery. However, when you respond and follow up on any negative feedback, it can open a conversation that makes customers feel heard and valued. Actively addressing your customer's concerns is also the first step to turning their experience around and proving to other shoppers they can confidently purchase from your brand.

recommendations from retailers they trust and shop with regularly, with a further 43% also fond of receiving tailored SMS or email campaigns from these brands. In contrast, only 21% want onsite recommendations from new or unknown

highly-tailored search results. Give your shoppers the personalized shopping journeys they want, help them find what they need faster, and provide onsite experiences that keep them coming back. Get in touch with the ecommerce experts at Searchspring to learn more about this intelligent solution.

In a quick, no-obligation chat, we'll give you even more insights about using technology to boost trust in your online store (and help shoppers get to the

checkout faster) with an award-winning search, merchandising,

personalization, and product bundling platform.

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How data security creates trusted relationships Offer familiar, secure payment methods at the checkout **Transparency of shipping and other** How UGC builds trust and increases conversion Remember: trust and personalization go hand-in-hand

• Show social content, real reviews, or average star ratings from providers like Google Reviews, Trustpilot, or REVIEWS.io to quickly build social proof. It's worth looking at your zero results search queries to identify any trustrelated items shoppers are looking for, possibly creating landing pages that Learn how to set up zero search results queries in GA4 or the automated zero-

Chip shortages, rapid rises in online ordering, port and factory closures, a lack of shipping containers, and geopolitical tensions all created a perfect storm of As a result, we're now in a highly-competitive retail landscape where value is Science Direct provides some answers in an enlightening paper, Diversity and When looking at this from an ecommerce perspective, it's even more clear that

When asked, "how much do you worry about each of the following", respondents in the 2024 Edelman Trust Barometer report see hackers as an equal fear to climate change. The concern is also rapidly growing, with a +5 point increase over last year. **Existential societal fears** Climate Change 76 Nuclear war

It is worth noting, though, that 89% of shoppers say they are open to using additional security measures, such as two-factor authentication (2FA), to

Riskified research shows that 53% of ANZ (Australia and New Zealand)

shoppers are only somewhat confident in recognising and avoiding phishing or

• Location checking to alert shoppers if there's unusual sign-in activity based on GPS location 1st factor 2nd factor authentication authentication

• One-time passwords generated from an Authentication app, such Google

It's a good idea to offer familiar, secure payment methods that are relevant to your shoppers. For example, seeing an AliPay option on a US website may raise an eyebrow or two. In the same respect, placing AfterPay as the first option on an Asian ecommerce site might seem out of place.

preferences by region. For example, the same Worldpay report shows that in

Cash on delivery Prepaid cards 1% Transparency of shipping and other costs

hidden costs. Baymard Institute research shows that 48% of respondents in the US abandon their cart at checkout because of high extra costs, including

services to someone else, is a powerful way to provide social proof and instill

experiences for 75% of respondents in Australia and New Zealand (ANZ). However, trust is a key ingredient in personalized experiences. The same Klaviyo report tells us that 53% of shoppers love receiving onsite product

The platform learns about your customers' preferences and serves them

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to connect with shoppers, it's vital to first understand them. So, how do we do Start by looking at the data you have about your customers' interests, demographics, shopping habits, pain points and challenges, and issues or causes they care about. Then, gain a clear picture of those customers by mapping out buyer personas. See HubSpot's article about creating detailed To effectively communicate your brand's beliefs and values, get back to basics. Review your brand's mission, vision, and values statements and how they flow through your marketing and communications. If you don't yet have these defined, this excellent article from Baton Global provides detail about how to With a robust understanding of these aspects of your brand identity, you can then get to work with authentically sharing your brand's beliefs and values with Marketing: weave your brand's mission, vision, and values through all your marketing materials. This can be as small as using inclusive language, or as large as dedicated campaigns aimed at connecting shoppers with your brand. Social media: review how posts, replies to comments, and audience Customer service: is your CS team intuitively communicating your brand values throughout customer interactions? Do they need a refresher on these Lastly, consider running "mystery shopper" tests. Put yourself in the mindset of a shopper who has never encountered your brand before or ask a friend to help you with a test case. Go through the end-to-end process of finding your site on a search engine, discovering new products, ordering, asking customer service a question or two, and seeing what happens in the post-purchase Why it's critical to create a sense of trust and Similarly to how we assess trust signals in personal relationships, as consumers, we also make complex evaluations about our trust in an online store. Brands can help their shoppers make this determination (and move addresses and phone numbers should your customers need help during • If you have a physical retail presence or allow order pickups from your • Ensure you have privacy policies accessible in your website footer that • Use trust badges to signal site security and reduced purchasing risk.

Most significant increase: fear of foreign attacks on our media to inflame differences access to shoppers' personal data, including credit card information. It's an issue which is front-of-mind for online shoppers across the globe. However, identifying security threats remains a challenge for many of them.

Offer familiar, secure payment methods at the checkout To continue building trust as shoppers reach the checkout—and give them confidence that you'll process their payment safely and securely—think about your payment methods.

are worth considering as payment methods on your online store. Also, be mindful that there are significant shifts in customers' payment Australia, 31% of shoppers want to use their digital wallets, whereas China shows a massive 82% preference. In North America, 33% favor credit cards, though in the UK that figure drops down to 24%. Generational preferences also come into play, with some age groups leaning more towards some payment methods than others.

reason: when a site wants shoppers to create an account. Consider making shipping and other charges more prominent during a shopper's product search and discovery stages. You can create specific callouts with inline banners on search results pages, add shipping information to product display pages, or even leverage site-wide banners.

How UGC builds trust and increases conversion Word-of-mouth marketing, i.e., when people recommend your brand or trust. Statista shows that 89% of consumers somewhat or completely trust a product recommendation from someone they know.

On the flipside, acknowledgement of positive feedback and other UGC further showcases your brand's competence, customer-focus, and trustworthiness.

Searchspring is one technology platform that creates more engaging, personalized shopping experiences by leveraging website tracking, first-party data analysis, and advanced Al-driven algorithms that understand shoppers' interests, intent, and predicted behaviors. After working through the actionable takeaways in this article to demonstrate

Article The Secret Sauce for Boosting **Ecommerce Conversions: Key Insights**

from Searchspring's Conversion Clinic

cutting-edge tools and strategies to stay competitive. In

Ecommerce is rapidly evolving, and businesses need

our recent Conversion Clinic, industry leaders from

is Right for You

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online payment. As the name implies, they act as a "wallet", connecting to your credit or debit card. Services like Google Pay, Apple Pay, and PayPal are popular options that enable ecommerce shoppers to pay with their digital wallets, and How does it make you feel about someone who seems to be hiding something from you? It probably makes you far less trusting of them. The same applies to shipping, taxes, and fees. That figure is almost twice as high as the next biggest Additionally, you can use free shipping thresholds as an incentive. For example, Didriks homewares store draws deliberate attention to shipping costs in its site

Think of user-generated content (UGC) as word-of-mouth marketing for the digital age. It's original content that's created and published by your customers. UGC can include social media posts, photos and videos, blog posts, Online reviews are a particularly potent form of social proof that influences your shoppers' purchase decisions. Gartner research shows that 85% of consumers trust online reviews as much as personal recommendations. UGC represents an enormous opportunity for online retailers—when managed Edelman data indicates that when consumers engage brands in ways other than purchasing, such as consuming brand content, participating in brand activities, connecting on social media, or sharing feedback with brands, they're making determinations about that brand. 70% are evaluating whether these interactions indicate they can trust a brand to be competent, 60% on an What does this mean for your brand's UGC—particularly in terms of feedback and reviews? You need to prove trustworthiness through your actions.

We know that personalization increases conversion. For example, Deloitte reports that a staggering 80% of customers are more likely to purchase from a company that offers personalized experiences. The 2024 Klaviyo Consumer Trends Report also shows that personalization improves the shopping retailers, with just 14% wanting to receive personalized SMS and email messages from those ecommerce stores.

Find Which Searchspring Product

Generative Discovery Terms to Know:

In the evolving landscape of ecommerce, understanding

the key concepts behind Generative Discovery and

tackling search abandonment is essential for creating

Defining How to Combat Search

Abandonment in Ecommerce

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Take full advantage of how you interact with your customers' UGC to help those customers be one of the 59% more likely to purchase and 67% to advocate for a brand when trust is established, as shown in the same Edelman Remember: trust and personalization go hand-in-hand

data.

reviews, and published feedback.

ethical level, and 59% for relevance.

the right way.

trust and security, think about how advanced personalization can further heighten the purchase-ready state of your shoppers.

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