

SALSIFY | Ebook

2020 Guide:

How FMCG Brands Can Build a
Successful Ecommerce Program

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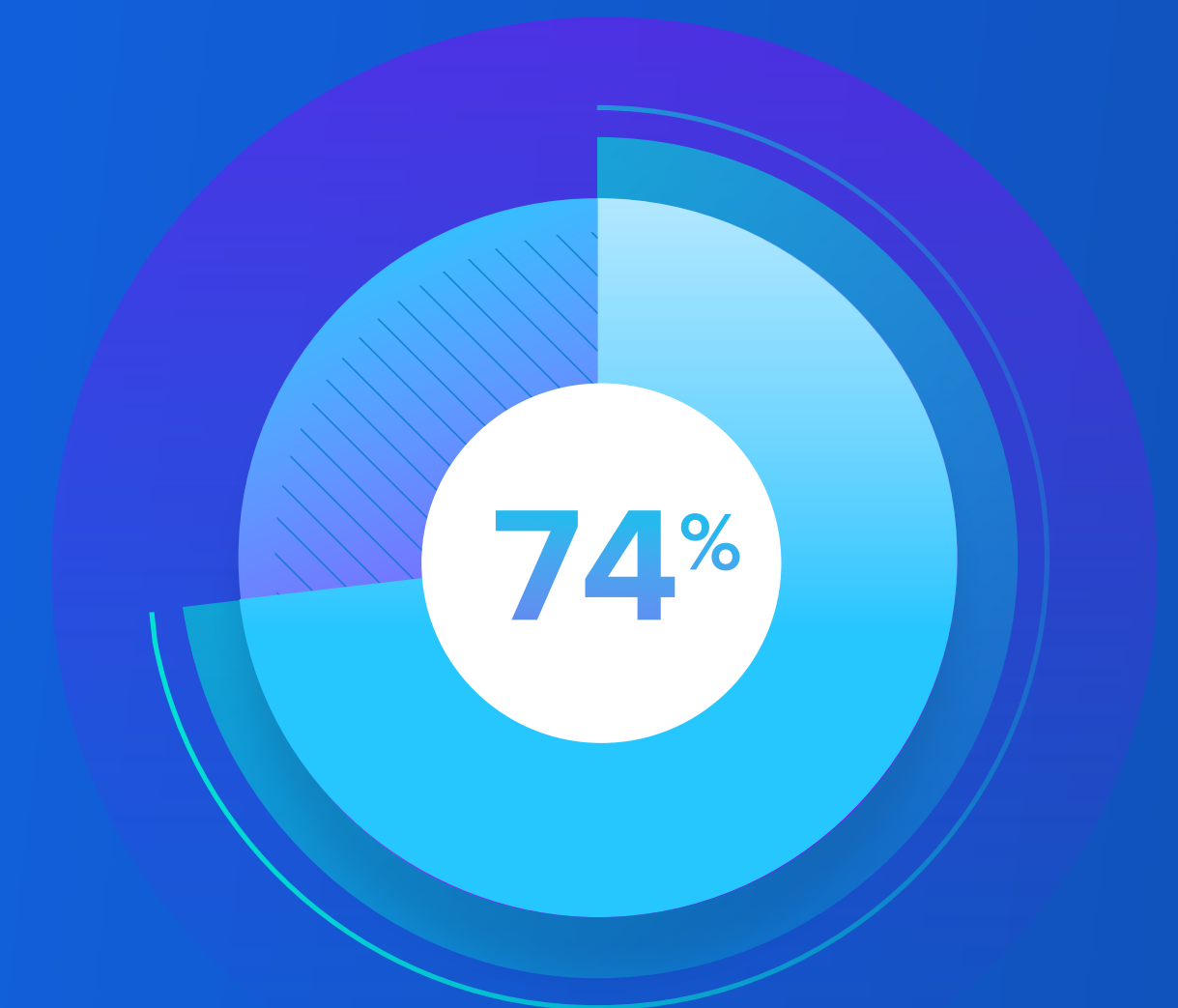


Build a Successful Ecommerce Program

Fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) brands must embrace the rapid digital shift currently taking place. As the adoption of online shopping habits continues to rise, these shoppers are only a small swath of people increasingly relying on digital. According to a Google global retail study, the overwhelming **majority of shoppers (74%) searched online before going into a store.**

From food, beverage, and alcohol brands to health, beauty, and household essential brands, customers will continue to engage with digital experiences, both in-store and online. As these omnichannel experiences continue to become the norm, brands must have a consistent and engaging online experience to meet them — wherever they are in the buying journey.

Establishing a successful ecommerce program requires five fundamental steps: building an ecommerce strike team, implementing an agile activation process, connecting with emerging digital channels, launching a direct-to-consumer (D2C) site, and prioritizing a test-and-learn



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Step 1: Build an Ecommerce Strike Team

Managing a successful ecommerce program requires a team with extensive industry experience, strategic foresight, and strong cross-functional capabilities. For brands that are launching an ecommerce program, there are [several essential members that can help ecommerce teams](#) find success.

Key Ecommerce Team Members:

- Director of Ecommerce
- Ecommerce Program Manager
- Digital Marketing Manager
- Graphic Designer
- Copywriter
- Ecommerce Business Analyst
- Ecommerce Developer
- Software Engineer
- IT Manager

Depending on the brand, not every leader has the resources to bring on every ecommerce team member. Look at brand program goals to establish which team members would be critical for the strategy, and consider how each role would fit into short and long-term plans.

Step 2: Implement an Agile System to Activate Product Content

On the digital shelf, content is currency. It's what helps shoppers learn about products, form an emotional connection with brands, and establish positive expectations for future brand experiences.

Brand manufacturers face many challenges. From scattered product content and inefficient go-to-market processes to a lack of visibility into retailer requirements, these struggles can limit the overall success of an ecommerce program.

One of the most critical first steps for building a successful ecommerce program is equipping teams with an agile system that allows them to activate product content at scale across priority retailers. Every retailer has different requirements on the digital shelf, and the Salsify Syndication solution helps brands control the end-to-end content management process.

Using Salsify as the central source of truth for product content, they gain the ability to manage multiple versions of product content to streamline the activation process. Harness vast control over multiple touchpoints: Upload, test, and tweak product content in a centralized database, while syndicating it with precision to each sales partner's unique requirements.

Step 3: Connect to Emerging Digital Channels

Shoppers continue to spend less time on traditional media like television, print, and radio, and more on digital spaces like social media. This shift has forced brands to face an obvious, but challenging, question: Is it time to move more ad spending into new online challenges?

Considering the rise in competition for attention on the digital shelf, projections for the near [doubling of online grocery store purchases by 2023](#), and the increasing amount of time consumers spend online researching their products, FMCG brands may soon find resources are better spent providing customers with a memorable time online.

Keeping content dynamic and compatible with a wide range of touchpoints across the web is one of the most important parts of managing a customer's experience on the digital shelf. But it's equally important to avoid resting on those laurels. Brands must always be on the lookout for opportunities to build connections with new and emerging digital channels.

Two major growth areas, especially for FMCGs, are social commerce and hyperlocal delivery.

Social Commerce

Any good ecommerce expert will tell you: The fewer clicks shoppers have to make before reaching a point of sale, the better. This is why the emergence of social commerce — essentially purchases made directly via social media — should be on a brand's radar.

Checkout on Instagram, Facebook Marketplace, Pinterest, and others are empowering brands to sell directly to customers on social channels.

Consumers may be more likely to view FMCG purchases as impulsive, lower-value sales — suggesting that shoppers are often looking to take immediate action when shopping for them online. These tendencies can help brands take advantage of these new social opportunities.

Hyperlocal Delivery

These channels were already rapidly growing in popularity before the start of the COVID-19 outbreak, and have now become something of an essential service to self-isolating consumers everywhere.

Platforms like Grubhub, Postmates, Drizzly, DoorDash, and others have accustomed shoppers to fast delivery and tracking capabilities. These channels are especially crucial for FMCG brands that can leverage these opportunities for maximum benefit.

Step 4: Launch a D2C Channel

The rise in the number of D2C sites is one of the most exciting disruptions in the FMCG market, with many legacy brands launching or acquiring new channels to cut out the middleman. Brands as large and globally recognizable as Coca-Cola and Procter & Gamble (P&G) have launched successful D2C services for customers, and upstarts like Madison Reed and Dollar Shave Club have made dents in what were once largely impenetrable markets.

And it's not just customers: Investors like the D2C model too. A majority of venture capital FMCG [investments from 2015 to 2019 went to brands with a D2C component](#) — a total of \$3.28 billion over four years. These valuations are only projected to continue growing into the next decade.

Consider how a hybrid wholesale and D2C approach could add a unique dimension to the customer experience — could a pop-up shop model work? A subscription concierge service? Now is the time to experiment.

Step 5: Embrace a Test-And-Learn Strategy

But, without agile analytics, testing, and optimization, you may just be taking stabs into the digital dark. It's essential that ecommerce teams [develop protocols like A/B testing](#), gain insights into customer feedback, and understand shopper behavior to ensure customer expectations are met.

Turning challenges into opportunities is what sets top-performing brands apart.

The Salsify Product Experience Management (PXM) platform helps brands manage their online product experiences over a wide range of touchpoints and channels. These capabilities are vital for brands as they look to stand out on the digital shelf. A PXM platform should empower teams to be actionable, encourage cross-functional collaboration, and help teams quickly navigate to shifting demands from customers, retailers, and the market.

About Salsify

Thousands of brands worldwide use Salsify to activate, engage, optimize, and manage their product content experiences.

