



C O R R A

Worldwide Market to Hit \$3.5 Trillion

ECOMMERCE TRENDS 2019

As purchasing online becomes easier, convenient, and engaging for consumers, the segment will continue to rake in phenomenal sales — from an estimated \$2.8 trillion this year to nearly \$3.5 trillion next year. As of 2017, ecommerce sales were already accounting for 10.2 percent of all global retail sales.

Here are some trend predictions of what we can expect in ecommerce over the coming year.

STORES STILL STANDING WILL SUPPORT ONLINE SALES

Physical stores will continue to either drop out entirely or move into secondary roles that complement their ecommerce equivalents, as noted in a recent [Forbes](#) article.

In 2017 alone, store closing announcements more than tripled to a record 7,000, and some 662 bankruptcies were filed in the retail sector — a 30 percent increase over 2016. In other cases, physical and online stores are being made to support each other; for example, convenient online shopping kiosks are being placed in stores, online purchases are sent to stores for pick-up, and retailer websites are promoting in-store events.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE, REAL IMPROVEMENTS

AI will increasingly be used to improve functions ranging from merchandising to supply chain to operations. Below are some examples of AI improving ecommerce strategy:

1. TARGETED PRODUCT SUGGESTIONS AI will continue to predict what shoppers may want to buy based on their search and purchase histories; retailers will optimize that to make key product suggestions via email, SMS, social media, and as part of the shopping experience itself. The trend is toward subtle suggestions. “People can grow alienated if they feel retailers are snooping on their behaviors or if it comes across as a hard sell,” notes journalist Kevin Kelleher in Time.

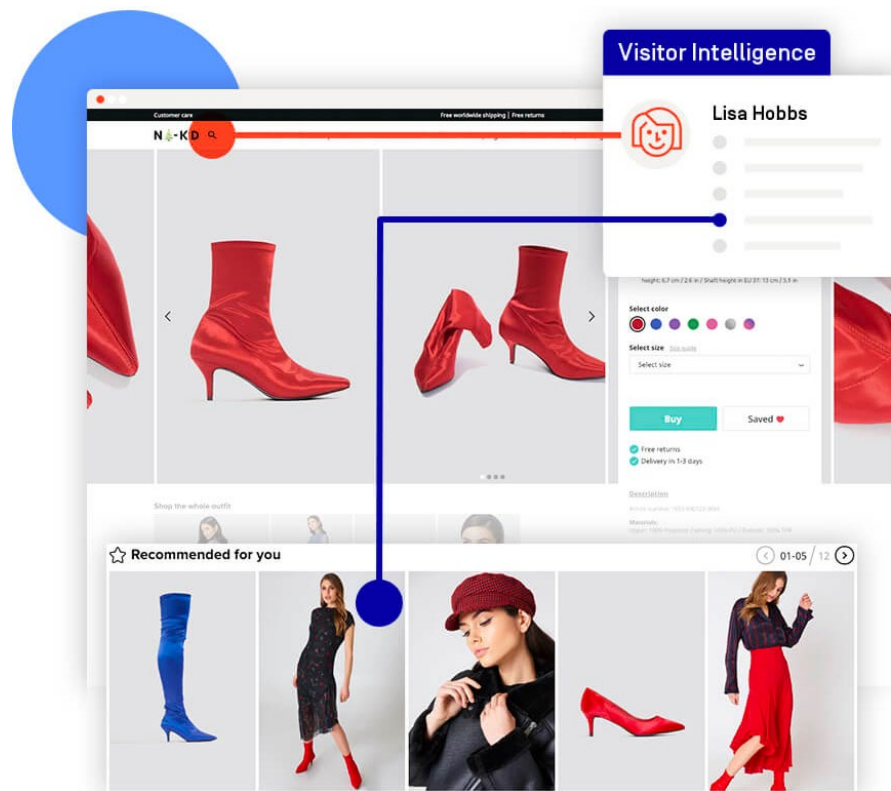


Image Source: <https://www.episerver.com/products/platform/personalization/>

2. VIRTUAL TRY-ONS Retailers are fine-tuning virtual avatars that let shoppers see how they'll look in products ranging from clothes to accessories to makeup. Consider Amazon's patent of an online “mirror” that scans its environment and adds face recognition to give viewers accurate depictions.

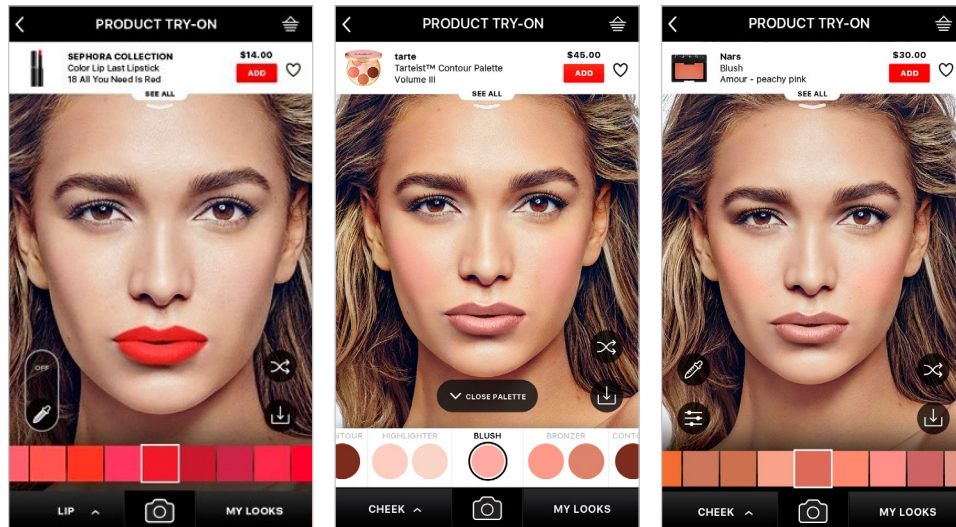


Image Source: <https://www.multivu.com/players/English/7926154-sephora-virtual-artist-cheek-try-on-color-match/>

3. ECOMMERCE-LEVERAGING CHATBOTS Chatbots will evolve to hold increasingly human-like conversations with ecommerce customers, boosting convenience, overall UX and saving retailers time and money. 80 percent of U.S. businesses plan to deploy them by 2020.

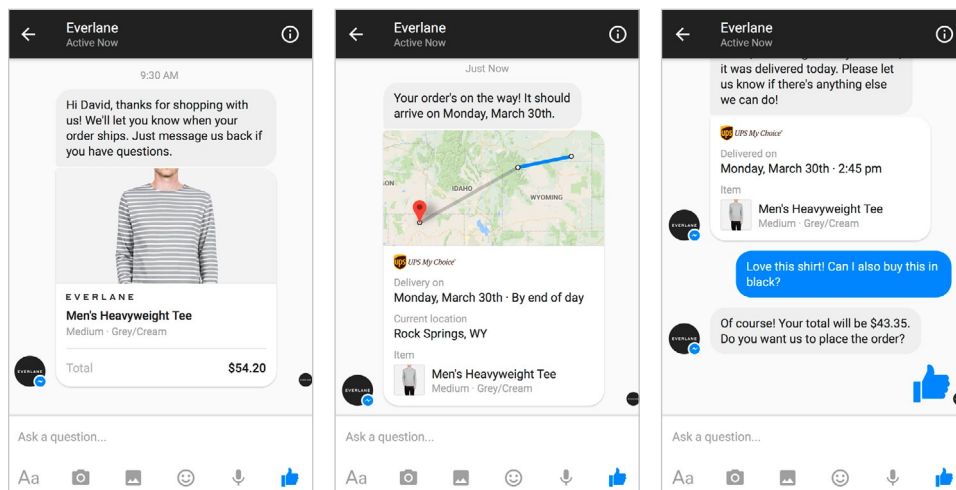


Image Source: <http://fortune.com/2016/02/18/facebook-messenger-ads/>

4. BETTER PRODUCT DISCOVERY BASED ON INPUT Through AI personalization tools, your website visitors can find what they're looking for ASAP, even if they enter vague search parameters or don't know exactly what they want themselves. Visitors are able to search, find and buy faster on retailer websites with AI, as well as find similar products they may be interested in.

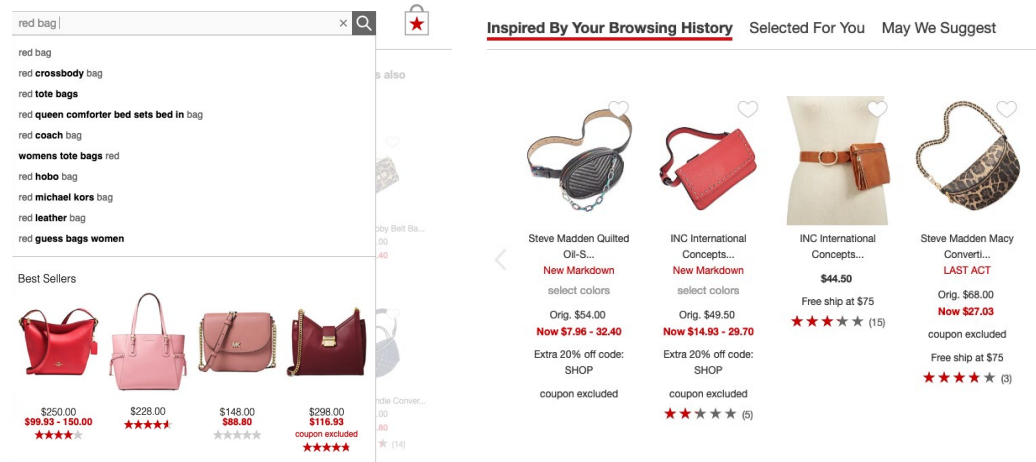


Image Source: <https://www.macys.com/>

5. IMAGE RECOVERY FOR EASIER SHOPPING The latest AI tools can record an image selected by the customer, search databases to find products that closely align, and strategically suggest them to optimize conversions.

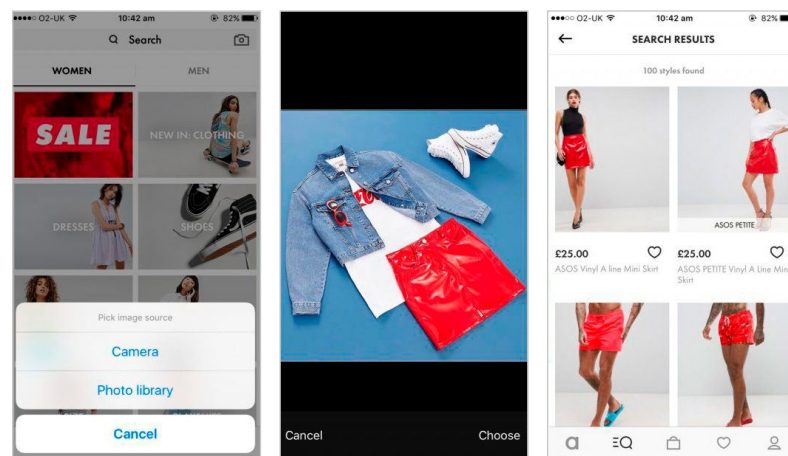


Image Source: <https://www.limely.co.uk/asos-visual-search-tool>

6. EXPEDITED SUPPLY CHAINS While machine learning has long been an element in making predictions regarding inventory, some companies are now moving to fully automated AI-based solutions that need no human intervention at all, reports [Forbes](#). Autonomous robots and vehicles, natural language processing, and the factoring in of copious data from the IoT are all contributing to better-timed and better-synchronized ordering and delivery. McKinsey estimated last year U.S. firms could gain \$1.3 trillion to \$2 trillion in annual economic value by using AI in supply chains and manufacturing.

MORE INTERACTIVE PRODUCT VISUALIZATION

Retailers will continue to use enhanced product photography to better mimic the full, 360-degree product views customers experience in stores. A key example is the [Magic Tool Box](#) Corra recently integrated for its luxury jewelry client [Sheiban Jewelers](#). Corra's work enabled automatic multi-angle views of their diamond jewelry to help mirror the client's brick-and-mortar customer experience.



Image Source: <https://www.extensionsmall.com/color-swatch-360.html>

PRIORITIZING PAGE SPEED

The race is on for retailers to be better than their competitors at attracting and engaging time-starved shoppers. Google recently released an update that now factors page speed into its site rankings. As such, ecommerce managers must apply significant strategy to improve page speed and other factors that increase their credibility while boosting Google rankings.

Even a small delay in page load time can increase bounce rates. As a result, a recent [page speed guide](#) published by Corra offers specific developer tactics for optimizing your servers, delaying the loading of third-party tools, and optimizing the size of your JS bundles, among other tips.

VIVA LA VOICE SEARCH

With the huge popularity of personal digital assistants, many consumers are searching for what they need or want by simply speaking up. Voice-enabled shopping markets in the U.S. and U.K. combined are [expected to grow](#) from \$2 billion this year to \$40 billion in 2022. To optimize that opportunity, ecommerce retailers must ensure they can be easily reached through voice directions, with an eye toward making their websites searchable by voice.

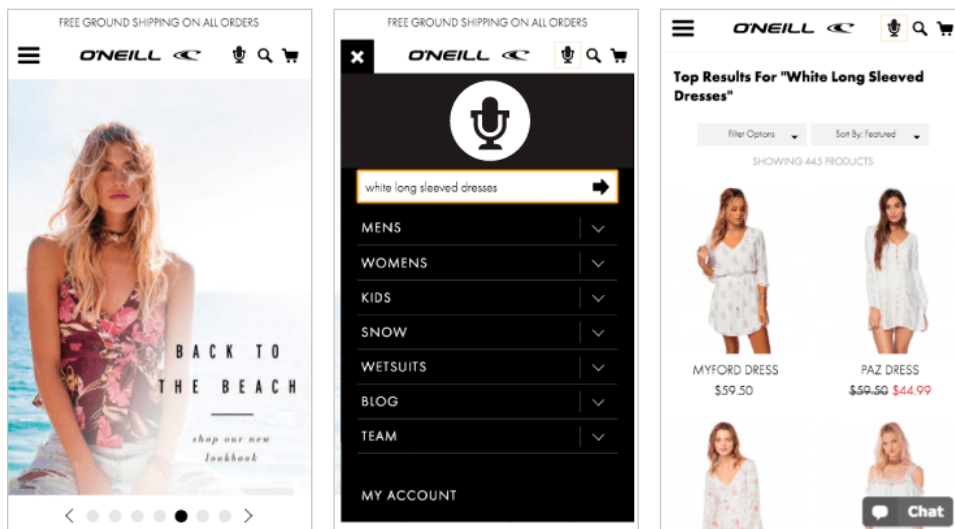


Image Source: <https://www.quora.com/What-will-be-the-top-eCommerce-trends-of-2019-2020>

MOBILE MARKETING EMBRACES AI AND AR

By next year, the number of purchases made by mobile will overtake those made on a desktop computer. Mobile marketing trends for 2019 will include more use of augmented reality, artificial intelligence, cloud apps, and blockchain for app security.

EXPECT MORE MERGING OF B2B AND B2C EXPERIENCES

Your business customers are coming to expect the same quality of online engagement as your B2C customers. Why? For one thing, more B2B purchases are being made online instead of through sales representatives, with Forrester noting that 68 percent of B2B customers conduct their own online research before buying, often in search of an answer to a specific problem. Further, more people are involved in the typical B2B buying decision — 6.8 compared to 5.4 two years ago, reports Harvard Business Review.

Those factors all give ecommerce retailers a strong chance at securing more B2B business through the same tactics they use to engage B2C customers online — strong visuals, ease of use, interactive features, effortless check-out, etc.

Corra was recently able to empower client Sigma Beauty with a smooth and seamless B2B experience by leveraging Magento Commerce Cloud 2's out-of-the-box B2B module. Corra optimized the code to ensure optimal speed and implemented engaging UX features. Immediately after the launch of the first B2B/B2C site on Magento Commerce Cloud 2.2, Sigma Beauty experienced a 38% decrease in load time and enjoyed a stream of positive feedback from their loyal customers.

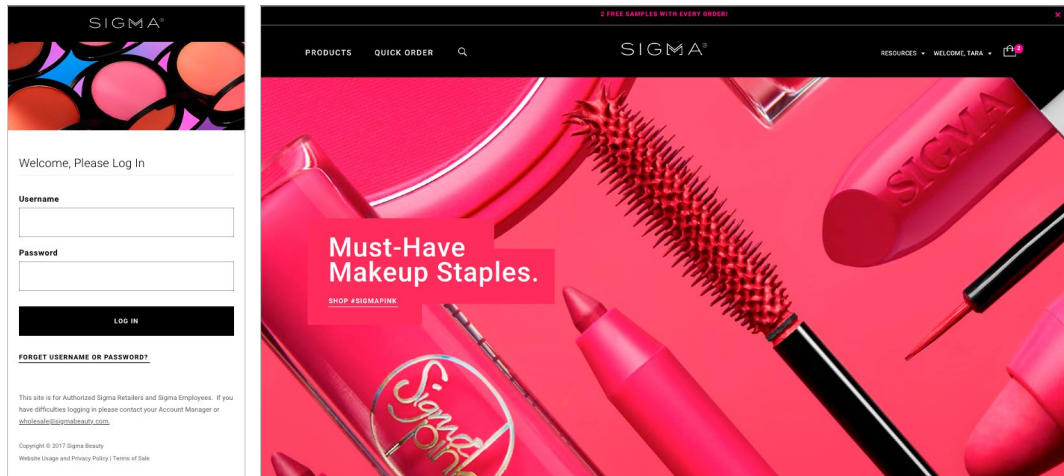


Image Source: <https://retailers.sigmabeauty.com/customer/account/login/>

Sigma Beauty Web Development Manager Dan Amundsen called the changes:

“An exceptional bonus for our performance — something that will benefit our global network of customers both immediately and long-term.”

THE NEXT BIG THING: HEADLESS COMMERCE ARCHITECTURE

One impending change in the ecommerce world is the headless commerce architecture used in CMS solutions that can store, manage, and deliver content without the need for front-end delivery.

What’s the rationale of the relatively new capabilities? Because consumers are heavily utilizing multiple technology touch points to buy merchandise and access content, some retailers are struggling to interact efficiently.

Thus the advent of headless commerce, accomplished via a platform that effectively separates the front end or “head” from the back end by implementing a back-end data model and cloud-based infrastructure. Among its greatest advantages is that it allows retailers to create “from-scratch” user experiences customized to their specific business needs, without requiring back-end modifications. In essence, it empowers developers to optimize APIs to rapidly deploy back-end content, products, blog posts, customer reviews, and other features across channels — a crucial capability given that multichannel publishing is growing more complex every day.

At the same time, it allows front-end developers to customize front-end content, experiment with different templates, and run continuous tests and cycles that can help you understand customer preferences faster.

The front end is typically of more interest to someone at the CMO level, due to their interest in how brands are presented to users through client interfaces. Conversely, CIOs tend to be more concerned with how the new technology can remain available 365/24/7.

Wish to learn more about adopting these trends to grow in 2019?

SPEAK WITH ONE OF CORRA'S ECOMMERCE SPECIALIST