

The rise of mobile shopping and its impact on business



By [Sven Schoof](#)

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At Spree, we have a huge appetite for innovation and making our customers' shopping journey easy, fun and inspiring. With smartphone usage in SA as high as an estimated 29.2 million (51% of the population), more and more shoppers are making purchases on their mobile phones - and this is the space where we're proud to be leading the way.



Prioritizing user-generated content (UGC) was our response to the trend for retailers to integrate social commerce software with their shopping platforms and turn social platforms into virtual storefronts.

Community at the centre

Buying through social platforms provides users with a point of inspiration for a possible purchase. Platforms like Instagram have a community with a potentially high buying intent, because they've already discovered something they like - which they then may want to buy.

According to Instagram, more than 80% of their users follow a business, so it makes sense that companies would use the platform to sell product. It is all about changing the business model of the brand – with community at the centre.



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In the last few years, brands have seen increasing engagement from their customers, who use social platforms to express both their positive and negative sentiments about these brands. The most successful e-commerce brands are seeking not just to grab attention, but to join the conversation and be relevant and present where their (target) customers are.

The most successful businesses harness this understanding to evoke a genuine feeling of connectedness and closeness between buyer and brand, as a strategy to increase sales through social commerce.

Brand-building opportunities

Both Instagram and Facebook present unique opportunities for brand building and staying in front of users who scroll through their feeds daily. Social channels are designed for interaction, expression, and, most importantly, to create connections. The exponential rise in engagement across social networks has made the arena increasingly difficult to navigate.

In order to build brand loyalty and enhance existing customer retention strategies, brands must identify new opportunities to isolate their market on social channels, creatively convert visitors into buyers, and devise customer engagement strategies to implement after the initial purchase.



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In the fashion industry in particular, Instagram is the primary source of inspiration for both content creators and consumers. In South Africa, Spree has seen an increase of 63% growth in Instagram users (91% on the SpreeMan account) and noted a shift from Facebook to Instagram and Twitter as SA consumers prefer the platforms for narrating experiences and expressing opinions and brand sentiment.

Based on our analysis of the above trends, and their application to online fashion stores, we been committed to investing in and developing a user-generated content platform that serves our customers and adds momentum to the democratisation of fashion in South Africa. Platforms we've developed are designed to capitalise on the power of user-generated content to increase product and build brand trust and credibility. After all, our best brand advocates are our customers.

Visit our [Mobile Commerce special section](#) for further insights throughout the month of July.

ABOUT SVEN SCHOOF

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