Metaverse growth means consumers now expect more digital, AR product info - report

By Nigel Taylor - 13 April 2022

Retailers’ recent Metaverse plays are prompting greater digitally-driven demands for product information as part of a widening omnichannel offer, according to Akeneo.

The product experience management (PXM) company’s study shows 42% of UK consumers now want to use augmented reality (AR) to find product information in their buying journeys, as more brands and retailers, including pioneers Gucci, Tommy Hilfiger, Dolce & Gabbana and Selfridges, begin to offer Metaverse retail formats.

Its research of over 1,800 shoppers in its ‘2022 B2C Survey: Product Experience Satisfaction Around the World’ report, also shows 32% of UK consumers wanted to be able to use voice commerce technology to find out more about the goods and services they are looking to buy. Meanwhile, 37% would be open to using chatbots in the future as part of product discovery in their paths to purchase.

However, while digital demand for product information is growing, the role of the store in delivering product information remains important. Some 72% of those polled say they use multiple sources and channels when researching a product and deciding what to buy, and a further 81% have started a product search in-store and have gone on to buy it online.

This omnichannel expectation of access to product information becomes even more important as insufficient product information not only leads to lost sales and abandoned purchases, but also risks brand loyalty being diminished, the report notes.

Some 62% said they would abandon a purchase due to poor product information, while 65% would stop buying from a brand altogether due to poor product details, saying they would lose trust with that retailer.
“The way we shop is rapidly changing and it’s essential to understand not only how and where consumers are engaging with your products, but what their expectations are for your brand,” said Fred de Gombert, CEO at Akeneo.

“The product experience that you design for your various online channels must first be consistent and second be continued through all the points where your consumers will be making their purchases and returns, be they digital or physical. This survey provides retailers with a roadmap of what to prioritise when thinking about their omnichannel strategy, with rich and consistent product experiences being at the top of the list.”

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