

Elevating Shopping Experiences - China - 2021

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This report looks at the following areas:

- Consumers' digital experience usage in the shopping journey
- Categories where digital shopping is more prevalent
- Important factors that improve consumers' shopping experience
- Key barriers that may affect offline shopping experience
- Information channels to learn more about products
- Attitudes towards the shopping experience, such as technology vs human services, and personal data sharing

COVID-19 has accelerated the use of online shopping channels. As the situation came under control, footfall returned offline. Consumers' spending confidence has also recovered, with consumers' demand for non-essential goods increased. Brands and retailers have begun to focus on improving the shopping experience in exchange for more attention and favour from consumers. The shopping experience, not just the product, will be an increasingly competitive arena for share of shoppers.

Consumers' growing expectations of expressing individuality means that personalisation will become a right, not a privilege, even as part of the shopping experience. 46% of consumers believe that personalised service is one of the most important factors for improving their shopping experience, which ranks of all the surveyed factors. More interestingly, consumers in tier 2 and lower cities have higher expectations for personalised service than those in tier 1 cities, which is important information for brands and retailers.

The future of retail lies in creating a full range of immersive experiences for consumers. The use of social elements, gamified operations, and new technology are increasingly being observed throughout business practices. The emerging importance of the olfactory element will be crucial in creating an all-round consumer experience.



"The development of technology has brought impetus to the experience elevation. Technologies represented by AR and AI are bringing a distinctive Metaverse shopping experience, and even making physical store shopping activities more immersive. Private traffic management is gaining more attention."
– Blair Zhang, Research Analyst

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While development opportunities are emerging, the retail industry is also facing various challenges. One key challenge is balancing the need for a more personalised shopping journey through customer data application while avoid being seen as intrusive or not respectful of data privacy. This is especially important as more retailers are investing in direct-to-consumer traffic.



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Table of Contents

OVERVIEW

- What you need to know
- Key issues covered in this Report
- Definition covered in this Report

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The market
- Companies and brands
- The consumer
- Digitalisation empowers customised service and immersive experience

Figure 1: Digital shopping services used in the last six months, 2021

- Expectations differ from groups with different digital penetration

Figure 2: Products/services purchased using digital shopping services, 2021

- Consumers ask for personalised services and convenience

Figure 3: Important factors that would improve shopping experience, 2021

- Consumers expect more space and consistency when shopping offline

Figure 4: Factors may affect offline shopping experience, 2021

- Source of information differs in age groups

Figure 5: Source of information, 2021

- Young consumers are less willing to sacrifice privacy for enhanced shopping experience

Figure 6: Attitudes towards shopping experience, 2021

- What we think

ISSUES AND INSIGHTS

- What does Metaverse mean to brands?
 - The facts
 - The implications
- Figure 7: Gucci virtual shoes, 2021
- Respect users' data privacy and build capability in providing customised recommendations
 - The facts
 - The implications

What's included

Executive Summary

Full Report PDF

Infographic Overview

Powerpoint Presentation

Interactive Databook

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MARKET FACTORS

- **Consumer confidence holds strong, with more interest into discretionary spending**

Figure 8: Confidence in improving future financial situation, 2019-21

Figure 9: Sectors that consumers have spent more money on compared to last month, 2020-21

- **Usage of online shopping channels remains stable, as offline regain visitors**
- **Seamless connection across apps allows better online consuming experience**
- **Social elements are integrated into the purchase journey**
- **Technologies drive the shopping experience enhancement**

KEY PLAYER PERFORMANCE

- **Top real estate agencies seek development through commercial projects**
- **Vanke**
- **CapitalLand**
- **Swire**
- **Internet giants focus on improving experience**
- **Alibaba**
- **JD.com**

WHAT'S IN?

- **Immersive experience as one of the key touch points**
- **IKEA turned spaces into an experience store – by applying social elements**

Figure 10: Revamped IKEA Shanghai Xuhui store, 2021

- **Kuku Home launched new products offline in the form of an immersive detective social game – by integrating gamified elements**

Figure 11: Kuku Home launched products series offline, 2021

- **XR (extended reality) technology brings immersive virtual experiences to the audience – by equipping technologies**

Figure 12: Live streamer present in 3D virtual scene, 2021

- **Maia Active aligns online order experience with its offline ones – by using olfactory elements**

Figure 13: Maia Active creates immersive experience for online orders, 2021

- **Reshape the spaces to attract traffic**
- **Boundless experience is expected in offline shopping journey**

Figure 14: Shanghai Ruihong Xintiandi Hall of the Sun, 2021

What's included

Executive Summary

Full Report PDF

Infographic Overview

Powerpoint Presentation

Interactive Databook

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- **Take natural green as design language**

Figure 15: Shanghai Nanxiang Incity MEGA, 2021

- **Granny chic is the on-going trend**

Figure 16: nostalgia scenes in North Bund CapitalLand, 2021

Figure 17: Super Wenheyou started business in Guangzhou, 2021

- **Meet diversified needs such as being pet-friendly**

Figure 18: Shenzhen Longhua Xinghe Coco City enable pet friendly shopping experience, 2021

Figure 19: Starbucks's new-opened pet friendly store in Shanghai Xuhui, 2021

What's included

Executive Summary

Full Report PDF

Infographic Overview

Powerpoint Presentation

Interactive Databook

DIGITAL SHOPPING EXPERIENCE BY TYPE OF SERVICES

- **Different services are at established, mainstreaming and emerging stages**

Figure 20: Digital shopping services used in the last six months, 2021

- **Young consumers are not always the keenest on digital innovations**

Figure 21: Total of "used but not interested" and "not used and not interested" for digital shopping services in the last six months, by generation, 2021

- **Retailer WeChat shopping groups are more popular while regional gaps still exist**

Figure 22: Selected digital shopping services used in the last six months, by city tier and regions, 2021

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DIGITAL SHOPPING EXPERIENCE BY CATEGORY

- **Different levels of reliance on digital shopping**

Figure 23: Products/services purchased using digital shopping services, 2021

- **Digital savvy vs digital-resistant**

Figure 24: Top 5 factors that would improve shopping experience, by categories purchased situation with digital services, 2021

- **Digital reliant remain worried about data sharing**

Figure 25: Attitudes towards sharing personal data for improving experience, by categories purchased situation with digital services, 2021

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FACTORS THAT WOULD IMPROVE SHOPPING EXPERIENCE

- **Personalisation will become a right, not a privilege in the future**

Figure 26: Important factors that would improve shopping experience, 2021

- **Provide pet owners with a warmer shopping experience**

Figure 27: Selected important factors that would improve shopping experience, by living situation, 2021

- **Utilize theme marketing to increase offline traffics for interaction experience**

Figure 28: Important factors that would improve shopping experience, % expected themed marketing activity, by age and city tier, 2021

FACTORS AFFECTING OFFLINE SHOPPING EXPERIENCE

- **People expect more space, both in terms of store and human interaction**

Figure 29: Factors may affect offline shopping experience, 2021

- **Respecting individual space and rights is especially important for Gen Z consumers**

Figure 30: Selected factors may affect offline shopping experience, by generation, 2021

- **Growing consumer expectation in lower tier cities**

Figure 31: Selected factors may affect offline shopping experience, by city tier, 2021

SOURCE OF INFORMATION

- **Social elements are gaining more importance in the purchase journey**

Figure 32: Source of information, 2021

- **Consumers at different ages have different information acquisition channels**

Figure 33: Source of information, by age, 2021

- **Brands' official channels may be the starting point for targeting personalisation seekers**

Figure 34: Source of information, by factors that would improve shopping experience, 2021

ATTITUDES TOWARD SHOPPING EXPERIENCE

- **Product and experience are both important**

Figure 35: Attitudes towards shopping experience, 2021

Figure 36: Attitudes towards shopping experience, by generation, 2021

- **Consumers are brand's ambassador now**
- **Consumers face the dilemma of trading off privacy and personalised shopping experience**

What's included

Executive Summary

Full Report PDF

Infographic Overview

Powerpoint Presentation

Interactive Databook

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Figure 37: Attitudes towards sharing, 2021

Figure 38: Attitudes towards sharing personal privacy data for improving shopping experience, by age and monthly personal income, 2021

- **Consumers' preference for technology indicates opportunities for AI/tech-enabled services and immersive experience**

Figure 39: Attitudes towards services provided by technological means and real people, 2021

Figure 40: Attitudes towards services provided by technological means and real people, by generation, 2021

APPENDIX – METHODOLOGY AND ABBREVIATIONS

- **Methodology**
- **Abbreviations**

What's included

Executive Summary

Full Report PDF

Infographic Overview

Powerpoint Presentation

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