Digital Commerce in Germany

Consumer and Business Survey

bitkom

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Executive Summary

How digital is German commerce, and how are consumers shopping online today? This study report examines e-commerce in Germany from two perspectives: consumer demand and the retail supply side. The focus is on key developments in digital sales channels, changing purchasing behaviour, the role of major platforms and new providers from third countries, as well as the growing importance of social commerce and artificial intelligence. At the same time, the report highlights the challenges retailers face as a result of rising costs, increasing competitive pressure, new technologies and changing customer expectations.

The consumer data are based on a representative survey conducted by Bitkom Research on behalf of Bitkom. The survey included 1,120 individuals aged 16 and over in Germany, including 1,072 online shoppers, and was conducted in calendar weeks 40 and 41 of 2025. The retailer perspective is based on a survey of 505 companies in the wholesale, retail and motor trade sectors, each with at least ten employees, conducted between calendar weeks 11 and 19 of 2025.

Key findings from the two studies:

Part I: Consumer Perspective

- **Online shopping is almost universal**
  96 percent of the population shopped online in the last 12 months, with more than a third (36 percent) doing so at least once a week.
- **Platforms clearly dominate online commerce**
  92 percent regularly shop on large online marketplaces; traditional online shops operated by individual retailers or manufacturers play a much smaller role.
- **Half have shopped with discount retailers**
  51 percent of online shoppers have already ordered from new Chinese discount retailers such as Temu or Shein. At the same time, 33 percent say they would not use them in future.
- **Many take a pragmatic approach to their data**
  62 percent trust retailers not to misuse their data. Meanwhile, 56 percent are willing to provide data in exchange for discounts.
- **Younger people are open to AI assistance in shopping**
  Among those aged 16 to 29, 43 percent would use AI when shopping – 11 percent definitely and 32 percent probably. Across the population as a whole, the figure is 21 percent.

Part II: Retailer Perspective

- **Digital sales are firmly established in retail**
  86 percent of companies sell both in-store and online, with purely offline business models becoming less relevant.
- **Retailers' own online shops are widespread**
  97 percent of retailers operate their own online shop – significantly more than sell via online marketplaces (78 percent) or social media platforms (27 percent).
- **Digitalisation significantly improves processes and customer engagement – yet progress remains slow**
  95 percent see benefits in simpler ordering processes and 75 percent in more personalised customer engagement. At the same time, 66 percent of companies consider themselves digital laggards.
- **Influencer marketing is an integral part of the digital marketing mix**
  Retailers that work with influencers invest an average of 7 percent of their advertising budget – approximately €66,860 per year.

Content

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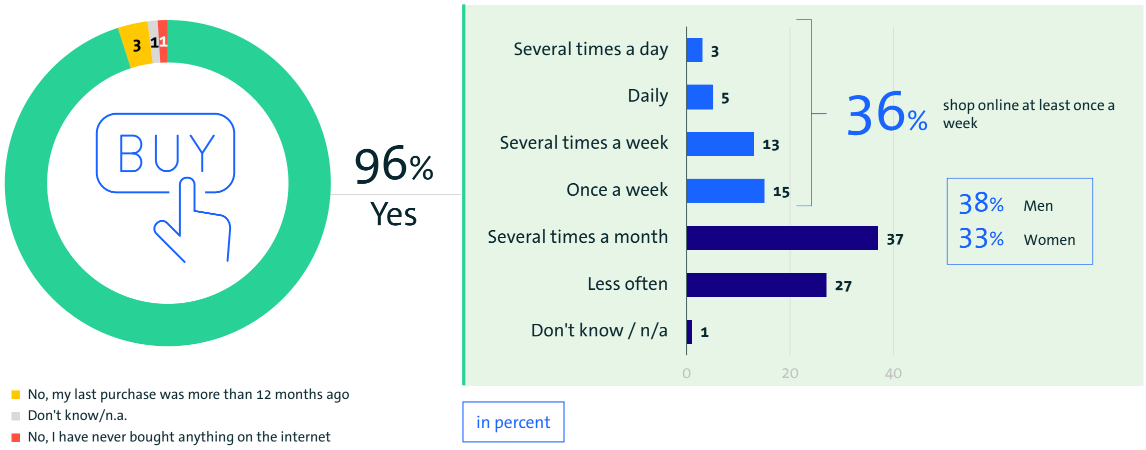
Part I Consumer Perspective

1 Prevalence and Use of Online Shopping

1.1 Prevalence of Online Shopping

Have you purchased or booked something online in the last 12 months?



Base (left): All respondents (n=1,120) | Base (right): Online shoppers (n=1,072) | Deviations from 100 percent due to rounding | Source: Bitkom Research 2025

Figure 1: Use of Online Shopping (last 12 months)

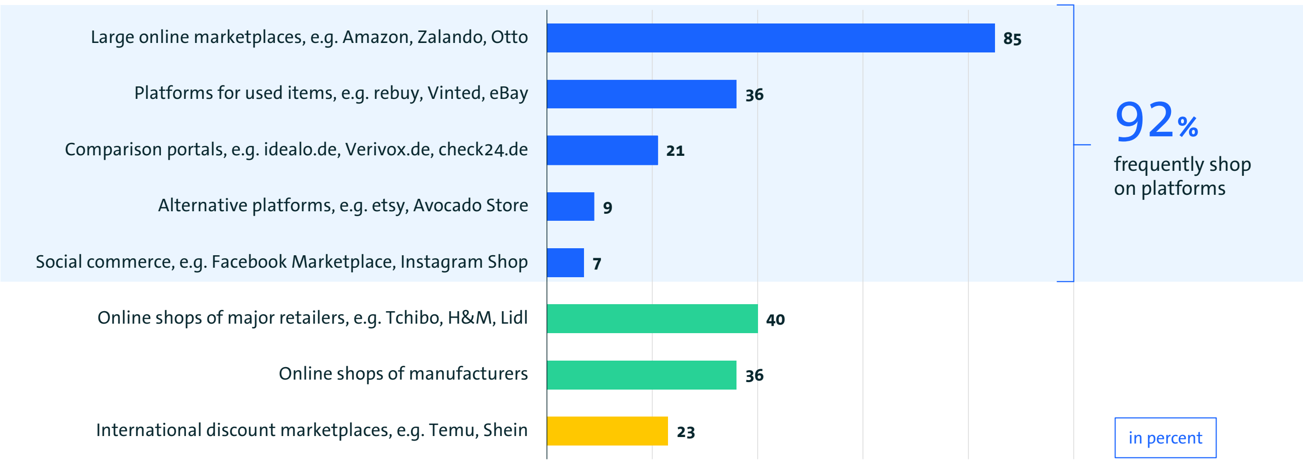
More than a third shop online every week

Online shopping is now an established part of everyday life for most people: In 2025, 96 percent of respondents said they had bought or booked something online within the previous twelve months. The proportion of people who have never shopped online has remained stable at one to two percent. The proportion of respondents who did not provide an answer has also remained consistently low, at around one percent.

> 96 percent shopped online in 2025, meaning the proportion of online shoppers remained consistently high. ↗Dataverse

1.2 Online Shops Used

Where do you frequently shop online?



Base: Online shoppers (n=1,072) | Multiple answers possible | Source: Bitkom Research 2025

Figure 2: Platforms where online shoppers frequently purchase

Platforms dominate online commerce

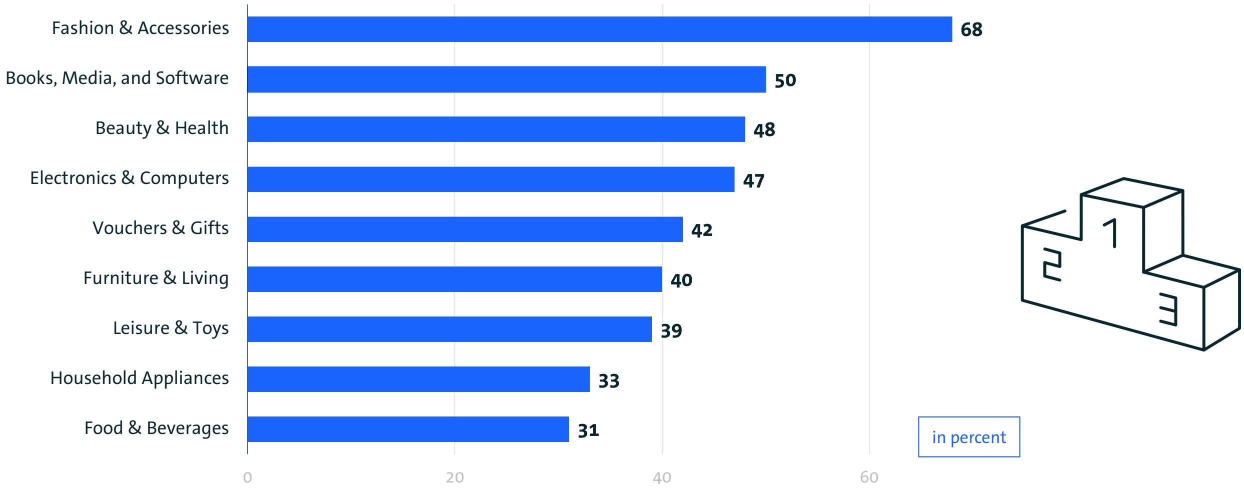
Online marketplaces play a central role in online shopping: 85 percent of respondents frequently shop on major platforms such as Amazon, Zalando or Otto. Overall, 92 percent say they regularly shop via online marketplaces. Online shops run by major retailers are used by 40 percent of respondents. These are followed by manufacturers' online shops and second-hand platforms, each used by 36 percent. Comparison portals play a slightly smaller role, at 21 percent.

Other services are used significantly less often. International discount marketplaces such as Temu or Shein are used by 23 percent. Platforms such as Etsy are used by 9 percent, while social commerce services such as Facebook Marketplace or Instagram Shop are used by 7 percent.

Overall, online shopping is centred primarily on large marketplaces, while other services tend to play a supplementary role.

1.3 Product Categories

Which of the following products have you purchased online in the past 12 months?



Base: Online shoppers (n=1,072) | Multiple answers possible | Source: Bitkom Research 2025

Figure 3: The most frequently online purchases

Top Online Purchases: Fashion, Media, and Electronics

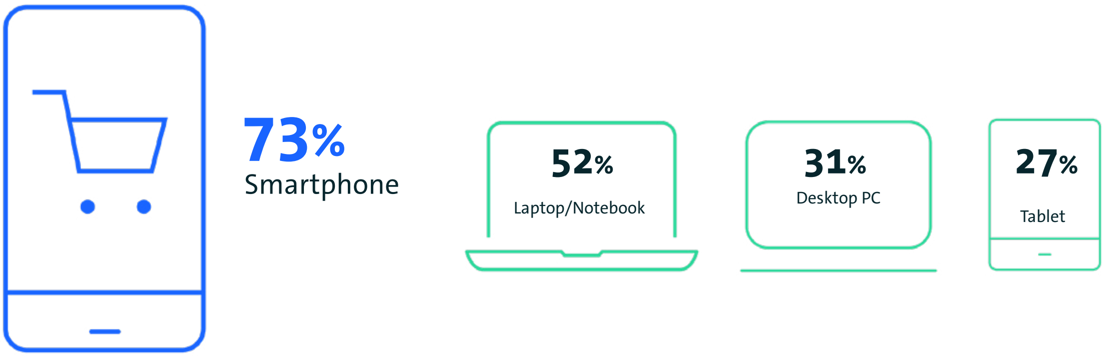
When shopping online, fashion and accessories are particularly popular, with 68 percent of respondents purchasing products in this category. Books, media and software follow at 50 percent, while beauty and health products account for 48 percent. Electronics and computers are also among the most frequently purchased categories, at 47 percent. Vouchers and gifts rank in the middle at 42 percent, followed by furniture and homeware at 40 percent. Leisure products and toys account for 39 percent. Household appliances are bought less frequently online, at 33 percent, as are food and beverages, at 31 percent.

Overall, fashion, media and electronics are among the categories most frequently purchased online, while household appliances and food are purchased online somewhat less often.

2 Access and Usage

2.1 Devices for Online Shopping

What devices do you use when shopping online?



Base: Online shoppers (n=1,072) | Multiple responses possible | Source: Bitkom Research 2025

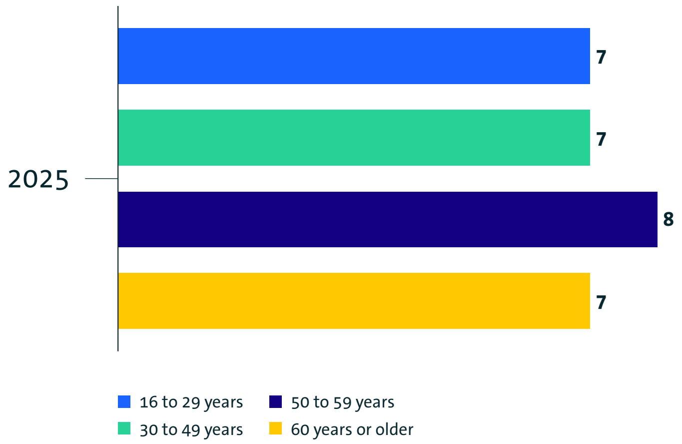
Figure 4: Devices for online shopping

The smartphone remains the number one device for online shopping

The smartphone is by far the most frequently used device for online shopping, at 73 percent. Laptops and notebooks also remain important, with 52 percent of respondents using them. Desktop PCs are used by 31 percent, putting them well behind mobile devices. Tablets are used slightly less frequently, at 27 percent.

2.2 Shopping apps on the smartphone

How many apps from online stores or retailers have you installed on your smartphone?



On average,
7 apps from online stores were installed on smartphones.

Base: Smartphone shoppers (n=779) | Average number of apps | Source: Bitkom Research 2025

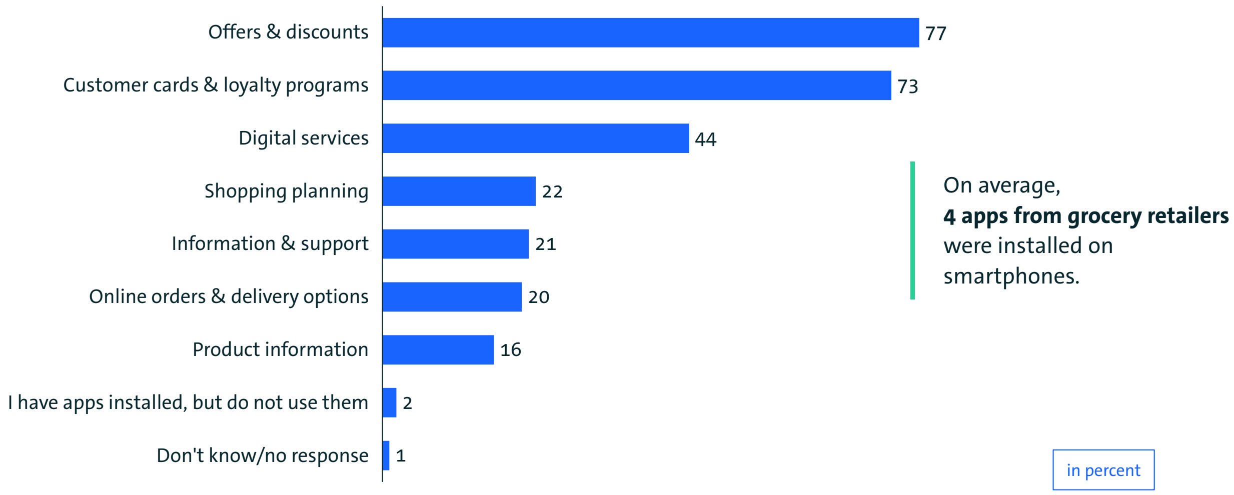
Figure 5: Average number of installed shopping apps on smartphones

An average of seven online shopping apps are installed on smartphones

Smartphone users have an average of around seven apps from online shops or retailers installed on their devices. This figure remains relatively consistent across most age groups: 16- to 29-year-olds, 30- to 49-year-olds and people aged 60 and over each have an average of around seven apps installed. Only 50- to 59-year-olds differ slightly, with an average of eight shopping apps on their smartphones.

2.3 Food Apps

How many apps from grocery retailers (e.g., REWE, Edeka, Lidl Plus) have you installed on your smartphone? Which features do you use in these apps at least occasionally?



Base left: Online shoppers (n=1,072) | Average indication of grocery apps; Base right: Respondents using grocery apps (n=748) | Multiple answers possible | Source: Bitkom Research 2025

Figure 6: Number of installed food retailer apps on smartphones and features used

77 percent use apps to access offers and discounts

Apps from grocery retailers have become an established part of shopping for many consumers: On average, users have four such apps installed on their smartphones. Overall, about two-thirds of internet users use at least one such app ↗Bitkom press release.

For consumers, the main reason for using these apps is to save money. 77 percent use them to access offers and discounts, while 73 percent use digital loyalty cards and rewards programmes. A further 44 percent use digital services such as electronic receipts.

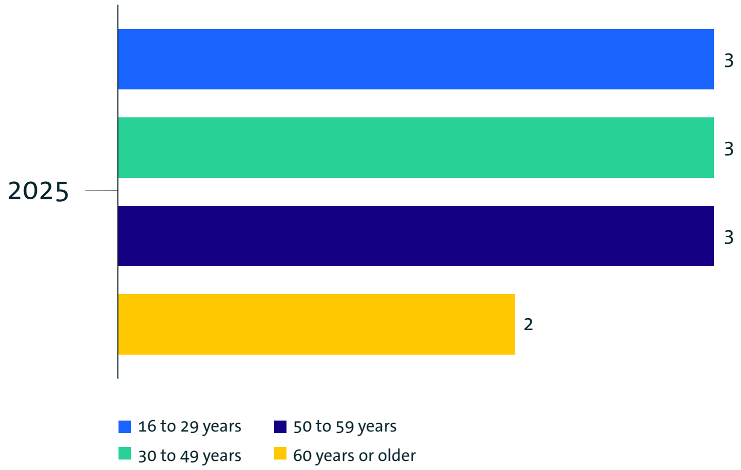
Other functions play a smaller role. Shopping-planning features are used by 22 percent, while information and support services are used by 21 percent. Online ordering and delivery services are used by 20 percent, while product information is used least, at 16 percent. Overall, these apps are used primarily for discounts and loyalty schemes, while more advanced features are less widely used.

"Apps already play a central role in the shopping experience for many consumers – particularly in grocery retail, where digital services increasingly complement the in-store experience. Looking ahead, apps are evolving into all-in-one shopping companions, offering everything from personalised offers and digital loyalty cards to integrated payment and service functions directly at the point of sale. It will be crucial to make effective use of personalisation to deliver genuine added value for customers, while ensuring transparent and reliable conditions."

Sebastian Lange, Head of Berlin Office, REWE Group and
Member of the Board of Bitkom's ↗Retail Working Group

2.4 Subscribe & Save and Repeat-Order Subscriptions

How many 'Subscribe & Save' or repeat-order subscriptions with online shops or retailers do you have?



On average
3 'Subscribe & Save' subscriptions with online shops

Base: Online shoppers (n=1,072) | Source: Bitkom Research 2025

Figure 7: Average number of savings and reorder subscriptions at online shops and retailers

Around a quarter have products delivered by subscription

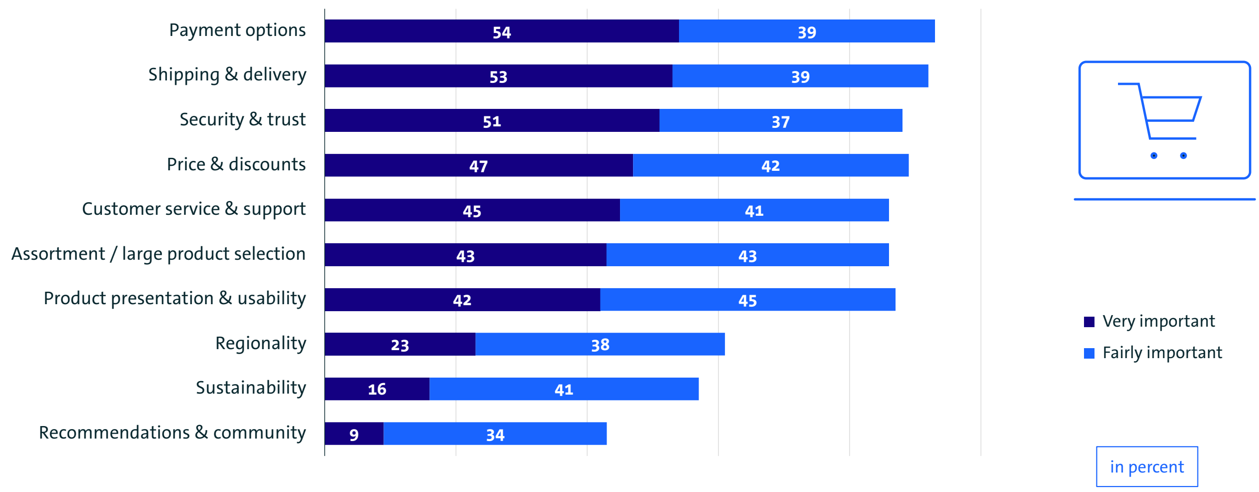
Subscribe & Save and repeat-order subscriptions are used by some online shoppers but are not yet widespread. Around 23 percent of respondents have at least one such subscription, while the majority do not use them. Among users, the average is three subscriptions. This pattern is also reflected across age groups: 16- to 29-year-olds, 30- to 49-year-olds and 50- to 59-year-olds each have an average of three subscriptions. Only among those aged 60 and over is usage slightly lower, at an average of two subscriptions ↗Dataverse.

Overall, subscription models remain relatively uncommon in online retail, although those who use them typically have several subscriptions at the same time.

3 Purchasing Decisions and Criteria

3.1 Important Criteria When Choosing an Online Shop

How important are the following criteria to you when choosing an online shop?



Base: Online shoppers (n=1,072) | Multiple responses allowed | Source: Bitkom Research 2025

Figure 8: Criteria when choosing an online shop

What matters most when choosing an online shop: payment, shipping and delivery

Several factors play a significant role when choosing an online shop. Payment options are most frequently rated as very important, at 54 percent, closely followed by shipping and delivery at 53 percent. Security and trust are also important factors, at 51 percent. Price and discounts follow at 47 percent, with customer service and support at 45 percent. A wide product range is considered very important by 43 percent, while product presentation and usability are rated as very important by 42 percent.

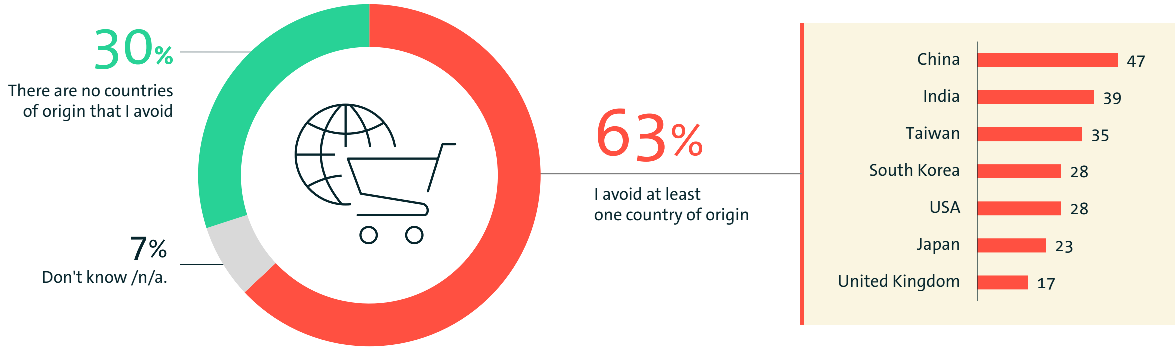
Regionality and sustainability are currently less important considerations: 23 percent consider regionality very important, while only 16 percent say the same of sustainability. Recommendations and community features rank lowest, at 9 percent.

Overall, practical considerations and trust are the main priorities, while sustainability and recommendations are less often considered very important.

4 Trust, Privacy and Risks

4.1 Trust in Countries of Origin and Providers

Which countries of origin do you tend to avoid when choosing an online shop?



Base: Online shoppers (n=1,072) | Multiple responses possible | Source: Bitkom Research 2025

Figure 9: Countries avoided when online shopping

Two-thirds avoid certain countries—especially China

A large proportion of respondents deliberately avoid online shops from certain countries. Overall, 63 percent say they tend to avoid shops from at least one country, while 30 percent do not differentiate by country of origin.

Among the countries mentioned, China is avoided most often, at 47 percent. India follows at 39 percent and Taiwan at 35 percent. South Korea and the USA are each avoided by 28 percent of respondents. Japan follows at 23 percent and the United Kingdom at 17 percent.

4.2 Privacy and Data Use Preferences

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

62% I trust that retailers will not misuse my data.

56% I am willing to provide my data in exchange for discounts.

52% I have given my data so many times that one more time doesn't make a difference.

27% I only use features that don't require me to create an account.

23% I fear the price will increase for me if companies know too much about me.

Base: Online shoppers (n=1,072) | Statements for "Applies" | Source: Bitkom Research 2025

Figure 10: Settings for Data and Privacy

Data Protection: majority trusts retailers

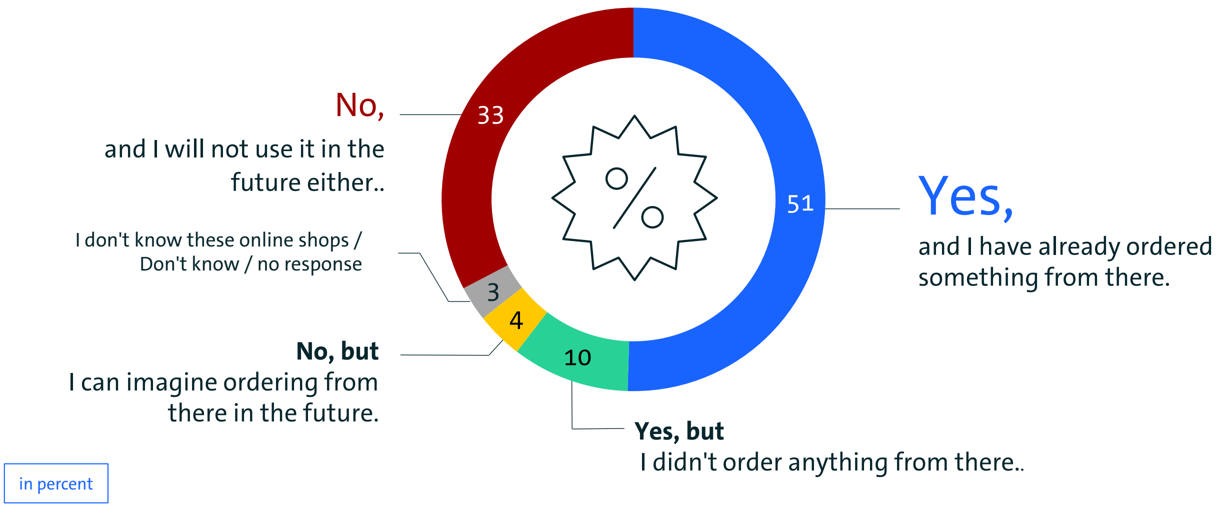
Attitudes towards the use of personal data in online retail vary considerably. 62 percent of respondents say they trust retailers not to misuse their data. At the same time, 56 percent are willing to provide personal data in exchange for discounts. More than half, 52 percent, also feel that they have shared personal data so often that «one more time doesn't really make a difference". Respondents are more cautious about other aspects: 27 percent only use features that do not require an account, while 23 percent are concerned that prices could rise if companies know too much about them.

Overall, attitudes towards data protection range from trust and pragmatism to a degree of scepticism about how personal data are used.

5 New Providers and Budget Platforms

5.1 Use of Discount Online Shops

Have you ever visited any of the new budget online shops from China like Temu or Shein?



Base: Online shoppers (n=1,072) | Deviations from 100% are due to rounding | Source: Bitkom Research 2025

Figure 11: Usage and awareness of Discount Online Shops

Half have shopped with Shein, Temu and similar providers

More than half of respondents have already used low-cost online shops from China: 51 percent say they have placed an order with one. A further 10 percent have visited such shops but have not yet made a purchase. A third of respondents, however, reject these providers: 33 percent have not used such online shops and do not intend to do so in future. A further 4 percent could imagine ordering from them in future but have not yet done so.

Only a small proportion, three percent, are unfamiliar with these online shops or did not provide an answer. Overall, this points to widespread awareness and use, but also to a sizeable group of consumers who deliberately avoid these providers.

5.2 Attitudes towards Low-Cost Platforms

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

Price

84% "I've ordered there before because the products were much cheaper than in other online shops."

30% "I've ordered products there that I don't even need because they were offered so cheaply."

Curiosity & Pastime

76% "I've ordered there before because I was curious."

40% "The shipping time directly from the country of origin is too long for me."

Politics & Future

45% "Non-European discount online shops should be more heavily regulated."

14% "Discount online shops are just a trend and will disappear soon."

Ethical Questions

59% "Since many products come from China anyway, it doesn't matter whether I buy them in discount online shops or on other platforms."

30% "When buying from these shops, I feel guilty."

Uncertainty & Concerns

35% "I worry about what happens to my user data that I have to provide when making a purchase."

31% "I felt overwhelmed by the website design."

Base: Online shoppers who have purchased from discount shops before (n=543) | Responses for "Applies to me" | Source: Bitkom Research 2025

Figure 12: Motives and Attitudes towards Discount Online Shops

What bargain hunters say about shopping on low-cost platforms

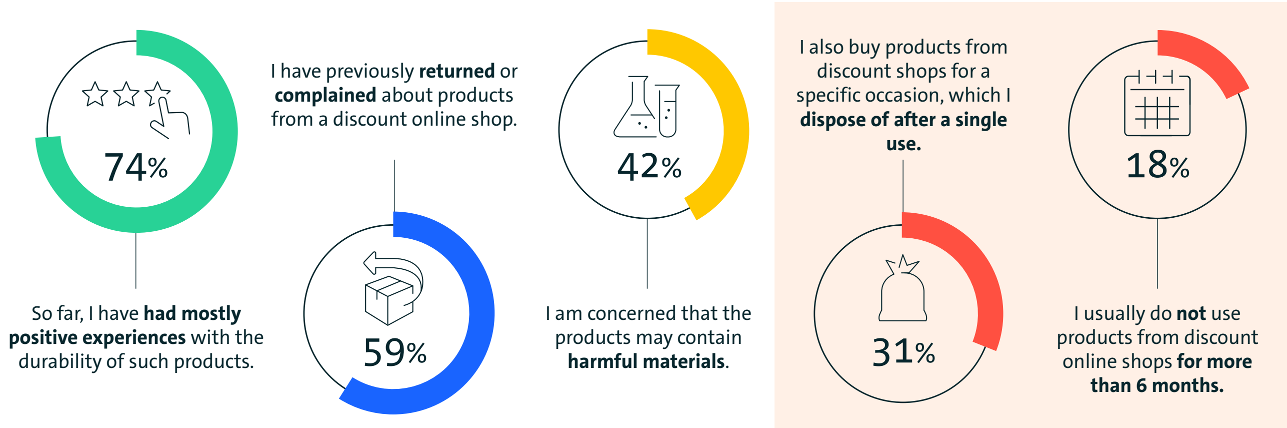
Price is a key factor when shopping on low-cost online platforms: 84 percent say they have ordered from them because products are cheaper than elsewhere online. In addition, 30 percent say they bought items they did not actually need because the prices were particularly low. Curiosity also plays an important role: 76 percent say they ordered because they were curious. At the same time, 40 percent feel that delivery times from overseas are too long.

When it comes to ethical considerations, 59 percent say it makes no difference to them whether they shop on low-cost platforms or elsewhere online. By contrast, 30 percent say they feel guilty about doing so. There are also signs of uncertainty: 35 percent are concerned about their user data, while 31 percent feel overwhelmed by the design of the websites. In addition, 45 percent support stricter regulation of non-European low-cost online platforms. 14 percent consider them to be little more than a passing trend.

People who do not shop on low-cost platforms are more likely to consider sustainability important than those who do (62 versus 52 percent). The reverse is true for price: 92 percent of customers, compared with 87 percent of non-customers, consider a low price important. Security and trust in the retailer are very important to both groups, although non-customers are more likely to rate them as "very important".

5.3 Experiences and Risks with Budget Platforms

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?



Base: Online shoppers who have purchased from discount shops multiple times (n=360) | Percentage values for "Applies completely" and "Applies somewhat" | Source: Bitkom Research 2025

Figure 13: Experiences, concerns, and patterns in dealing with products from low-cost platforms

Low-cost platforms also supply many short-lived products

Experiences with products from low-cost online platforms are largely positive: 74 percent report positive experiences with the durability of the products they have purchased. However, more than half, 59 percent, have returned a product or made a complaint at least once. At the same time, there are also concerns: 42 percent worry that the products might contain harmful materials.

Some respondents use these products for only a relatively short period of time. 31 percent keep them for no longer than six months, while 18 percent buy products specifically for a particular occasion and dispose of them after a single use.

6 Shopping via Social Media

6.1 Purchases via Social Media

Through which of the following social networks have you made a purchase? This includes both purchases made directly through the platform, for example via Facebook Marketplace, and purchases made on a website that you accessed via a social media post.

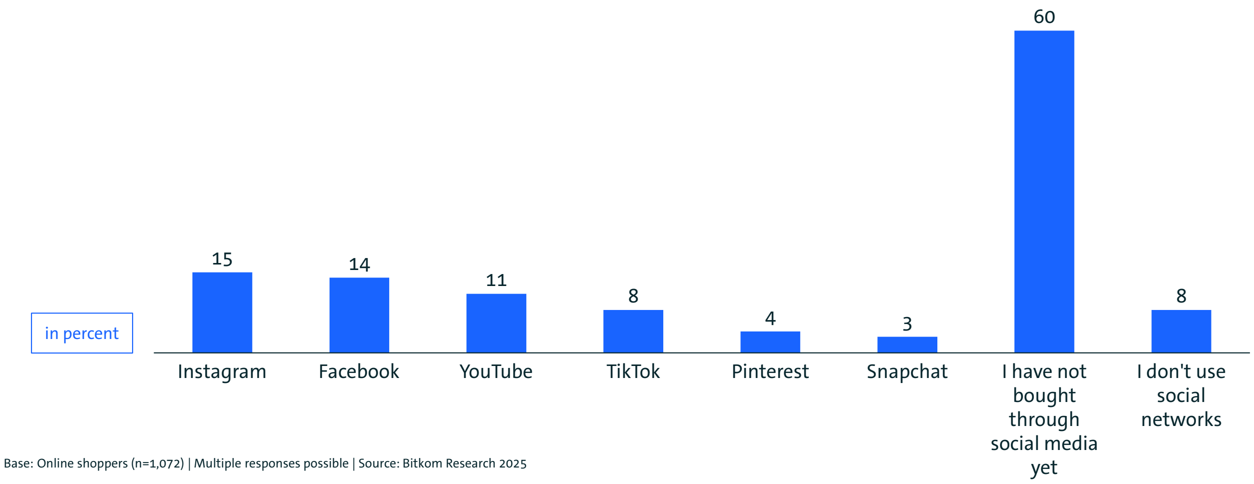


Figure 14: Social Commerce

"Social Commerce" is not yet widespread

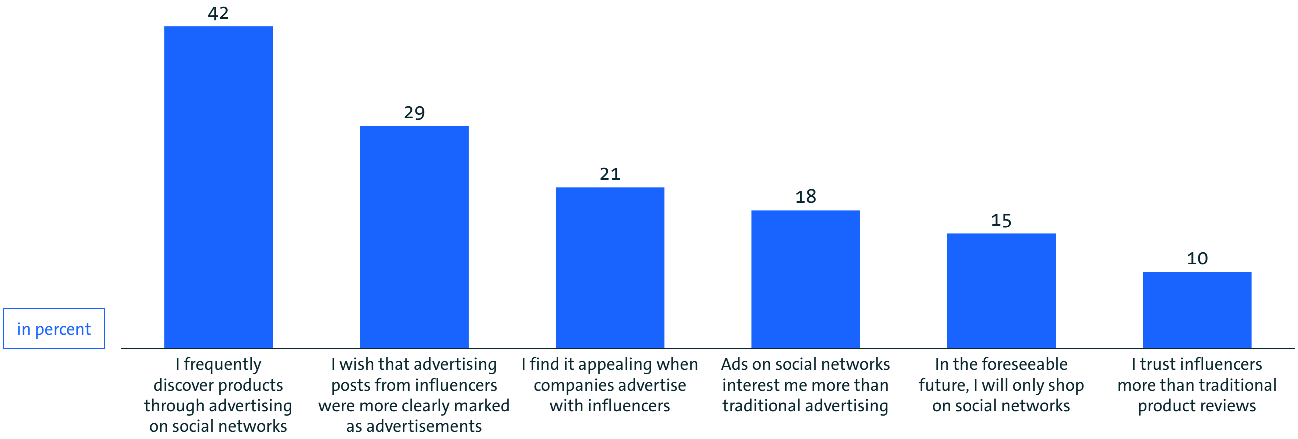
Social commerce refers to the buying and selling of products via social networks. While it is already relevant for some respondents, it has yet to become widespread overall. 60 percent say they have not yet purchased anything via social media. At the same time, around 29 percent of internet users engage in social commerce overall. Among the platforms used, Instagram leads at 15 percent, followed by Facebook at 14 percent and YouTube at 11 percent. TikTok accounts for 8 percent, while Pinterest and Snapchat play a smaller role, at 4 and 3 percent respectively.

Shopping via social networks is particularly common among younger people. Nearly half of 16- to 29-year-olds use social media for shopping, with Instagram particularly prominent ↗Dataverse.

Overall, social commerce is spread across several platforms, with a clear focus on Instagram, while a large proportion of respondents have not yet made a purchase via social media.

6.2 Attitudes towards Social Media Purchases

Which of the following statements about social networks such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube or TikTok apply to you or reflect your views?



Base: Respondents who have purchased on social networks before | Multiple responses possible | Source: Bitkom Research 2025

Figure 15: Attitudes towards Social Media purchases

42 percent discover new products through social media advertising

Advertising on social networks is an important source of product discovery for many consumers: 42 percent say they regularly discover new products through ads. At the same time, 29 percent would like influencer posts to be labelled more clearly as advertising. 21 percent find it appealing when companies collaborate with influencers, while 18 percent consider advertising on social networks more interesting than traditional advertising.

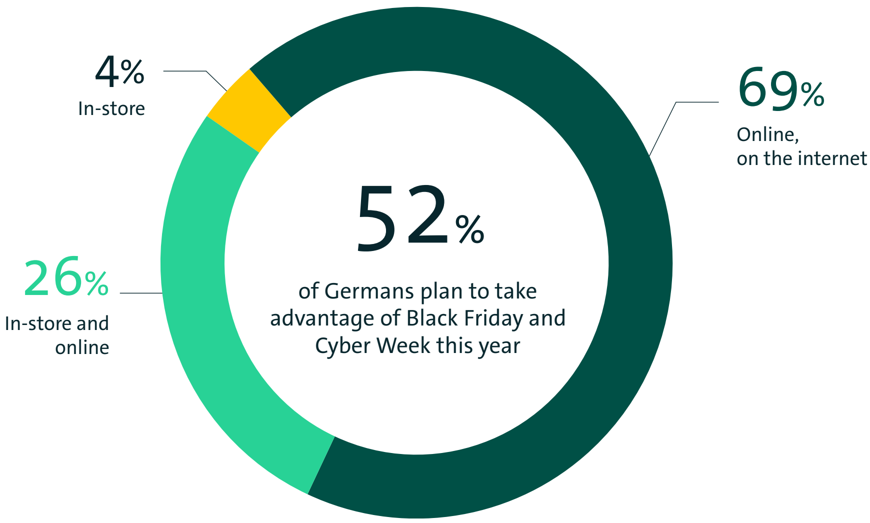
A smaller proportion of respondents show greater openness to social commerce: 15 percent can imagine shopping exclusively through social networks in future. However, trust in influencers remains relatively low — only 10 percent trust them more than conventional product reviews or tests.

Overall, social networks are perceived primarily as channels for product discovery, inspiration and advertising.

7 Shopping events in online retail: Black Friday and Cyber Week

7.1 Black Friday and Cyber Week (2025)

Where are you likely to shop for Black Friday and Cyber Week deals this year?



Base: All respondents (n=1,120) or this year's Black Friday and Cyber Week shoppers (n=588) | Deviations from 100% due to rounding | Source: Bitkom Research 2025

Figure 16: Black Friday and Cyber Week

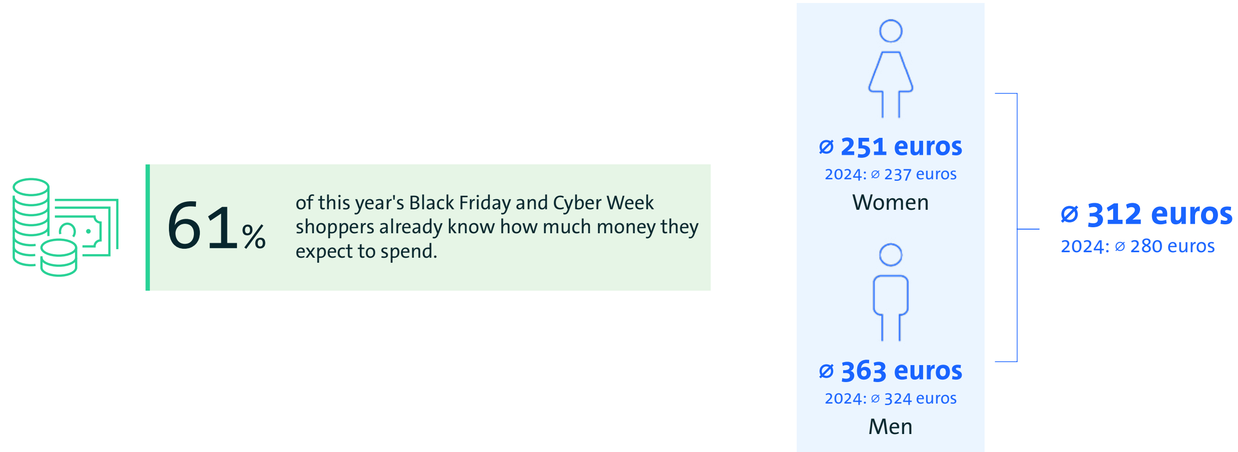
Black Friday and Cyber Week: Most shoppers plan to buy online

Around Black Friday and Cyber Week 2025, about half of respondents planned to take advantage of the available deals. Online shopping was the clear preference: 69 percent of those planning to shop during the promotional period intended to do so online. A further 26 percent planned to shop both online and in-store.

Shopping exclusively in stores played only a minor role: just 4 percent planned to take advantage of deals solely in-store.

7.2 Planned Spending

How much money do you expect to spend on Black Friday and Cyber Week deals this year?



Base: This year's Black Friday and Cyber Week shoppers (n=588) | Source: Bitkom Research 2025

Figure 17: Planned Spending for Black Friday and Cyber Week 2025

Average planned spending exceeds €300

A large proportion of respondents had already decided how much they planned to spend during Black Friday and Cyber Week 2025. 61 percent of shoppers knew in advance how much they intended to spend. The average planned budget was €312, up from €280 in 2024. Differences were also apparent between men and women: men planned to spend an average of €363, while women planned to spend around €251. Both figures were higher than in the previous year, when the averages were €324 for men and €237 for women.

7.3 Self-Assessment: Shopping Behavior

How would you categorise your shopping behavior around Black Friday and Cyber Week?

Base: This year's Black Friday and Cyber Week shoppers (n=588) | Multiple responses possible | Source: Bitkom Research 2025

Figure 18: Types of shopping behavior around Black Friday and Cyber Week

Most consumers use promotional offers selectively

Shopping behaviour around Black Friday and Cyber Week 2025 can be divided into different shopping types.

Planned purchases dominate: 45 percent classify themselves as "wish-list shoppers" or "rational shoppers". The former aim to buy products they already want at a discount, while the latter focus on necessary or higher-priced items when they are on offer. Overall, 48 percent say most of their purchases are planned. A third of respondents, 33 percent, use discounts primarily to buy gifts.

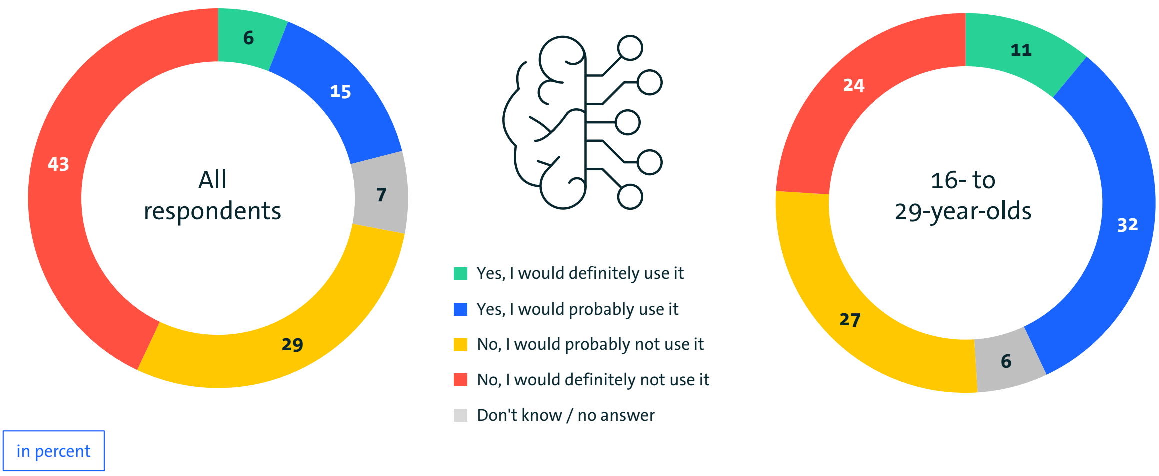
Spontaneous purchases also play a role, but are less common. 28 percent describe themselves as «impulse shoppers" who are inspired by products while browsing. A further 22 percent actively look for bargains, regardless of whether they actually need the products. Together, these groups account for 30 percent of respondents who tend to shop more spontaneously.

Overall, planned and deliberate purchases are more common than spontaneous ones.

8 Future of Commerce: Artificial Intelligence

8.1 Automated Purchases Using AI

AI chatbots can now browse the internet and complete tasks independently. Would you let an AI handle your shopping for you?



Base: All respondents (n=1,120) | Source: Bitkom Research 2025

Figure 19: AI Settings in Online Shopping

One in five would let AI make purchases on their behalf

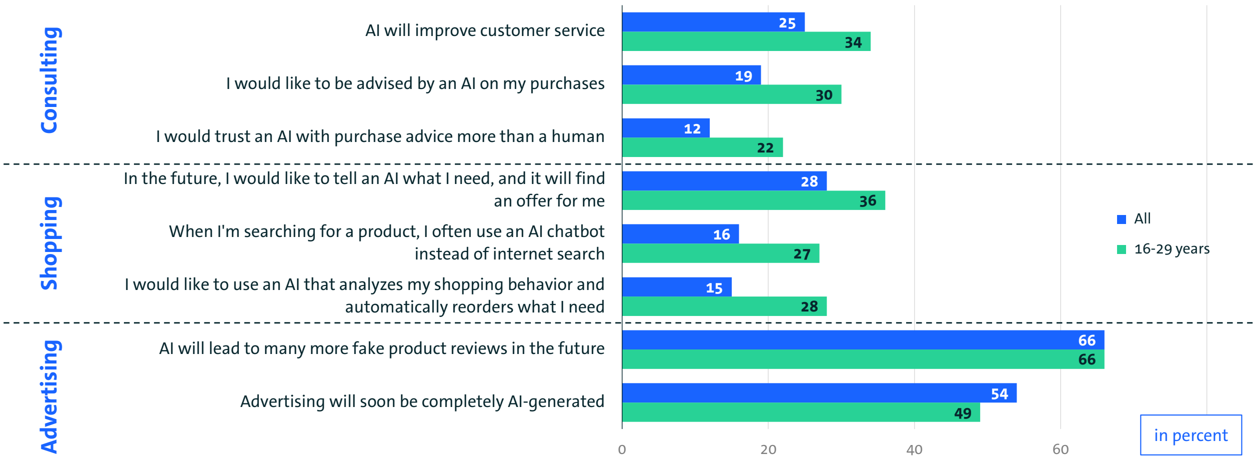
The idea of AI making purchases autonomously is met with mixed reactions. Overall, about one in five people are open to it: 15 percent say they would probably use such an AI system, while a further 6 percent would definitely do so. By contrast, a larger group remain sceptical: 29 percent say they would be unlikely to use AI in this way, while 43 percent would not use it at all.

Acceptance is significantly higher among younger people. Among 16- to 29-year-olds, 32 percent say they could imagine using such a system, while 11 percent would definitely do so ↗Dataverse.

At the same time, reservations remain widespread even among younger respondents: 27 percent are rather sceptical about the idea, while 24 percent reject it outright.

8.2 Statements on Artificial Intelligence

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?



Base: All respondents (n=1,120) | Source: Bitkom Research 2025

Figure 20: Attitudes Towards Artificial Intelligence in Online Shopping

Younger people are open to AI assistance when shopping

Opinions on artificial intelligence in online shopping and advertising are mixed. AI's impact on customer service is viewed positively: 25 percent agree that AI can improve customer service, rising to 34 percent among 16- to 29-year-olds. Younger people are also more willing to receive shopping advice from AI, at 30 percent compared with 19 percent overall.

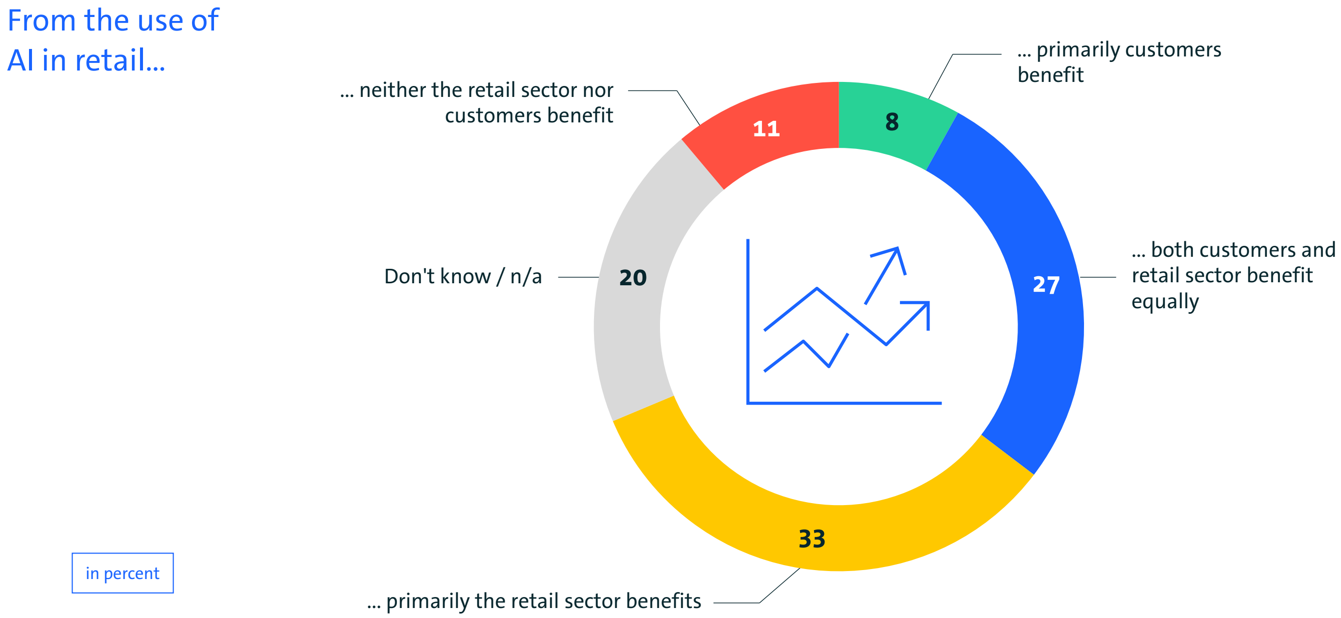
Younger respondents also show greater openness to using AI when shopping. 36 percent would like to tell an AI what they need and receive suitable offers in future, compared with 28 percent overall. AI chatbots and automated repeat orders are also more popular among younger people.

When it comes to advertising, however, scepticism dominates. 66 percent believe that AI will lead to more fake product reviews, while 54 percent expect that most advertising will be generated by AI in future.

Overall, younger respondents are more open to using AI for shopping and advice, while attitudes towards its role in advertising are more critical.

> "When more than a quarter of consumers would rather search for offers using AI than a traditional search engine, this fundamentally changes the customer journey. Retailers therefore need to take this channel into account consistently in future."
>
> Eike Folkerts, Head of Business Development Retail, Adesso SE and Member of the Board of Bitkom's Retail Working Group

8.3 AI in Retail



Base: All respondents (n=1,120) | Deviations from 100% are due to rounding | Source: Bitkom Research 2025

Figure 21: Statements on the Use of Artificial Intelligence in Retail

Many believe that AI primarily benefits retailers

When it comes to the use of artificial intelligence in retail, many respondents see the main benefits on the business side: 33 percent believe that retailers are the primary beneficiaries. 27 percent think that businesses and customers benefit equally. Far fewer see the main benefit as being for customers, with only 8 percent saying so.

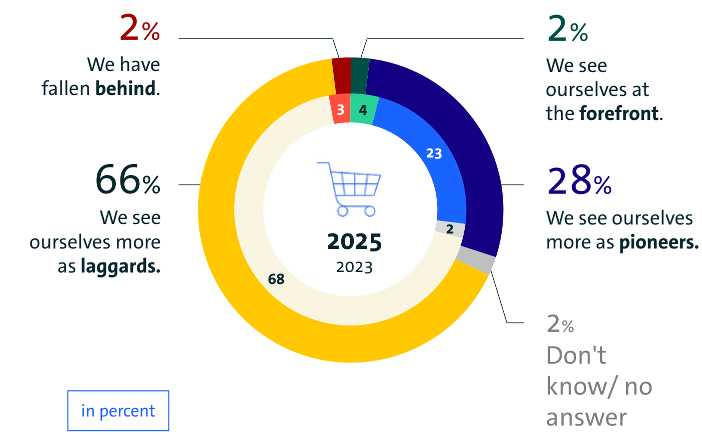
By contrast, 11 percent see no benefit for either retailers or customers. At the same time, a relatively large proportion, 20 percent, say they are unable to assess the impact. Overall, the benefits of AI in retail are more often associated with businesses than with customers.

Part II Retailer Perspective

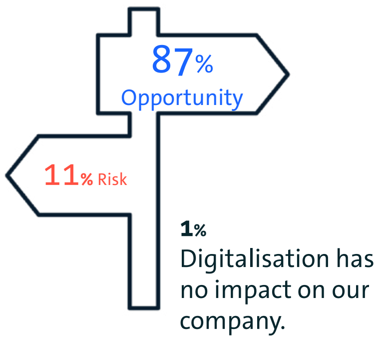
9 Status quo: Digitalisation

9.1 Level of Digitalisation

Where does your company stand overall in terms of digitalisation?



Do you see digitalisation primarily as an opportunity or a risk for your company?



Base: All companies (n=505) | right: Percentage values for "Predominantly as an opportunity" and "More as an opportunity" as well as "Predominantly as a risk" and "More as a risk", not shown: "Don't know/no answer" | Deviations from 100 percent due to rounding | Source: Bitkom Research 2025

Figure 22:Assessment of Companies' Own Level of Digitalisation

Digitalisation in retail is progressing slowly

The companies surveyed predominantly see themselves as digital laggards: 66 percent place themselves in this category. By contrast, 28 percent consider themselves pioneers. 2 percent say they have fallen behind completely, while a further 2 percent see themselves as being at the forefront of digitalisation.

At the same time, digitalisation is viewed predominantly positively: 87 percent of companies see it as an opportunity, while only 11 percent regard it as a risk. Just 1 percent say that digitalisation has no impact on their company.

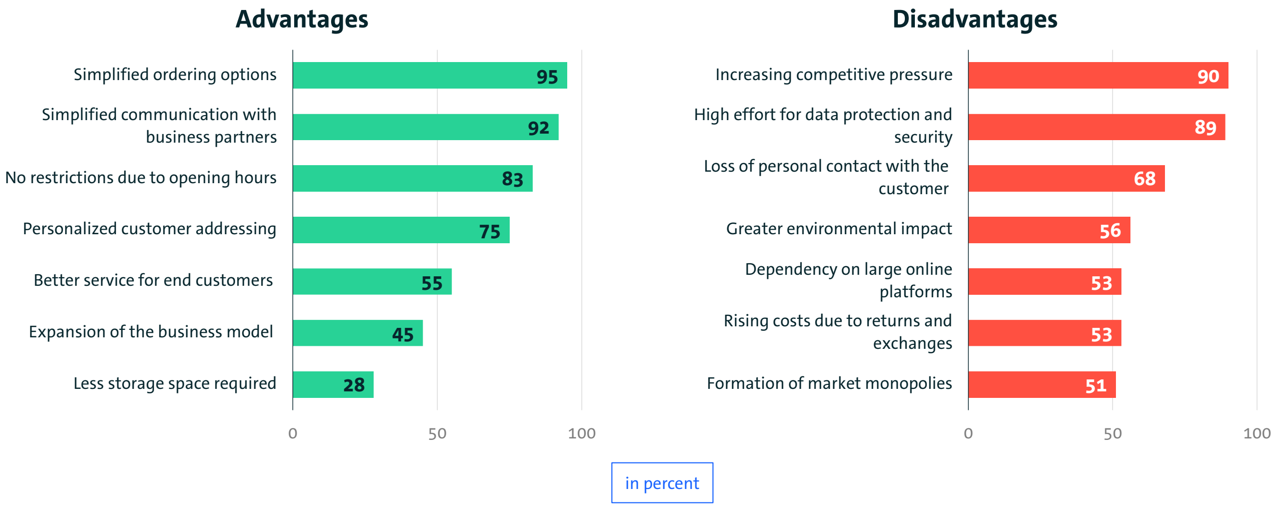
66 percent of companies consider themselves digital laggards, while 87 percent see digitalisation as an opportunity.

"Digitalisation in retail is not just a question of technology; it also requires companies to realign their organisational structures and processes. These necessary changes are often time-consuming and can slow the pace of digitalisation."

Stefan Binkowski, VP Retail & Wholesale Advisory, SAP and Chair of Bitkom's Retail Working Group

9.2 Advantages and Disadvantages of Digitalisation in Retail

What are the main advantages and disadvantages of digitalisation in commerce?



Base: All companies (n=505) | Most frequent mentions, multiple answers possible | Source: Bitkom Research 2025

Figure 23: Perceived key advantages and disadvantages of digitalisation in commerce

Added value in ordering, communication, and service

In retail, digitalisation is primarily associated with greater efficiency and improved communication. The biggest advantage is seen in simpler ordering processes (95 percent), followed by easier communication with business partners (92 percent). Freedom from opening-hour restrictions (83 percent) and more personalised customer interaction (75 percent) are also cited as positive effects by a clear majority. In addition, 55 percent see improved customer service, while 45 percent identify opportunities to develop existing business models further. Reduced storage space requirements are mentioned much less frequently as an advantage, at 28 percent.

By contrast, competitive and regulatory pressures dominate the perceived disadvantages. 90 percent of companies cite increasing competitive pressure as a key drawback of digitalisation. The substantial effort required for data protection and security (89 percent), as well as the loss of personal customer contact (68 percent), are also seen as significant challenges.

Other risks include a greater environmental impact (56 percent), increasing dependence on large online platforms (53 percent) and higher costs caused by returns (53 percent). More than half of respondents also view increasing market concentration critically (51 percent).

9.3 Current Challenges

What are current challenges for your company?

Economy

- **90%** Economic uncertainties
- **48%** Weak domestic demand
- **46%** Weak foreign demand
- **43%** High export tariffs
- **42%** Pressure: non-European competitors
- **25%** Pressure: European competitors

Personnel & skilled workers

- **81%** Finding suitable employees
- **70%** Recruiting employees with digital expertise

Costs

- **87%** High energy costs
- **77%** High transport and logistics costs
- **66%** High rental costs

Digitalization

- **62%** Digitalisation of business processes

Politics

- **56%** Uncertainty due to the new federal government

Base: All companies (n=505) | Multiple responses possible | Source: Bitkom Research 2025

Figure 24: Key Current Challenges for Companies

Economic Conditions, Workforce and Costs Challenge Retailers

Current challenges for companies are shaped primarily by macroeconomic uncertainty and rising costs. Economic uncertainty is by far the most frequently cited challenge, at 90 percent. Many companies also report weak demand in Germany (48 percent) and abroad (46 percent), as well as the burden of tariffs on exports (43 percent) and international competitive pressure, particularly from markets outside Europe (42 percent).

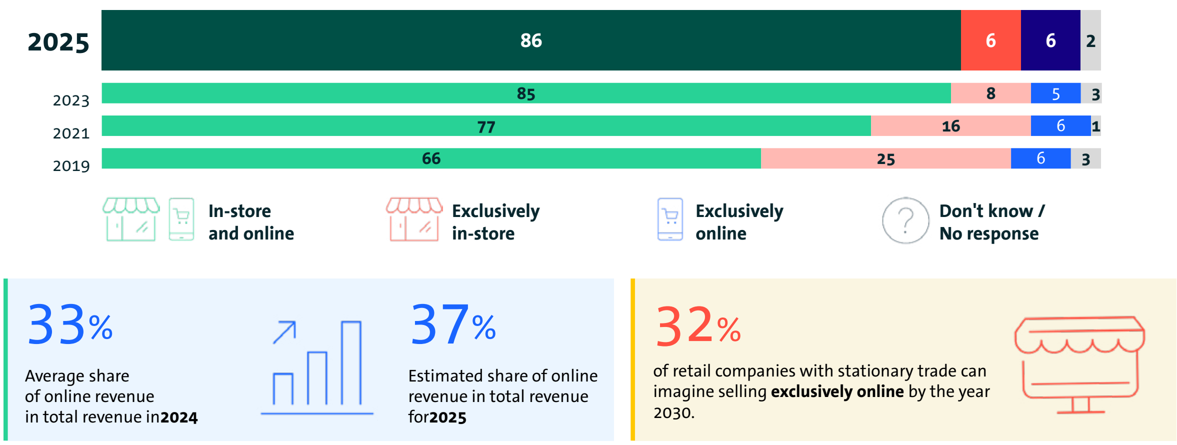
At the same time, rising costs are a major challenge: 87 percent of companies cite high energy costs, 77 percent high transport and logistics costs and 66 percent rising rents. The labour market also remains challenging: 81 percent see recruiting suitable employees as a problem, while 70 percent struggle to recruit skilled workers with digital expertise.

The digitalisation of business processes is identified as a current challenge by 62 percent of companies, highlighting the continuing pressure to transform. In addition, political uncertainty, including uncertainty surrounding the new federal government, creates further risks for business planning (56 percent).

10 Digital Sales Structures

10.1 Sales Channels

Where does your company sell its products or services? (in percent)



Base top: All companies (n=505) | Base box left: Retail companies with online and stationary trade (n=433) | Base box right: Retail companies with stationary trade (n=465) | Percentage values for "Yes, definitely" and "Rather yes" | Deviations from 100 percent are due to rounding | Source: Bitkom Research 2025

Figure 25: Development of distribution channels in commerce and significance of online sales

Most retailers sell both online and offline

Retail distribution is increasingly hybrid: In 2025, 86 percent of companies sold their products both in-store and online. This continues a long-term trend: the figure stood at 66 percent in 2019, 77 percent in 2021 and 85 percent in 2023. Purely brick-and-mortar business models continue to decline in importance, falling from 25 percent in 2019 to just 6 percent in 2025. The proportion of companies operating exclusively online remains relatively stable, at 6 percent.

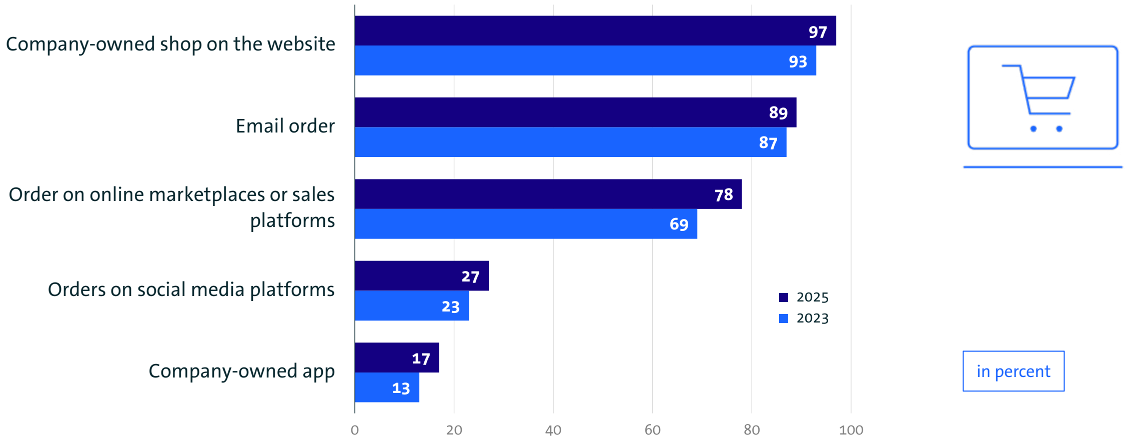
At the same time, online sales continue to gain importance: in 2024, online sales accounted for an average of 33 percent of total revenue, rising to an expected 37 percent in 2025. Despite this trend, brick-and-mortar retail remains relevant. However, retailers are becoming more open to purely digital business models: 32 percent of brick-and-mortar retailers can imagine selling exclusively online by 2030.

"The study highlights a clear shift towards hybrid sales models. At the same time, logistics remain a major challenge in digital commerce. Shipping costs are particularly significant for lower-priced products, while returns can also frequently result in losses."

Dr Daniel Chernuchin, VP Enterprise Transformation and Member of the Board of Bitkom's Retail Working Group

10.2 Online Sales

Which of the following channels does your company use to sell products or services online?



Base: Trading companies with online sales (n=466) | Multiple answers possible | Source: Bitkom Research 2025

Figure 26: Online Sales Channels by Retail Companies

Almost one in four retailers sell via social media

Online sales in retail are primarily generated through retailers' own channels. Nearly all companies that sell online operate their own online shop (97 percent), followed by orders via email (89 percent). Both figures have increased slightly since 2023.

At the same time, external platforms are becoming increasingly important: 78 percent of companies use online marketplaces or sales platforms, up significantly from 69 percent in 2023.

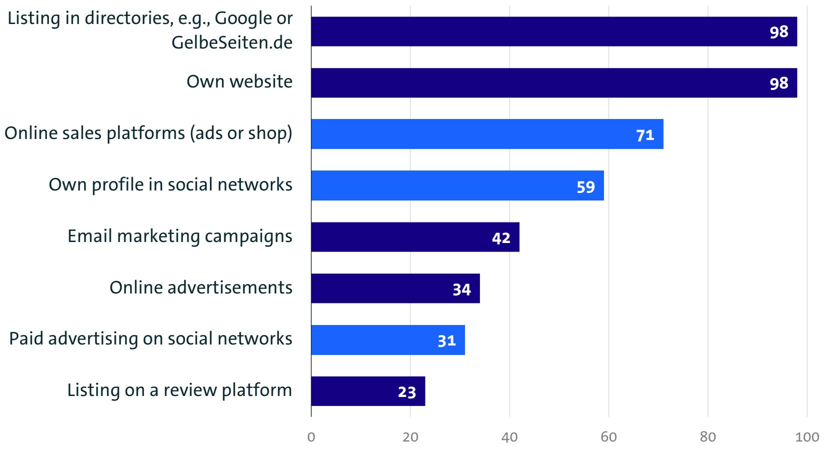
Social media platforms have so far played a relatively minor role, but their use is increasing (27 percent). Retailers' own apps remain an additional but less common sales channel, at 17 percent.

97 percent rely on their own online shop – but platforms are gaining ground rapidly.

11 Digital Marketing and Social Media

11.1 Online Marketing Channels

Which of the following channels does your company use to market products or services online?



Base: All companies (n=505) | Most common mentions, multiple answers possible | Source: Bitkom Research 2025

Figure 27: Online marketing channels used by companies to promote products and services

Established sales platforms and social media channels

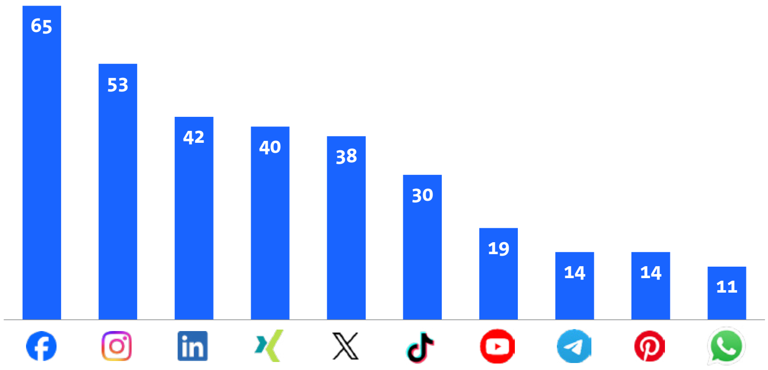
Companies primarily rely on basic online visibility and their own digital channels for online marketing. Listings in online directories such as Google or the Yellow Pages (98 percent) and companies' own websites (also 98 percent) are used almost universally.

Platform-based and social channels also play an important role: 71 percent use online sales platforms for marketing, while 59 percent maintain their own profiles on social networks. Traditional direct marketing tools, such as email campaigns, are used by 42 percent of companies. Paid advertising, however, remains less widespread: 34 percent advertise online, while 31 percent use paid advertising on social networks. Review platforms are used least frequently for marketing purposes, at 23 percent.

98 percent of companies rely on their own websites and online directories – paid advertising plays a significantly smaller role.

11.2 Presence on Social Media Platforms

On which of these platforms does your company have a profile or account?



in percent

48%

"Through social media, we reach customers that we **would not reach through traditional sales channels**."

37%

"Trends from social media have a direct **impact on our product offerings**."

Basis: Companies with a social media profile (n=298) | left: Most frequent mentions, multiple answers possible | right: Percentage for "Applies completely" and "Applies rather" | Source: Bitkom Research 2025

Figure 28: Social media platforms used by companies and their impact on reach and product offerings

Facebook and Instagram dominate retailers' social media presence

Companies with a social media presence primarily rely on established platforms with a broad reach. They are most commonly active on Facebook (65 percent) and Instagram (53 percent). Professional networks such as LinkedIn (42 percent) and XING (40 percent) follow. X (formerly Twitter) is used by 38 percent. More visually focused platforms and those with younger user bases play a smaller but growing role: 30 percent of companies are active on TikTok and 19 percent on YouTube. Messenger and niche platforms such as Telegram and Pinterest are each used by 14 percent, while WhatsApp is the least commonly used platform for maintaining a company profile, at 11 percent.

However, the relevance of social media goes beyond simply maintaining a presence: 48 percent of companies say they reach customers through social networks whom they cannot reach via traditional sales channels. In addition, 37 percent say that social media trends have a direct influence on their product range.

11.3 Social Media: Usage and Challenges

What are currently the biggest challenges your company faces when using social media platforms or channels?

Base left: Companies with a social media profile (n=298) | Percentage values for "Fully applies" and "Applies somewhat"; Base right: all companies (n=505) | Multiple responses possible | Source: Bitkom Research 2025

Figure 29: Biggest challenges companies face when using social media

Retailers struggle with posting regularly

Using social media presents companies with a range of operational and strategic challenges. The most frequently cited is the ongoing effort involved in creating and publishing content, with 46 percent seeing regular posting as a major hurdle. Dealing with negative comments (41 percent) and growing their follower base (38 percent) are also among the biggest challenges.

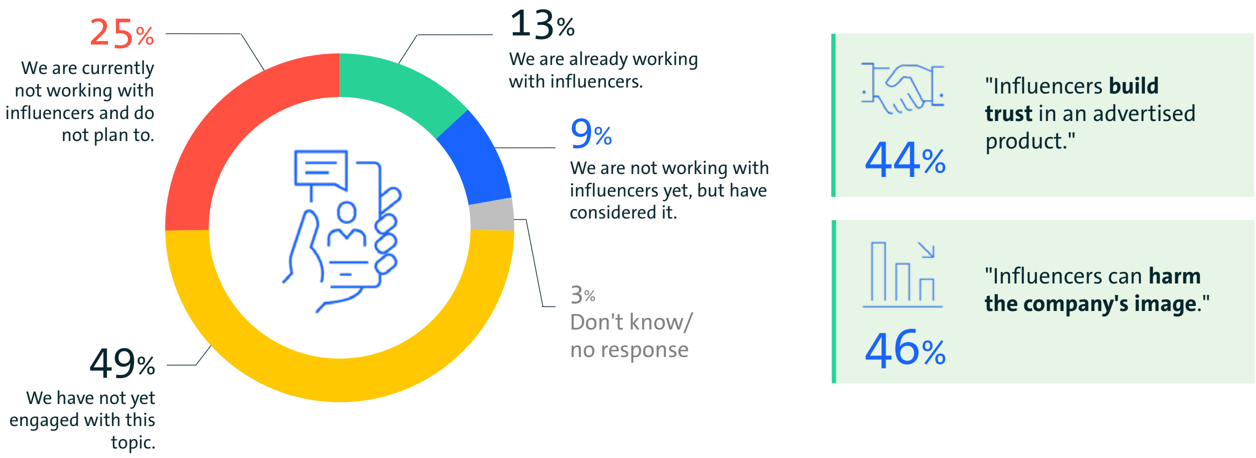
There are also structural issues, such as metrics being distorted by fake profiles (35 percent) and the difficulty of creating relevant and engaging content (34 percent). Costs are another factor, cited by one-third of companies (33 percent). Other challenges relate to the effectiveness and management of social media activities. For example, 27 percent report difficulties increasing engagement, while 25 percent cite a lack of qualified staff. Ongoing channel and community management (23 percent), as well as low conversion rates from social media activity to actual sales (19 percent), are also mentioned. A lack of a clear social media strategy is less common, at 18 percent, but remains relevant.

There is also widespread scepticism about the benefits: 46 percent of companies with a social media presence believe that the effort invested in social media marketing often fails to translate into tangible business results.

12 Influencer and Creator Partnerships

12.1 Attitudes towards Influencers and Content Creators

What is your company's approach to working with influencers or external content creators?



Base: All companies (n=505) | left: Deviations from 100 percent are due to rounding | right: Percentage values for "Completely agree" and "Somewhat agree" | Source: Bitkom Research 2025

Figure 30: Companies' attitudes towards influencers and content creators

Two in ten companies are open to working with influencers

Working with influencers and external content creators is still far from established among many companies: only 13 percent currently work with influencers. A further 9 percent have considered doing so but have not yet taken any action. A large proportion of companies, however, have not yet engaged with the topic: 49 percent say they have not considered working with influencers, while 25 percent currently rule it out altogether. Overall, influencer marketing remains a niche activity for most companies.

At the same time, attitudes are mixed: 44 percent of companies agree that influencers can strengthen trust in promoted products. By contrast, 46 percent also see risks and are concerned about potential damage to their company's image.

To what extent do the following statements about influencers or external content creators apply to your company?

88%
Through influencer advertising, we reach **new target groups**..

64%
Even with a small advertising budget, retailers can **successfully market** their products through influencers..

80%
Paid posts by influencers on their profile **are more worthwhile than traditional advertisements**.

49%
Collaboration with influencers is also meaningful in the **B2B sector**.

Base: Companies collaborating with influencers (n=67) | Percentage values for "Completely agree" and "Somewhat agree" | Source: Bitkom Research 2025

Figure 31: Agreement with Statements on the Impact of Influencer Marketing

88 percent reach new target groups through influencers

Companies that already work with influencers overwhelmingly view the benefits positively. This is particularly evident when it comes to extending their reach: 88 percent agree that influencer marketing can help them reach new target groups. Many also see advantages over traditional advertising formats: 80 percent believe that paid influencer posts deliver better returns than conventional advertising. In addition, 64 percent say that influencer marketing can be effective even with relatively small budgets.

By comparison, attitudes in the B2B sector are more cautious: 49 percent of companies consider using influencers in B2B marketing to be worthwhile.

Overall, influencer marketing is seen as particularly effective for increasing reach and improving marketing efficiency, while its suitability varies across different market segments.

12.2 Budget and Investments

What percentage of your total advertising budget do you estimate is spent on influencer marketing? And approximately how much does your company spend on influencer marketing each year, in euros?

7 %
On average, retail companies spend 7 percent of their advertising budget on **influencer collaborations**.

€66.860
is the average annual amount spent by each retail company on **influencer marketing**.

Base: Companies collaborating with influencers (n=67) | Percentage values for "Fully applies" and "Mostly applies" | Source: Bitkom Research 2025

Figure 32: Share of the advertising budget and annual spending on influencer marketing in retail

Retailers are strategically investing in influencer marketing

Retail companies that use influencer marketing allocate a relatively small but targeted share of their advertising budgets to this channel: on average, 7 percent of the total advertising budget is spent on influencer marketing. In absolute terms, this equates to average annual spending of around €66,860 per company. The distribution of budgets varies widely: 35 percent of companies invest up to €10,000 per year, while a further 39 percent spend between €10,000 and €100,000. At the same time, a smaller group makes significantly higher investments: 6 percent spend at least €100,000 annually, with 1 percent investing €1 million or more ↗Bitkom press release.

Overall, the results indicate that while influencer marketing does not yet dominate advertising expenditure, it has become an established and scalable part of the marketing mix, with investment levels varying considerably depending on company strategy and size.

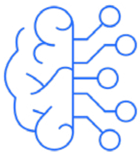
13 Deployment of New Technologies: Artificial Intelligence

13.1 Attitudes Towards AI

To what extent do the following statements about the use of AI apply to your company, or to what extent do you agree with them?

81%
We are concerned that **AI-generated fake reviews** could harm our company.

61%
The use of AI technologies in customer service results in **the loss of direct contact with customers**.



66%
We **lack employees with skills** in the area of AI.

17%
AI technologies in retail are a **passing trend**.

Base: All companies (n=505) | Percentage values for "Applies completely" and "Applies rather" | Source: Bitkom Research 2025

Figure 33: Companies' Assessment of Opportunities, Risks and Challenges Associated with the Use of Artificial Intelligence

The use of AI still raises concerns in the retail sector

The use of artificial intelligence in retail is viewed ambivalently and continues to be associated with considerable reservations. Concerns about reputational risks are particularly pronounced: 81 percent of companies fear that AI-generated fake reviews could harm their business. The potential impact on customer relationships is also viewed critically: 61 percent believe that using AI in customer service could lead to a loss of direct contact with customers. At the same time, there is a clear skills gap: 66 percent say they lack employees with relevant AI expertise. Nevertheless, AI is not widely regarded as a short-term trend: only 17 percent of companies see it as a passing phenomenon.

Overall, the results show that AI is perceived as an important driver of the future of retail, but remains associated with uncertainty and structural challenges.

"The study results show that AI is firmly established on the industry's agenda. However, with two-thirds of retailers also reporting a lack of relevant skills within their organisations, the critical bottleneck for success in retail is not access to technology, but the expertise of their teams."

Eike Folkerts, Head of Business Development Retail, Adesso SE and Member of the Board of Bitkom's Retail Working Group

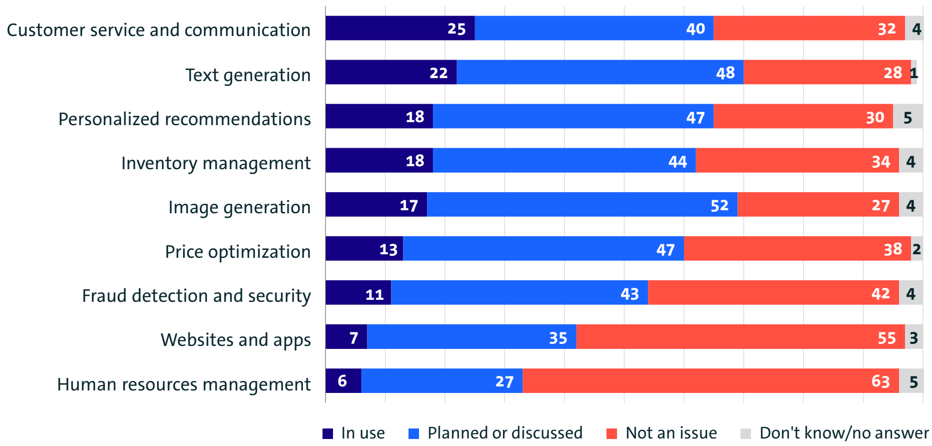
"If 81 percent of retailers are concerned about AI-generated fake reviews, one thing is clear: the key factor in retail is not just technological capability, but trust.

For retailers, AI offers opportunities to improve advice, service and processes – but only if customers understand where and how it is being used. That is why we need responsible applications, transparency and fair rules that enable innovation while preventing misuse."

Robert Echtermeyer, Head of Public Policy and External Relations at MediaMarktSaturn and Member of the Board of Bitkom's Retail Working Group

13.2 Use and Planned Adoption

In which of the following areas does your company already use AI or plan to do so?



61%

"Retailers who use **AI** have a **competitive advantage**."

in percent

Base: All companies (n=505) | Deviations from 100 percent are due to rounding | right: Percentages for "Applies completely" and "Rather applies" | Source: Bitkom Research 2025

Figure 34: Current and Planned Use of Artificial Intelligence in Various Business Areas

AI is used primarily for customer engagement and content creation

The use of artificial intelligence in retail is currently focused primarily on customer-facing and content-related applications. AI is most commonly used in customer service and communication (25 percent), followed by text generation (22 percent), personalised recommendations and inventory management (18 percent each), and image generation (17 percent).

Many applications are still being planned or considered. The greatest potential is seen in image generation (52 percent planned or under discussion), text generation (48 percent), as well as personalised recommendations and price optimisation (47 percent each).

At the same time, there is greater reluctance in some areas: 55 percent currently oppose or are sceptical about the use of AI on websites and in apps, while 63 percent say the same about its use in human resources.

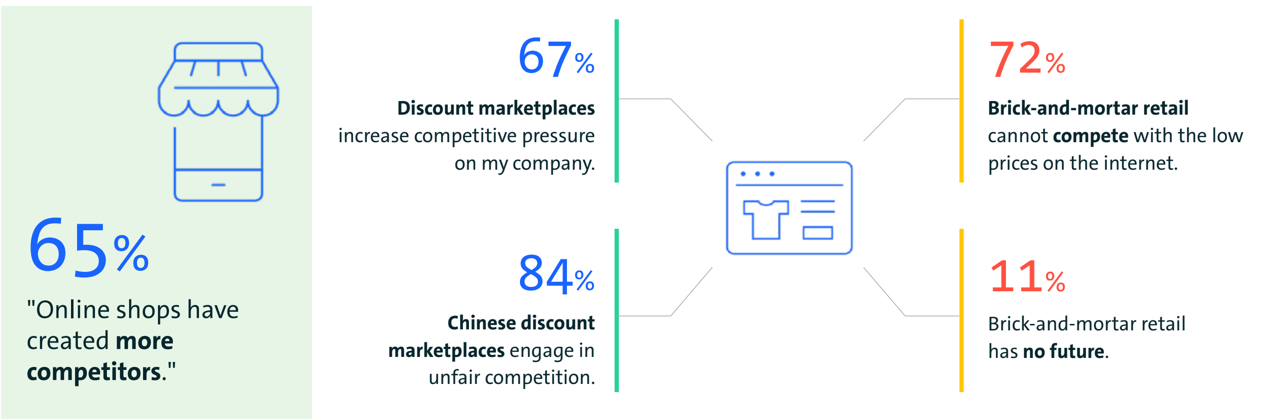
Overall, AI is gradually being integrated into key parts of the retail value chain, particularly in customer-facing applications. Companies that already use AI also see clear competitive benefits, with 61 percent agreeing with this statement.

> "The biggest obstacle to using AI across core value-creation processes is the lack of a solid data foundation. Companies often lack a consistent, cross-system data platform, which is essential for the effective use of AI."
>
> Stefan Binkowski, VP Retail & Wholesale Advisory, SAP and Chair of Bitkom's Retail Working Group

14 Platform Economy and Competition

14.1 Marketplaces and Sales Channels

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?



Base: All companies (n=505) | Percentage values for "Completely true" and "Rather true" | Source: Bitkom Research 2025

Figure 35: Assessment by companies of the competitive pressure from online retail and international platforms

Online retail significantly increases competitive pressure

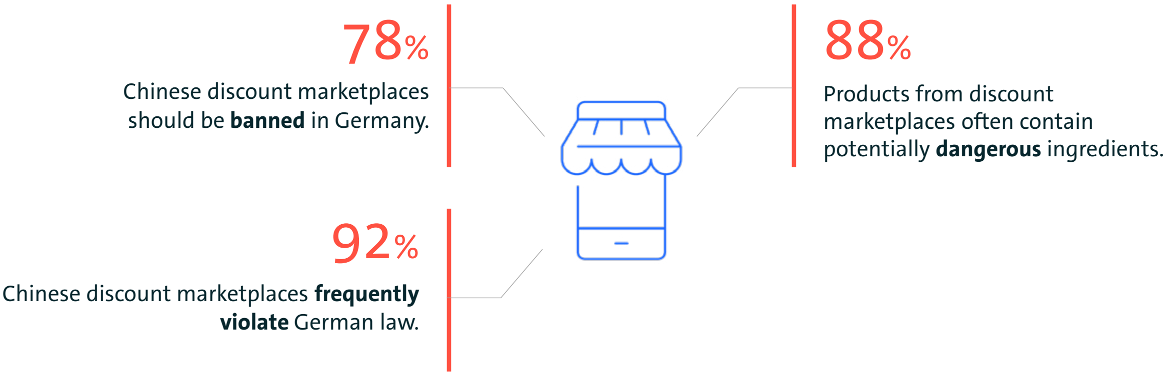
A significant majority of companies consider competition in retail to be intense, particularly as a result of online retail: 65 percent agree that online shops increase competition overall. The assessment is even clearer when it comes to international platforms: 84 percent see Chinese low-cost marketplaces as unfair competition, while 67 percent say that such platforms increase competitive pressure on their own company.

Brick-and-mortar retailers also face structural challenges in terms of pricing: 72 percent of companies believe that physical retailers cannot compete with low online prices. Nevertheless, the future of brick-and-mortar retail is not widely called into question: only 11 percent agree that it has no future.

Overall, while online channels and international platforms are intensifying competitive pressure, there remains considerable confidence in the long-term viability of brick-and-mortar retail.

14.2 International Competitive Dynamics

In recent years, Chinese low-cost retailers and marketplaces have become increasingly active in Germany. To what extent do you agree with the following statements in this context?



Basis: All companies (n=505) | Percentage values for "Completely applies" and "Rather applies" | Source: Bitkom Research 2025

Figure 36: Evaluation of Chinese low-cost marketplaces regarding law, product safety, and regulatory measures

Chinese Low-Cost Marketplaces Viewed Critically

The growing presence of Chinese low-cost marketplaces in Germany is viewed very critically by companies. A large majority see legal and product-safety concerns: 92 percent believe that these providers frequently breach German law. There are also significant concerns about product safety, with 88 percent of companies believing that products sold on low-cost marketplaces often contain potentially harmful substances. Against this backdrop, a clear majority support regulatory action: 78 percent favour banning Chinese low-cost marketplaces in Germany.

Overall, this reflects a very high level of scepticism towards these platforms, particularly with regard to fair competition, legal compliance and consumer protection.

14.3 Geopolitical Factors

Which of the following statements about the geopolitical situation do you agree with?

33%
The worsening geopolitical situation will lead us to **reduce our product range**..

47%
Due to the worsening geopolitical situation, we are affected by **supply difficulties**.

41%
In light of the current geopolitical situation, we will **replace non-European suppliers with European ones**..

67%
We are at the beginning of a **trade war**..

Basis: All companies (n=505) | Multiple answers possible | Source: Bitkom Research 2025

Figure 37: Assessment of the impact of the geopolitical situation on supply chains, product range, and trade relations

67 percent of companies believe a trade war has begun

The geopolitical situation is having a noticeable impact on companies' strategic decisions, although this is translating into concrete action to varying degrees. 47 percent of companies already report supply difficulties due to geopolitical tensions, while 33 percent expect to have to reduce their product range in future. Supply chains are also beginning to shift: 41 percent plan to replace non-European suppliers with European ones. This points to increasing regionalisation and greater diversification of procurement risks.

At the same time, concerns about the broader economic environment are even more pronounced: 67 percent of companies believe that a trade war has already begun.

14.4 Future Prospects of Digital Commerce

How widespread do you expect the following scenarios to be by 2030?

Basis: All companies (n=505) | Percentage values for "Will be very widespread" and "Will be rather widespread" | Source: Bitkom Research 2025

Figure 38: Future Scenarios in Retail by 2030

What might retail look like in 2030?

Companies' assessments of future developments in retail by 2030 present a varied picture, with a clear emphasis on data-driven and platform-based approaches. Social media platforms are seen as particularly important in B2B marketing: 56 percent expect them to become indispensable. The use of artificial intelligence is also expected to increase. Half of companies anticipate that AI shopping assistants will take over product searches and that digital twins of stores and logistics centres will be used to optimise processes.

Social media is also expected to become more important: 42 percent believe these platforms will become the most important advertising channels in retail. By contrast, consumer-facing and more technology-intensive scenarios are viewed more cautiously. For example, 33 percent expect shopping to take place primarily via social media, while 30 percent believe VR headsets will become widely used in consumers' homes.

"We are preparing for a future in which product searches will increasingly be driven by AI. Agentic AI will also gradually become more widely used. Given the rapid pace of technological development, and looking ahead to retail in 2030, we need to consider how markets are changing and how to respond to increasing consolidation and competitive pressure."

Dr Sabine Schmidt, Senior Representative, Otto Group and Member of the Board of Bitkom's Retail Working Group

Conclusion

The study report reveals a rapidly changing online retail landscape: major platforms account for a large proportion of consumers' online purchases and consequently dominate digital sales channels. However, this landscape is beginning to change in several ways. New platforms are rapidly gaining market share, social commerce is becoming established, particularly among younger consumers, and AI commerce could become a key customer touchpoint in future. Retailers face the major challenge of using multiple channels strategically without losing control of their customer relationships. Geopolitical uncertainty and rising costs add to the complexity. For retailers, this means that digital visibility alone is no longer enough. Success will depend on combining customer access, data expertise, logistics, brand trust and technological capabilities.

This is particularly evident in the case of platforms and low-cost online shops from outside Europe. Low prices encourage consumers to buy, although many remain critical of product quality and safety. Interestingly, compared with 2024, the proportion of consumers buying from these platforms has barely increased, which could indicate that negative media coverage has affected their ability to attract new customers. The study results also show that consumers who do not shop on low-cost platforms attach greater importance to sustainability and trust in retailers – areas in which such platforms are frequently criticised. For retailers, this is an important indication that they can differentiate themselves from competitors through quality, transparency and good customer service rather than competing solely on price.

Retailers primarily accuse these platforms of unfair competition and express doubts about effective enforcement and market surveillance. As non-European platforms increasingly enter the German market, it is becoming even more important for policymakers to ensure a level playing field. This includes rules on product liability, fraud prevention and measures to prevent dangerous products from entering the market. Recent EU customs reforms could represent a first step towards more effective market surveillance. At the same time, European retailers need to strengthen their own digital capabilities rather than relying solely on tighter regulation of competitors.

Social media is evolving from a marketing channel into a sales channel in its own right. Purchasing decisions are increasingly being made where consumers discover products: in feeds, videos, recommendations and creator content. This gives retailers new ways to reach target audiences, but also requires new skills. Successful social commerce depends on continuous communication, credible content, clear labelling of advertising and an understanding of how communities work. This makes implementation complex and resource-intensive. At the same time, social media and influencer marketing offer retailers the opportunity to strengthen their brand image through creative campaigns, particularly among younger audiences.

Artificial intelligence will transform e-commerce even more profoundly in the years ahead. At present, AI primarily helps retailers improve the efficiency of processes such as customer service, content creation, product descriptions, personalisation, price optimisation and inventory management. From a consumer perspective, however, the way people access online shopping is already beginning to change. Conversational AI models are already searching for products, comparing offers and making recommendations. This creates a new competitive dynamic: retailers must not only be visible to consumers and optimised for search engines, but also feature in the recommendations generated by LLMs. More than ever, this requires a robust digital ecosystem that can provide structured product data, transparent availability and pricing in machine-readable formats. Advertising within chatbots could also become an important way of increasing visibility in future. In addition, personal AI assistants for advice, product research and service offer considerable potential for online shops to keep significant parts of the customer journey within their own digital environments.

At the same time, trust is becoming a decisive factor. If consumers can no longer tell whether a review is genuine, a recommendation is independent or content is promotional, confidence in digital business models is undermined. Retailers should therefore invest early in transparency, data quality, clear labelling and quality assurance. Policymakers should create a framework that allows innovation while effectively preventing abuse.

Digital commerce needs future-proof regulatory frameworks as well as fair conditions for competition. This includes consistent enforcement of existing rules for providers from third countries, practical regulation of AI and platforms, fewer bureaucratic barriers for digital business models and targeted support for the development of digital skills. Strengthening European retail requires regulation, competitiveness and digital transformation to be considered together.

The e-commerce of the coming years will not simply mean more online retail. It will be more automated, more personalised, more heavily mediated by social platforms and AI, and at the same time more politically contested. For German and European retailers, this creates opportunities to combine a strong commitment to quality with intuitive digital customer journeys and a high degree of reliability. This means simple shopping experiences, fair prices, transparent information, safe products and credible communication. At a time when products are available across more channels than ever before, but consumers are also facing increasing uncertainty around AI-generated content, poor product quality, fake shops and online fraud, retailers need a strong and trusted brand to build lasting customer relationships.

Methodology

Survey 2025 | Population

Client	Bitkom
Methodology	Online panel survey
Population	Internet users in Germany aged 16 and over
Sample Size	n=1,120, including n=1,072 online shoppers
Survey Period	Calendar weeks 40 and 41 of 2025
Weighting	Representative weighting of the dataset based on structural data on internet usage from the Working Group for Media Analysis
Statistical margin of error	+/- 3 percent in the total sample

Survey 2025 | Companies

Principal	Bitkom
Methodology	Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI), Dual Frame
Population	Companies in wholesale, retail, and motor vehicle trade with at least 10 employees
Target group	Management and board
Sample size	n=505
Survey period	Calendar weeks 11 to 19 of 2025
Weighting	Representative weighting of the dataset based on the current business register of the Federal Statistical Office
Statistical margin of error	+/- 4 percent in the overall sample

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Online shopping is part of everyday life for the vast majority of consumers, yet digital commerce is undergoing fundamental change. Large platforms dominate many purchasing decisions, providers from third countries are increasing competitive pressure, social commerce is gaining importance, and artificial intelligence could reshape how consumers access online shopping in the future. The study report highlights which channels are relevant in e-commerce today, what customers expect, and how retailers are responding to new technologies, rising costs and concerns about fair competition.

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