

**STUDY:**

# Boomers Coming Around on Mobile

**GfK FutureBuy shows early adopters steady on end-to-end browsing and buying on mobile while Baby Boomers drive an overall bump**

By Dan Ochwat

NEW YORK — Be it webrooming or showrooming, Generation Z is on board. And while Baby Boomers use end-to-end mobile shopping very little overall, their usage and trust in it gained year over year, according to the 2016 FutureBuy study from market research and insights firm GfK.

With a title like FutureBuy, the annual study (in its fourth year at this scale) not surprisingly dishes out numbers on how shoppers worldwide are leaning toward issues of e-commerce, mobile payment in-store and shopper loyalty. The study was released weeks before the end of 2016 and encompasses results from a 20-minute online survey of 20,000 shoppers (1,000 shoppers per 20 different countries) aged 18 and over. The survey drills into 16 product categories in consumer goods, services, specialty products and consumer durables. It was conducted in late August through September 2016.

Proprietary to GfK and FutureBuy is a special look at consumers they call Leading Edge Consumers (LECs). Joe Beier, executive vice president of shopper and retail strategy at GfK, says these consumers represent about 15% of the population and “are an interesting bellwether of coming trends.” They’re flagged by three traits: First, they’re highly passionate shoppers who are emotionally connected to shopping; second, they’re early adopters of technology

and new products; and third, they’re very influential with a history of being ahead of the mainstream.

Interestingly enough, in the 2016 study, LECs showed a drop when asked about using a click-and-collect delivery model. In 2015, more than half said they expected to use it, while in 2016, only 38% responded in favor of it. This is a dipping trend among FutureBuy’s most plugged-in consumers. Overall shoppers, however, registered flat with 32% expected to use click-and-collect versus 31% a year ago.


to fall away a bit.” He adds that mobile phone screen sizes have gotten bigger, so that may have increased usage.

For Gen Z, buying in-store the traditional way but looking for goods online is the perfect marriage, according to the study, pointing to an increase in webrooming. The study shows more than a third of all shoppers look online and buy in-store, but 46% of Generation Z shoppers engage this way. Generation Z shoppers also lead the way in showrooming, looking in-store first and buying online, with 32% of Gen Z respondents exhibiting this behavior, up from 24% in the 2015 study.

All U.S. consumers are comfortable with a phone in-store. They may not like using it to pay for products, but engaging with a retailer’s app and other apps inside a store is proving to be normal behavior. Beier says the U.S. market was higher than any other region in the study when asked about using a mobile device to help them shop inside a store. “Retailers have seen the light in making their environments much more mobile-friendly,” he says.

Retailers haven’t convinced shoppers to use it as a mobile payment device in-store, however. “One [reason] is security of information and not wanting to compromise their personal information, and another is the sense that it’s a gimmick,” Beier says. “It’s a cute parlor trick, but it’s not solving a major problem.”

More than 60% of LECs in the study responded that payments with a mobile device are easier, faster and preferred, so mobile payment could still happen, but the study shows more than half of U.S. respondents use mobile payment once in a month at best.

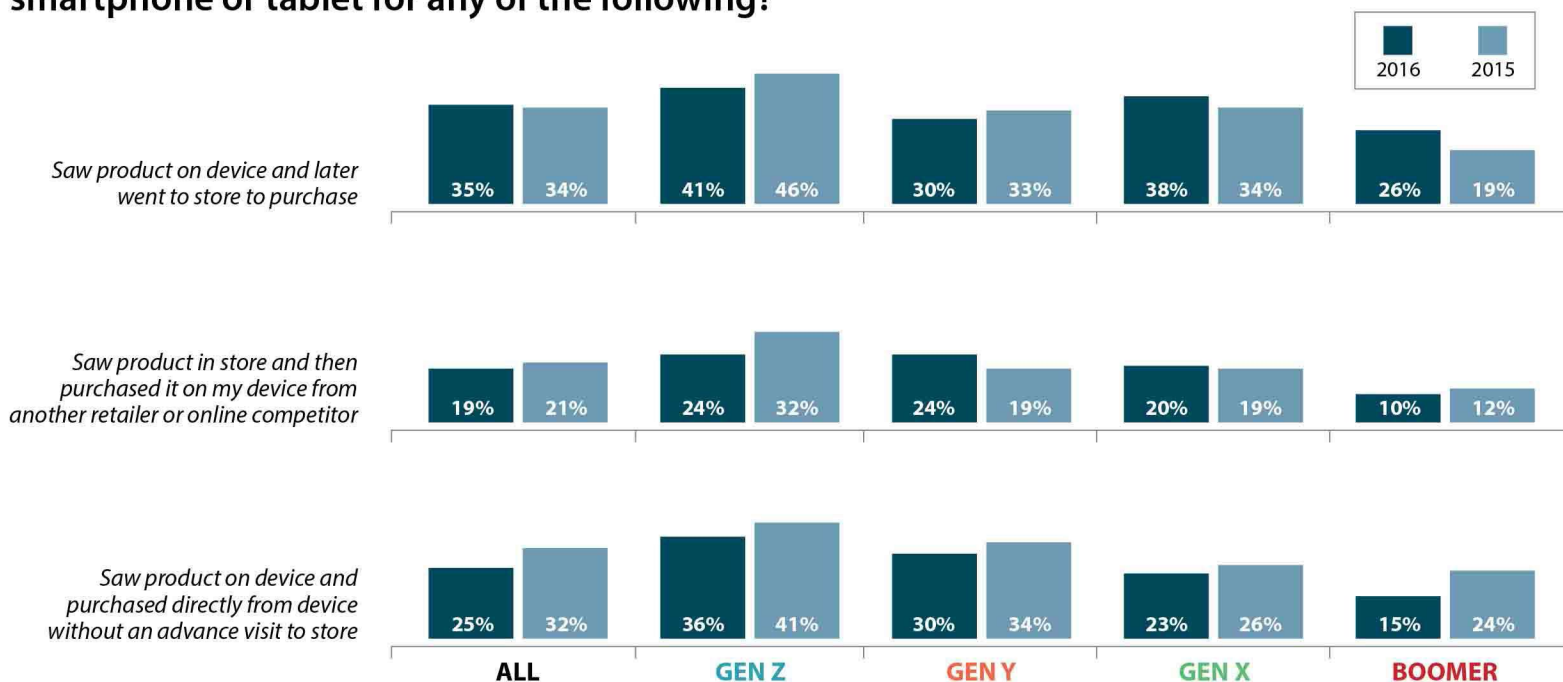
For more information on the study and to learn how to get customized learnings, visit [GfK.com](http://GfK.com). 

“There was a reticence to play the purchase all the way through on the device. This reticence is starting to fall away.”

Joe Beier, GfK

A newer topic in the study is looking at shopping journeys that begin and end on the mobile phone, Beier says. LECs showed flat levels of doing this at 39%, yet still high. But looking at the overall population, there was a jump from 25% in 2015 to 32% in 2016. Drilling deeper, Beier says Boomers drove this spike. “There was a reticence to play the purchase all the way through on the device,” he says. “This number says to us that this reticence is starting

**Over the last six months, have you used your smartphone or tablet for any of the following?**



Source: GfK FutureBuy 2016