Contentsquare

2023

Retail

Digital Experience Benchmark Report

Data and insights to make every visit count.

Table of contents

Inside the retail dataset

The 2023 Retail Digital Experience Benchmark report shares the most important digital KPIs driving growth and their impact on the digital experience and customer happiness.

102 billion
Page Views

20 billion
Sessions

1493
Websites

26
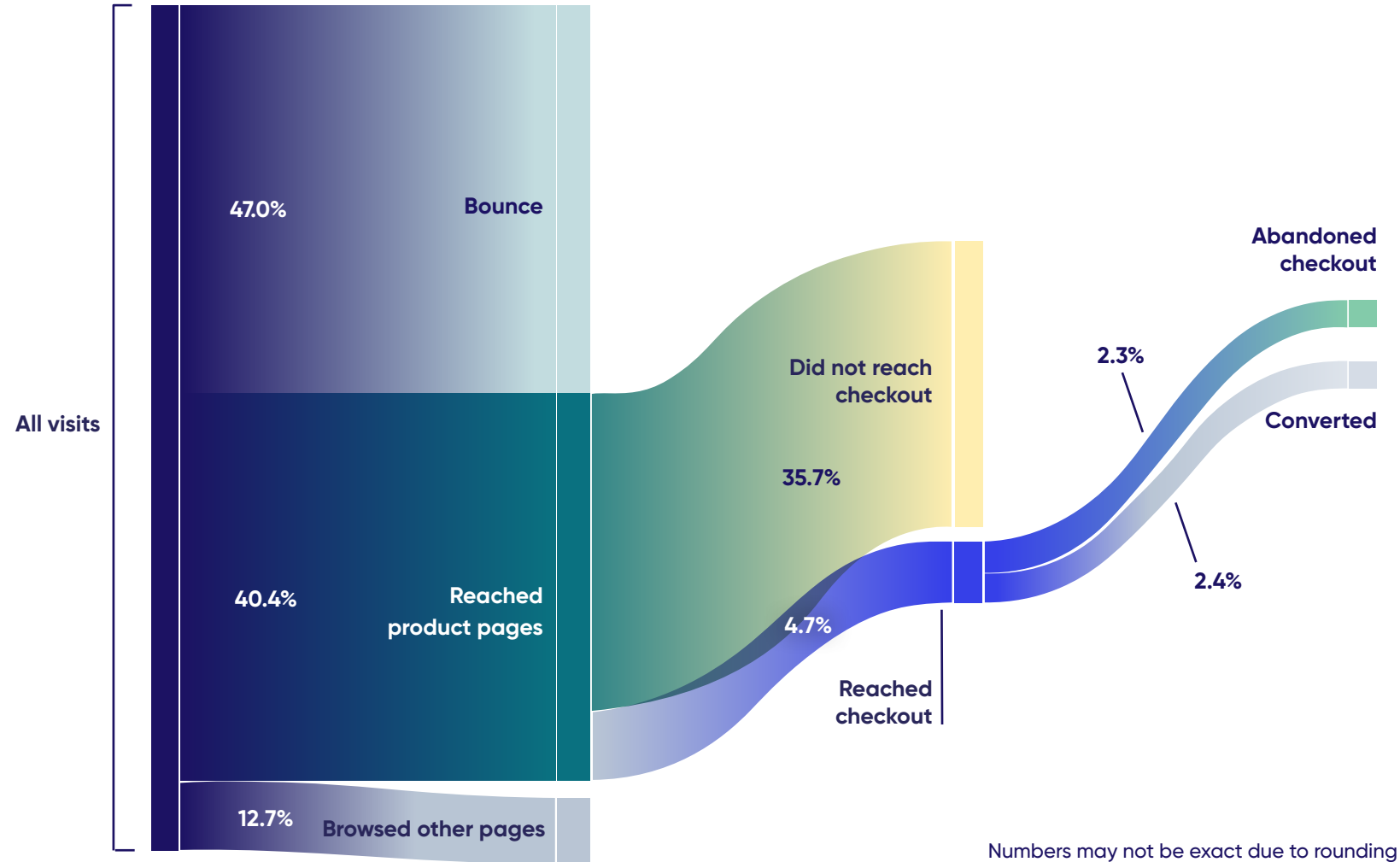Countries

7
Retail Industries

The shopper journey

The shopper journey analyzes 20 billion sessions in aggregate-and uncovers something more valuable than simply which journeys converted versus those that did not.

It's what's inside the customer journey that counts, and the shopper journey shows where in the journey attrition is typically happening. This gives retailers a clear view of the opportunities to improve the customer experience at every stage.

■ **The shopper journey**

Across all retail visits, where does the journey come to an end?

All visits

47.0% Bounce

40.4% Reached product pages

12.7% Browsed other pages

Did not reach checkout 35.7%

Reached checkout 4.7%

Abandoned checkout 2.3%

Converted 2.4%

Numbers may not be exact due to rounding

Introduction

Over the past few years, retail has lived through a generation's worth of change. The pandemic forced retailers to pivot to digital-led services at unprecedented speed. Further blows to retail businesses were dealt by intensely volatile supply-chain disruptions and spikes in inflation.

One lasting change that's united retailers of every type (digital native brands, legacy omnichannel retailers and marketplace heavyweights alike) through these tough times is a hardened focus on growing direct-to-shopper engagement—and with it, a heightened emphasis on offering a better digital customer experience.

While most retailers acknowledge that data unlocks the much-coveted 'better experience', too many are exclusively focused on the data that tracks the start and end points of their customers' journeys—traffic, bounces and conversion.

Digital leaders know better. They understand that the path to providing a better experience is mapped out by understanding the complete customer journey, not only its origin and destination.

This year's Retail Digital Experience Benchmark report navigates the entire shopper journey, sharing insights at each stage into what has been shaping the digital customer experience and how to apply these to maximize growth in 2023.

Along the way, a panel of retail influencers and practitioners will be providing their perspective on how brands and retailers can incorporate these insights into their go-to-customer experience this year.

Shopper journey at-a-glance

Traffic and visitor segmentation
Paid traffic on mobile contributes as much traffic as all of desktop.
Page 5

Engagement
All the key session consumption metrics—page views, time spent, scroll rate—declined year-over-year.
Page 13

Conversion and outcomes
Conversion rate slumped, dropping **-3.5%**, the likely result of more bounces and less consumption.
Page 19

User frustration
More than **1 in 3** visitors face some sort of frustration during their journeys.
Page 27

Traffic and visitor segmentation

Deconstructing traffic: where are visitors coming from?
After a drought that hindered retail growth during the first three quarters of 2022, traffic growth finally turned positive in Q4—albeit only eking out a scant **+1.5%** increase.
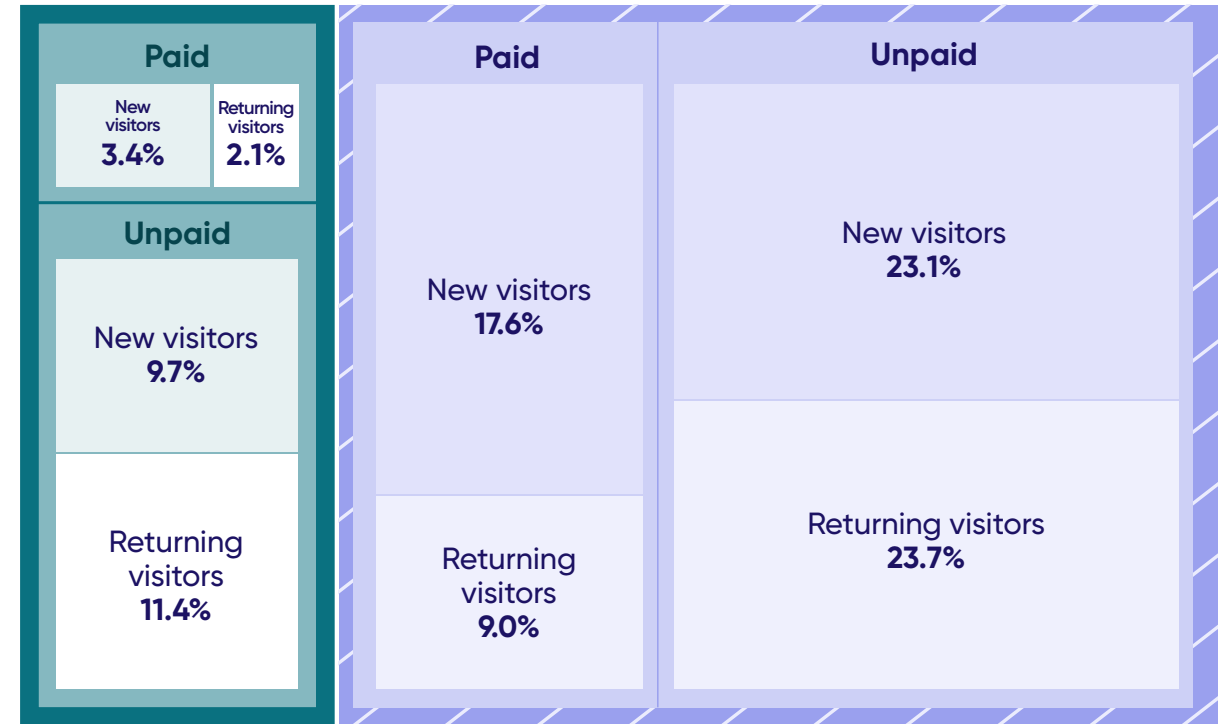
Mobile traffic share continued to swell and drove nearly 3 of 4 visits across retail sites. This continuing migration is naturally influencing the prevailing profile of your visitor base: mobile attracts a majority of visits that are new to your site, and those visitors are more likely to be from paid sources when compared to desktop traffic.

While assessments of the impact of more mobile traffic on digital businesses have typically focused on the smaller screen size and function, the real shift is to be found in the audience crowding into digital.

These changing attraction dynamics mean that tailoring the experience to the growing mobile audience is no longer an aspirational pursuit. It's a matter of cost of acquisition, profitability—and, ultimately, survival.

■ Retail traffic share, paid vs. unpaid, by device and visitor type

■ Desktop ▨ Mobile

Paid

| New visitors 3.4% | Returning visitors 2.1% |

Unpaid

New visitors 9.7%

Returning visitors 11.4%

Paid

New visitors 17.6%

Returning visitors 9.0%

Unpaid

New visitors 23.1%

Returning visitors 23.7%

Traffic insights

- **55%** of mobile traffic is from new visitors, compared with **49%** on desktop.
- More than **1 in 3 (36%)** of mobile traffic is paid, compared with **21%** on desktop.
- Paid mobile accounts for as much traffic as desktop.
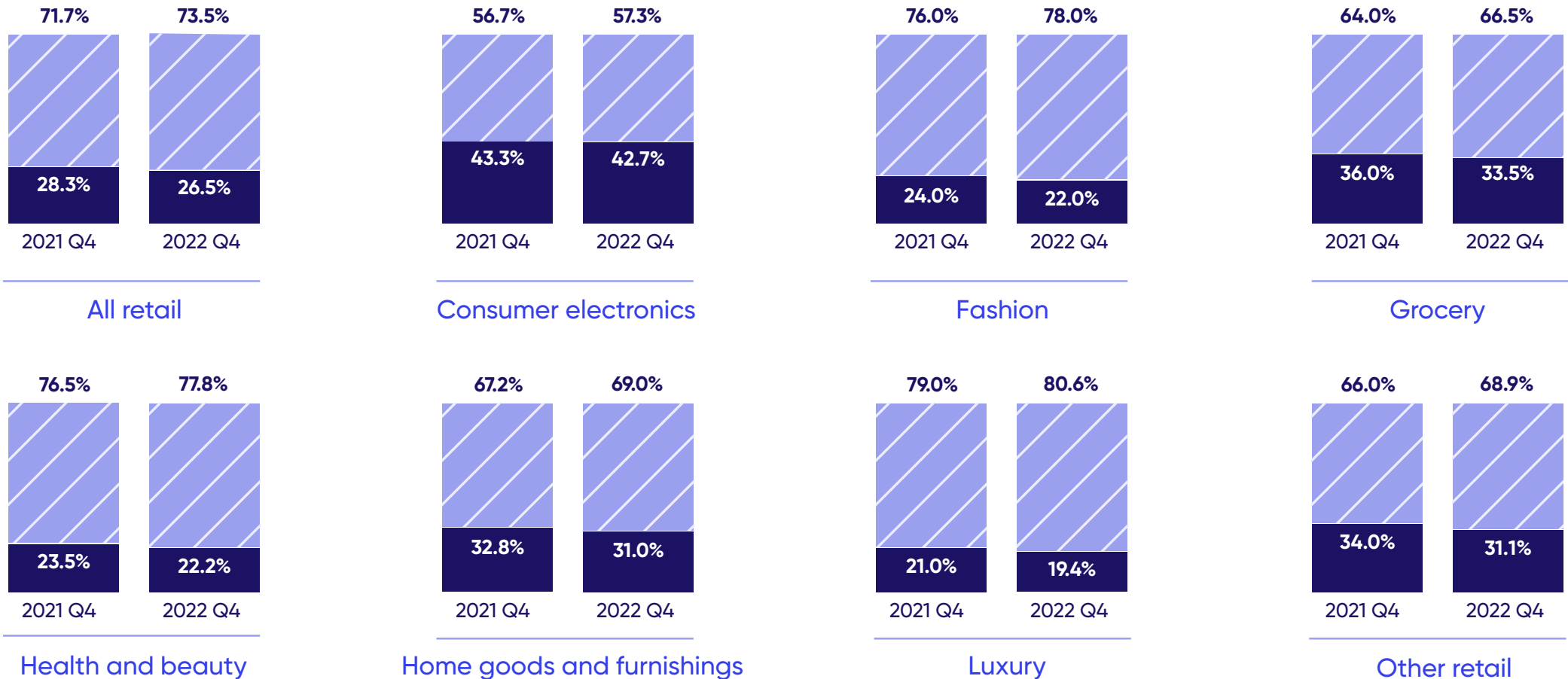- Mobile accounts for **76%** of new visitors across retail sites.

Traffic continues its mobile march

Retail is the most mobile-led of all industries, with mobile claiming **73.5%** of traffic, nearly **3 of 4** visits.

Luxury, Health & Beauty and Fashion outpace their retail peers in terms of mobile traffic and appear to be on a path to mobile-only.

■ **Retail traffic share by device, by industry, year-over-year**   ■ Desktop   ▨ Mobile

All retail
	71.7%	73.5%
Desktop	28.3%	26.5%
	2021 Q4	2022 Q4

Consumer electronics
	56.7%	57.3%
Desktop	43.3%	42.7%
	2021 Q4	2022 Q4

Fashion
	76.0%	78.0%
Desktop	24.0%	22.0%
	2021 Q4	2022 Q4

Grocery
	64.0%	66.5%
Desktop	36.0%	33.5%
	2021 Q4	2022 Q4

Health and beauty
	76.5%	77.8%
Desktop	23.5%	22.2%
	2021 Q4	2022 Q4

Home goods and furnishings
	67.2%	69.0%
Desktop	32.8%	31.0%
	2021 Q4	2022 Q4

Luxury
	79.0%	80.6%
Desktop	21.0%	19.4%
	2021 Q4	2022 Q4

Other retail
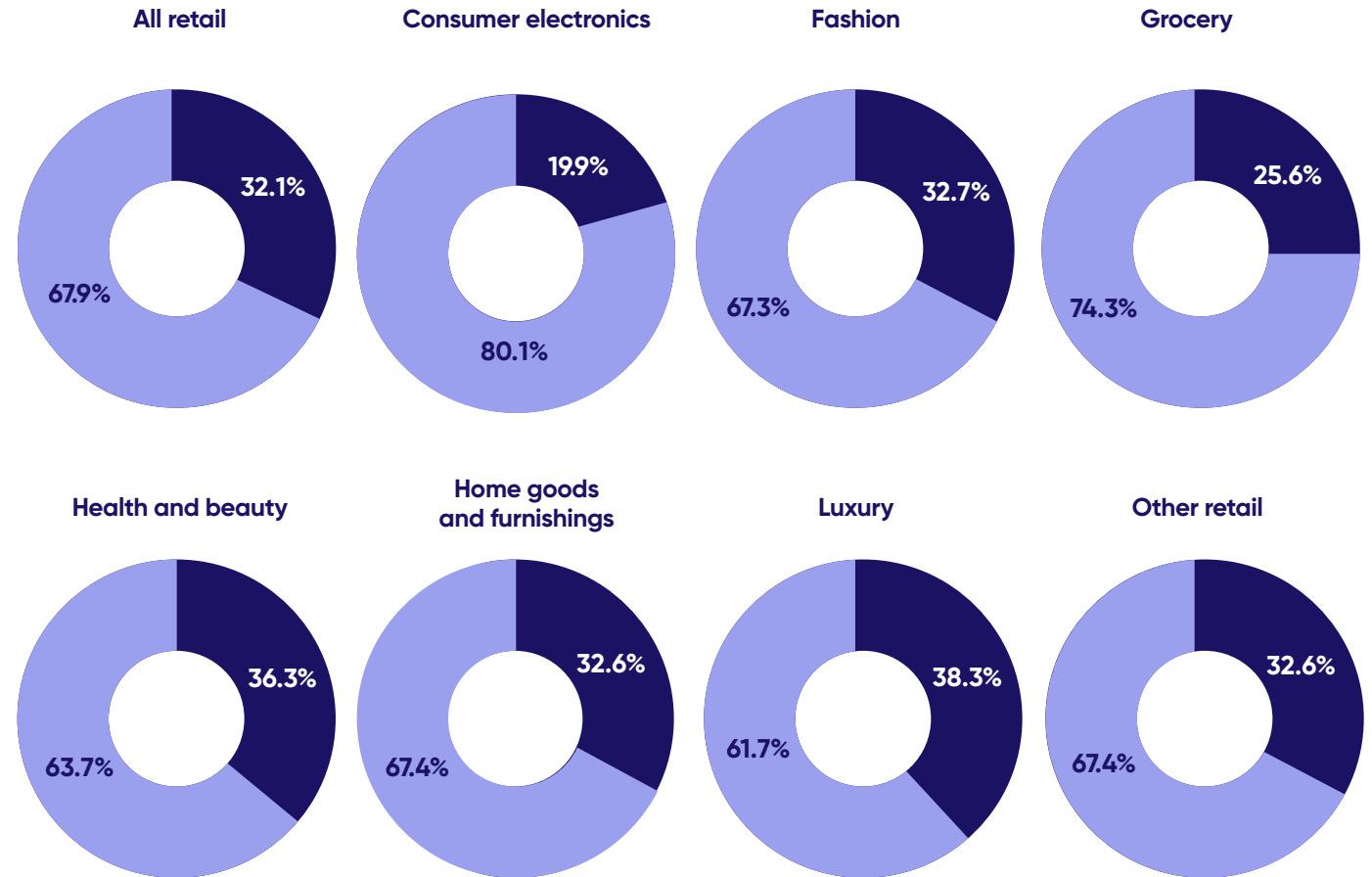|	66.0%	68.9%
Desktop	34.0%	31.1%
	2021 Q4	2022 Q4

Retail collects nearly 1 of 3 visits from paid traffic sources

The growth in retail traffic is thanks entirely to paid growth. Traffic from paid sources was up **6.4%** in 2022, while unpaid channels fell **2.8%**.

The result: more than **1 of 3** visits across retail were sourced from paid channels in 2022, with a high of **38%** in Luxury.

■ **Share of traffic by industry, paid vs unpaid**

■ Paid ■ Unpaid

All retail
32.1%
67.9%

Consumer electronics
19.9%
80.1%

Fashion
32.7%
67.3%

Grocery
25.6%
74.3%

Health and beauty
36.3%
63.7%

Home goods and furnishings
32.6%
67.4%

Luxury
38.3%
61.7%

Other retail
32.6%
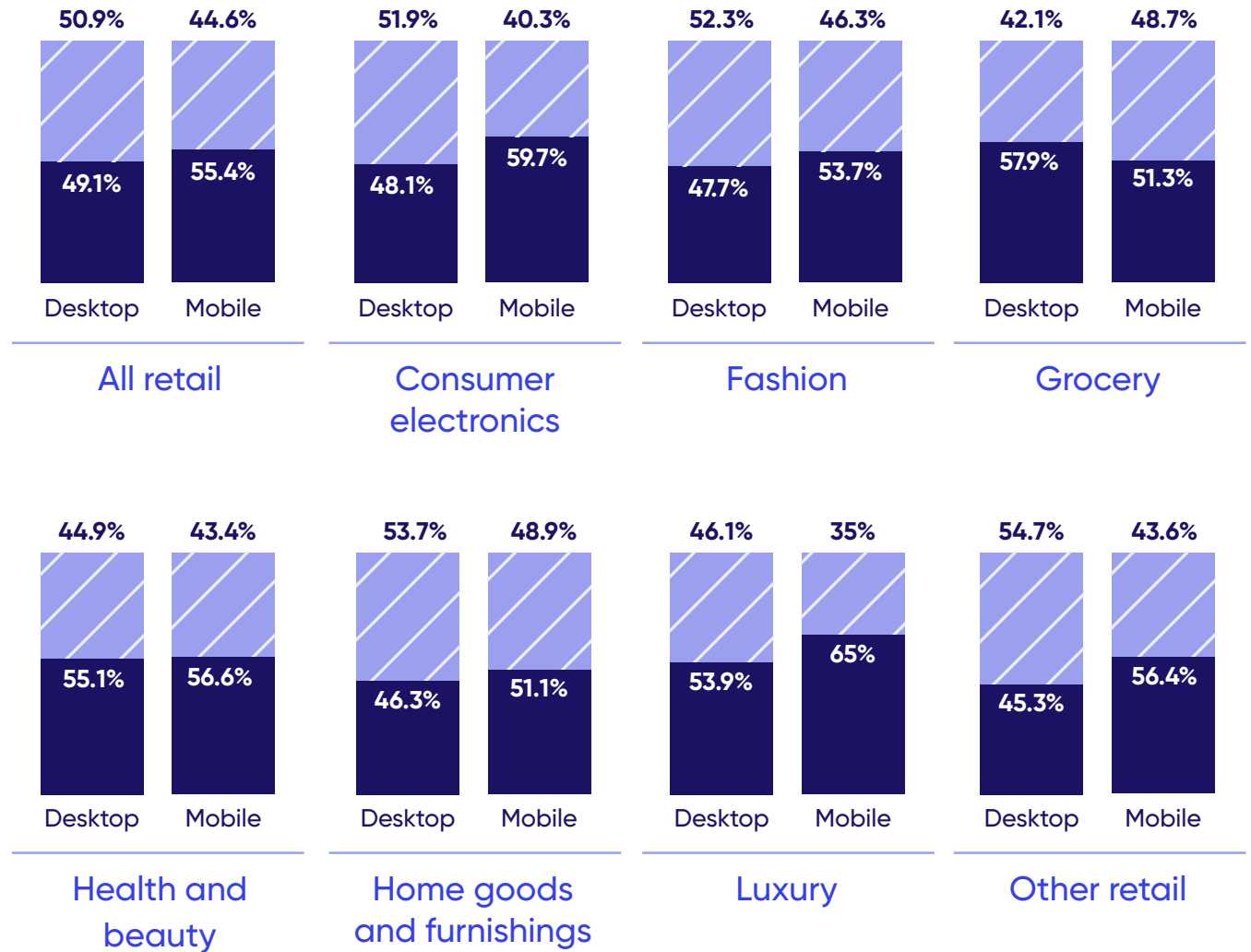67.4%

New shoppers increasingly turn to mobile

New traffic is critical for retail growth, and the rise of new visitors in 2022 was certainly a breath of fresh air for retailers.

New visits rose **6.1%** this year and retail continues to see a majority of its traffic from new visitors.

New vs. returing traffic by industry, by device

■ New visitor share   ▨ Returning visitor share

All retail

	Desktop	Mobile
Returning	50.9%	44.6%
New	49.1%	55.4%

Consumer electronics

	Desktop	Mobile
Returning	51.9%	40.3%
New	48.1%	59.7%

Fashion

	Desktop	Mobile
Returning	52.3%	46.3%
New	47.7%	53.7%

Grocery

	Desktop	Mobile
Returning	42.1%	48.7%
New	57.9%	51.3%

Health and beauty

	Desktop	Mobile
Returning	44.9%	43.4%
New	55.1%	56.6%

Home goods and furnishings

	Desktop	Mobile
Returning	53.7%	48.9%
New	46.3%	51.1%

Luxury

	Desktop	Mobile
Returning	46.1%	35%
New	53.9%	65%

Other retail

	Desktop	Mobile
Returning	54.7%	43.6%
New	45.3%	56.4%

Unpaid traffic converts best on mobile—paid traffic needs close attention
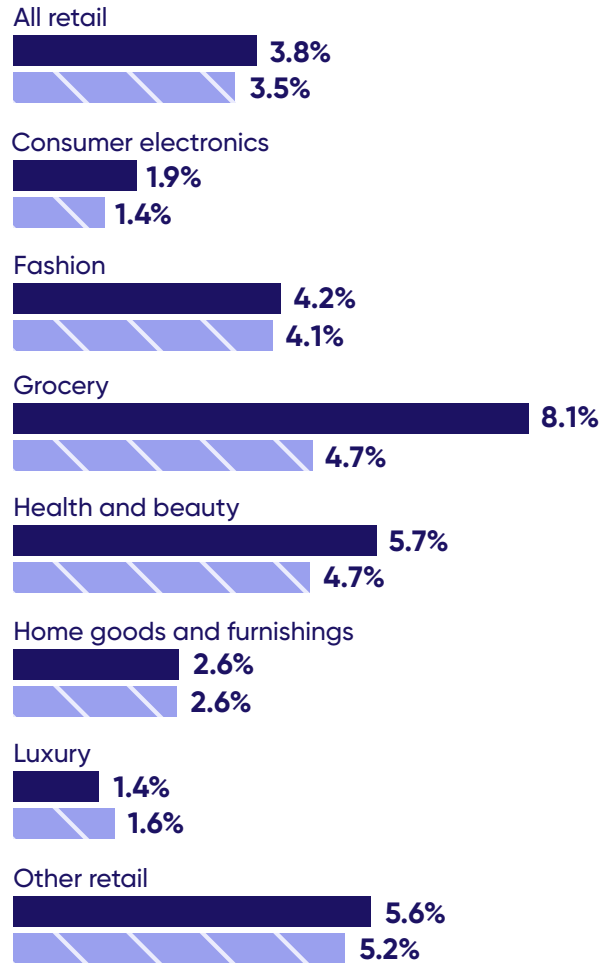
Where it matters most—on mobile—unpaid traffic converts best.

With far lower conversion rates on paid, retailers should be continuously refining their targeting to attract the right audiences and closely scrutinizing their paid campaigns to ensure their landing pages and content are meeting the moment for shoppers.
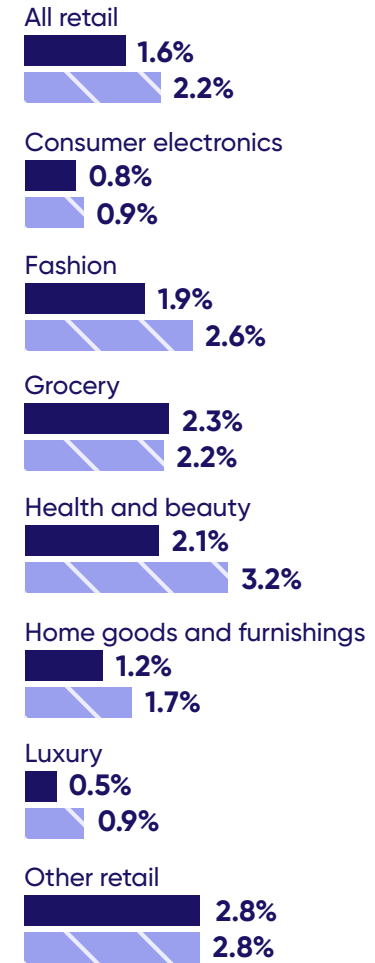
■ **Conversion rate of paid vs. unpaid visits, by device, by industry**

■ Paid   ▨ Unpaid

Desktop

All retail
Paid: 3.8%
Unpaid: 3.5%

Consumer electronics
Paid: 1.9%
Unpaid: 1.4%

Fashion
Paid: 4.2%
Unpaid: 4.1%

Grocery
Paid: 8.1%
Unpaid: 4.7%

Health and beauty
Paid: 5.7%
Unpaid: 4.7%

Home goods and furnishings
Paid: 2.6%
Unpaid: 2.6%

Luxury
Paid: 1.4%
Unpaid: 1.6%

Other retail
Paid: 5.6%
Unpaid: 5.2%

Mobile

All retail
Paid: 1.6%
Unpaid: 2.2%

Consumer electronics
Paid: 0.8%
Unpaid: 0.9%

Fashion
Paid: 1.9%
Unpaid: 2.6%

Grocery
Paid: 2.3%
Unpaid: 2.2%

Health and beauty
Paid: 2.1%
Unpaid: 3.2%

Home goods and furnishings
Paid: 1.2%
Unpaid: 1.7%

Luxury
Paid: 0.5%
Unpaid: 0.9%

Other retail
Paid: 2.8%
Unpaid: 2.8%

As traffic shifted more paid, paid conversion fell

The downside of mobile's increased device dominance is the drag it exerts on conversion rates. The combination of mobile's typically lower conversion rate and a heavier concentration on paid traffic wreaked havoc on retail dashboards across 2022.
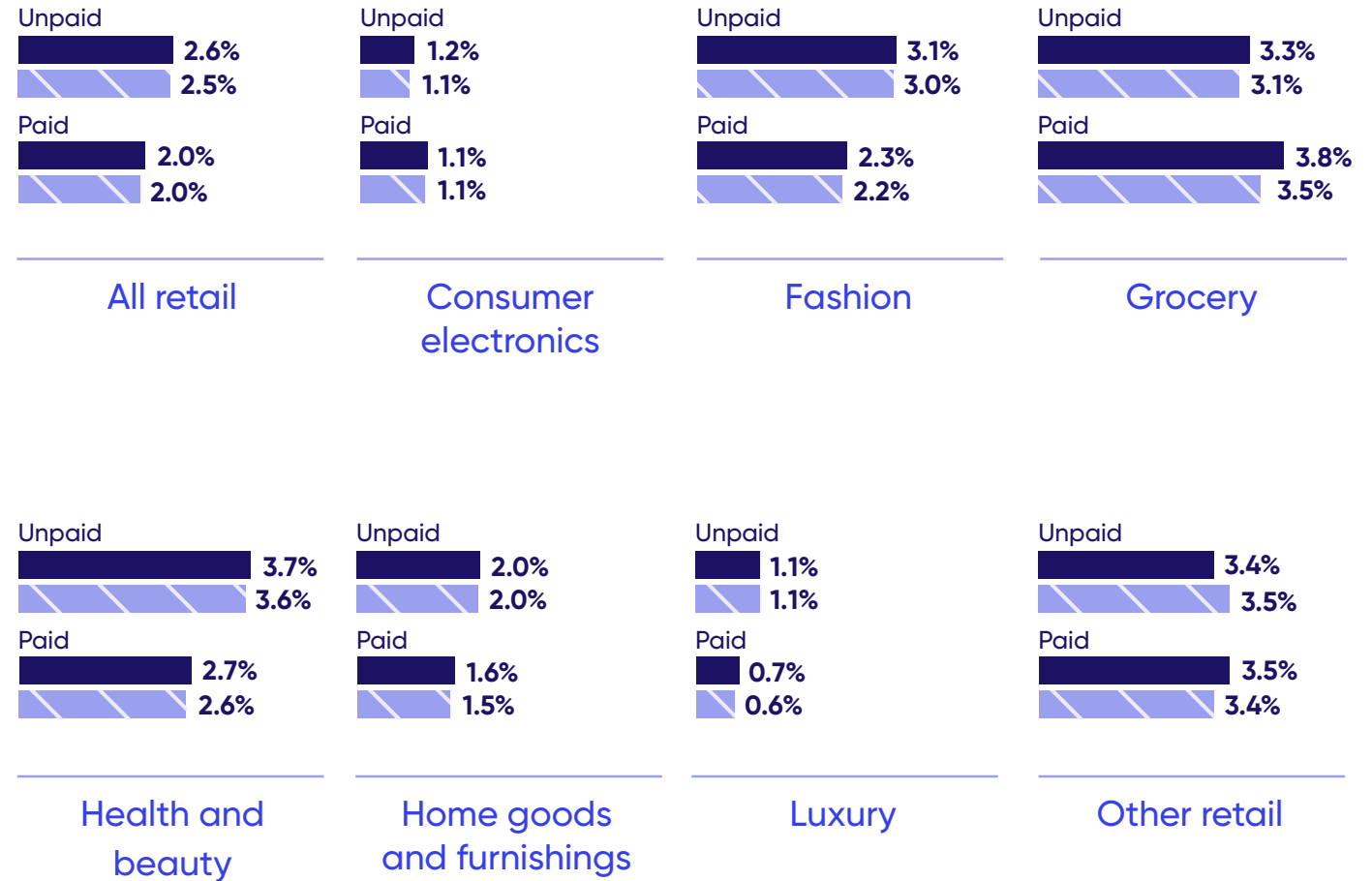
"The key is to ensure a high traffic (SEO) and reduce the number of clicks (UX and DY), because a high number of clicks may NOT highlight engagement, but the fact that the customer does not find what he is looking for, which ends up not an exit rate and especially affects the conversion rate."
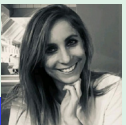
Perrine Bris
E-commerce Manager
Decathlon

■ **Conversion rate of paid vs. unpaid visits, by industry, year-over-year**   ■ 2021-Q4 ▨ 2022-Q4

All retail
Unpaid
2.6%
2.5%
Paid
2.0%
2.0%

Consumer electronics
Unpaid
1.2%
1.1%
Paid
1.1%
1.1%

Fashion
Unpaid
3.1%
3.0%
Paid
2.3%
2.2%

Grocery
Unpaid
3.3%
3.1%
Paid
3.8%
3.5%

Health and beauty
Unpaid
3.7%
3.6%
Paid
2.7%
2.6%

Home goods and furnishings
Unpaid
2.0%
2.0%
Paid
1.6%
1.5%

Luxury
Unpaid
1.1%
1.1%
Paid
0.7%
0.6%
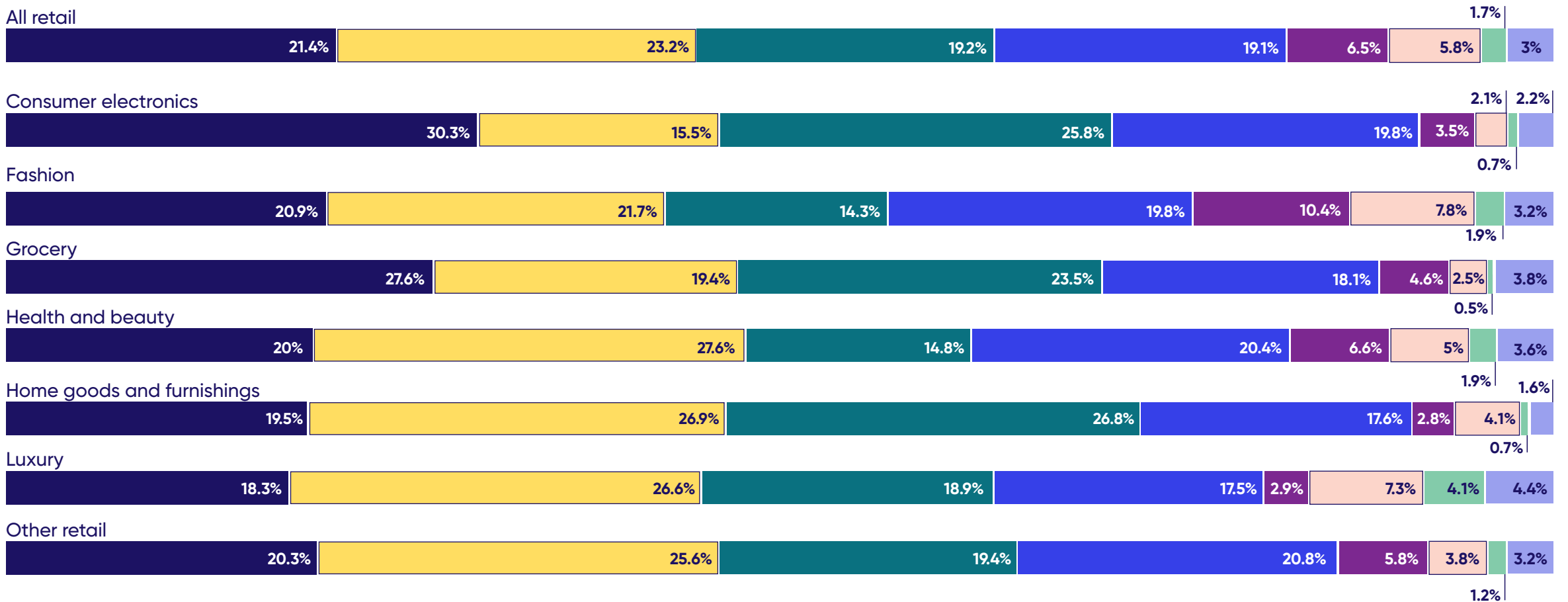
Other retail
Unpaid
3.4%
3.5%
Paid
3.5%
3.4%

Established traffic sources continue to attract

The usual suspects (direct, paid and organic search) continued to carry the vast majority of traffic last year.

Social channels can still be categorized as emerging, since combined they account for less than **10%** of all traffic. Only Luxury's social sources pass double digits, with Fashion's not far behind.

■ Traffic share by source, by industry

Legend: ■ Direct □ Paid search ■ SEO ■ Other ■ Email □ Paid social ■ Social organic ■ Ads, display, retargeting

All retail

Direct	Paid search	SEO	Other	Email	Paid social	Social organic	Ads, display, retargeting
21.4%	23.2%	19.2%	19.1%	6.5%	5.8%	1.7%	3%

Consumer electronics

| 30.3% | 15.5% | 25.8% | 19.8% | 3.5% | 2.1% | 0.7% | 2.2% |

Fashion

| 20.9% | 21.7% | 14.3% | 19.8% | 10.4% | 7.8% | 1.9% | 3.2% |

Grocery

| 27.6% | 19.4% | 23.5% | 18.1% | 4.6% | 2.5% | 0.5% | 3.8% |

Health and beauty

| 20% | 27.6% | 14.8% | 20.4% | 6.6% | 5% | 1.9% | 3.6% |

Home goods and furnishings

| 19.5% | 26.9% | 26.8% | 17.6% | 2.8% | 4.1% | 0.7% | 1.6% |

Luxury

| 18.3% | 26.6% | 18.9% | 17.5% | 2.9% | 7.3% | 4.1% | 4.4% |

Other retail

| 20.3% | 25.6% | 19.4% | 20.8% | 5.8% | 3.8% | 1.2% | 3.2% |

Conversion rates fell across nearly every channel

Before vilifying a source for low conversion, remember that not every source is created equal. Email traffic is typically composed of known buyers, while social sources are more likely to be new-to-you shoppers.

'Consider your source' is not simply an axiom for traffic analysis, but serves as a reminder to properly segment your site experience based on differing incoming marketing sources.

■ Retail conversion rate by source, year-over-year

■ 2021-Q4   ⬜ 2022-Q4

All retail

Social organic
- 2021-Q4: 0.6%
- 2022-Q4: 0.7%

SEO
- 2021-Q4: 1.9%
- 2022-Q4: 1.8%

Paid social
- 2021-Q4: 0.8%
- 2022-Q4: 0.7%

Paid search
- 2021-Q4: 2.3%
- 2022-Q4: 2.3%

Other
- 2021-Q4: 3.0%
- 2022-Q4: 3.0%

Email
- 2021-Q4: 2.5%
- 2022-Q4: 2.3%

Direct
- 2021-Q4: 2.6%
- 2022-Q4: 2.5%

Ads, display, retargeting
- 2021-Q4: 1.6%
- 2022-Q4: 1.5%

Expert take

Rachel Frederick
VP & GM, ecommerce
Sur La Table

Sur la table
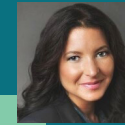
An ever-changing marketing mix, combined with the continuing rise of mobile device dominance is bringing a new visitor profile to retail sites.

Retailers must adapt the on-site experience to reflect the evolution of their audience, particularly given the shift to more paid traffic. Since paid traffic typically converts less, this shift demands retailers make every visit as meaningful and engaging as possible.

Question to Expert

How does the changing profile of traffic change your approach to the shopper experience?

Expert Response
We're seeing a shift in channels and device mix with our traffic. It's so critical and top of mind for us to give the customer what they want as quickly as possible to make a decision. Obviously if they're coming in from branded search they know about our brand and are probably looking for something very specific. We'll want to take them directly to the category, brand or product they searched for. If they're coming in from an email they received from us, we know what interests them or what they clicked on. And we know based on the data insights we have about them, what they've purchased or looked at in the past. Showing them what's relevant or complements their past behavior is key.
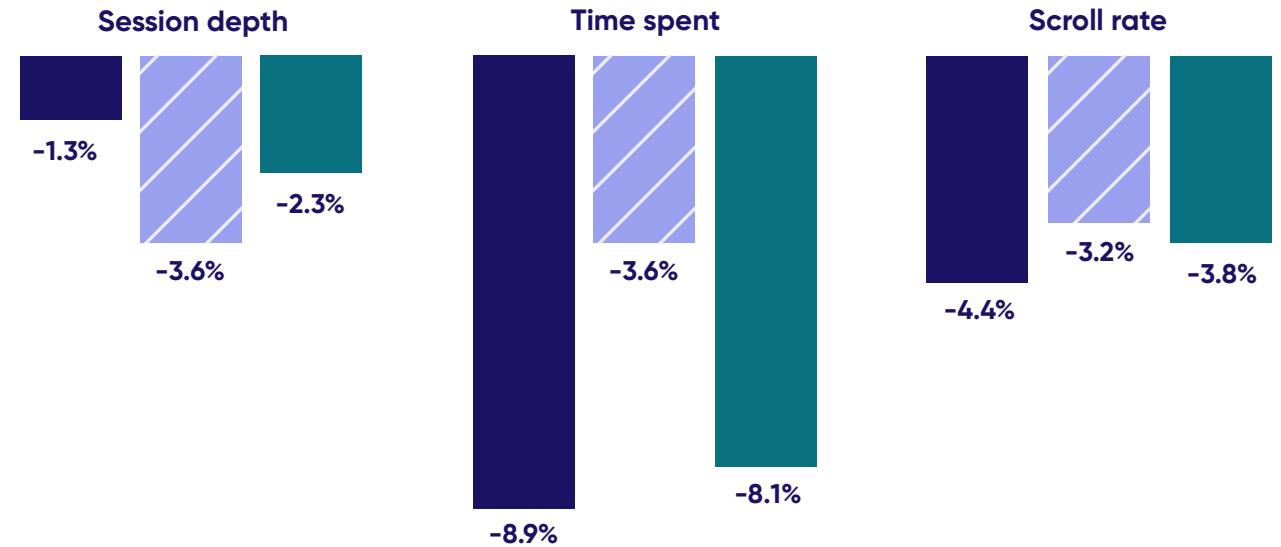
Engagement

Retail's consumption crisis

With traffic barely edging up at the end of 2022, the growth opportunity remains reliant on the quality of the on-site experience—which makes a trend we've identified within the customer journey in 2022 even more concerning for retailers.

By all key consumption measures—scroll rate, session depth, time spent—shoppers consumed less of the digital sites they visited in 2022. Visitors are increasingly 'grazing'; that is, they're making more numerous but shorter and shallower visits to websites.

This growth of grazing brings into sharp focus the critical value of every pixel and pane presented to a shopper across their journey.

■ **All retail session consumption KPIs, by device**

■ Mobile ▨ Desktop ■ Overall

All retail

Session depth
- Mobile: -1.3%
- Desktop: -3.6%
- Overall: -2.3%

Time spent
- Mobile: -8.9%
- Desktop: -3.6%
- Overall: -8.1%

Scroll rate
- Mobile: -4.4%
- Desktop: -3.2%
- Overall: -3.8%
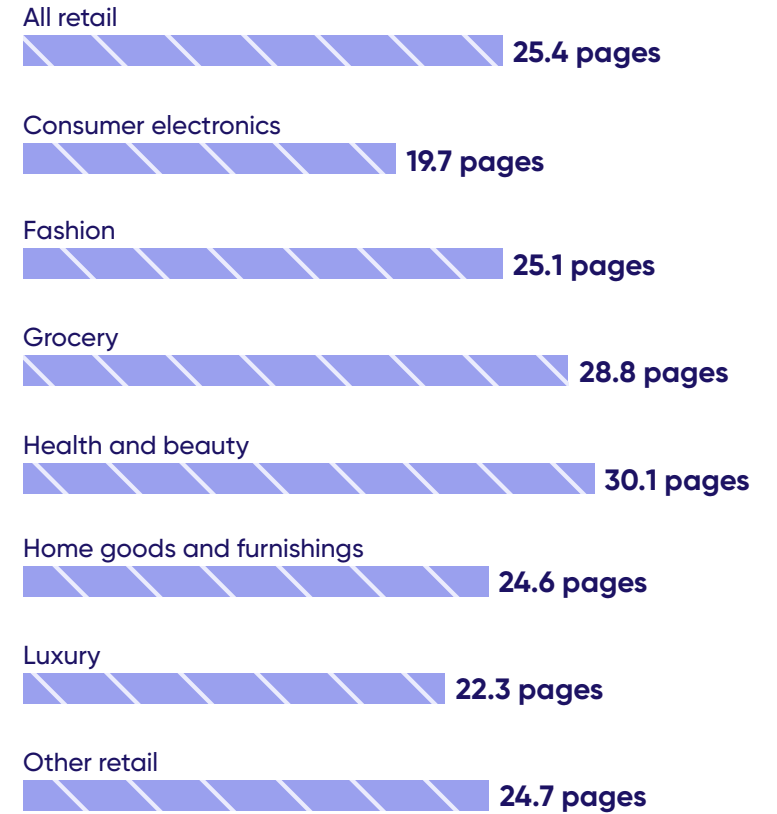
Sprawling buying sessions

While overall page view consumption fell, buying sessions sprawled across 25 pages overall and exceeded 30 pages in Health & Beauty. With this many page views, retailers would be wise to consider their engagement approach across the journey. Whether testing merchandising tactics and page layouts, or accelerating checkouts, the depth of the buying journey is made for experimentation.

■ **Pages per session and buying session, by industry**

Page views per session

All retail
5.0 pages

Consumer electronics
3.0 pages

Fashion
5.4 pages

Grocery
4.6 pages

Health and beauty
7.0 pages

Home goods and furnishings
4.9 pages

Luxury
4.6 pages

Other retail
4.8 pages

Pages views per buying session

All retail
25.4 pages

Consumer electronics
19.7 pages

Fashion
25.1 pages

Grocery
28.8 pages

Health and beauty
30.1 pages

Home goods and furnishings
24.6 pages

Luxury
22.3 pages

Other retail
24.7 pages

Session durations shrink

Comparing session durations by device should lend weight to the argument for segmenting experiences by device.
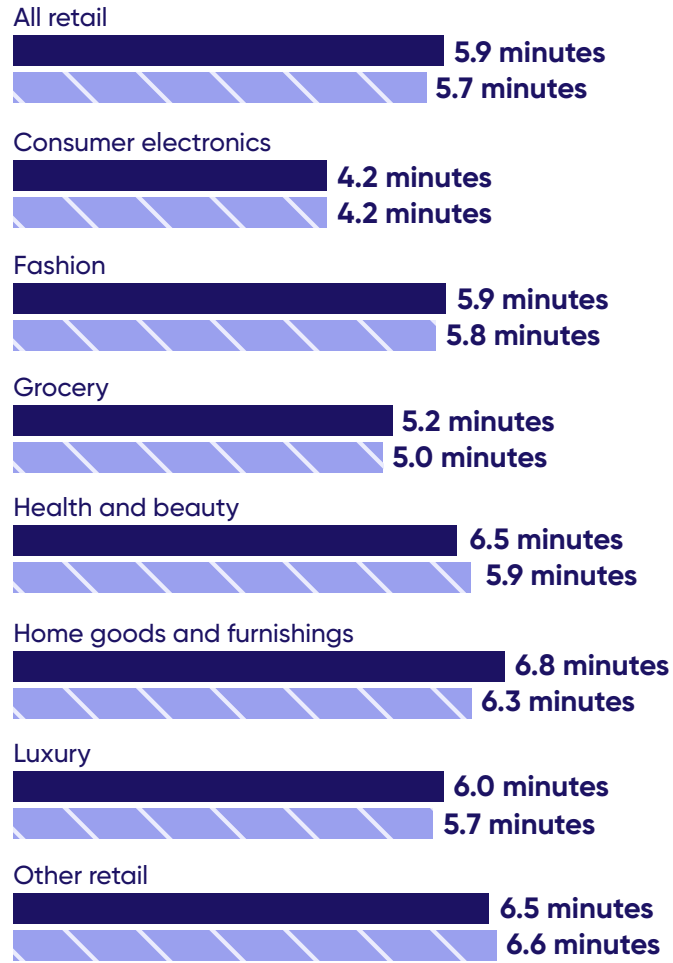
With mobile shoppers spending less than half the time per session when compared with desktop shoppers, it's clear that mobile visits are rapid and every moment is meaningful.

Retailers should therefore scour their site's mobile journeys for opportunities to save time and gain efficiency—by delivering faster page loads, for example, or ensuring the checkout process involves as few steps as possible.

■ **Time spent per session, by device, by industry, year-over-year**

■ 2021-Q4   ▨ 2022-Q4

Desktop

All retail
- 5.9 minutes
- 5.7 minutes

Consumer electronics
- 4.2 minutes
- 4.2 minutes

Fashion
- 5.9 minutes
- 5.8 minutes

Grocery
- 5.2 minutes
- 5.0 minutes

Health and beauty
- 6.5 minutes
- 5.9 minutes

Home goods and furnishings
- 6.8 minutes
- 6.3 minutes

Luxury
- 6.0 minutes
- 5.7 minutes

Other retail
- 6.5 minutes
- 6.6 minutes

Mobile

All retail
- 2.9 minutes
- 2.6 minutes

Consumer electronics
- 2.0 minutes
- 1.9 minutes

Fashion
- 3.1 minutes
- 2.8 minutes

Grocery
- 2.6 minutes
- 2.4 minutes

Health and beauty
- 2.9 minutes
- 2.7 minutes

Home goods and furnishings
- 3.1 minutes
- 2.7 minutes

Luxury
- 2.6 minutes
- 2.3 minutes

Other retail
- 2.7 minutes
- 2.5 minutes

Category and product detail pages capture the most attention

A major difference in shopping patterns as broken down by device is where shoppers spend their time.

Mobile shoppers spend far more of their (shorter duration) visits on category pages, while desktop shoppers spend more time on product pages.

This differing time allocation per device presents retailers with a decision point and testing opportunity: does the optimal journey change by device? Should retailers alter the traditional path of advancing shoppers from category pages to product pages and allow for different actions, like adding to cart directly from category page via tactics like quick view?

■ Share of session time spent by page, by device

■ Homepage   ■ Search   ■ Category   ■ Product   ■ Cart   ■ Checkout   ■ My account

■ Store locator

Desktop

0.8%	
4.4%	
4.3%	
5.2%	
39.4%	
33.7%	
7.1%	
5.2%	

Time spent per page

Mobile

0.7%	
2.3%	
4.4%	
4.9%	
35.8%	
40.2%	
7.6%	
4.0%	

Time spent per page
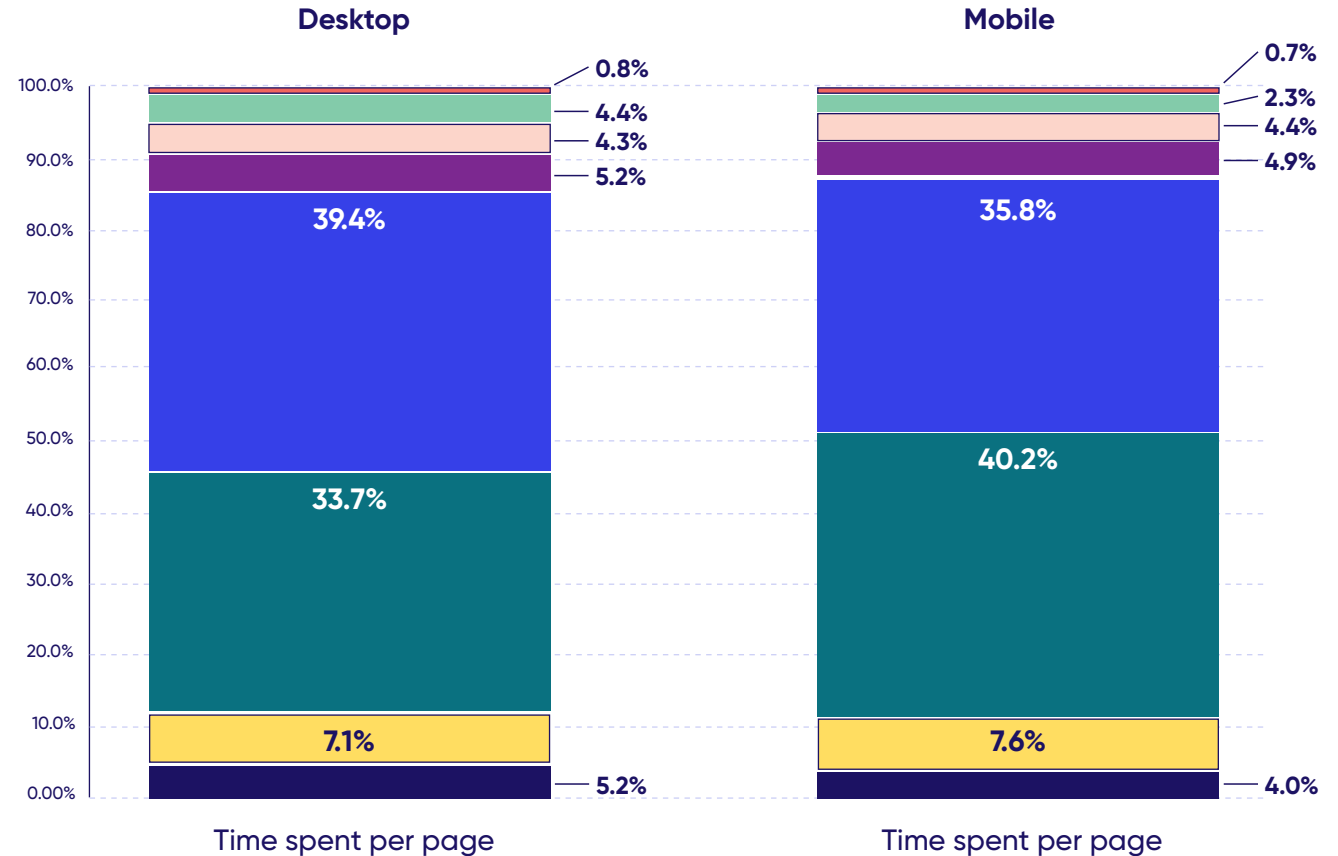
Scroll rate is down, so move up your critical content

More than half of a page is typically going unseen and untouched. This flags up the importance of 'above-the-scroll' content.

Retailers should place calls-to-action and critical content early on in the page to compel shoppers to act, or at least to continue scrolling.
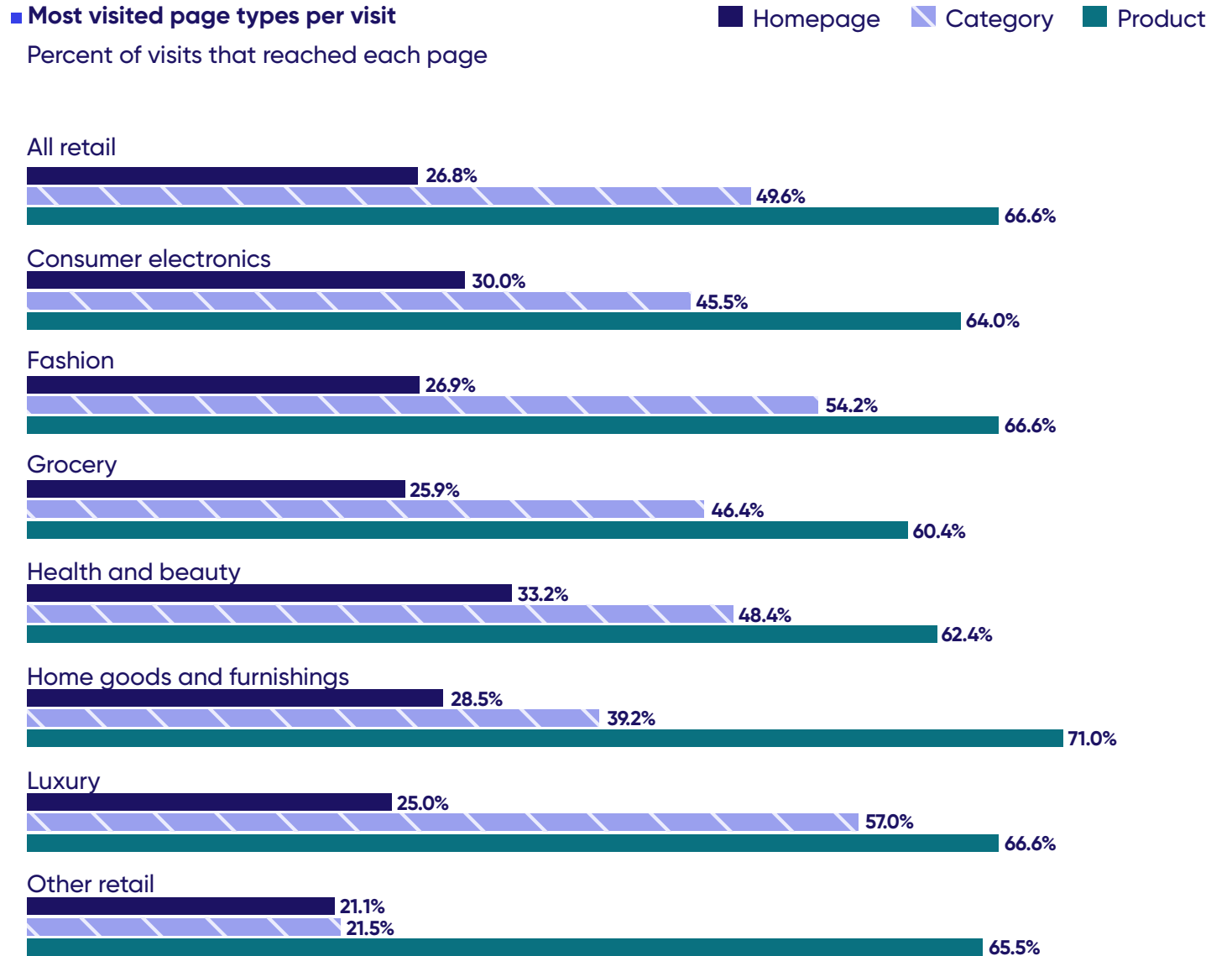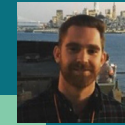
■ **Scroll rate by industry, by device**

■ Scroll rate

	Desktop	Mobile
All retail	50%	46%
Consumer electronics	47%	41%
Fashion	49%	46%
Grocery	53%	52%
Health and beauty	51%	50%
Home goods and furnishings	48%	44%
Luxury	52%	49%
Other retail	53%	48%
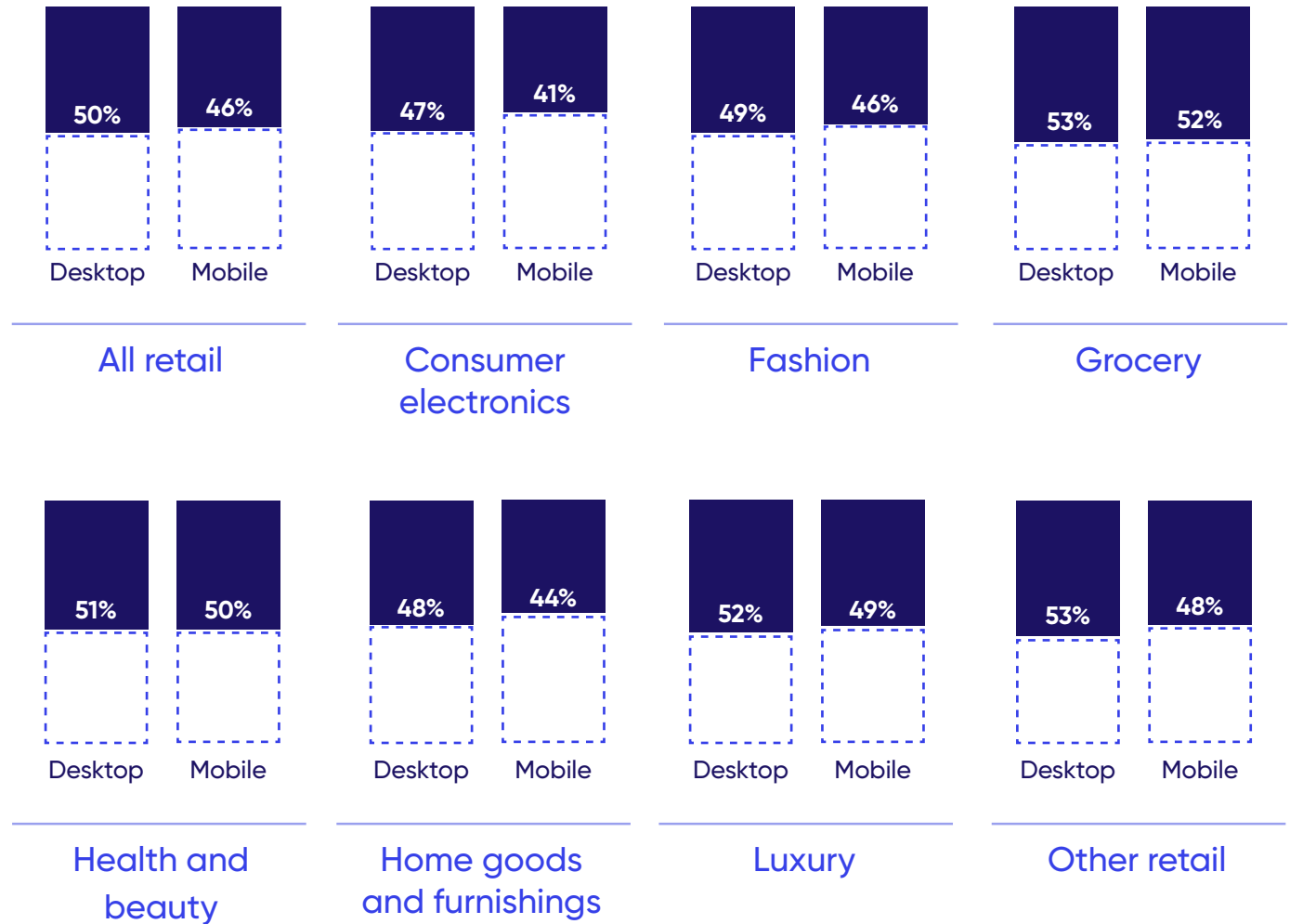
The MVPs (most valuable pages)

The heatmap makes clear which page types are most trafficked through the shopper journey: category and product. These two star pages provide concentrated opportunity—prioritizing improvements on these two pages can materially enhance the overall customer experience.

■ Most visited page types per visit

Percent of visits that reached each page

■ Homepage   ◨ Category   ■ Product

All retail
- Homepage: 26.8%
- Category: 49.6%
- Product: 66.6%

Consumer electronics
- Homepage: 30.0%
- Category: 45.5%
- Product: 64.0%

Fashion
- Homepage: 26.9%
- Category: 54.2%
- Product: 66.6%

Grocery
- Homepage: 25.9%
- Category: 46.4%
- Product: 60.4%

Health and beauty
- Homepage: 33.2%
- Category: 48.4%
- Product: 62.4%

Home goods and furnishings
- Homepage: 28.5%
- Category: 39.2%
- Product: 71.0%

Luxury
- Homepage: 25.0%
- Category: 57.0%
- Product: 66.6%

Other retail
- Homepage: 21.1%
- Category: 21.5%
- Product: 65.5%

Expert take

Tom Parkins
Site Optimization Manager
Marks & Spencer

M&S

Some may argue that positioning the downtick we saw in session consumption last year as a 'crisis' is an overreaction.

If taking each decline independently, the changes appear marginal and merely hint at a challenge. However, taken together these declines paint a more dire picture that demands retailers respond by making use of every precious moment they have with a shopper.

Question to Expert
How should retailers adjust their experiences to account for grazing behavior (more, but shorter visits)?

Expert Response
There's a lot of time that's spent on curating stories and considering what content to use higher up the funnel. However, based on this benchmark data, you're seeing that that's getting bypassed by a lot.

Customers are spending less time on the homepage, less time higher up in the funnel. Instead they're spending more time with product and category pages, and coming in using direct search.

Instead of spending the majority of your time and effort that goes into thinking around what we want to do higher up in the funnel, we should be thinking around, okay, what do we need to be getting across at PDP level from a story? How do we tell the story deeper in the funnel? And because that's clearly where customers are migrating to.
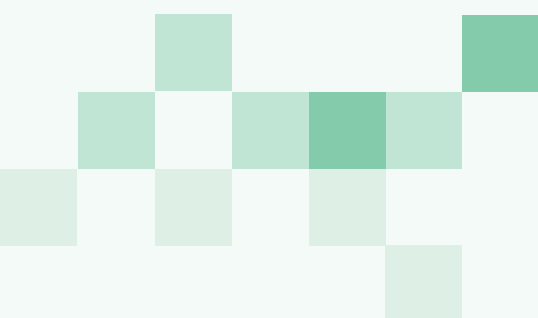
Conversion and outcomes

Ultimately, the measure of the success of an experience is whether or not it persuades the shopper to advance through the journey and make a purchase.

Session outcomes are the result of a combination of the quality of experience provided and the quality (that is: relevance) of the audience attracted via targeting.

As you can see below, last year retail flirted with flat growth, the result of a scant gain in traffic, falling conversion rates and inflation-infused average order values.

Conversion rate	Average order value	Revenue per visit	Revenue
−3.5% ↓	**+3.2%** ↑	**−0.4%** ↓	**+1.1%** ↑
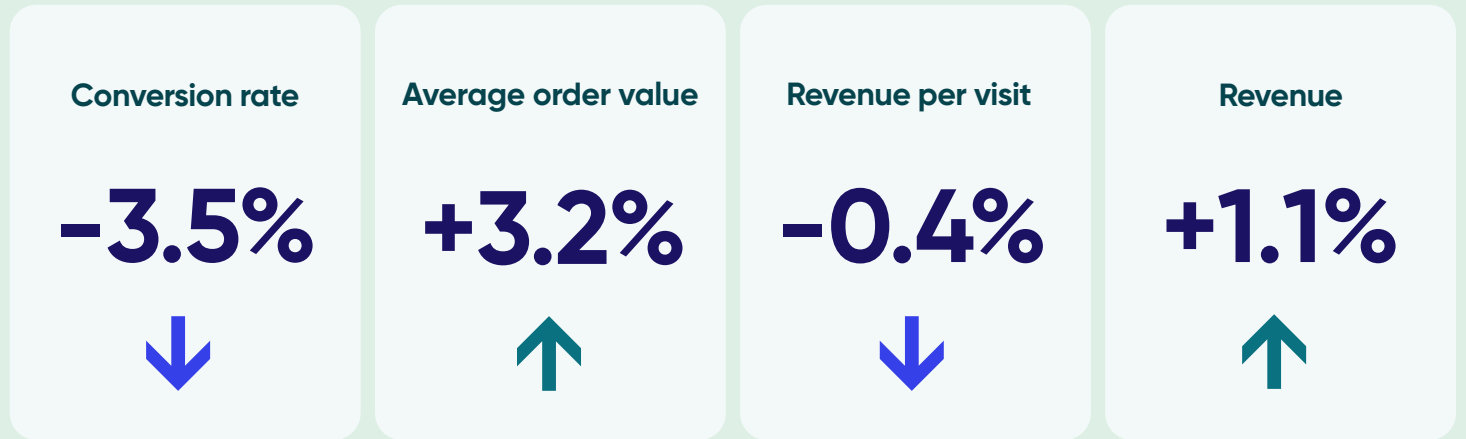
But what do 2022's dismal outcomes tell us about the quality of experience retailers are currently providing (and need to provide) and how accurately they're targeting inbound traffic?

Increasing bounce rates spell bad news for overall outcomes

A bounce is the worst possible outcome of any digital session. You put effort (and resources) into attracting visitors; a bounce means that at least part of that effort has been wasted.

Although a 1 percentage point decline might seem negligible, when fewer sessions get beyond the initial landing page—and are increasingly being paid for—this has a damaging ripple effect on outcomes overall.
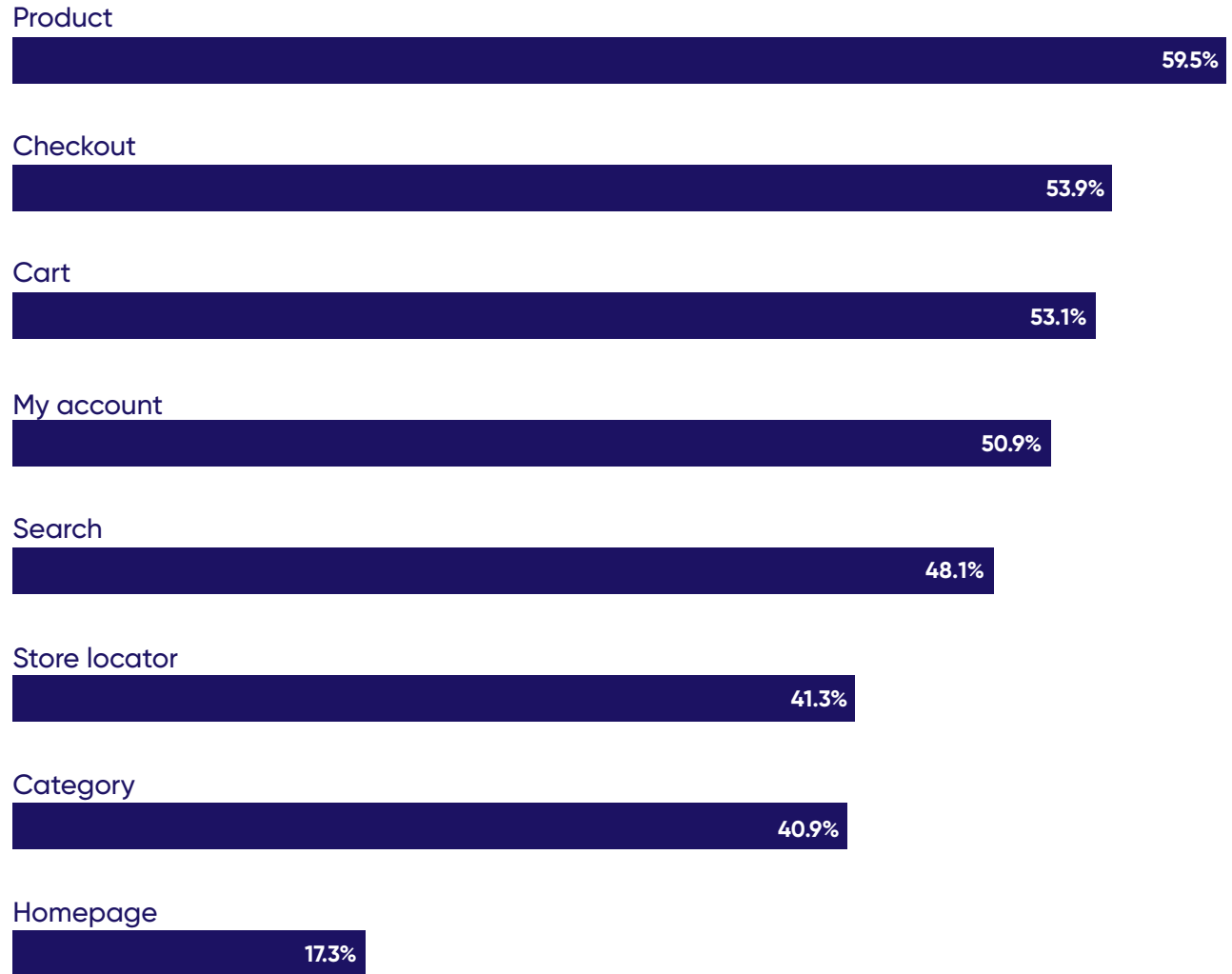
■ Bounce rate by industry, year-over-year

■ 2021-Q4 ▨ 2022-Q4

	2021-Q4	2022-Q4
All retail	46.0%	47.0%
Consumer electronics	57.3%	57.5%
Fashion	43.3%	43.9%
Grocery	47.1%	52.4%
Health and beauty	46.2%	45.1%
Home goods and furnishings	45.7%	47.4%
Luxury	46.2%	46.5%
Other retail	48.0%	49.2%
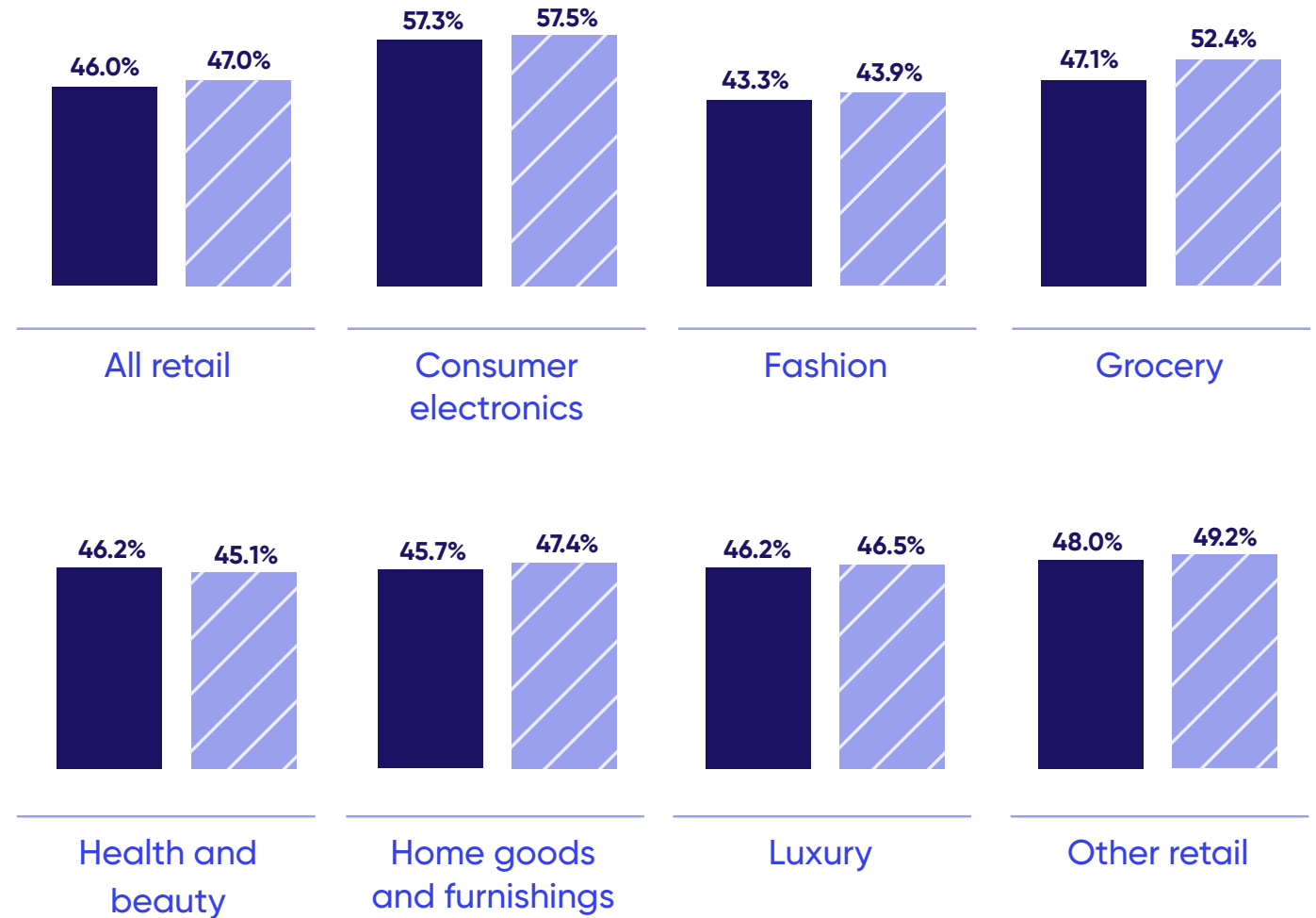
Finding a proper landing

Traffic needs to land somewhere, so choose wisely. The product detail page—yes, the very one that is so crucial across digital—is also most likely to bounce shoppers. With campaign proliferation across marketing channels, digital teams must be thoughtful when choosing where to land shoppers. Monitoring bounce by page (and campaign) and optimizing accordingly, can help reduce early exits.
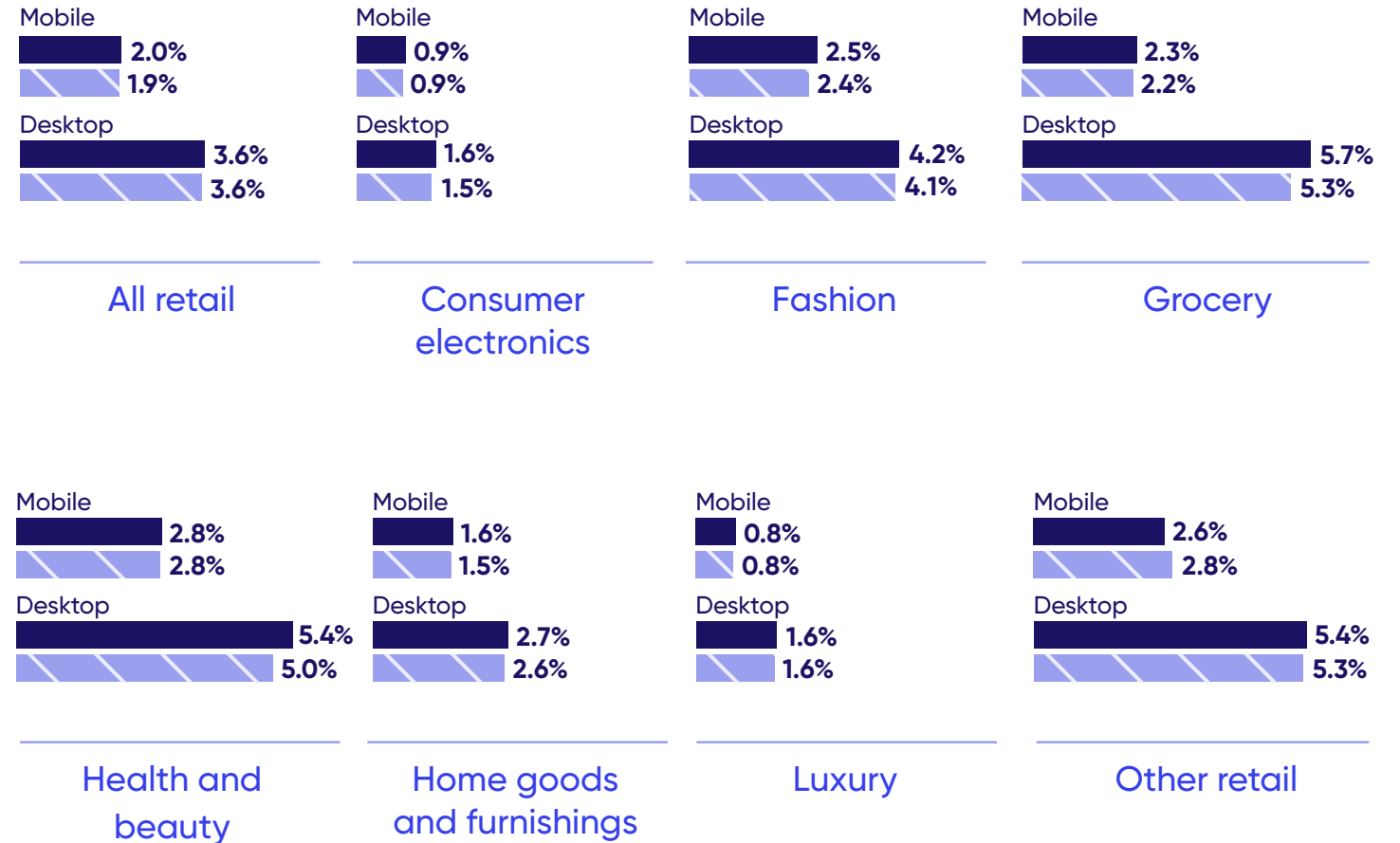
■ **Bounce rate by page type**

Product
59.5%

Checkout
53.9%

Cart
53.1%

My account
50.9%

Search
48.1%

Store locator
41.3%

Category
40.9%

Homepage
17.3%

Conversion rates fell across the board

The Q4 period was marked by conversion rate declines. Interestingly, desktop sessions continue to convert far better than their smaller screen peers, a clear sign that—despite the growing dominance of mobile traffic—shoppers are still far more intentional when browsing with the larger device.

■ Conversion rate by industry, by device, year-over-year

■ 2021-Q4 ▨ 2022-Q4

All retail
Mobile
- 2.0%
- 1.9%

Desktop
- 3.6%
- 3.6%

Consumer electronics
Mobile
- 0.9%
- 0.9%

Desktop
- 1.6%
- 1.5%

Fashion
Mobile
- 2.5%
- 2.4%

Desktop
- 4.2%
- 4.1%

Grocery
Mobile
- 2.3%
- 2.2%

Desktop
- 5.7%
- 5.3%

Health and beauty
Mobile
- 2.8%
- 2.8%

Desktop
- 5.4%
- 5.0%

Home goods and furnishings
Mobile
- 1.6%
- 1.5%

Desktop
- 2.7%
- 2.6%

Luxury
Mobile
- 0.8%
- 0.8%

Desktop
- 1.6%
- 1.6%

Other retail
Mobile
- 2.6%
- 2.8%

Desktop
- 5.4%
- 5.3%

Mobile captures more revenue

Mobile is not only first for traffic, but also wins on revenue, capturing **53.8%** of all sales.

The range of revenue by device is still wide across retail, and shows that desktop is still meaningful. That's most true for the retail verticals where shoppers are exerting high purchase consideration: Grocery, Home Goods & Furnishings and Consumer Electronics.

■ Revenue share by device

■ Mobile   ■ Desktop

All retail

| Mobile 53.8% | Desktop 46.2% |

Consumer electronics

| Mobile 47.1% | Desktop 52.9% |

Fashion

| Mobile 61.2% | Desktop 38.8% |

Grocery

| Mobile 37.2% | Desktop 62.8% |

Health and beauty

| Mobile 58.5% | Desktop 41.5% |

Home goods and furnishings

| Mobile 45.5% | Desktop 54.5% |

Luxury

| Mobile 57.9% | Desktop 42.1% |

Other retail

| Mobile 48.5% | Desktop 51.5% |
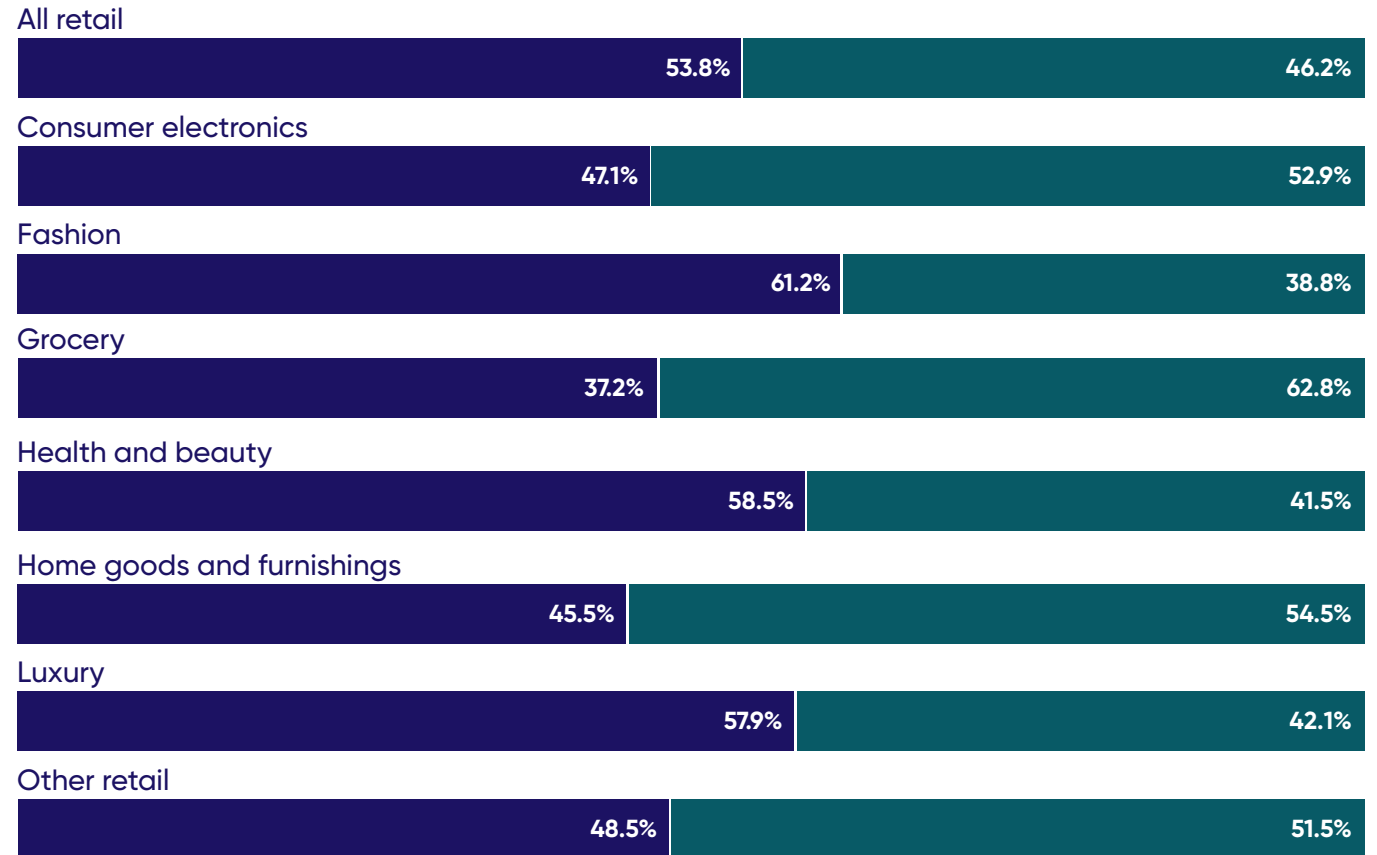
Average order value nudges up

The impact of economic forces on the retail sector is an ever-present—and usually clearly negative or positive—reality.

The economy's effect on average order value in 2022 is, however, a more nuanced outcome. Inflation-driven price increases can claim nearly all the credit for the gains, although promotional discounts tempered prices more than the year prior, when low inventories allowed for more full price sales.

Average order value, by industry, year-over-year

■ 2021-Q4   ▨ 2022-Q4

All retail
- $148.28
- $145.80

Consumer electronics
- $339.44
- $352.74

Fashion
- $110.74
- $116.74

Grocery
- $94.35
- $92.94

Health and beauty
- $81.32
- $86.41

Home goods and furnishings
- $181.25
- $204.21

Luxury
- $422.66
- $388.06

Other retail
- $120.80
- $125.65
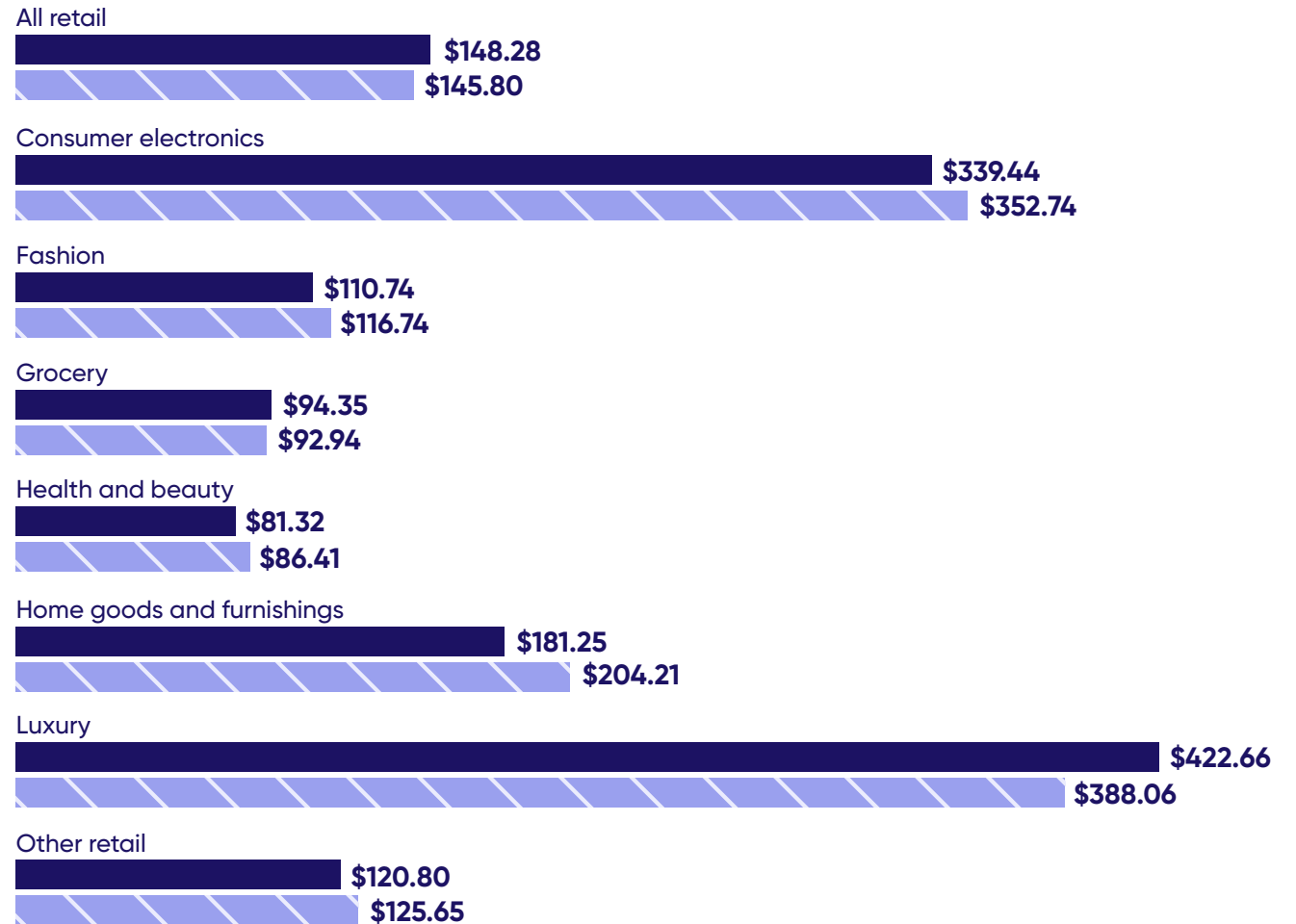
Revenue per visit (RPV) varies widely

Some may exhale a sigh of relief to see that RPV came in flat year-over-year.

But not so fast: RPV shouldn't be considered in isolation against the prior year, but instead needs to be coupled with cost-per-visit to understand a net of per-visit profitability.

With more paid traffic and the recent trend towards rising acquisition costs, a flat RPV is actually a far costlier reality than at first blush.

■ Revenue per visit, by industry

RPV range ● Low   ● Median   ● High

Industry	Low	Median	High
All retail	$1.46	$2.79	$5.13
Consumer electronics	$1.29	$3.21	$5.49
Fashion	$1.66	$2.78	$4.54
Grocery	$1.16	$3.53	$6.99
Health and beauty	$1.05	$2.23	$4.15
Home goods and furnishings	$1.42	$2.78	$6.68
Luxury	$1.65	$3.50	$6.25
Other retail	$1.51	$3.31	$6.49

RPV range represents the 25th, 50th and 75th percentiles of revenue per visit

Expert take

Mike Edmonds
Business Strategy Lead Worldwide RCG
Microsoft

Microsoft

If not for inflation-boosted average order values, retail would have experienced revenue declines in 2022.

But declining conversion rates are merely the result of all that came before: Traffic changes, increased bounce rates, and lower consumption. Winners will be those that treat these symptoms to uplevel the experience.

Question to Expert

Which digital experience KPI is most critical to optimize for to deliver stronger outcomes?

Expert Response

■ Improving conversion and profitability. By elevating shopping experiences for products and services, you can maintain differentiation while giving consumers what they want and hitting your business metrics.

■ Lowering cost of acquisition and maximizing customer lifetime value. And how do you do this? By maximizing the value of your data—we have access to more data than we ever have before. By building a foundation from data, we can focus on those clear business outcomes and be better prepared and resilient in the future.
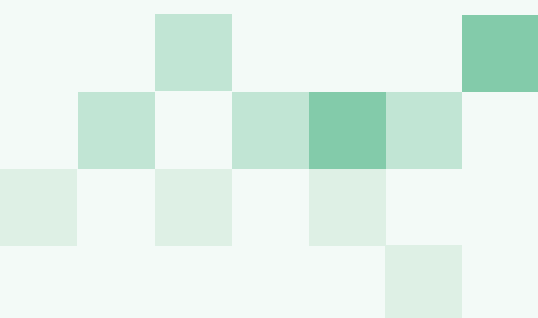
User frustration

It's often difficult to measure the quality of a digital experience—and attempts to do so tend to be too narrowly focused on conversion.

Taking a deeper look into the elements that precede (and underpin) session outcomes—frustration and activity—uncovers the real human experience that drives every customer journey.

Frustration is the villain of the digital experience, stymying visits and curbing conversion. Activity plays the role of hero, providing hope for earning good outcomes.

What do we mean by 'frustration'?

Frustration includes the specific moments of friction observed during the on site experience, including:

Slow page load
Page loads that exceed **3 seconds**

Rage clicks
An element was clicked at least **3 times** in less than **2 seconds**

Multiple button interactions
A button was clicked at least **3 times**

Multiple field interactions
A field was clicked at least **3 times**

Multiple use target
An element was clicked at least **3 times**

Frustration is far too common

With frustration factors impacting one in three visits, friction is a sore spot in the digital experience that shouldn't be ignored.

Slow page loads (those that take more than 3 seconds) are the most frequent offender, impacting 1 in 5 sessions.

■ **Share of visits with frustration, by industry**

Any frustration factor

Industry	Share
All retail	37%
Consumer electronics	32%
Fashion	38%
Grocery	37%
Health and beauty	40%
Home goods and furnishings	37%
Luxury	39%
Other retail	37%

Slow page loads

Industry	Share
All retail	19%
Consumer electronics	19%
Fashion	18%
Grocery	20%
Health and beauty	24%
Home goods and furnishings	19%
Luxury	19%
Other retail	17%

Rage clicks

Industry	Share
All retail	6%
Consumer electronics	5%
Fashion	7%
Grocery	5%
Health and beauty	6%
Home goods and furnishings	6%
Luxury	5%
Other retail	6%

Slow pages are sabotaging sessions

The leading cause of friction—slow page loads—grinds the experience to a halt. As page loads slow, bounces increase and session depth falls.

■ Bounce rate and session depth, by load time

■ Session depth
●— Bounce rate

Session depth

Bounce rate

Load time	Session depth	Bounce rate
< 1 second	5.8 pages	43.8%
1-2 seconds	4.9 pages	46.9%
> 2 seconds	4.9 pages	47.7%
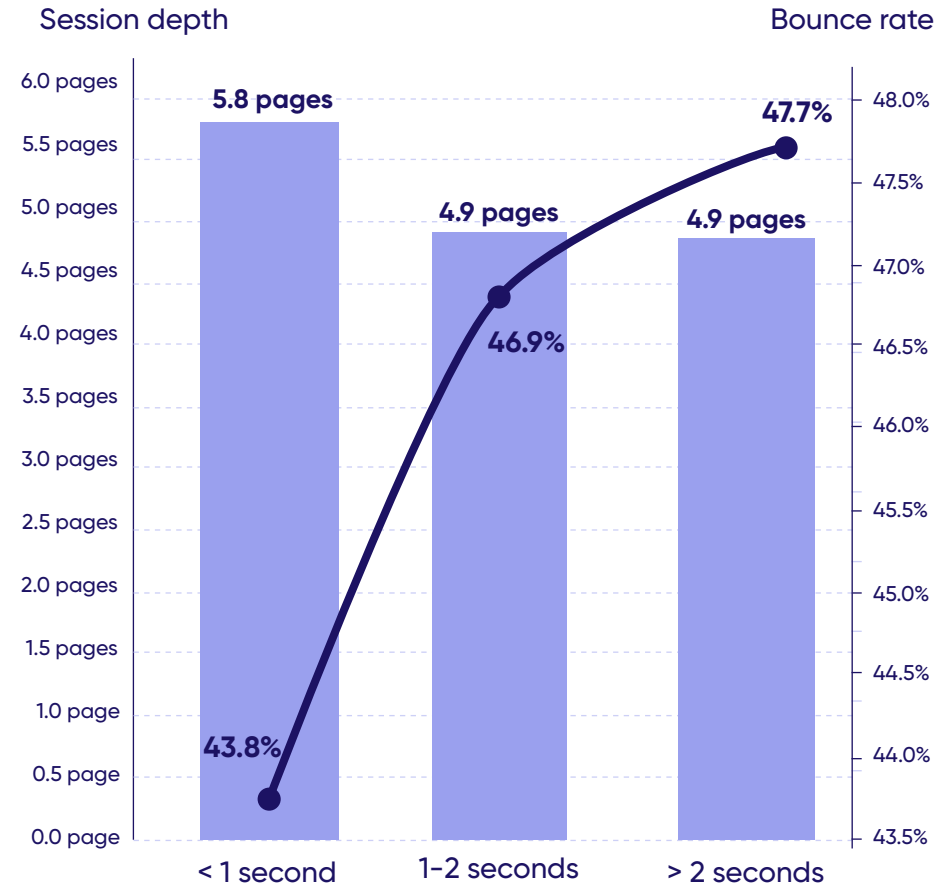
Active customers reward sites

Activity measures how much visitors are interacting with your content—and it's critical in helping to predict outcomes.

Sites with more active visitors deliver stronger conversion rates and lower bounce rates. (The relationship between bounces and conversions is crucial, since lowering bounce rates gives businesses more opportunities to engage and inspire shoppers to act.)

Activity = Time spent interacting (e.g. clicking, swiping, scrolling, typing) during the session
―――――――――――――――――――――
Total time spent during the session

■ **Conversion rates and bounce rates by activity**

Conversion rate ▮
Bounce rate ●―

Conversion rate

Bounce rate

- Low activity: Conversion rate 1.98%, Bounce rate 55.9%
- Average activity: Conversion rate 2.25%, Bounce rate 45.7%
- High activity: Conversion rate 2.79%, Bounce rate 43.3%
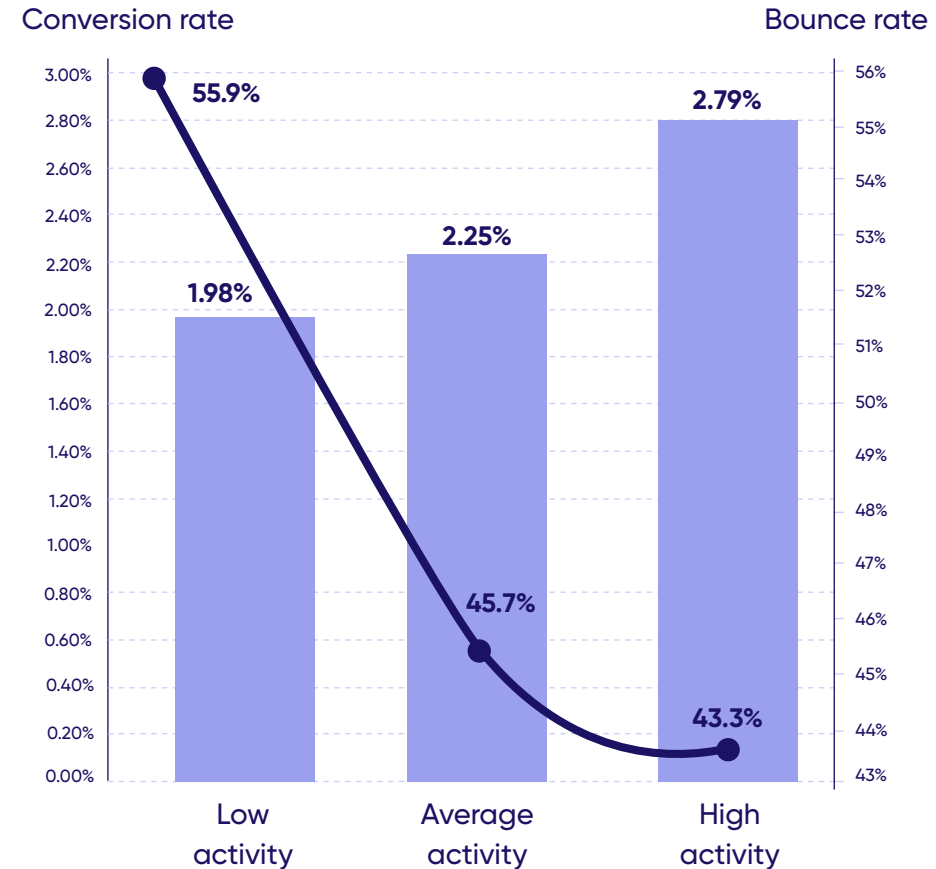
Low, average and high metrics represent the average of the bottom 25%, middle 50% and top 25% quartiles

Expert take

Kevin Delli
Head of Brand & E-Merchandising
Rakuten

Rakuten

Frustration is a (far too) common feature in today's digital experiences—and yet the damage it does is underappreciated by digital teams.

Two frustration factors that are particularly ripe for elimination are the dastardly tag-team of slow page loads and rage clicks.

Question to expert

How should digital leaders rationalize reducing friction amongst other customer experience optimizations?

Expert Response
Behavioral data must be taken seriously to better understand the expectations and frustrations of our users. We need to set up regular analysis of our user journey to ensure that the objectives of our new features are well understood. If not, make changes in an agile way to meet the needs and retain our users.

Explore the Rakuten case study →
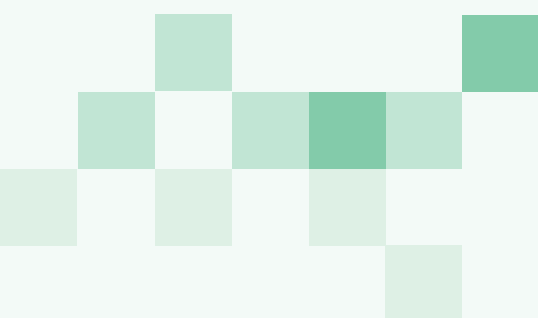
The cost of frustration—and the ROI of addressing it

Frustration is expensive. It causes headaches for more than 1 in 3 site visitors and takes its toll across the shopper journey.

But frustration also provides a clear and addressable opportunity. Those businesses that can identify and minimize frustration in their customer journeys will earn a significant return on their optimization.

For example, those who vanquish slow page loads, the undisputed leading frustration factor, stand to reap the rewards in revenue. Here's how: Sites that accelerate page speed from the slower speed bracket of <2 seconds into the fastest group, >1 second, stand to reduce bounce rates by nearly **4 percentage points**, from **47.7%** to **43.8%**.

Fewer bounces allows for greater session depth. By retaining more shoppers across the journey, retailers can lift revenue by **+7.46%**.

For a $100 million GMV retailer, this equates to a **$7.46M** incremental revenue opportunity.

Summary

Top 5 digital experience metrics to track

Here are 5 critical digital experience metrics you need to understand (and optimize) the retail customer experience in 2023:

Scroll rate

Scroll rate helps gauge how much of a page's content a visitor is exposed to. It's particularly useful for judging the results of an A/B test at the page level. Our analysis shows that visitors typically scroll almost exactly halfway down a page, suggesting that compelling content, offers and CTA should be moved 'above the fold' to be seen and engaged with.

Scroll rate in retail was down -2.7% in 2022, from 51.6% in 2021 to 50.2%

Activity

Activity measures how frequently visitors are engaging with your site via the clicks, scrolls, swipes, taps and hovers they make across the journey. You should encourage activity in your journeys; sites with high rates of activity ward off bounces and encourage deeper (and more valuable) visits.

Activity was highest on category pages (32.7%) and search (30.3%)

Frustration

Frustration is present in more than 1 in 3 visits (37%)—and is a session (and conversion) killer which you should seek to minimize wherever possible. The most negative effect on visitor sessions is caused by the most common frustration factor: slow page loads.

Most common frustrations:
Slow page loads: 18.6% of sessions
Rage clicks: 5.9% of sessions

Session depth

Session depth is a measure of consumption. Digital is trending towards shallower sessions, as more traffic moves to mobile and visitors 'graze' more. So make sure you use your content and optimize your shopper journeys wisely.

Session depth fell to an average of 5.0 pages, a -2.3% decline year-over-year

Conversion rate

Conversion rate is the capstone metric in ecommerce, the ultimate measure of a visit's success. But, site conversion rate is only the beginning. Tracking segmented views of conversion rate over time – by visitor type, purchase frequency, marketing channel and other attributes – helps digital leaders uncover underperformers along the shopper journey and craft testing strategies to lift results.

Conversion rate fell -3.5% to 2.36% in Q4 2022

Make every visit count

Forrester finds **602%** ROI with Contentsquare in new Total Economic Impact™ study

If these benefits weren't enough to persuade you of the importance of digital experience, we'll also call out that having a superior digital experience has been shown to fuel growth. In a recent commissioned Total Economic Impact™ study conducted by Forrester Consulting, companies achieved a 602% return on investment* using a (well-ah-hem-our) Digital Experience Analytics Platform.

Get the study

* Forrester's study is based on the aggregated interviewees' experiences and the results combined into a single composite organization over three years.

About Contentsquare

Contentsquare moves beyond traditional analytics to enable an unprecedented understanding of the customer experience that transforms your business. With intuitive technology that reveals the behavior, intent and feelings of any and every user, we allow businesses to deliver more human experiences quickly, while ensuring privacy and accessibility. This results in faster growth, greater agility and happier customers.

With Contentsquare, you have the power to make the digital world more human.

Learn more at __contentsquare.com__

602% ROI
with payback in just
6 months

2,914 hours
reclaimed from
productivity gains

20–30%
more conversion

$3.32M
in profit from site
optimization

$805k
in savings in redundant
software

$3.28M
of income recovered

Methodology

The Retail Digital Experience Benchmark report is a set of aggregated and anonymized insights of digital performance. Strict aggregation measures are employed to ensure anonymity. These measures include requirements on analysis set size, diversity, and consistency, in order to present credible and reliable information that is insulated from concentration risk.

To qualify for inclusion in the year-over-year analysis, each site must have operated throughout the entire analysis period, in this case October 2021 through December 2022. For current period analyses, the analysis period is Q4 2022.

Additional data hygiene factors are applied to ensure accurate metric calculation.

This edition of the Retail Digital Experience Benchmark report analyzed more than 20 billion sessions and 100 billion page views across 1493 websites.

Data may not be exact due to rounding.

Data footnotes are noted throughout the report to provide additional clarity on analysis.

The The Retail Digital Experience Benchmark report is not directly indicative of the operational performance of Contentsquare or its reported financial metrics. The performance metrics shared within this report are calculated based on the analysis set, and should not be taken as a guarantee of site performance.