

Kohl's digital expansion further blurs lines between stores, online

Kohl's Corp. is sharpening the synergy between stores and e-commerce this year, building on recent strides from early efforts. In the fourth quarter, digital sales posted double-digit increases, "reflecting the positive impacts that our investments are having on customer engagement," said CEO Michelle Gass, citing recent investments in the mobile app, "Your Price," personalized search, "Smart Cart," and fulfillment options such as Buy-online-pickup-in-store (BOPUS) and buy-online-ship-to-store (BOSS). "Mobile again represented the majority of our traffic growth, at over 70% of digital traffic and more than half of digital sales," she continued.

"A key focus of our omni-channel strategy has been and will continue to be amplifying the role and relevancy of our stores," she noted. "Our stores are a key asset and differentiator for Kohl's, and we continue to innovate to make them more relevant and compelling for our customers." These sites, dubbed "Omni Power Centers," are being equipped with technology and process enhancements that allow for more efficiency in processing digital orders. But there are more such efforts planned for this year.

Additionally, Kohl's is optimizing its fulfillment network and is working to grow its online assortment. At the store level, there are also several planned innovations, like right-sizing units and aligning with other businesses – including grocers, specialty shops and fitness companies. In fact, Kohl's today announced its partnership with Planet Fitness at 10 locations, initially.

Building on home, the retailer this fall will launch the exclusive lifestyle collection Scott Living at Kohl's program with HGTV Property Brothers stars Drew and Jonathan Scott. The line will encompass furniture, rugs and other decorative accessories as well as bedding, bath and kitchen textiles. ■ *Source: HFN*

Global consumer trends revealed in new Euromonitor report

Global market research firm Euromonitor International has released a report highlighting the top global consumer trends to watch in 2019. The emerging trends provide insight into changing consumer values and explore how their behaviour is disrupting business globally.

Intelligence is the common thread linking all trends in 2019. In a world full of choices, consumer needs and wants are fast-changing. "How we live is so centrally dependent on the choices available that the biggest issue we face is how to make sense of it all," Euromonitor International director of lifestyles, Gina Westbrook says.

The boundaries of old age are shifting as people live longer and take better care of themselves. Older consumers want to be treated as younger, according to the 'Age Agnostic' trend and should be at the centre of business strategies. "Older consumers today have much more in common with the values and priorities of younger generations than one might think," she says.

Later lifers are also in better financial shape than the rest of the population, boasting the highest spending power among all age groups. People aged 50-59 years old earned 28 per cent above the average income of all age groups in 2018.

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The Loner Living trend will become increasingly important as people, especially older consumers, break the stigma of living alone and embrace their independent lifestyles, Euromonitor International head of lifestyles, Alison Angus says. "Products and services that help these consumers celebrate their proudly independent lifestyles will succeed in capturing this growing market segment."

'Everyone is an Expert' showed the switch in power between retailer and consumer and the need for digital consumers to absorb and share information. As internet retailing continues to increase all industries have to adapt to consumer demands to stay relevant. However, over-reliance on the internet is becoming a source of stress, and this perception is growing fastest in the US, Australia and South Korea. ■ *Source: Euromonitor*

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