

Social Commerce In Our Lives

Safe Social Commerce: The Next Shopping Frontier

(NAPSA)—With more than 500 million active users spending over 700 billion minutes a month on its site, Facebook has become a premier platform for socializing, sharing, searching and, now, shopping online. The emerging trend of selling and buying merchandise through Facebook and other social media platforms is here and it's exploding. Booz & Company estimates that the dollar volume of goods sold through social media overall could increase sixfold, from \$5 billion in 2010 to \$30 billion in 2015. Businesses and consumers alike refer to this paradigm as "Social Commerce," a fusion of social media and e-commerce that enables consumers to shop directly through their social networks.

Many stores are leveraging social networks to allow consumers to execute transactions in the comfort of their own Facebook pages, where attention is high and the user's likes and dislikes are clear. The Social Commerce premise is that the focus is on people instead of products. There is a treasure trove of data based on users' interests on their Facebook pages, and businesses can finally tailor the presentation of merchandise to offer a truly customized shopping experience. Businesses can now sell con-



Online shopping can be safer when you know what signs to seek.

sumers exactly what they want, and consumers are reaping the benefits.

Social Commerce helps businesses offer consumers exclusive deals and special promotions while enabling them to connect with, listen to, understand and engage with their customers to improve the overall shopping experience. Furthermore, the information and content on Facebook is "shared," meaning that friends can update each other on their recent online shopping sprees.

But in addition to benefits and opportunities, emerging communications channels always come with some new potential risks, and Social Commerce is no exception. The main concerns for consumers are security and privacy. Especially when phishing scams, identity theft and hackers are constantly in

the headlines, consumers are more aware than ever of the need for online security and identity protection. With Social Commerce, cybercriminals are more likely to exploit the inherent trust that social networking sites enjoy. So how can consumers gain confidence in Social Commerce?

To know if a website, link and transaction are safe, the first thing to look for is an SSL Certificate, a technology that enables encryption when users connect to a website. When the lock icon appears in an Internet browser, this means SSL is in place, encrypting the site visitor's information.

Symantec, the provider of VeriSign® SSL, has been working with a number of social commerce platform providers to offer enhanced security to organizations with a fan store on Facebook. When fans visit a fan store protected by VeriSign SSL, they will see the familiar "VeriSign Trusted" seal that more than 100,000 online businesses choose to show that their transactions are secure.

When consumers buy directly on their Facebook pages and see SSL, they know they can trust the businesses they "like" and that their transactions are protected with the most advanced and proven security technology.