

Mobile shopping apps

In the world of shopping, competition is fierce. Shopping malls are no longer just for buying and browsing, but also places for entertainment and socializing. As a result, retailers are always on the lookout for new ways to beat their rivals. Now, with online shopping showing no signs of slowing, mobile shopping apps are offering customers even more than the ability to make a purchase on the go.

Over two thirds of Internet users in the Asia Pacific region use mobile shopping apps. These apps provide everything from product descriptions and reviews to price comparisons and both in-store and online availability. Customers have information about future events and discounts at their fingertips. Whether they are looking to buy a new item of clothing or order groceries, there's an app to help. One of the most exciting aspects of mobile shopping apps is their potential for personalization. This means making the customer feel appreciated as an individual person, not "just another shopper". For example, the apps can find out a customer's likes and dislikes, and make product recommendations based on their preferences. They can also inform customers of upcoming promotions, particularly of the products they are most likely to buy. Some apps can let customers know when they are near a store, and offer an incentive for them to visit that store and make a purchase. For example, if someone is walking near a branch of their favorite coffee shop, the app might offer them a 20% discount on any medium-sized beverage. Some apps even offer shoppers the chance to design their own products – customized shoes or nail polish, anyone?

1 Read the text and check the sentences True (T) or False (F).

- a Online shopping is becoming less popular. T F
- b Mobile shopping apps are successful in the Asia Pacific region. T F
- c Mobile shopping apps make customers feel appreciated by offering price comparisons. T F
- d Most mobile shopping apps offer discounts of around 20%. T F
- e Apps for designing your own products have now hit the market. T F

2 Complete the sentences with the words in the box.

available	branches	competitive	customization
incentives	preferences	recommend	socialize

- a** The retail industry is very _____ and it can be difficult for companies to stand out from the crowd.
- b** To encourage customers to visit stores, mobile shopping apps offer a variety of _____.
- c** Many mobile shopping apps _____ new products to customers.
- d** Promotional offers can differ between _____ of the same retailer.
- e** Designing your own mugs is an example of product _____.
- f** Information about customer _____ helps companies to target the shoppers most likely to buy their products.
- g** Shoppers can use apps to find out whether a product is _____ in a nearby store.
- h** Shopping malls have become places for people to _____ with one another.