

The benefits of shopping on social media

- Shoppers can easily compare prices and search for the best deal for their purchase, search for coupons
- Consumers can browse and buy products anytime and anywhere without leaving their homes.
- Online shopping integrates seamlessly into people daily scrolling habits as we spend more time with our electronic devices
- Social media algorithms track user preferences and show targeted ads to shoppers so that they can easily discover products that match their specific tastes.
- Features like live-streaming (e.g., Instagram Live, TikTok Shop) allow buyers to see products in real-time, ask questions, and interact with the host before making a purchase.
- Buyers have all the comments, likes, and reviews from real users or even their own friends at their fingertips so that they can learn more about the products before buying them

The benefits of selling on social media

- Social media sellers do not need to pay expensive physical store rent, utility bills, or hire as many floor staff.
- A physical store only attracts people in the neighborhood, but a social media shop can reach millions of users globally.
- A post or a product can even go viral, bringing in massive sales overnight.
- Sellers can build strong relationships and brand loyalty by replying to comments, hosting Q&A sessions, and using polls on their stories.
- Platforms provide sellers with detailed insights (e.g., age, location, and active hours of their audience), allowing them to adjust their marketing strategies effectively.

How shopping through social media may affect traditional businesses

- Traditional "brick-and-mortar" stores may lose foot traffic and sales because they cannot compete with the lower prices and convenience of online shops.

- It forces traditional businesses to digitise. Many traditional shops are now adopting an hybrid / "O2O" (Online-to-Offline) model, where they use social media to promote their physical stores.
- To survive, physical stores must offer things social media cannot—like excellent in-person customer service with more human touch, the ability to touch and try on products, or an aesthetic store environment for taking photos.

Other points

- Since it is so easy to set up a shop on social media, there are many fake accounts selling counterfeit goods or taking money without delivering the product.
- Because buying is just a click away and flashy ads are everywhere, teenagers and young adults might spend money they don't have, leading to financial problems. It can lead to impulsive shopping behaviours / become addicted to shopping .