



## Consumers have trust issues with online shopping that can be remedied

**Despite consumers spending more time and money online, more than three-quarters (78%) are wary of the freshness and 63% have food safety concerns for items that they buy online, according to Mintel.**

Online food and beverage purchases are continuing to rise with a few categories lagging behind the overall growth curve, namely fresh foods, due to some trust issues consumers still have, Mintel research found.

While online grocery shopping has been on the rise, it appears that freshness is a significant barrier as just 10% of Americans say they buy fresh produce, meat, poultry and/or fish online, said Mintel senior e-commerce analyst, Matt Lindner.

In fact, 69% of consumers overall are hesitant to purchase an item they can't see or touch in advance and 75% prefer to sample product before buying, according to Mintel.

"Americans are exercising caution when shopping online as they believe that purchasing in store is the most trustworthy way to determine the safety, quality and/or freshness of the items they buy," Lindner said.

"As a result, retailers have to go above and beyond in terms of offering more product information and anticipating any potential concerns from shoppers."

### Where online retailers should focus their efforts

Online shopping has been associated with convenience and ease, but replicating the in-store experience in a digital format has proved challenging for most.

Online retailers would be using their time and efforts wisely by promoting cost savings and in-depth product information to build consumer trust and communicate quality, Lindner noted.

"In doing so, consumers will have less hesitation about adding a product to their online shopping cart and subsequently completing a purchase," he said.



More than half (56%) of American shoppers said the reason they shop online is to search for good deals, followed by wanting to save time (46%), and desire to avoid a physical store (42%).

“Retailers and brands don’t always have to offer the lowest price in order to get shoppers to buy online, rather than in-store,” Lindner added.

“Offering specific products or selling consumers on the fact that buying online allows them to avoid a trip to the store, and ultimately saving them time, could be enough to win business.”

Reordering options like Amazon’s “Subscribe and Save” are an appealing feature to busy consumers, especially women (48%) who are more likely than men (37%) to make online food or drink purchases.

### Power of word of mouth

American consumers look to family and friends before most other sources when learning about new products – Mintel found that roughly 30% of consumers said they do not use the online channel to discover new products and brands.

Mintel research showed that word of mouth may be more effective than digital tools when it comes to encouraging purchase decisions. Online shoppers cited family and friend recommendations as the top reason for a food or beverage purchase followed closely by stumbling across a new product while searching for something else online.

The effectiveness of word of mouth is especially true for meal kit delivery services, Mintel added, which provide a good platform for brands to expose consumers to new products.

“Online stores have grown increasingly sophisticated in terms of spotlighting product details in order to better inform shoppers; however, there ultimately is no substitute for the endorsement from a family member or friend when it comes to potentially spending money on a new item,” Linder said.

“This creates an opportunity for retailers to increase their word-of-mouth marketing by investing more in digital advertising or rewarding consumers that refer others in the form of loyalty points or discounts on future purchases.”

**Lien article complet :** <https://www.foodnavigator-usa.com/Article/2018/05/22/Consumers-have-trust-issues-when-it-comes-to-online-shopping-that-can-be-remedied-says-Mintel>