

Preparing for an Explosion of Digital Commerce



A Practical Checklist for Brands and Publishers

AI isn't just changing how people search for products; it's changing how they shop across search, social, creator content and answer engines.

Based on recent forecasts that **AI will drive more than a 30 percent increase in Western digital shopping revenue over the next 24 months**, this checklist helps brands and publishers translate that macro shift into concrete steps. Use it to stress-test your current approach and identify the gaps you need to close to capitalize on the impending growth.

Treating the dramatic increase in online shopping as a planning assumption changes the questions leadership teams should be asking. It shifts the conversation from "How do we protect what we have?" to "What needs to happen for us to earn our share?"

Make your products legible to AI answer engines

- ☐ Map your top revenue-driving SKUs against key shopping questions customers actually ask (best price, place, version, and time to buy).
- ☐ Align PDP copy, structured data and feeds so that AI systems can reliably understand price, availability, location and key attributes.
- ☐ Audit how your brand and products appear today in AI overviews and answer engines for priority queries.
- ☐ Create a simple internal "AI surface" report: a snapshot of where your products already surface in AI answers and where you're invisible.

Treat social and creator channels as AI-powered storefronts

- ☐ Identify the categories where your shoppers already "window shop" via influencers and creator content.
- ☐ Build a short list of creators whose audience, tone & verticals align to your core SKUs, then test structured programs instead of one-off sponsorships.
- ☐ Make it easy for creators to sell: standardized links, clear offers and assets that can be adapted or AI-augmented without losing brand integrity.
- ☐ Define how you will measure incremental lift from creator-driven discovery versus your existing paid and organic channels.

Reduce friction across the entire path to purchase

- ☐ List the top three journeys your shoppers take (search → PDP → cart, social → landing page → checkout, etc.) and count the steps.
- ☐ For each journey, identify one step where AI could remove friction: better on-site search, smarter recommendations or pre-filled checkout experiences.
- ☐ Standardize your "price story" across surfaces so the offer is consistent whether a shopper arrives from an ad, answer engine or a creator video.
- ☐ Set specific targets for reducing time-to-purchase or steps-to-purchase over the next 12 months.

Rebalance your measurement for an AI-shaped funnel

- ☐ Update attribution models to account for AI surfaces and creator content as distinct touchpoints, not just "social" or "referral."
- ☐ Track how often AI-driven or creator-driven sessions include add-to-cart, wishlist or save actions, even when the purchase happens later.
- ☐ Build reporting that compares performance across classic search, AI answers and creator channels side by side.
- ☐ Share these metrics with finance & leadership so the uplift in sales becomes a shared planning assumption, not just a marketing talking point.

Organize for continuous experimentation

- ☐ Designate an internal owner (or committee) for "AI shopping experiments" with a clear mandate and small, recurring test budget.
- ☐ Set a simple cadence: one new AI/creator experiment per quarter, with a written learning summary each time.
- ☐ Capture playbooks for what works so you can scale quickly across brands, categories or regions.
- ☐ Use learnings from early experiments to refine your 12-24 month roadmap instead of waiting for a perfect long-term strategy.