

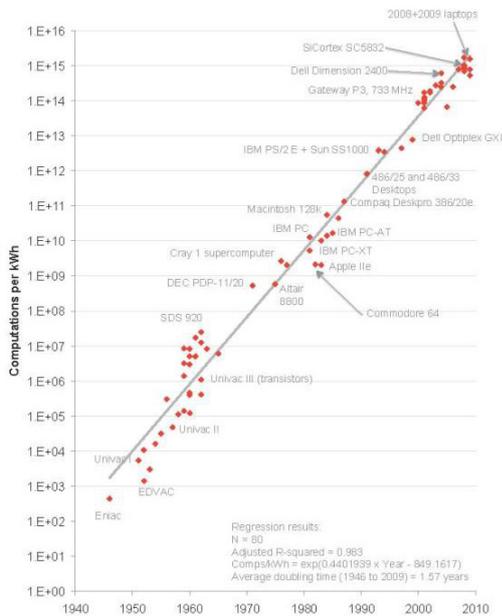


“Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic.”

Arthur C. Clarke

eCommerce Trends **2017**

As the years roll on, so does technology! And 2017 is no different. We’ve compiled a list of eCommerce trends to keep your business at the forefront this year.



Phone Power

Powerful trends have driven the astonishing increase in mobile phones' capability.

One is Koomey's Law. It's held up since the 1950s and states the amount of energy needed for a given amount of computation halves roughly every year and a half.

There's no reason it'll collapse in 2017. So, by year's end, a new phone will need 50% less battery than what one would have in mid-2016. And 99% less than in 2007.

Battery efficiency itself is also improving, albeit sluggishly.

What does all this mean?

Put simply, in 2017, you'll be able to do much more with your phone – and for longer with more battery.

This means that you will need to be more focused on mobile devices in your marketing than ever before. Whether it's ensuring that your website works well on phones and tablets as well as desktops, or taking advantage of push notifications and beacons, you need to consider mobile at all times. Even email, that marketing staple, has been rejuvenated by marketers taking advantage of consumers reading emails on their devices, rather than waiting until they're sat at their computer.



Quirky Queries

Fake News

The way we search, and what we find when we do, will change in 2017.

'Fake News' itself became newsworthy following last year's U.S. election where it was alleged fictitious news items skewed its outcome.

And it's big business, not just a writing exercise for journalism students.

Compelling Fake News has potential to earn thousands in ad revenue for its users on a pay per click basis.

Why does it matter?

Google and Facebook, accused of promoting Fake News in search results, have pledged to cut off this source of profiteering and revise their algorithms to screen it out.

ECommerce firms will accordingly need to look again at their SEO, to avoid being misidentified and falling down the ranks.

Voice Searches

Voice searches are also set to increase throughout the year, although in a linear (2, 4, 6, 8, 10), not exponential (2, 4, 8, 16, 32), way.

Perhaps responsible for the slow pace of growth is the stigma attached with talking to your phone in public – all within earshot knows your business.

Where the technology's proved most useful is as a hands-free option in the privacy of people's cars.

What does it mean for marketers?

In search terms, they'll need to include more conversational terms, such as 'Where can I buy a blouse?' or 'What's a good mower for long grass?'



Brainy Bots

We've touched on the march of the mobiles, but ever-better processing power isn't their preserve alone. It's also allowing chat bots, showing crude artificial intelligence, to become the gateway to a new internet.

How is this?

Rather than navigating to a webpage, and clicking through a product range, undergoing the usual eCommerce process of filling a cart and payment at checkout, messaging apps can be thought of as browsers and chat bots as websites.

ECommerce will become a conversation where you'll interact with lifelike software, asking for recommendations, and proceeding to payment and delivery options.

You can already order pizza from Domino's through their chat bot on WhatsApp – expect others to follow their lead in 2017. Particularly as messaging app use continues to outshine social networks.

Chat bots aren't limited to ordering, though. Businesses are also harnessing their abilities as brand ambassadors, and even in HR departments, as focal points for interaction with customers and employees that never tire.



Faster Fulfilment

Waste Less Time Waiting

Ever find that waiting those extra few days to get your parcel delivered is way too long? Well, never fear, retailers are starting to use same day delivery for those of us who simply cannot wait.

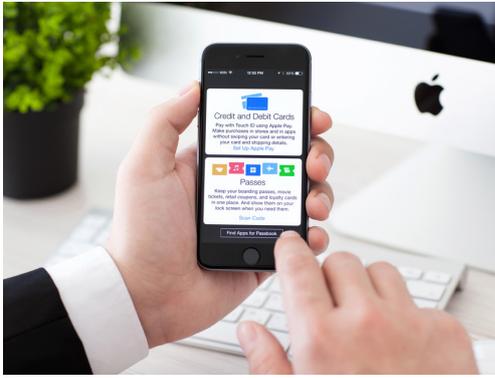
Delivery times have become a lot more convenient, and for 2017, we predict they will go beyond this.

Many more stores will aim to get parcels delivered the same day – and this doesn't exclude international deliveries, with some companies aiming to fulfil the first international same day delivery service.

It's not just delivery times that will benefit customers – the cost will too! Pockets will feel lighter after companies start to roll out prime delivery options consisting of one-off reasonable payments entitling free same day delivery all year.

What does this mean for you?

With all of this in mind, businesses need to modernise delivery to keep up with competition. Delivery time will become very relevant in 2017 – more customers will take this into account when shopping. So it would be a brilliant idea to get ahead of the game and update your delivery options.



Preferred Payment

Funeral for the Wallet

Ladies and Gentlemen, we are gathered here today to bid farewell to the traditional forms of payment we've grown accustomed to, to make space for the new way to pay!

With 2017 upon us, we predict modernised payment methods will come into full force with almost everyone getting a taste of what the future holds for handing over funds.

Shopping will become easier than ever, with everyone adopting in-phone apps such as Apple Pay, PayPal and Amazon Pay. New developments mean that these payments can be made on modern wearable technologies such as watches and rings – so if you're a bit of a gadget geek, you're in luck! Bournemouth

What does this mean for you?

For customers, being able to pay with their preferred method can mean the difference between making a purchase and not. This means that, for a business, offering all of the options is important. Making all payment methods accessible will be a sure fire way of ensure sales are up and the shopping cart is not discarded.

Loyalty Love

Offering an Incentive

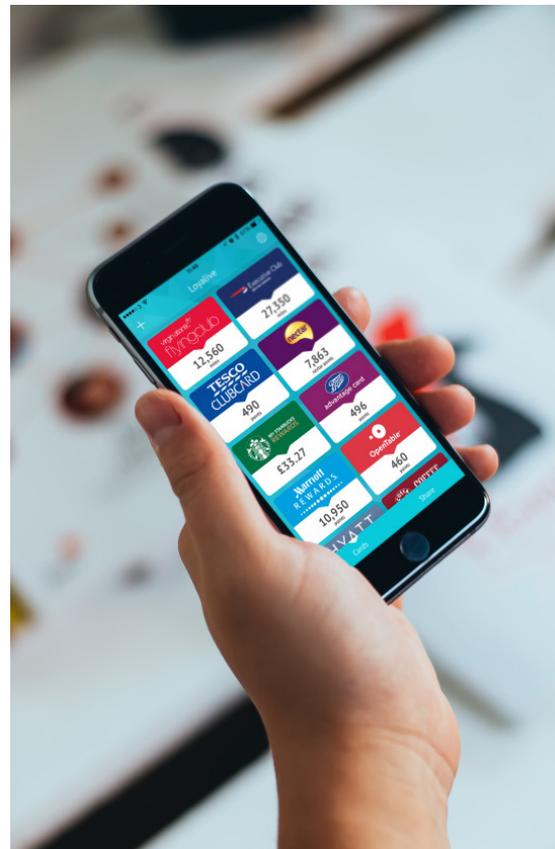
Loyalty programmes are far from new, but in today's market, where retail giants such as Amazon are dominating the industry, smaller businesses need to find ways to attract loyal customers. And your answer is loyalty programmes.

In 2017, we predict more SMEs will do this to keep their customers coming back. What's more, we believe loyalty programmes will move past the point of card schemes and into a more modern way of receiving rewards. All businesses behind this will use data, such as customer's previous purchases, to tailor the rewards they send to the customer through mobile – creating a highly-personalised experience.

What does this mean for you?

Every customer loves to be rewarded, and in a market where cost of product takes precedence over loyalty to a company, it's a good idea to offer something different.

Point systems are now a thing of the past and businesses are working hard to revolutionise the way they keep customers – so jump on board and get planning your unique reward programme.



Those trends for 2017 in summary:

- The Mobile Phone will continue to dominate
- AI will start to handle order processing and customer service
- The Organic Search landscape will change dramatically in light of fake news
- Delivery times, instant fulfilment and subscription delivery services will take off
- Payment applications will gain traction in replacing cards and tokens
- Loyalty programmes will allow independent retailers to grow repeat custom.