



Emerging Models of E-Commerce: A Comprehensive Analysis of Trust-based, Quick, Virtual, Community, and Social Commerce

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Abstract – The field of electronic commerce has had remarkable expansion in the last twenty years, and it is expected that worldwide sales will reach \$5.5 trillion by 2022. The ongoing evolution of customer behavior and expectations in the digital marketplace is giving rise to new and inventive forms of e-commerce that are poised to become dominant. This work examines five main models: trust-based commerce that utilises buyer-seller relationships, quick commerce that meets the need for immediate delivery, virtual commerce that is driven by augmented and virtual reality, community commerce that utilises insights from dedicated users, and social commerce that combines shopping and social sharing functionality. Trust-based platforms facilitate increased transactions by fostering transparency and credibility between transacting parties. Quick commerce startups offering delivery in as fast as 10 minutes are proliferating across India, Europe and Latam. Immersive retail experiences are being powered by virtual and augmented reality, with spending on AR/VR in e-commerce expected to reach \$120 billion by 2026. Community-driven commerce like social shopping and dropshipping thrives on leveraging insights from vibrant user communities. With social media enabling seamless sharing and shopping integration, the social commerce sector is projected to grow three-fold to \$604 billion by 2027. As e-commerce evolves, these emerging models will redefine the digital retail landscape to serve the next generation needs of an increasingly demanding consumer base through innovative shopping formats, trusted networks, instant gratification, customized engagement and integrated social platforms. The analysis provides critical insights into upcoming shifts set to disrupt status quo.

Keywords: E-commerce, Trust-based commerce, Quick commerce, Virtual commerce, Community commerce, social commerce, Augmented reality, Virtual reality.

1.INTRODUCTION

1.1 A Brief Background on E-commerce and How It Has Evolved Over the Past Two Decades. Discuss the Growth of E-commerce Globally

E-commerce has dramatically transformed the retail landscape over the last 20 years. While online shopping portals and transactions have existed since the early days of the internet, e-commerce as we know it today really started taking shape in the late 1990s with the founding of industry pioneers like eBay and Amazon. Rapid advancements in internet connectivity and mobile technology over the 2000s then catalyzed exponential growth of the sector. According to reports, global e-commerce sales in 2014 reached approximately \$1.3 trillion. Just five years later, this figure nearly doubled to over \$2.8 trillion in 2019. Current projections estimate worldwide e-commerce sales to grow to a mammoth \$5.5 trillion by 2022.

Several key factors have facilitated the monumental expansion of e-commerce in recent years. The proliferation of smartphones and mobile internet has allowed consumers to shop online seamlessly from any location. By 2021, mobile phones accounted for nearly 75% of website traffic. Enhanced logistics and



delivery networks have also enabled firms to offer quick, reliable shipping and returns – now table stakes for e-commerce merchants. Furthermore, enhanced broadband connectivity, better digital payment systems like mobile wallets and debit/credit card penetration have removed infrastructure roadblocks faced in the early stages of e-commerce. Evolving consumer preferences have also stoked e-commerce growth as more buyers embrace convenience, price comparisons and expanded range offered by online shopping channels.

On the merchant side, innovation in the e-commerce business and operating models have reduced barriers to setting up and scaling digital shops. The emergence of the cross-border e-commerce model in the 2010s, for instance, enabled businesses to sell products overseas without a physical presence. SaaS platforms like Shopify and Magento have also provided SMBs customizable, mobile-friendly digital storefront solutions. Marketplaces like Amazon and Alibaba's Tmall host third-party sellers on established e-commerce sites with high traffic. Emerging markets have specifically seen a boom thanks to such innovations, with the Middle East, Latin America, Southeast Asia and Africa expected to grow 50% faster than mature economies.

As internet access continues to improve globally alongside rapid digitization, e-commerce is positioned to penetrate deeper into society in the next decade. Ubiquity of mobile devices promises to drive more first-time online shoppers from tier 2 and 3 cities. Global middle class expansion also bodes well for spending growth. Evolving logistics networks, digital payment platforms and merchant solutions will further increase the engine of innovation to steer future e-commerce growth worldwide.

2. TRUST-BASED COMMERCE

2.1 Explain the Model and How Leveraging Trust Between Buyers and Sellers Facilitates Increased Transactions. Discuss Examples

Trust has always been a crucial factor in buyer-seller transactions, but even more so in e-commerce where the parties involved rarely meet face-to-face. Early e-commerce portals struggled with low consumer trust stemming from reasons like perceived risk of fraud, product quality uncertainty, and data security concerns. This erosion of trust also coincided with a surge of fly-by-night sellers looking to make a quick buck online without accountability.

To overcome such hurdles, pioneers like eBay and Amazon focused on building robust trust-based digital commerce models to cultivate confidence between buyers and sellers on their marketplaces. Core areas of trust they established included seller credentials by way of strict ID verification processes, customer support for dispute resolution, and secure payment mechanisms. The advent of user ratings and community reviews also helped consumers make better informed decisions by leveraging experiences of fellow shoppers.

Today, the trust economy forms the foundation of thriving e-commerce ecosystems like Alibaba and Amazon. On the Alibaba marketplace Tmall, for example, sellers are vetted thoroughly with on-site verification meetings before approval. Stringent standards are maintained around authenticity of products listed. For used and refurbished goods, Tmall managers reputable offline reuse chains like Aihuishou to set up online stores after inspection. Amazon has also doubled down on consumer trust initiatives through the Amazon A to Z Guarantee for issues resolution, Amazon Prime providing reliable quick delivery, and ramping up efforts to tackle counterfeits.

The results of focus on trust by marketplaces has been increased gross merchandise value (GMV).



Alibaba's China retail marketplaces had over 930 million annual active customers in 2022 spending record sums during the Single's Day shopping festival. Prime member spends have also steadily risen on Amazon, now making up over 50% of total US e-commerce sales as per analysts. Transacting parties meeting each other half-way on trust has been essential for such thriving platform economies.

In fact, nurturing trust is a strategy digitally native disruptors also adopt for differentiation. Social commerce apps like Instagram and Pinterest integrate influencer recommendations into the user shopping experience – leveraging authenticity and connections creators share with their communities. Similarly, mobile grocery platform Instacart fosters trust by assigning individual shoppers chosen based on reviews to specific customer orders.

The next wave of innovation could see decentralized platforms using blockchain further boost trust by removing third-party intermediaries. Transparent tamper-proof ledgers building collective community trust coupled with smart contracts promise to increase credibility of unknown counter-parties. Whether emerging or mainstream, trust-centric values remain pivotal for successive generations of e-commerce models to unlock exponential value in the global online shopping ecosystem while protecting consumer rights.

3. QUICK COMMERCE

3.1 Define Quick Commerce and How It Meets Consumer Demand for Ultra-fast Delivery. Analyze the Rise of Quick Commerce Startups Globally

Quick commerce constitutes a new model of digital convenience retail fulfilling near-instant delivery of products to customers. While traditional e-commerce focuses on wider assortments and price competitiveness, quick commerce taps into satiating consumer demand for speed. The business model involves setting up mini warehouses in dense neighborhoods to enable hyper-local logistics networks and narrow delivery times to as little as 10–15 minutes.

The promise of receiving online orders almost immediately has become increasingly appealing for time-strapped urban users. A 2021 survey found 73% of customers willing to pay extra for 1-hour delivery. Quick commerce firms thus excel on winning customer loyalty through instant gratification. Their app-based interfaces make re-ordering daily essentials almost addictive while data insights on purchase habits feed sophisticated recommendation engines.

Globally, quick commerce has seen massive growth in adoption in the last 5 years parallel to the wider boom in e-grocery during the pandemic. The sector is forecast to grow 10–15X by 2025 to around \$300 billion, according to industry reports. Key global markets witnessing major activity include India, Latin America, Middle East and Europe home to densely congested cities where the model gains efficiency.

India has birthed at least half a dozen well-funded quick commerce firms since 2020 pegged as future unicorns. Top players like Dunzo, Swiggy Instamart and Zepto have collectively raised hundreds of millions in VC funding, turning profitable even as they expand nationwide. 10–30 minute deliveries are now offered across metro cities like Bangalore, Mumbai, Delhi-NCR for everything from groceries, electronics to pharmacy products. Strategic partnerships with retail chains like 7-11 franchisee store networks gives them offline footholds for micro-warehousing too.

In Europe and Latam, Turkey's Getir achieved the coveted unicorn status in 2021 followed by Germany's Gorillas and Flink. Getir raised \$1.1 billion last year to reach a valuation of \$12 billion on the back of operations across Europe and acquisition of local competitors. Other Turkish startups like JOKR and Berlin



Brands Group have also muscled in with aggressive geographic expansion plans through rapid hiring and marketing blitz scales.

Dubai-bred startups including Breadfast, Mrsool and BulkWhiz have ignited activity in West Asia too capitalizing on high mobile penetration and a progressive regulated environment in the region for e-commerce. International investors have shown increasing appetite to back mature models like Breadfast which has already achieved profitability in the UAE since 2021.

Underpinning quick commerce globally is nurturing client stickiness through memberships, integrating digital payments, utilizing analytics and introducing differentiation. Zepto in India has launched Cafe offering fresh coffee on demand. Flink has introduced a sustainable packaging initiative. Getir publicized delivery using drones within minutes in Istanbul. While sustainability and unit economics remain key challenges, innovative quick commerce startups continue aggressively capturing consumer mindshare worldwide all set to disrupt online retail.

4. VIRTUAL COMMERCE

4.1 Describe the Idea Behind Virtual Commerce Powered by Technologies Like Augmented Reality and Virtual Reality. Discuss Applications in Retail for Enhanced Customer Experience

Virtual commerce represents the next frontier of digital retail centered around immersive simulated environments and enhanced visual engagement. Two technology categories powering this evolution are augmented reality (AR) which overlays digital elements onto the real-world, and virtual reality (VR) fully simulating artificial 3D environments. By seamlessly blending digital and physical, virtual commerce promises to revolutionize consumer journeys leading up to and beyond online transactions.

In e-commerce, AR allows potential buyers to visualize products in context of their intended placement location before purchase. For example, home furnishing portals like Wayfair and IKEA have implemented AR tools to see lifesize 3D models of furniture mapped to corners of rooms scanned using phones for realistic scale. The ability to better gauge dimensions, design aesthetic against backdrop improves confidence for big-ticket buying decisions.

AR also assists in smarter product selection by enabling try-before-you-buy experiences digitally. Cosmetics retailer L'Oréal has deployed 'virtual testing' across many skincare and makeup brands where users can test shades of lipsticks, hair dyes etc. on selfies to identify best matches. By serving individualized recommendations, conversion and retention improves driven by more satisfied owner experiences post-purchase. Following trials indicating 35% less product returns, AR-guided shopping is fast mainstreaming.

More immersive applications of virtual retail exist in VR where consumers enter computer-generated worlds using VR headsets. Game engines which power real-time visualization combined with natural user interfaces through gesture or speech make navigating virtual stores intuitive. Realism is heightened by dynamic 3D product catalogs, life-like avatars, spatial ambient sounds and haptic gloves simulating touch. VR expands e-commerce beyond being transactional to building deeper experiential engagement.

Walmart recently launched 'store of the future' - a metaverse megastore with vast inventories while showcasing emerging tech like AI inventory robots. Nike opened Nikeland on metaverse platform Roblox to promote its sneaker collections through mini games. Global fashion behemoth Dior live streamed a virtual show in 2020 for millions featuring CGI models walking down simulated runways. The boundary



between physical and virtual worlds stands increasingly blurred.

Analysts predict spending in the metaverse to touch nearly \$120 billion annually by 2026 with e-commerce, healthcare and education being prime candidates for persistent VR spaces. An estimated 82 million head mounted displays are forecast to ship worldwide by 2025. Venture funding into related startups also reached record levels crossing \$1 billion in 2021. Next to mobile and voice commerce, virtual commerce platforms leveraging AR and VR will therefore massively reshape digital shopping.

While concerns exist around interoperability, hardware costs and scalability currently, steady advancements towards more lightweight wearables with 5G connectivity are helping overcome teething issues. Combining the best of human experiences and intelligent interfaces, virtual commerce heralds an exciting new shopping realm that is highly personalized, deeply engaging and intelligently assisted for consumers everywhere.

5. COMMUNITY COMMERCE

5.1 Explain the Community Commerce Model That Leverages Insights From a Dedicated Community of Users. Discuss Examples Like Dropshipping Businesses Cultivating Communities

Community lies at the heart of human transactions, now digitally reimaged for modern e-commerce through the community commerce model. It taps into collective consumer insights, preferences, and engagement from dedicated user bases to drive transactions. Hyper-targeted product recommendations stemming from an existing ecosystem yields higher relevancy and conversion versus generic listings on anonymous marketplaces.

For community players, turning unknown first-time visitors into loyal patrons begins with free tools, advice, and education to win mindshare. Valuable tutorials and comparison guides seeded online, transparent pricing, expert reviews and community discussion forums act as lead magnets. For instance, SEMrush built an ardent following initially by freely teaching SEO before launching paid tools. Leveraging network effects, they crafted a viral flywheel targeting a niche user need.

Another example is homework help platform Chegg who gave academic utility via open study guides and scholarship searches before pivoting to paid monthly subscriptions. Now public listed, their community exceeds 100 million registering 45% YoY growth. While starting out, community development involved Seed funding, so models have longer gestation periods more focused on lifetime values beyond immediate sales.

A breakout e-commerce category demonstrating community commerce is social shopping. Platforms like Popshop Live and NTRWK integrate live video streams where influencers host shows almost teleshopping style showcasing products from various brands. Viewers browse and buy in real-time leveraging influencer intimacy and crowd enthusiasm. NTRWK signed up 7 million users within just 3 years as the model combined entertainment with commerce.

Chinese leader Xiaohongshu fostered a vibrant community of young female users sharing reviews and recommendations. They are now expanding overseas having raised \$300 million to explore global partnerships, localization, and influencer marketing in new regions. Discovery and learning through trusted community fuels further transactions and loyalty.

Community building has also massively benefited dropshipping businesses. Online storefronts here source inventory from third-party suppliers who handle packaging and shipping without overhead of



warehousing. AliExpress has been instrumental for dropshippers. Its Alipay integration allows streamlined payments while reviews verify supplier reliability aiding vendor selection – critical to manage fickle customer expectations.

Dedicated Facebook groups of dropshippers share notes on winning products, techniques and growth hacking amplifying success rates. Reviews indicate 63% retailers registering over 20% revenue growth after community commerce adoption. As margins tend to be low, the model relies on knowledge sharing to minimize trial-and-error. Discussion forums solve issues in sourcing, shipping, returns handling and ads optimization. Self-help combined with automation then unlocks scale.

Overall, community creates the context for commerce to thrive sustainably. Trust, accountability, and collective growth open up opportunities by converting strangers to brand advocates. As Web 3.0 networks evolve, community could assume more decentralized ownership and governance aided by technologies like blockchain and tokens. Aligned ecosystems could unlock exponentially more value through cooperation versus competition alone.

6. SOCIAL COMMERCE

6.1 Analyze How Social Networks Are Enabling Seamless Social Sharing and Shopping. Discuss the Future Prospects of Synergizing Social Media and E-commerce

Social commerce refers to leveraging social media platforms to assist with online selling through seamless integration of sharing user experiences and shopping. Pioneered in 2005 by Facebook which introduced a marketplace feature allowing peers to buy and sell amongst each other, social commerce has dramatically evolved since. Today online community influence powers product discovery, recommendations, comparisons, referrals and conversions across source networks like Instagram, Pinterest, YouTube and TikTok.

Recognizing monetization opportunities in commerce, these networks have launched features that enable everything from in-app payments to shoppable video posts. Instagram partnered with Shopify, BigCommerce etc to enable sellers directly tag products in images, simplify inventory uploads and process orders. Using @shop links redirects to merchant stores for checkout. Over 130 million users tap to reveal tags in shopping posts monthly while videos see 5X higher conversion according to analytics.

YouTube's integrated buying functionality facilitates transactions by letting creators tag and track products in video content. Viewers can shop recommended items from info cards without leaving YouTube. Given its massive appeal to younger demographics, the platform holds lucrative potential to boost social commerce.

In China, Douyin's live commerce streams with influencers host limited-period flash sales driving urgency. Limited quantity products sell out quickly with discounts sometimes as high as 90% fuelling excitement. Over \$26 billion worth goods were transacted in 2021, cementing Douyin's lead. Its parent company ByteDance aims to onboard 10 million creators to expand reach globally.

The social element inherent in these platforms builds trusted relationships between creators, retailers and audiences even if they've never met in-person. Relatability, styling tips and behind-the-scenes improve perceived authenticity and inspiration for buyers. Instead of faceless products, discovery here feels more human and tailored convergence of entertainment and shopping meant for digital natives.

By 2025, an estimated 1.8 billion people will actively use social commerce finding styling inspiration and completing purchases according to research reports. Global sales are projected to triple touching nearly



\$600 billion as more categories like automotive, pharmaceuticals tap into community recommendations. Emerging presence of AR for virtually trying products and VR stores in metaverse spaces will likely boost engagement further.

While concerns exist around data privacy, flow of counterfeit goods and social platforms gaining disproportionate leverage, tighter regulations promise to balance growth. As millennials and Gen Z users conduct lives increasingly online, social platforms seem poised at the epicenter of future consumption cycles with commerce playing an anchor role to stickiness. Potential also abounds for decentralized ownership models through blockchain to redistribute value more fairly in the ecosystem while maintaining inventiveness.

7. CONCLUSION

7.1 Summarize Key Points and Reiterate How These Emerging Models Will Redefine the E-commerce Sector to Better Serve the Digital Consumer of the Future

E-commerce has entered an inflection point with global retail sales projected to reach nearly \$5.5 trillion by 2022. While past growth focused on tapping wider audiences through lower prices, vast assortments and convenience, future expansion will rely extensively on continued innovation to create differentiated value. This concluding section recaps how models analyzed across trust-based commerce, quick commerce, virtual commerce, community commerce and social commerce are poised to reshape e-commerce aligned to evolving digital consumer priorities.

Trust forms the bedrock for nurturing lifetime loyalty beyond one-time transactions. Mainstream merchants like Amazon and Alibaba owe long-term sustenance to robust processes, strict seller guidelines, community reviews and reliable logistics erected to build credibility. Blockchain-powered decentralized marketplaces herald further disruption by distributing trust across stakeholders through tamper-proof ledgers. Rather than top-down control, peer consensus fosters accountability.

Demand for instant gratification has sparked around quick commerce as consumers increasingly prize convenience. 10–30 minute deliveries on everyday essentials align with mobile-first lifestyles in congested cities. Rapid fulfillment is enabled by hyperlocal mini warehousing. Young firms like Germany's Flink and Turkey's Getir have secured billions in funding reflecting promise of this model catering to time-strapped urban users. Integrating digital payments and focus on sustainability remain key challenges.

Transitioning e-commerce to more experiential realms are applications for virtual commerce based on augmented reality and virtual reality. Solutions spanning visual product rendering in home environments before purchase and metaverse storefronts are gaining traction. Spending projections for related technologies point to \$120 billion market potential by 2026 across retail, healthcare, education etc. Startups blending physical and simulated to enable immersive shopping journeys to have piqued investor interest.

Community creation nurtures stickier user bases beyond chasing unrelated prospects. Platforms like SEMrush, Popshop Live and Xiaohongshu have successfully fostered trust through education and influencer intimacy before introducing commerce elements. By positioning community at their epicenter focused on collective upliftment over hard selling, bottom-up advocacy activates. Dropshipping businesses scaling successfully demonstrate similar adoption of knowledge sharing to build member loyalty preventing attrition.

The crucial role of social sharing in shopping journeys is integrated seamlessly by networks like Facebook,



Instagram and Douyin via in-app marketplaces, product tags and live streams. Hyper targeted recommendations and limited time exclusivity introduced through creator collaborations make social commerce intuitive for digital natives. Global projections point to sales tripling to \$604 billion by 2027 as more categories adopt this model combining entertainment with transaction. But challenges around regulation and equitable distribution are likely discussion points.

In summary, upcoming shifts in e-commerce span tapping predictive analytics around micro-preferences, introducing exclusivity and ubiquity via democratized access, preventing choice paralysis through custom curation and fostering transparency as trends. Differentiated positioning holds the key as attention of users fragment across platforms. Trust sits at the foundation while innovation across technology and business models offer pathways for inventing sustainable value and meaning to serve the evolving digital consumer ahead.

While near term uncertainty exists regarding inflation, geopolitical instability and supply chain crunches, the long-term outlook remains firmly optimistic buoyed by the exponential advances of the internet economy. E-commerce particularly retains decades of continuing runway by embedding itself deeper into the daily fabric of life through new ideas. The next generation of mobile-first users worldwide demands nothing less than constant reimagination and progress at the intersection of bits and atoms.

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