

YouTube tests social commerce waters, TV measurement

Article

The news: YouTube is making moves into social commerce and tapping its large connected TV (CTV) viewership to attract advertisers, per Social Media Today.

- It's launching **YouTube Holiday Stream and Shop** on November 15—a weeklong live shopping stream where users can watch popular creators and buy items in-app.

- YouTube is also making its CTV viewership inventory available to advertisers via a partnership with **Nielsen** “as of this month,” per a blog post.

Testing the social commerce waters: YouTube began beta-testing live shopping in February and has since hosted live shopping events featuring **small businesses** and sponsored influencer streams as social media platforms **race** to launch live shopping features ahead of the holiday shopping rush.

Live shopping and other social commerce features are major drivers of revenue in eastern markets.

- In China, we expect live shopping to drive **\$299.66 billion** in sales, or **11.7%** of the country’s total retail sales. Of that, **\$131.52 billion** will come from streams on social platforms.

The US is far behind in comparison, though platforms are betting on the popularity of their creators and the recent popularity of livestreaming to drive sales.

- We expect social commerce sales to reach **\$79.64 million** in the US by 2025.
- Reports from platforms like YouTube and **TikTok** have indicated users are interested in purchasing products live when **recommended** by creators they trust, hence why social platforms have launched funds and other features to attract and keep creators on board.

The CTV opportunity: Meanwhile, opening its CTV inventory to advertisers allows YouTube to pressure streaming rivals and provide detailed measurements.

- We expect the number of viewers who watch YouTube on a CTV at least once per month to reach **123.8 million** this year, or **55.4%** of all YouTube viewers—and that will hit **60.8%** by 2025.
- That makes YouTube a significant competitor not just in social media but also to other OTT video providers like **Netflix** and **Hulu**.
- A **Comscore** survey found YouTube was the second most watched service on CTVs in June behind Netflix, making up 21% of hours spent watching. Hulu came in a distant third at 13%.

Why it’s worth watching: YouTube is trying to communicate credibility to advertisers and provide them with detailed user information that has become **increasingly inaccessible**.

- YouTube and other platforms' aggressive social commerce moves are also a sign the battle for creators isn't just about driving fans to a platform but also finding ways to monetize fandoms.