



It's showtime! How live commerce is transforming the shopping experience

July 21, 2021 | Article

- Share
- Print
- Download
- Save

Blending entertainment with instant purchasing, live commerce offers retailers, brands, and digital platforms a new channel with enormous scope for creating value.

The arrival of Alibaba's Taobao Live in May 2016 marked the opening of a new chapter in sales. The Chinese retail giant had pioneered a powerful new approach: linking up an online livestream broadcast with an e-commerce store to allow viewers to watch and shop at the same time. Live commerce quickly established itself as a fixture in sales campaigns for Singles' Day—a major shopping event in China—and, more broadly, as a reliable digital tool for boosting customer engagement and sales. In 2020, the first 30 minutes of Alibaba's Singles' Day presales campaign on Taobao Live generated an impressive \$7.5 billion in total transaction value.^[1] Welcome to the next wave of the e-commerce revolution.

DOWNLOADS

[↓ Article \(8 pages\)](#)

Sidebar

Share

About the authors

Live commerce combines instant purchasing of a featured product and audience participation through a chat function or reaction buttons. In China, live commerce has transformed the retail industry and established itself as a major sales channel in less than five years. In a 2020 survey, two-thirds of Chinese consumers said they had bought products via livestream in the past year.^[2] While retailers overall in the West are still behind China in the pursuit of live commerce, early movers are also starting to rack up significant sales.

Sign in or create a free account to read/download this McKinsey Archive article

McKinsey insights published prior to 2023 are available in our archives.

[Continue](#)

[Or go to our homepage](#)



- Careers
- Alumni
- Global locations
- About us
- Contact us

Subscribe

Select topics and stay current with our latest insights



- Scam warning
- FAQ
- Privacy policy
- Your privacy choices
- Cookie preferences
- Terms of use
- Local language information
- Accessibility statement

