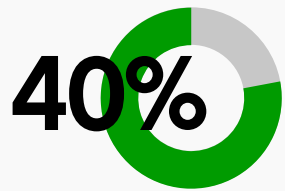


Using Instagram to Drive Revenue Alongside a Great Support Experience



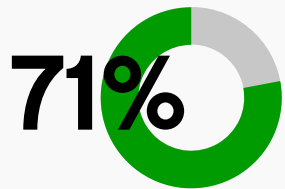
Shoppers spend a lot of time on social media—over an hour per day. Social channels are how they explore trends and products, shop, seek out customer service, and tell their friends about exciting new products and brands.

Instagram in particular has taken center stage in the social sphere:



of the U.S. population
have an account

FIG 1



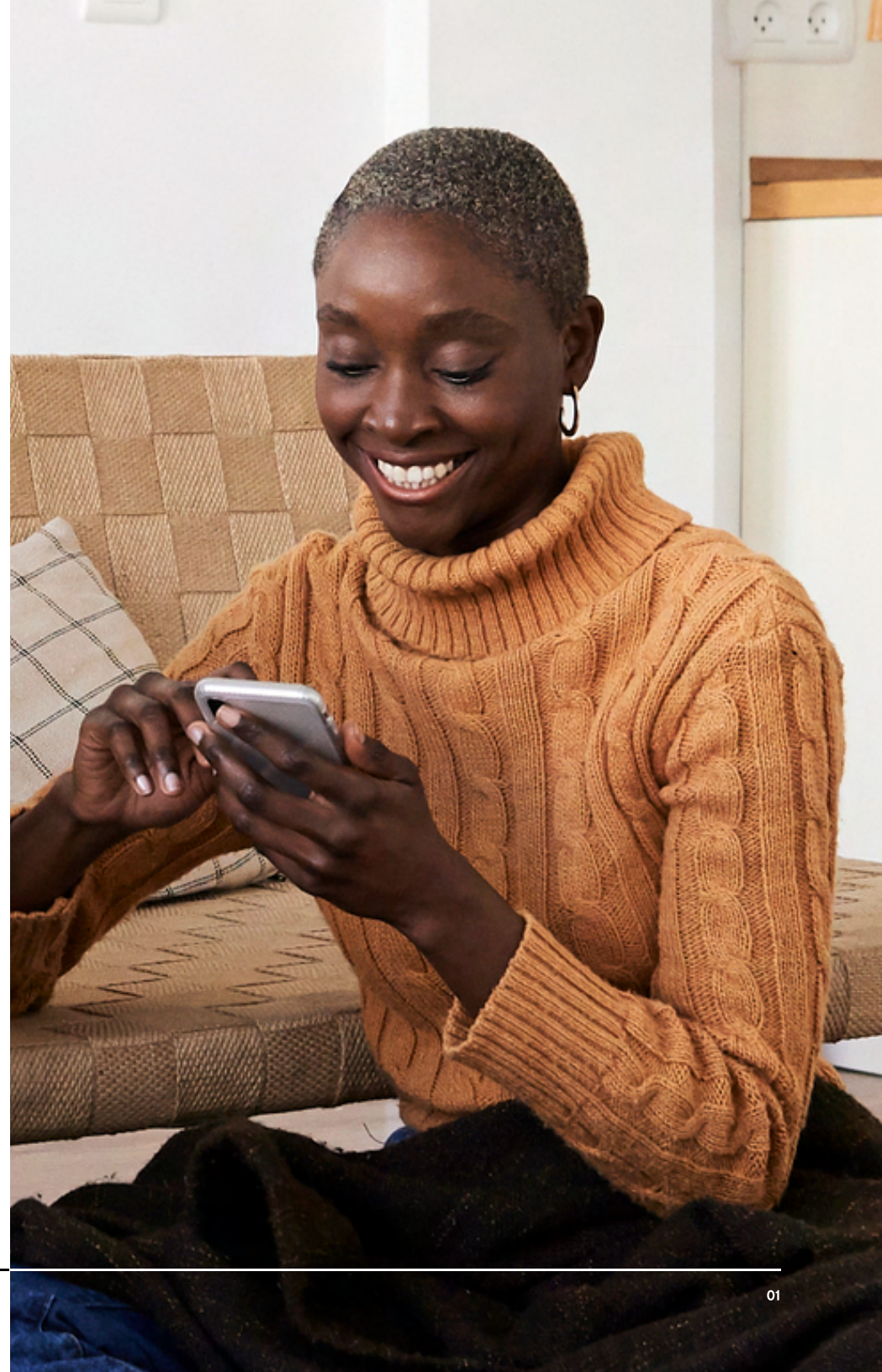
of U.S. adults between 18
and 29 use Instagram

FIG 2



1B Globally, there are 1 billion
active users

FIG 3



This means that companies that are intentional about using Instagram can generate huge returns.

By now, most companies are familiar with it as a marketing platform and many have also started selling directly. The leaders of that pack have taken it one step further by integrating their customer service as well for a seamless, omnichannel support experience.

Allow us to explain.

Brands sell on social.

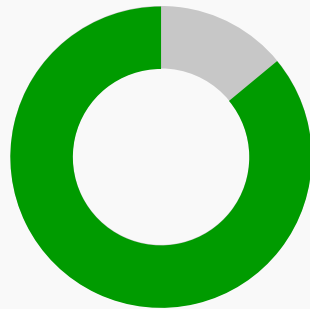
Defined as purchases that take place within social network apps, social commerce is a rapidly growing sub-segment of e-commerce. Positioning content in front of audiences on social media creates a wider sales funnel, allowing you to engage people in shopping for entertainment.

Social support commerce deploys marketing and sales efforts across social platforms to maximize engagement and profit and provide a top-quality customer service experience.



The Instagram Advantage

Selling through social media provides a unique opportunity to reach customers. Instagram has proven to be a particularly useful platform for this, with 70% of consumers discovering new products on the platform.



90%

Of those on Instagram, 90% follow at least one company.

FIG 4

Social marketing is effective, but only using these channels for marketing is a huge missed opportunity.

Why? Although most businesses don't think of social channels as customer service and support platforms, their customers do.





Customers Expect Support on Social

Nearly 70% of consumers have reached out to customer service via social platforms at some point.

As Lindsay Patton-Carson, social media supervisor at Evoke KYNE, noted,

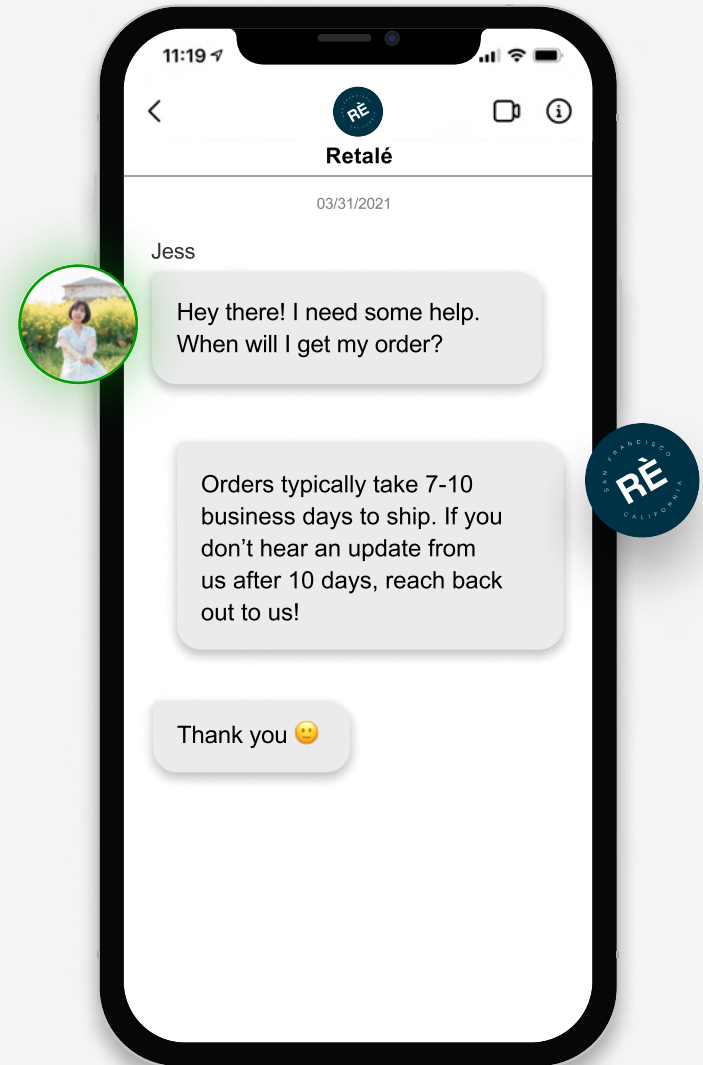
"If your brand has social media profiles, you are absolutely going to have to perform customer service on social media. There isn't a way to get around it."

Introducing Social Support Commerce

Social support commerce is the practice of providing superior, seamless customer service by integrating customer support systems into the channels where commerce is already taking place.

By engaging in service situations, social support commerce identifies opportunities to:

- Build brand loyalty
- Resolve customer issues
- Upsell to dedicated customers

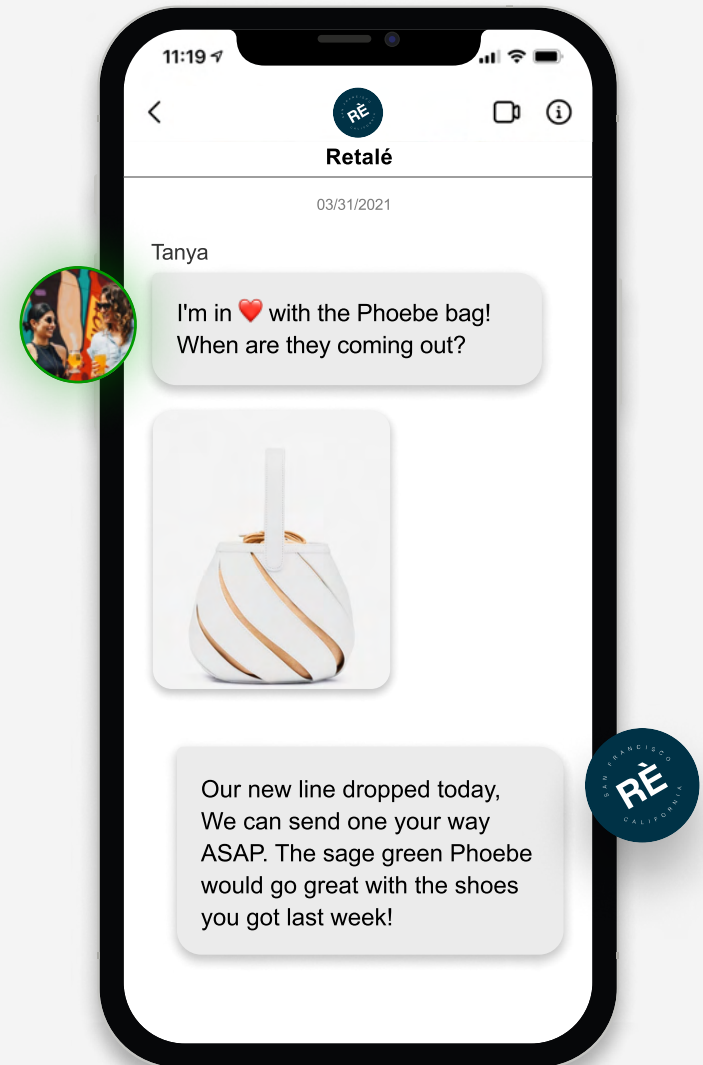


If you post promotional photos, expect to get product questions in the comments. Have someone answer these quickly, and you'll see sales increase.

For example, imagine a customer sees a new product, but doesn't see if it's available yet through your Instagram profile link. They come back to the profile and send a DM asking how they can get it, in case their local store has it.

You respond that you can ship it today, and you're able to send three options in the colors you know they like (since you know their past purchase history). The customer is delighted and the conversation results in a sale.

If your social support commerce strategy was lacking, that could quickly turn into a missed opportunity.



Expect customers to reach out with DMs about all sorts of questions.

You can set up a chat bot for easy ones, like “What are my shipping options?” and “How do I initiate a return?”

Ideally, you should be able to use a native Quick Reply option that will auto-generate topics and answers for your most frequently asked questions.

Other questions can be routed to your customer service representatives through specialized software, where your team can use the conversations to point out sales, upsell products, or encourage follow-through to checkout.



Because social media channels are built for ongoing engagement, platforms like Instagram are tailor-made for the kind of relationship-building that brands should prioritize as part of the purchasing experience.

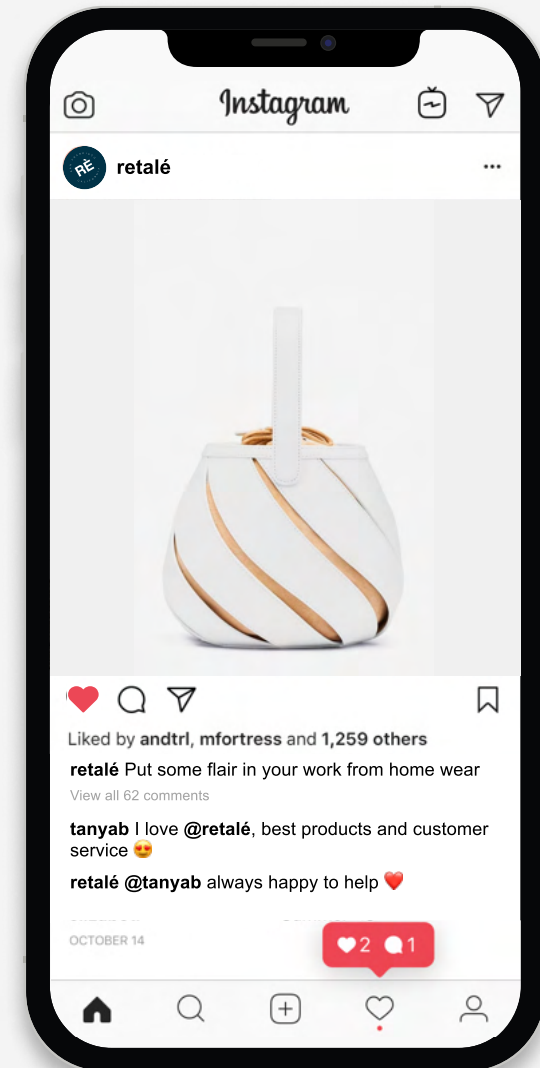
For example, not only do customers explore products on social media, they also post about their products after the package arrives in the mail.

Did they love it? Great! Maybe they'll post a positive message, and, if you're lucky, tag you (or use your hashtag). This is an opportunity for one type of social support commerce. If they post--thank them!

Customers love the recognition and response, and they'll become your loyal advocates. If someone has a really great post, ask them about sharing it on your main page or in your stories.

The same is true if a customer hates a purchase. You might see posts like, "Wrong size," "Where's my package?" and "The color isn't what was pictured."

Brands that respond quickly can salvage the relationship, turning a negative into a positive.





Brands that engage proactively with customer posts and comments earn 20-40% more than companies that only post marketing content.

In other words, failing to engage in social support commerce leaves easy profits on the table.

The Struggle of Integrated Support

Social media channels have greatly improved the tools available to sellers over the years. Instagram now offers a shopping tab, glossy, magazine-like spreads, and integrated Instagram Checkout. Small and medium size businesses can even link their Instagram shopping experience to Facebook Shops, allowing you to set up a virtual storefront.

Another bonus: direct messaging is available on both platforms.

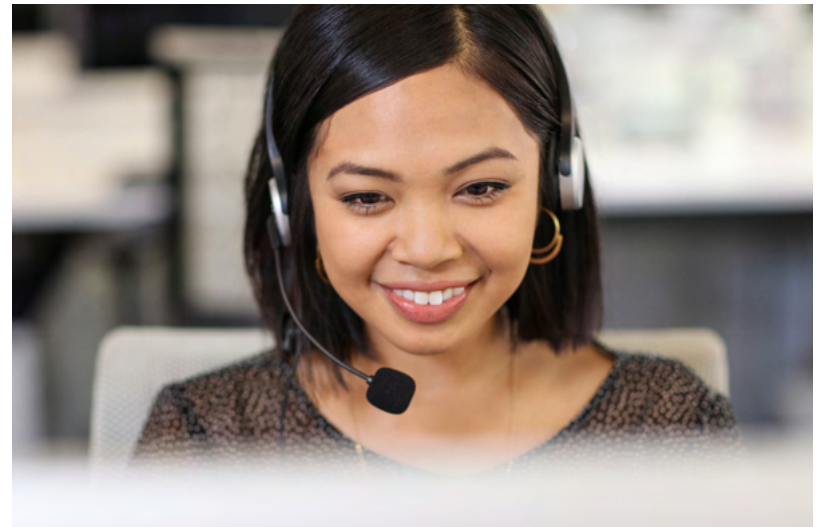
Customer service technology, however, tends to fall behind.

If your customers are buying across multiple social media platforms and reaching out to customer service on these channels, how do you keep track of the interactions?

Customer service and outreach at many companies looks like this:

- Phone support team
- Email and chat support team
- Social media marketing team

Unfortunately, this creates difficulties when marketing posts receive comments from curious or dissatisfied customers and there's no clear plan in place for how to field them.



Here's what NOT to do on social media:

- Ignore comments and feedback
- Respond with instructions to take interactions off the platform. Being told to "Call our customer service number" or "Reach out to this email address" frustrates your customer
- Take too long to reply. Set an autoresponder message for right away, and try to respond in depth within one business day

Many customers prefer to resolve the entire interaction on the social platform. Your team can be prepared to make this possible.

Instead, use instant, friendly interactions that social networks like Instagram offer. Have your customer service heroes respond promptly. They should:

- Quickly post a reply comment that offers the necessary information or directs the customer to a direct messaging conversation
- Send a DM to take the conversation one-on-one and build the relationship
- Include all those conversations in the customer's support and order history

In the past, software integrations have also presented challenges, and third-parties haven't always worked smoothly when applied to multiple social channels.

The good news: this is changing.



Social Support Commerce and Your Brand's Future

Social media sales are the growth opportunity of the present and future.

**In 2025, eMarketer
expects social
commerce sales to
reach \$79.64 billion**

As a company, make the most of this trend by using intuitive and streamlined tools so that your customer service heroes can keep up with loyal customers across multiple channels and social platforms.

Gladly offers a platform to help your heroes offer personal service at scale, tracking customers' past orders and conversation history across all channels (digital and voice), including Instagram messaging.

Use social media to build relationships with your customers and offer radically personal service. If you've been hanging back on Instagram, now is the time to jump in with both marketing and customer service.

Embrace social support commerce. You'll see a huge boost to your company's online reputation and your revenue.

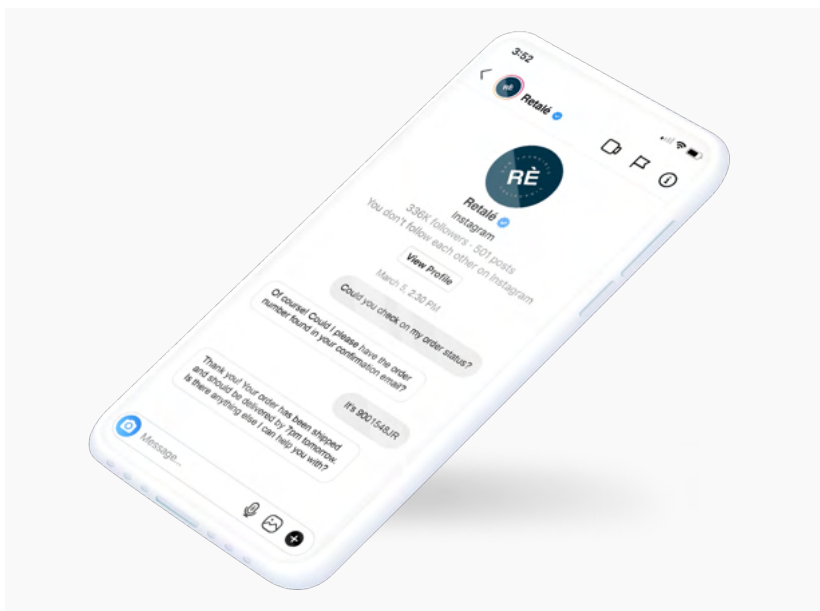
Sources:

FIG 1. [Social Media Fact Sheet](#)

FIG 2. [Social Media Fact Sheet](#)

FIG 3. [How to Use Instagram for Customer Service](#)

FIG 4. [How to Use Instagram for Customer Service](#)



About Gladly

Gladly is the customer service platform that makes customer support a competitive advantage. Unlike legacy service platforms that treat customers like tickets, only Gladly treats customers like people.

Every communication is part of a single, lifelong conversation that spans all channels including voice, messaging, and self-service. Gladly uses full customer context to match customers with the answer they need or the agent best equipped to help. Gladly makes service teams wildly efficient, transforms contact centers into revenue drivers, and turns customers into die hard fans.

[REQUEST A DEMO →](#)

After switching to Gladly, companies see up to



 **Gladly**

