

Press Release

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ECOMMERCE CLINIC REPORT

The future of ecommerce will be shaped not only by human shoppers but increasingly by AI-powered agents acting on their behalf, according to insights shared during the latest eCommerce Clinic, hosted by eCommerce Expo and featuring digital commerce leader Swagat Choudhury.



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PURPOSE OF THE DOCUMENT

The 48-hour live Q&A brought together ecommerce professionals, marketers, digital transformation specialists, and customer experience leaders to discuss the forces reshaping online retail.

From customer experience and product page optimisation to artificial intelligence and agentic commerce, the discussion highlighted how brands must adapt to remain visible, relevant, and discoverable in a rapidly evolving digital landscape.



Swagat Choudhury

Global Digital Commerce Director - Mars

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE MUST EVOLVE BEYOND TRADITIONAL ECOMMERCE

One of the first themes explored during the clinic was the changing definition of customer experience.

According to Choudhury, brands often overcomplicate CX by focusing on technology before understanding the role ecommerce plays in helping consumers discover, understand, and purchase products.

Reflecting on the evolution of ecommerce, he described how the industry has progressed from providing basic product information and pricing, to richer content, reviews, and fulfilment experiences.

The next stage, he argued, will require brands to create content capable of serving both people and AI agents.

As AI increasingly becomes a discovery layer, customer experience will depend as much on the quality and structure of product information as it does on website design and user journeys.

AGENTIC COMMERCE MOVES FROM THEORY TO REALITY

Perhaps the most significant topic discussed was the rapid emergence of agentic commerce.

Described as a digital equivalent of a personal shopping assistant, agentic commerce enables AI systems to research, recommend, and increasingly purchase products on behalf of consumers.

While recommendation engines and voice assistants have existed for years, participants agreed that recent advances in AI have accelerated adoption dramatically.

For brands, this creates a new challenge: ensuring content is optimised not only for traditional search engines and consumers but also for AI agents evaluating products based on context, intent, suitability, and trustworthiness.

The clinic highlighted that businesses must now consider how products are interpreted by machines as well as how they are presented to people.

THE DIGITAL SHELF IS BEING REWRITTEN

As shopping journeys become increasingly conversational, traditional keyword-focused optimisation is no longer enough.

Choudhury explained that consumers are moving beyond simple product searches and instead using intent-led prompts such as asking AI tools to recommend ingredients for specific recipes, products for particular occasions, or solutions to individual needs.

This shift requires brands to rethink product content strategies.

Detailed descriptions, clear ingredient and allergen information, contextual usage guidance, authentic reviews, and visual cues linked to real-life occasions are becoming increasingly important in helping AI systems understand when and why products should be recommended.

The message was clear: the future digital shelf will be built around context, not just keywords.

CONVERSION STILL STARTS WITH THE FUNDAMENTALS

While much of the discussion focused on emerging technologies, participants also reinforced the importance of ecommerce fundamentals.

When asked which product page elements drive the greatest impact on conversion, Choudhury stressed that availability, delivery information, and pricing remain the most critical factors.

Beyond these essentials, strong product titles, clear hero imagery, detailed descriptions, reviews, and supporting visual content continue to play a decisive role in helping shoppers make confident purchasing decisions.

Rather than replacing these fundamentals, AI amplifies their importance by making structured, accurate information easier to discover and evaluate.

RETHINKING DIRECT-TO-CONSUMER STRATEGY

The clinic also explored the evolving role of direct-to-consumer commerce.

Rather than treating DTC as a separate channel, Choudhury encouraged brands to view it as part of a connected commerce ecosystem.

Successful DTC strategies, he argued, should combine sales, consumer insight, marketing, innovation, and personalisation. Brands should use their direct channels as testing grounds for new products, exclusive experiences, and customer relationships while ensuring they complement broader retail partnerships.

With AI-driven discovery becoming more prevalent, participants suggested DTC may enter a new phase of relevance as brands gain additional opportunities to influence purchasing decisions earlier in the shopping journey.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE BECOMES A COMMERCIAL NECESSITY

Questions around AI adoption revealed a growing consensus that artificial intelligence is becoming a core component of modern digital commerce operations.

However, the discussion emphasised that AI's greatest value currently lies in helping teams plan, analyse, create, and optimise more efficiently rather than replacing strategic decision-making.

Participants highlighted how AI can support content creation, product page optimisation, digital shelf analysis, and customer insight generation, allowing teams to focus more time on commercial priorities.

The challenge for organisations is no longer whether to adopt AI, but how quickly they can embed it into everyday workflows while maintaining governance and quality standards.

THE NEXT ERA OF ECOMMERCE HAS ALREADY BEGUN

The Digital Transformation & CX Clinic reinforced a growing industry belief that ecommerce is entering a new chapter.

The convergence of artificial intelligence, conversational discovery, and agentic shopping is changing how consumers find products, evaluate options, and make purchasing decisions.

Brands that continue to focus solely on traditional search and conversion tactics risk falling behind.

Those investing in richer content, stronger digital shelf execution, AI-ready product information, and seamless omnichannel experiences are positioning themselves for a future where commerce is increasingly influenced by intelligent systems acting alongside human shoppers.

ABOUT ECOMMERCE EXPO

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eCommerce Expo is the UK's leading event for eCommerce and digital marketing professionals, bringing together retailers, brands, technology providers, and industry experts to explore innovation, strategy, and growth in modern commerce.



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