

Access to Deals and Information Drives Faster Major Purchase Decisions

Fifth Annual Major Purchase Consumer Study explores shopping journey across 13 categories

STAMFORD, Conn.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- Empowered with research, reviews and real-time discount information, shoppers making purchases of \$500 or more are more decisive and deal-oriented than ever before, according to Synchrony Financial's Fifth Annual Major Purchase Consumer Study.

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More major purchase shoppers report starting and ending their shopping journey online this year and spending less time (63 days on average vs. 68 days in 2015) on the path to purchase than in the past. As part of this year's study, Synchrony Financial (NYSE:[SYF](#)), a premier consumer financial services company with 80 years of heritage, explored shopping and spending preferences and the path to making a major purchase across 13 categories: appliances; automotive service and products; electronics; eyewear; fine jewelry;

flooring; home improvement; furnishings; bedding and mattresses; lawn and garden; musical instruments; sewing; and sports and fitness equipment.

"Major purchase shoppers are seeking maximum value in minimal time, taking a multi-faceted approach to navigate information and narrow options," said Bart Schaller, EVP and chief marketing officer, Synchrony Financial. "Although shoppers are more decisive, they remain cautious about spending and carefully consider where to buy based on deal, product and financing availability."

Key findings of the Fifth Annual Major Purchase Consumer Study include:

Research

- The major purchase journey is declining to 63 days spent on average, down five days from 2015 and 17 days from 2014.
- More shoppers (85%) report starting their research online compared to 80% last year.
- The research process spans multiple digital assets and nearly 68% of shoppers surveyed visited the retailer's website; more than 60% used search engines; over half also viewed the manufacturer's site; and approximately 40% used aggregators to compare products and reviews.

- In-store visits were the second step in the journey of 70% of major purchase shoppers, and 28% returned and used their mobile device while in the store.
- Nearly one-third researched financing options and 60% decided on payment method before entering the store to buy.
- Online purchasing among major purchase shoppers surveyed rose to 18% from 13% last year, driven by product availability, better deals and value, and ease and convenience. Music (65%), fitness equipment (46%), and electronics (37%) are the top online major purchase categories.
- Most shoppers (82%) purchased in-store, reflecting the preference of buyers who want to interact with a store associate, see the product and take it home the same day.

Role of Financing

- Financing is an important consideration in merchant selection, and nearly half of all shoppers surveyed report they would not have made the purchase or would have gone to another retailer if financing were not available.
- A higher percentage of respondents who are not Synchrony Bank cardholders (43%) reported awareness of financing options compared to last year (36%), indicating retailers are better integrating credit information across multiple channels.
- Among Synchrony cardholders surveyed, 78% said they “always” seek promotional financing when making a purchase and 90% confirm that special promotional financing makes larger purchases more affordable.

More than 2,775 respondents who made a purchase of \$500 or more in the past six months, or planned to make such a purchase, participated in the survey conducted for Synchrony Financial in June and July 2016 by global market research company Rothstein Tauber, Inc.

The Synchrony Financial Market Research team provides insights into consumer attitudes and perceptions toward the retail brand, products and platforms to improve customer satisfaction. Through the Synchrony Connect program, Synchrony Financial partners can connect with subject matter experts to gain knowledge and expertise in non-credit areas that help them grow, lead and operate their business. More information can be found at www.SynchronyFinancial.com.

About Synchrony Financial

Synchrony Financial (NYSE: [SYF](#)) is one of the nation’s premier consumer financial services companies. Our roots in consumer finance trace back to 1932, and today we are the largest provider of private label credit cards in the United States based on purchase volume and receivables.* We provide a range of credit products through programs we have established with a diverse group of national and regional retailers, local merchants, manufacturers, buying groups, industry associations and healthcare service providers to help generate growth for our partners and offer financial flexibility to our customers. Through our partners’ over 350,000 locations across the United States and Canada, and their websites and mobile applications, we offer our customers a variety of credit products to finance the purchase of goods and services. Synchrony Financial offers private label and co-branded Dual Card[™] credit cards, promotional financing and installment lending, loyalty programs and FDIC-

insured savings products through Synchrony Bank. More information can be found at www.synchronyfinancial.com, facebook.com/SynchronyFinancial, www.linkedin.com/company/synchrony-financial and twitter.com/SYFNews.

* Source: The Nilson Report (May 2016, Issue # 1087) - based on 2015 data.

Editor Note: Graphic data representations are available.

Topics: big ticket, large purchase, financing, credit cards, merchants, small business, retail, appliances, home furnishings

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Synchrony Financial Communications:

855-791-8007

media.relations@synchronyfinancial.com

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