

Footwear Retailing - UK - August 2010

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What is this report about?

After years of decline, there are signs that the specialist footwear retailers are beginning to fight back, and they have gained share of retail sales in the last couple of years.

What have we found out?

- Clarks, the market leader, and other traditional shoe retailers such as M&S and the department stores have been losing customers in the last few years.
- The biggest winners have been sports shops (such as JD and Sports Direct), Primark and New Look (because of their strength in young fashion), the supermarkets and the Internet specialists.
- For nearly two thirds of the population comfort is the most important criterion in buying shoes. There is a bias to older customers in this group.
- But there is a significant minority (around a third) for whom style is most important.
- Shoe lovers are a smaller proportion again- around 20% -but they buy more shoes and so are proportionately more important to retailers.
- Over a quarter of all consumers only buy shoes to replace ones that are worn out. Those who are purely price led represent a much smaller proportion, around 11%. Of more interest to shoe retailers are the 23% who shop around for the right style and fit.

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