

DIY Review - UK - June 2010

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What is this report about?

The DIY market has suffered over the last two years from a slump in the housing market and the economic recession, but the decline in interest in DIY goes back to before these negative factors came into play, with a gradual decline in the proportion of adults doing DIY. Up until 2007 there had been a trend towards more people paying tradesmen to carry out home improvements, and while more people may be currently opting for DIY, this is likely to be a long-term trend.

The face of DIY retailers is therefore gradually changing, but there is still a need to drive sales of DIY products to both DIY enthusiasts and trade customers. Getting the balance right between the two is essential in order to maximise sales. Inspiring people with new ideas for their homes and encouraging more to have a go at tackling DIY and home improvement tasks, while at the same time providing more installation services for those who don't want to do DIY, will be crucial to future success.

What have we found out?

- The proportion of adults undertaking DIY activities has been declining. But with incomes being squeezed, the next few years should be a good time to encourage more DIY activity. The DIY stores need to first educate, and then inspire people with a range of new ideas for the home.
- Three in ten adults lack the confidence to do any DIY. Stores need to build people's confidence to tackle a wider range of DIY tasks. Demonstrations or short films in stores to show the relative simplicity of certain DIY jobs would help demystify these tasks and build the confidence of DIYers.
- The disparity between men and women's confidence to undertake DIY jobs is wide. DIY stores should set up women-only courses for them to learn DIY skills (away from men), backed up by an 'Ask an Expert' service and post-course networking of attendees.
- Home makeovers are still an important driver of sales. But DIY chains need to provide more inspiration in stores for changing the look or usage of rooms. Four in ten do DIY to change the look or colour scheme of a room and one in ten to change its use.
- At the start of 2010, nearly half of adults were planning some DIY activity. DIY stores need to find out their customers' intentions, then reduce the barriers to plans not coming to fruition, whether it is a lack of time, knowledge, money or organisation.
- One in five adults are doing more DIY/home improvements to save money. More return on investment information could be provided: how doing jobs yourself could save £xx amount compared with paying a professional or how much value various DIY projects could add to your home.

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