

Buying for the Home Online - UK - February 2012

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"Online shopping is getting more sophisticated and increasingly convenient. Consumers already expect to be able to find the products they want online, look for information about those products and read impartial reviews to help guide them to their final choice. But for many home goods there are layers of complication when choosing, particularly when judgement about comfort, texture and colour come into play or when expert estimations are required. Even so, pioneering companies are facing up to these issues and creating more online choices. Those that fail to embrace online shopping will be relegated to the second division of retailing, left behind in tomorrow's brave new world."

– Neil Mason, Head of Retail Research

In this report we answer the key questions:

- Do consumers make use of social media when buying online for the home?
- What are retailers doing to extend the appeal of shopping online for the home?
- What are the latest developments in buying for the home online?
- What factors are holding back development in this market?
- Is online discounting stripping the profit out of retailing?

Mintel's definition of goods for the home for this report is based on the following categories: large domestic appliances (eg washing machines, fridges, dishwashers), small domestic appliances (eg toasters, food processors), furniture, lighting, household textiles, kitchenware, cookware and tableware, garden plants and flowers, DIY and garden tools and equipment, DIY materials, and carpets and other flooring.

Online transaction is defined as any purchase by a consumer where the act of ordering and giving payment details is completed entirely using the internet, wherever the goods are collected from or delivered to at the end of the purchase process. This therefore includes items bought online for collection from the store, often referred to as multichannel purchases or click and collect.

Although online ordering for purchase in-store is not included in this definition, it is obviously an important factor for an increasing number of retailers and is therefore included within the scope of discussions.

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