

Accessories for the Home - UK - November 2012

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"In a situation where consumers' focus has shifted to core priorities like food and energy costs, it is a tough task to rekindle their enthusiasm for their homes and for spending on items that may seem like non-essentials. Nevertheless, the internet and mobile technology offer opportunities to inspire consumers and encourage them to review these priorities, start to value their home environment once more and begin spending again."

– Neil Mason, Head of Retail Research

In this report we answer the key questions:

- Are consumers buying home accessories again after the downturn?
- Is retailer competition based on price inevitable or can it be avoided?
- Do specialists have a long-term future in this market?
- What are the prospects for selling home accessories online?
- Which retailers are best placed to take advantage of any growth?

The market for accessories for the home has suffered, like other home related spending categories, from the downturn in the property market, pressures on household discretionary spending and waning consumer interest in investing in the domestic environment. It is highly fragmented, led by a non-specialist, general merchandiser, Argos, out of town home retailer IKEA, budget chain Wilkinsons and the grocers. Low price operators like these are predominant, with a less important role for specialists and middle to upper market players.

This report looks at what home accessories UK consumers buy, where they buy them, and what they feel and think about them. It also considers some of the ways in which retailers are reacting to consumers' needs and wants in home accessories. It examines what opportunities there might be to generate sales that do not solely depend on low prices and, the most common motivation for purchase at the present time, the basic need to replace items as they wear out.

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EMEA: +44 (0)20 7778 7151
Americas: +1 (312) 932 0600
APAC: +61 (0)2 8284 8100