

# Greetings Cards and Personal Stationery Retailing - UK - February 2021

Report Price: £1995.00 | \$2693.85 | €2245.17

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"The pandemic has heightened consumers' sense of belonging and as such, sending greetings cards have become an important part of keeping in touch with family and friends during lockdown. Despite the rise of digital communications, the pandemic has put a renewed focus on the traditional pastime as it gives people the chance to feel connected and switch off from the digital world. This has also contributed to trends in the personal stationery market, which has seen consumers use it

This report looks at the following areas:

as a way to maintain their wellbeing. The pandemic has helped boost the use of both mediums as a way for consumers to express and channel emotions during a year that has been challenging for many.

Greeting card retailers have had a tough year as key events such as Mother's Day and Christmas were celebrated in lockdown. Despite the closure of non-essential stores, demand from consumers held up well, with 89% purchasing a greeting card in the past 12 months.

The impact of COVID-19 has seen some of this demand move online as consumers look for personalised cards to send to loved ones. While in the personal stationery market, we have seen consumers take up journal writing as a way to maintain their wellbeing. The pandemic has helped boost the use of both mediums as a way for consumers to express and channel emotions during a year that has been challenging for many.

The rise of digital communications and online shopping remains a threat to card specialists and independents that depend on a high-street presence. Looking at the performance from leading retailers, we see that many were unable to regain losses made from closed stores. Paperchase was one of the first casualties in the sector to fall under the impact of COVID-19, although it had been struggling for some years due to declining footfall on the high street – something the pandemic will have further exacerbated.

Going forward, card retailers should tap into the trends COVID-19 has helped to boost. The pandemic has heightened consumers' sense of belonging and as such, sending greeting cards is one of the key ways in which consumers have kept in touch with family and friends during lockdown. Despite the rise of digital communications, the pandemic has put a renewed focus on the traditional pastime as people look for a way to switch off from the digital world. Retailers should be aligning marketing and innovation efforts with the wellbeing trend, which has become increasingly multifaceted, giving retailers plenty of scope to help define the term for greeting card and personal stationery shoppers.

## Key issues covered in this report:

- The impact of COVID-19 on the greetings card and personal stationery market.
- How card retailers can encourage seasonless card purchasing.
- How stationery retailers can support the new work-from-home environment.
- Behaviours relating to personal stationery shopping habits.
- Behaviours relating to greetings card shopping habits.

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## Table of Contents

### Overview

Key issues covered in this Report

Economic and other assumptions

Products covered in this Report

### Executive Summary

Impact of COVID-19 on greetings cards and personal stationery

Figure 1: Short-, medium- and long-term impact of COVID-19 on greetings cards and personal stationery, 2020

The market

Figure 2: Consumer spending on greetings cards, 2015-25

Stationery sees a decline as consumers cut back on discretionary items

Figure 3: Consumer spending on personal stationery, 2015-25

Consumers want personalised cards

Figure 4: Consumer spending on greetings cards, by segment, 2020 (est)

Seasonal events are key for greetings card retailers

Figure 5: Seasonal events consumers buy greetings cards for, 2020

Consumers limit time in-store and shop more online

Figure 6: Changes to behaviours due to COVID-19, 8-13 January 2021

Card shops capture 44% of market by value

Figure 7: Distribution of greetings card, by type of retailer, 2020 (est)

WH Smith hit by travel restrictions around the globe

Figure 8: Distribution of personal stationery, by type of retailer, 2020 (est)

Companies and brands

COVID-19 causes disruption to sales

Card retailers show responsiveness with COVID-19-related card ranges

Adspend up 70.6% in 2020

Figure 9: Total above-the-line, online display and direct mail advertising expenditure on greetings cards and stationery, 2016-20

Key advertising campaigns help those struggling with isolation during lockdown

The consumer

Greetings card purchasing declines as COVID-19 prevents gatherings

Figure 10: Greetings card purchases, 2019 and 2020

Greetings card purchasing is mainly in stores

Figure 11: How greetings cards are purchased, November 2020

Supermarkets benefit from essential status during lockdown

Figure 12: Types of retailers greetings cards are purchased from, 2019-20

Greetings cards give a personal touch to gifts

Figure 13: Greetings card behaviours, November 2020

Supermarkets a go-to place for personal stationery

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Figure 14: Types of retailers personal stationery is purchased from, November 2020

Value is an important factor when buying personal stationery

Figure 15: Factors shoppers look for when buying personal stationery, November 2020

Shoppers buy stationery to help support working from home

Figure 16: Personal stationery behaviours, November 2020

## Issues and Insights

COVID-19 accelerates online shopping

Retailers should celebrate non-occasions

Retailer should find ways to support the working-from-home lifestyle

## The Market – Key Takeaways

Demand for greetings cards persist despite store closures

COVID-19 helps spark an increase for personalised cards

Print-on-demand and supermarkets emerge as lockdown winners

Retailers should encourage trading-up at seasonal events

## Market Size and Forecast

Greetings cards and personal stationery to recover in the medium term

Figure 17: Short-, medium- and long-term impact of COVID-19 on greetings cards and personal stationery, 2020

UK greetings card market holds up despite store closures

Figure 18: Consumer spending on greetings cards, 2015-25

Figure 19: Consumer spending on greetings cards, 2015-25

Stationery sees a decline as consumers cut back on discretionary items

Figure 19: Consumer spending on personal stationery, 2015-25

Figure 20: Consumer spending on personal stationery, 2015-15

Market drivers and assumptions

Learnings from the last recession

Forecast methodology

## Market Segmentation

Consumers want personalised cards

Figure 22: Consumer spending on greetings cards, by segment, 2020 (est)

Figure 23: Consumer spending on greetings cards, 2013-20

Encourage consumers to trade up at seasonal events

Figure 24: Single cards, share by value, 2020

## Channels to Market

Card shops capture 44% of market by value

Figure 25: Distribution of greetings cards, by channel, 2016-20 (est)

WH Smith hit by travel restrictions around the globe

Figure 26: Distribution of personal stationery, by channel, 2016-20 (est)

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Report Price: £1995.00 | \$2693.85 | €2245.17

The above prices are correct at the time of publication, but are subject to change due to currency fluctuations.

## Market Drivers

### Population trends

Figure 27: Population of the UK, 2020-30

Figure 28: Population of the UK, 2020-30

### Over-75s set to grow the most

Figure 29: Population of the UK, percentage change, by age group, 2020-30

### Deaths and marriages contribute to greetings card purchasing

Figure 30: Number of deaths and marriages in England and Wales, 2010-19

### Seasonal events are key for greetings card retailers

Figure 31: Seasonal events consumers buy greetings cards for, 2020

### More households have internet access

Figure 32: Percentage of households who have internet access in the UK and EU, 2010-19

### Smartphone ownership increases

Figure 33: Technology device ownership, September 2020

### Consumer confidence holds up well

Figure 34: Consumer confidence, January 2020

### Back-to-school contributes to personal stationery market

Figure 36: What consumers bought for the new term in 2019, September 2019

### Consumers limit time in-store and shop more online

Figure 37: Changes to behaviours due to COVID-19, 8-13 January 2021

### Brexit impact

## Companies and Brands – Key Takeaways

COVID-19 causes disruption to sales

Card retailers show responsiveness with COVID-19-related card ranges

Adspend set for a record year in 2020

## Companies and Brands

COVID-19 causes disruption to sales

WH Smith sales down as travel restrictions impact stores at airports

Paperchase saved out of administration

Clintons highlights unfairness for supermarkets to keep selling cards

Moonpig goes public as it emerges as a lockdown winner

Figure 38: Leading greetings cards and stationery retailer revenues, 2014-20

Figure 39: Leading greetings card and stationery retailers, store numbers, 2014-20

Figure 40: Leading greetings card and stationery retailers, sales per store, 2014-20

## Market Share

Market shares decrease due to COVID-19

Figure 41: Greetings card market share, by value, 2014-20

Figure 42: Personal stationery market share, by value, 2014-20

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## Launch Activity and Innovation

### Seasonal event launches

#### Filthy Sentiments launches COVID-19-related Mother's Day cards

Figure 43: Filthy Sentiments' COVID-19-related Mother's Day cards, 2020

#### Moonpig blood donation range for Mother's Day

Figure 44: Moonpig's Mother's Day card range, 2020

#### Louis Vuitton's #WELVMOMS e-card service

Figure 45: Louis Vuitton's complimentary e-card personalisation service, 2020

### Sustainability

#### Co-op teams up with Econature in new stationery range

Figure 46: Econature range sold by Co-op, 2020

### Inclusivity and diversity

#### Scribbler celebrates Black card designers

Figure 47: Scribbler's dedicated webpage for Black card designers, 2020

#### Waterstones stocks first Black-owned greetings card business in stores

### COVID-19-inspired innovations

#### Moonpig's Little Lockdown Heroes

Figure 48: Moonpig's Little Lockdown Heroes card range, 2020

#### Scribbler helps customers send cards to NHS workers

Figure 49: Scribbler's free greetings card ranges, 2020

#### Now TV recreated Love Actually doorstep scene

Figure 50: Now TV Greetings Gram, 2020

## Advertising and Marketing Activity

### Adspend set to increase in 2020

Figure 51: Total above-the-line, online display and direct mail advertising expenditure on greetings cards and stationery, 2016-20

### Moonpig is the biggest advertising spender

Figure 52: Moonpig and NHSBT Mother's Day cards, 2020

Figure 53: Moonpig's Mental Health Awareness cards, 2020

Figure 54: Above-the-line, online display and direct mail advertising expenditure on greetings cards and stationery, selected retailers, 2016-20

### Adspend on TV increases

Figure 55: Above-the-line, online display and direct mail advertising expenditure on greetings cards and stationery, by media type, 2020

### Key campaigns

#### Thinking of You Week

Figure 56: GCA Thinking of You Week banner and Sainsbury's' dedicated displays to the camping, 2020

#### Collins wants you to #StayWriteAtHome

Figure 57: Spotlight Stationery and Collins collaboration, 2020

## The Consumer – Key Takeaways

Greetings card demand holds up well despite cutback for non-essentials

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- Younger shoppers buy non-occasional cards
- Younger consumers buy greetings cards on smartphones
- Supermarkets benefit from essential status during lockdown
- COVID-19 has made it more important to stay in touch
- Younger consumers buy personal stationery from a range of retailers
- Shoppers buy stationery to help support working from home

## Impact of COVID-19 on Consumer Behaviour

- Safety concerns peak during key retail events  
Figure 58: Levels of concerns about exposure to the virus, February 2020-January 2021
- Greetings card demand holds up well despite cutback on non-essentials  
Figure 59: Changes in behaviour due to COVID-19, 21-26 January 2021

## Occasions Greetings Cards are Purchased For

- Greetings card purchasing declines as COVID-19 prevents gatherings  
Figure 60: Greetings card purchases, 2019 and 2020
- Younger shoppers buy non-occasional cards  
Figure 61: Greetings card purchases, by age group, November 2020

## Who They Purchase Greetings Cards For

- Shoppers purchase cards for family members  
Figure 62: Who they purchase greetings cards for, November 2020
- Card giving predominantly female-driven  
Figure 63: Who they purchase greetings cards for, by gender, November 2020

## How They Purchase Greetings Cards

- Greetings card purchasing made mainly in-store  
Figure 64: How greetings cards are purchased, November 2020
- Younger consumers buy greetings cards on smartphones  
Figure 65: How greetings cards are purchased, by age group, November 2020

## Which Retailers They Shop At

- Supermarkets benefit from essential status during lockdown  
Figure 66: Types of retailers greetings cards are purchased from, 2019 and 2020
- Online-only retailers are popular across demographics  
Figure 67: Types of retailers greetings cards are purchased from, by age group, November 2020

## Greetings Card Behaviours

- Greetings cards give a personal touch to gifts  
Figure 68: Greetings card behaviours, November 2020

## Retailers Personal Stationery is Purchased From

- Supermarkets a go-to place for personal stationery  
Figure 69: Types of retailers personal stationery is purchased from, November 2020

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Younger consumers buy personal stationery from a range of retailers

Figure 70: Types of retailers personal stationery is purchased from, by age group, November 2020

## Important Factors When Shopping for Personal Stationery

Value is an important factor when buying personal stationery

Figure 71: Factors shoppers look for when buying personal stationery, November 2020

Females want stylish personal stationery

Figure 72: Factors shoppers look for when buying personal stationery, by gender, November 2020

## Personal Stationery Behaviours

Shoppers buy stationery to help support working from home

Figure 73: Personal stationery behaviours, November 2020

## Appendix – Data Sources, Abbreviations and Supporting Information

Abbreviations

Consumer research methodology

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