

Aircare: Inc Impact of COVID-19 - UK - September 2020

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“The pandemic has brought people closer to their personal spaces and consumers are now reassessing the value they provide. Air care products are an effective way for consumers to feel more comfortable at home, while mood-enhancing scents have proven attractive to consumers during stressful times.”

– Richard Hopping, Global Household Analyst

This report looks at the following areas:

- The impact of COVID-19 on the air care market
- Launch activity and innovation opportunities for 2020 and beyond
- Usage and purchasing frequency of air care products
- Where air care products are used around the home
- Important purchase factors for air care products
- Interest in environmental behaviours around air care products
- Attitudes towards air care products in relation to health
- Perceptions of air care brand tiers

Value sales of air care products are expected to increase by 1.5% in 2020, rising to £504 million. This represents a turnaround after two years of sales declines. The key part of this recovery has been the increase in usage of premium formats, such as scented candles and reed diffusers, compared to 2019.

COVID-19 has had a significant impact on the air care market. While consumers did not necessarily seek to stockpile in the same way as other household care categories, the importance of feeling comfortable at home has increased as people have spent more time there. At the same time, increased levels of stress have driven people to seek products to aid their mental wellbeing. Just by being at home more often, usage occasions of functional products like aerosols and sprays have increased, encouraging higher sales.

Consumers have largely maintained a sense of confidence about their finances so far, which means we have yet to see people falling out of the category. However, with the end of the UK government’s furlough scheme coming in October, more job losses are expected and some consumers will be even more cautious about non-essential spending. Own-label is set to benefit, particularly as retailers have invested more in NPD to close the quality gap between them and recognised brands. The challenge for brands is to make their products feel more essential and offer more value.

Brands have the opportunity to align with renewed pride in the home environment and broaden functionality to cater for new tasks in the home, including providing scent to aid concentration for home workers or boosting physical performance for those exercising at home. In previous recessions, certain segments of the market have succeeded by positioning themselves as a slice of affordable luxury. Brands can seek to premiumise their offerings through the increased use of natural ingredients, or by boosting their environmental credentials in line with growing consumer demands.

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This report is part of a series of reports, produced to provide you with a more holistic view of this market

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