

Brand Overview: Retail: Inc Impact of COVID-19 - UK - October 2020

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“COVID-19 will introduce even more ethical indicators that need to be appropriately dealt with, particularly when it comes to the treatment of staff, vulnerable members of society or NHS workers.”

– **Richard Hopping, Senior Brand and Household Analyst**

This report looks at the following areas:

- **The impact of COVID-19 on retailers**
- **Usage of leading retailers**
- **Top scoring retailers on metrics like trust, preference, differentiation, and satisfaction and recommendation**
- **The top scoring retailers for personality traits including ethics, customer service, value and exclusivity**
- **Retailers particularly noted for online service**

Like most markets, the retail market has been significantly affected by COVID-19, although whether the impact on individual retailers has been positive or negative depends heavily on the category they operate in.

Online retail never went away, but is still going through something of a resurgence due to the pandemic. This has benefited specialists in the market, but will also offer new opportunities for retailers to futureproof their offering by expanding their online options and involving more technology to make the experience positive. For example, brands can take inspiration from Currys PC World and The Perfume Shop, which are using video calling with experts to encourage purchases in an area heavily determined by in-person trial.

Amazon remains dominant in the retail market, helped by its Prime service, and is influencing the market beyond its own proposition. For example, other retailers have relaunched their loyalty schemes in 2020, with Tesco exploring free delivery for its Clubcard Plus subscribers. Such services can help to add value at a time where consumers will be inclined to cut their spend wherever possible.

COVID-19 will introduce even more ethical factors that need to be appropriately dealt with, particularly related to the treatment of people; for example staff, vulnerable members of society or NHS workers. But while retailers have certainly increased their ethical activity over recent years, it is important to note that those with strongest heritage in this area are most readily recognised for their efforts, like The Body Shop, Lush and Co-op. Brands should seek to push new ethical initiatives in the short term, but will need to recognise that it may take longer for these actions to filter through into consumer consciousness.

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DID YOU KNOW?

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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