

Alcoholic Beverages Online - US - 2021

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This report looks at the following areas:

- The impact of COVID-19 on consumer behavior and the online alcoholic beverages market
- Online channel use by alcoholic beverage drinking occasion
- Reasons for buying alcohol online and incentives to inspire trial
- Barriers to shopping for alcohol online

The pandemic provided a leg-up to the online alcoholic beverages market; instances of online purchase of alcohol nearly doubled from 2019 (23% “typically shop”) to 2021 (41% any shop), and 40% of online alcohol purchasers did so for the first time out of in-store safety concerns. While instance of shopping primarily online will dip from 11% to 6% into 2022, with shoppers lured away by a preference for in-store exploration, this remains a net gain over the 2% who did so in 2019, suggesting online channels proved their worth beyond pandemic safety.

Barriers to adoption come from a lack of perceived relevance, which drives discontent over additional fees. Two distinct audiences exist: the in-store stalwarts for whom price incentive will have the strongest draw, and the engaged online adopters who find value in the add-on offerings, such as broad selections, high-quality offerings and personalization through order customization and targeted recommendations. The market will need to continue to vie for relevance, and it can prove worth through value, which for some means convenience and for others means experience.

Immediate alcohol delivery services, such as Drizly, are the most relevant online option for a range of occasions, pointing to the draw of speed and specialization. Consumers are moving away from their computers when making purchases online and expressing interest in using mobile apps and websites for alcohol shopping. The market’s future will require meeting consumers where they are, providing shopping solutions from scannable on-pack and in-the-



“While in-store alcohol shopping continues to dominate, online channels made huge gains from 2019-21, nearly doubling adoption to 41% of alcohol shoppers, including one in 10 who shop online mostly or exclusively.”

– **Beth Bloom, Associate Director – US Food and Drink Reports**

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wild formats to voice-assisted ordering and click-throughs from social media, TV and other entertainment content.

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Table of Contents

OVERVIEW

- **What you need to know**
- **This Report looks at the following areas**
- **Definition**
- **Market context**
- **Economic and other assumptions**
- **COVID-19: US context**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **Top takeaways**
- **Market overview**

Figure 1: Best- and worst-case forecast value of total US retail sales of alcoholic drinks (in-home), at current prices, 2016-26

- **Impact of COVID-19 on alcoholic beverages online**

Figure 2: Short-, medium- and long-term impact of COVID-19 on alcoholic beverages online, September 2021

- **Opportunities and challenges**
- **Online shopping anticipated to dip into 2022, but net gains seen from 2019**

Figure 3: Anticipated alcohol shopping methods over the next 12 months, 2021

- **Consumers still need to be sold on value**

Figure 4: Barriers to online alcohol shopping, 2021

- **Competitive pricing will have the widest draw in enticing trial**

Figure 5: Incentives to try online alcohol beverage shopping, 2021

- **Home-based workforce supports drinking (and shopping) at home**

Figure 6: Work expectations for 2021, 2021

THE MARKET – KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Dollar sales of alcohol projected to dip in 2021, gains projected 2022 on**
- **Alcohol retailers will need to contend with a reduction in drinking**
- **Boom in grocery ecommerce can benefit all**
- **Hybrid work environments will keep people at home longer**

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SEGMENT PERFORMANCE

- **After recalibration from 2020 boom, dollar gains projected from 2022 on**

Figure 7: Best- and worst-case forecast value of total US retail sales of alcoholic drinks (in-home), at current prices, 2016-26

Figure 8: Total US retail sales and forecast of alcoholic drinks (in-home), at current prices, 2016-26

- **RTDs continue as a growth driver**
- **Spirits see interest and movement**
- **Behemoths beer and wine not keeping pace**

Figure 9: Alcoholic beverage purchase, 2021

MARKET FACTORS

- **Alcohol retailers must contend with a reduction in drinking**
- **Grocery ecommerce surpasses \$100 billion, not looking back**

Figure 10: Shopping methods, 2021

Figure 11: Shopping by category – Net – Any online and any purchase, 2021

- **Delta variant causes uptick in coronavirus exposure fears**
- **Consumers are comfortable gathering, less so at restaurants and bars**

Figure 12: Coronavirus exposure concern – Net – Any worried, 2020-21

Figure 13: Coronavirus exposure concern – Net – Any worried, 2021

- **Home-based workforce supports drinking (and shopping) at home**

Figure 14: Work expectations for 2021, 2021

- **Consumers are split on their intentions for hosting events at home**

Figure 15: At-home hosting expectations in 2021, 2021

- **Consumer confidence dips to pandemic low, challenges desire to indulge**

Figure 16: Consumer Sentiment Index, 2020-21

COMPANIES AND BRANDS – KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Move consumers from pack to purchase**
- **Food delivery service partnerships can nurture online alcohol familiarity**
- **Be the go-to for what’s popular, among experts and peers**
- **Consider low- and no-alcohol offerings to secure relevance**

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COMPETITIVE STRATEGIES

- **The steady drumbeat of diversification**
- **Getting big by supporting small**
Figure 17: Gopuff: "Put Me On," 2021
- **Looking at RTDs as ready to deliver**
- **Bacardi's Mix Lab offers convenient access to expertise**
Figure 18: Mix Lab: "Find Your Flavor with Mix Lab," 2021

MARKET OPPORTUNITIES

- **Tap alcohol need states**
Figure 19: Alcoholic beverage attitudes – Net – Any agree, 2020
Figure 20: Alcohol consumption occasions by alcohol type – Net – Any alcohol type*, 2020
- **Partner with food delivery services to nurture familiarity with alcohol online**
- **Be the go-to for what's popular, among experts and peers**
- **Drive consumers online from on-pack**
Figure 21: Improvements to online shopping, 2021
- **Think beyond the (alcoholic) drink**

THE CONSUMER – KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **One in 10 alcohol buyers shop for alcohol mostly or exclusively online**
- **Online participation expected to drop, net gains are seen**
- **Growing online alcohol sales will require proving worth**
- **Brick-and-mortar online platforms outperform online-only sellers**
- **Competitive pricing will invite trial, personalization will stick**

ALCOHOL SHOPPING METHODS

- **41% of alcohol shoppers do so online**
Figure 22: Alcohol shopping methods in the past 12 months, 2021
Figure 23: Alcohol shopping methods in the past 12 months, 2019 and 2021
- **Men, under-45s and urban dwellers dominate online audience**
Figure 24: Alcohol shopping methods in the past 12 months – Net – Any online, by select demographics, 2021
- **Seltzer buyers are the most likely to shop online**
Figure 25: Alcohol shopping methods in the past 12 months, by alcohol type purchased, 2021

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- Full Report PDF
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- **Online channels will experience net gains from pre-pandemic**

Figure 26: Anticipated alcohol shopping methods over the next 12 months, 2021

ONLINE ALCOHOL SHOPPING SERVICES USED

- **Mass merchandisers have widest appeal, edge in via specialization**
- **Occasion-specific messaging can grow relevance of alcohol-focused retailers**
- **Meal kits could strengthen tie with wine**
- **Don't overlook RTDs**

Figure 27: Online alcohol shopping services used, 2021

CHANNEL USE BY OCCASION

- **While in-store rules, drink delivery services beat stores' online offerings**

Figure 28: Channel use, by occasion, 2021

- **Younger shoppers reserve drink delivery services for special occasions**

Figure 29: Channel use by occasion – Online drink delivery service (eg Drizly, Minibar), by age, 2021

- **Grocery apps reserved for larger events**

Figure 30: Channel use by occasion – Grocery store or mass merchandiser website or app (eg albertsons.com, target.com), by age, 2021

- **Third-party apps seen as meeting everyday convenience needs of 22-44s**

Figure 31: Channel use by occasion – Online drink delivery service (eg Drizly, Minibar), by age, 2021

FREQUENCY OF ONLINE ALCOHOL PURCHASE

- **Frequency of alcohol delivery is high, make it regular**

Figure 32: Frequency of online alcohol purchase, 2021

- **A third of 22-44s who buy alcohol online do so weekly**

Figure 33: Frequency of online alcohol purchase, by age, 2021

REASONS FOR PURCHASING ALCOHOL ONLINE

- **Necessity boosted online adoption, convenience will keep it**

Figure 34: Reasons for purchasing alcohol online, 2021

Figure 35: Online alcohol statements – Impact of COVID-19, 2021

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- Guidance translates to convenience among men, younger shoppers**

Figure 36: Reasons for purchasing alcohol online, by gender, 2021

Figure 37: Reasons for purchasing alcohol online, by age, 2021

- In-store shoppers can be swayed by brand availability online**

Figure 38: Reasons for purchasing alcohol online, by alcohol shopping method in the past 12 months, 2021

ONLINE ALCOHOL SERVICE CHOICE FACTORS

- Price and selection dominate online channel choice**

Figure 39: Online alcohol service choice factors, 2021

- Selection drives channel choice among engaged shoppers**

Figure 40: Online alcohol service choice factors, by alcohol shopping method in the past 12 months, 2021

Figure 41: Online alcohol service choice factors, by online alcohol purchase frequency – Nets, 2021

- Younger shoppers are used to paying a fee for access**

Figure 42: Online alcohol service choice factors, by age, 2021

Figure 43: Drizly Instagram post, Malibu Pina Colada, 2021

DEVICE TYPES OF INTEREST FOR ONLINE ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE SHOPPING

- Apps have equal draw with websites, pointing to mobile future**

Figure 44: Device types of interest for online alcohol shopping, 2021

- Market future will require touchpoints to meet consumers where they are**

Figure 45: Device types of interest for online alcohol shopping, by age, 2021

- Engaged online shoppers are interested in next-level tech**

Figure 46: Device types of interest for online alcohol shopping, by alcohol shopping method in the past 12 months, 2021

Figure 47: Device types of interest for online alcohol shopping, by online alcohol purchase frequency – Nets, 2021

ONLINE ALCOHOL PURCHASE BEHAVIOR

- Beat in-store retailers at their own game or change the offerings**

- Quality is a clear path to engagement**

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- **Encouraging larger purchase volume can lessen the need for in-store buys**
Figure 48: Online alcohol statements, 2021
- **One in five younger shoppers trades down online, points to value in range**
Figure 49: Online alcohol statements, by age, 2021

INCENTIVES TO TRY ONLINE ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE SHOPPING

- **Competitive pricing will have the widest draw in enticing trial**
Figure 50: Incentives to try online alcoholic beverage shopping, 2021
- **Engaged online shoppers put a premium on holistic value beyond price**
Figure 51: Incentives to try online alcoholic beverage shopping, by alcohol shopping method in the past 12 months, 2021
Figure 52: Incentives to try online alcoholic beverage shopping, by online alcohol purchase frequency – Nets, 2021
- **Suite of offerings can entice younger shoppers**
Figure 53: Incentives to try online alcoholic beverage shopping, by age, 2021
- **Customization appeals to RTD drinkers**
Figure 54: Incentives to try online alcoholic beverage shopping, by alcohol type purchased, 2021

BARRIERS TO ONLINE ALCOHOL SHOPPING

- **Preference for in-person exploration limits online adoption**
- **Potential lies in the need waiting to be filled**
Figure 55: Barriers to online alcohol shopping, 2021
- **Fees will remain an issue unless and until the benefit outweighs the cost**
Figure 56: Barriers to online alcohol shopping, by alcohol shopping methods, 2021
Figure 57: Barriers to online alcohol shopping, by area, 2021

ITEMS PURCHASED WITH ONLINE ALCOHOL ORDERS

- **Snacks are common online alcohol companion purchases**
- **Alcohol bundles can drive up cart totals**
Figure 58: Items purchased with online alcohol orders, 2021
- **Reaching infrequent shoppers can come from pairing alcohol with grocery**

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- Full Report PDF
- Infographic Overview
- Powerpoint Presentation
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Figure 59: Items purchased with online alcohol orders, by online alcohol purchase frequency – Nets, 2021

APPENDIX – DATA SOURCES AND ABBREVIATIONS

- Data sources
- Consumer survey data
- TURF Methodology
- Consumer qualitative research
- Abbreviations and terms
- Abbreviations
- Terms

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