

Consumer Attitudes towards Cut Flowers and Houseplants - UK - May 2021

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This report looks at the following areas:

- The impact of COVID-19 on flowers and houseplant purchasing
- Key consumer behaviours influenced by COVID-19
- Houseplant and flower behaviours in the last 12 months
- The impact of COVID-19 on online shopping for flowers and houseplants

Purchasing levels for flowers and houseplants remained stable in 2021, with 50% of consumers having purchased flowers in the past year, while houseplants saw a marginal increase (36%). It was encouraging to see the average spend on shoppers last purchase of flowers and houseplants increase from £18.7 a year before to £24.8 in 2020/21, driven by consumers wanting to stay in touch with family and friends during lockdown.

The impact of COVID-19 forced most florists and specialists to close shop while supermarkets and discounters could trade in the category, benefiting from their essential status. Meanwhile, online benefitted from the closure of non-essential retail and saw purchasing levels increase 55% in the past 12 months. Retailers should focus on encouraging spend from older consumers who have gained confidence in online shopping as a result of the pandemic.

Indeed, over a third shopped online for flowers/houseplants in the past year (33%). Demand is expected to revert back to store-based retail as the high streets reopened and florists could capture demand from passing footfall ahead of the crucial spring/summer period. However, store-based retailers will have to compete with online players, especially nurseries and garden centres that have opened direct-to-consumer channels in response to the pandemic. Our research also reveals that online shopping saw a significant uptick.

Despite the pandemic, consumers took up house planting as a hobby, while gifting and implementing flowers helped lift moods during lockdown. Retailers have the opportunity to tap into the wider wellbeing trend with houseplants



“The past 12 months have continued to be tough for the sector as the UK endured a second and third lockdown. As a result, florists and specialists were forced to close shop during the crucial Christmas period and lose out on store sales for key events like Valentine’s Day, Mother’s Day and Easter which were, yet again, celebrated in lockdown.”

– Emily Viberg, Retail Analyst

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and flowers as consumers have had the chance to recognise the benefits of having both in the home during national lockdowns.



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