

## Women's Fashion Lifestyles - UK - May 2012

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“With consumers’ disposable incomes under constant pressure, almost half of women are mainly buying clothes which are on sale or special offer. With competition rife in the women’s fashion market, retailers need to differentiate themselves from the pack for reasons other than slashing prices, in order to maintain their margins. There is scope for retailers to focus on adding extra value to their offering in terms of the retail experience to spur the market forward.”

– Emma Clifford, Fashion and Clothing Analyst

### In this report we answer the key questions:

- Are young women continuing to drive the performance of the fashion market?
- What are women looking for when buying new clothing?
- Are older women still being ignored on the high street?
- How is technology impacting upon the women’s fashion market?
- How can retailers make finding the right fit easier?
- What added value opportunities are there in the women’s fashion market?

Womenswear dominates the clothing industry and accounts for two thirds of the value of the adult outerwear market, reflecting women’s affinity for fashion and enjoyment in the clothes shopping experience. Indeed, almost six in ten (57%) women include clothing, shoes and jewellery as a spending priority, making this their main area of discretionary spend. Young fashion-oriented women continue to underpin the performance of the market, and many young women are delaying the transition to independent living, which has insulated them from the worst effects of the economic downturn.

Interest in following fashion trends diminishes as women age, whereas the appeal of high-quality and comfortable clothing in classic styles that can be worn for years rises. Half of over-55 women feel overlooked within the youth-centric fashion arena and there is an opportunity for retailers to focus more attention on this under-served – and rapidly expanding - demographic.

This report looks at the women’s fashion market in early 2012, analysing where women buy clothes, how frequently they go shopping and assessing their attitudes towards shopping for clothes.

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**EMEA:** +44 (0)20 7778 7151  
**Americas:** +1 (312) 932 0600  
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