

Who shops online?

Background

The following information is taken from the **Consumer 2010** research published by the Consumer Council in October 2010. To see the full report visit:

<http://www.consumercouncil.org.uk/publications/>

Broadband take-up:

70 per cent of households in Northern Ireland are connected to broadband in 2010, up from 64 per cent in 2009.

Broadband take-up in Northern Ireland is higher than in Scotland (61 per cent) or Wales (64 per cent), and on a par with England (73 per cent).

Source: Ofcom (19 August 2010), Communications Market Report: Northern Ireland

By age:

Internet shopping peaks among 25-34 year olds (65 per cent).

Half of 45-54 year olds shop online (52 per cent).

Less 55-64 year olds shop online (37 per cent).

Only 14 per cent of over 65's shop online.

By income:

79 per cent of those with high household incomes shop online.

29 per cent of those with low household incomes shop online.

By location:

A higher proportion of consumers living in urban areas shop online (50 per cent) compared with rural consumers who shop online (42 per cent). This can be partly explained by the fact that cable broadband is currently unavailable in most rural parts of Northern Ireland.

Family status:

Of the 483 people who had shopped for goods and services online 60 per cent had children under 16 years old and 40 per cent did not.

Marital status:

Of the 483 people who had shopped for goods and services online:

56 per cent were married.

22 per cent were widowed, separated or divorced.

49 per cent were single.

Why shop online?

61 per cent of online shoppers mention convenience as the main reason for shopping online.

Over half (54 per cent) mention online prices as a benefit.

About a third say the range of choice available is the main reason for shopping online.

Interestingly, the reason for online shopping's benefits according to gender. 66 per cent of women mention convenience as a major benefit compared to 57 per cent of men. In contrast, 59 per cent of men mentioned price as the greatest benefit compared to 48 per cent of women.

Barriers to shopping online

44 per cent of consumers who don't shop online gave not having access to the internet as the main reason.

49 per cent of those who said lack of access was the barrier are from lower income backgrounds.

Having a lack of internet knowledge and skills is the reason why 22 per cent do not shop online.

21 per cent prefer to physically see goods and services before they buy.

Concerns about online security deter 16 per cent of non-online shoppers.

4 per cent don't shop online because they don't have a debit or credit card. This reason is most prevalent among young people (11 per cent).

Online shopping rights

Only four in ten feel confident about their rights when buying online.

Among those who do shop online, 69 per cent stated they feel confident about their rights. This drops to 13 per cent among non-internet shoppers.

56 per cent of 18-24 year olds feel well informed about their online shopping rights compared to only 11 per cent of over 65s.

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Curriculum Links:

(GCSE) Effective Consumer – Barriers that prevent individuals + Distance Selling Regulations 2000

(GCSE) What influences shopping? factors that influence + evaluate shopping options (internet)

(GCSE) Task option 1 – Investigate the use of the internet as a method of shopping for families