



***The Psychology of Shopping:  
Market-Changing Consumer Shopping Trends Transforming Retail***

*Criteo and Expert Insights Track Emerging Shopper Behaviours*

**LONDON—14 Nov. 2018—**[Criteo](#) S.A. (NASDAQ: CRTO), Criteo, the advertising platform for the open Internet, today reveals three fast-growing consumer shopping macro trends about to become mainstream market forces. From the 40% of UK shoppers seeking pleasure from enhanced ethical credentials to the re-rise of the social shopping trip and self-gifting, across the country, people are looking for more out of the retail experience. The result is a tidal shift that's seeing more people than ever before enjoying shopping – and the sentiment isn't slowing down.

The consumer research, conducted in partnership with Walnut Unlimited and Academic Anthropologist and Semiotician, Dr Nick Gadsby, explores a number of retail behaviours and the psychology behind them. Each trend explores how retailers can support these different behaviours to build stronger connections with customers.

**Virtuous circlers**

Ethical shopping is one of the fastest growing sectors of retail. Spend last year on ethical food and drink grew 9.7% and the ethical market is now worth [£81.3bn in the UK](#).

Almost half of shoppers (40%) feel more positive about brands that publish their ethical standards. The Internet is helping people discover more ethical choices, and rather than making shopping a guilty pleasure, it helps reinforce our identity.

Technology is also helping consumers make ethical choices about previous purchases. The option to re-sell and recycle purchases makes a third (33%) of UK shoppers feel better about spending money.

“The things we buy are part of our identity, they are a public expression of our values and what we deem important. Shopping, and consumption in general come with negative associations for the environment and the wellbeing of employees, but increasingly ethical choices offer consumers an opportunity to shop with good conscience, to feel that buying things is a way to make the world a better, safer, healthier place to live. Brands have a huge opportunity to showcase their ethical and sustainable credentials to help shoppers make choices that suit this shift in attitudes amongst consumers.” said Dr Nick Gadsby, Semiotician.

**Social capitalists**

Twenty years after the idea was first coined, the experience economy is becoming mainstream. Led by millennials, but popular across all age groups, spend on experiences that can be shared in-real-life and online is overtaking more traditional discretionary spend, like leisure or entertainment.

At the same time online retail has made many purchases easy but functional. Physical retail and the ability to share experiences on and offline fulfils a social need for consumers. According to the research a quarter of people (24%) prefer to shop with friends.

When shopping with friends, department stores are ranked the highest as social retail destinations because of their wide product range, and distinct locations that offer sandbox-like experiences – with ‘stop spots’ where discoveries can be made.

“Consumer perceptions of value are highly sensitive to context. Our research shows that as the value of experiences goes up, but the value of the goods by themselves goes down. Increasingly, the value of purchases is strongly influenced by the environment in which they are made. The value of an experience is enhanced when it can be shared both in the moment but also on social, generating positive social responses by peers,” comments Dr Gadsby.

“So, brands need to make shopping experiences more like what people experience online, in terms of shareability, and look and feel in terms of aesthetics and photography.”

### **Self-care shoppers**

Online and new retail sales rituals (for example Black Friday) have transformed shopper expectations and behaviours. Consumers now expect to find just the right deal or shopping experience for them, at any time. Take rise in shoppers using their homes as a more convenient changing room for example, more shoppers are rejecting retail stores as the best place to make purchase decisions – one-third of people don’t like using fitting rooms. They prefer to buy multiple items to try on at home.

The availability of bargains online has created an emerging ethos of “self-care”. Almost half (47%) of UK shoppers have self-gifted in the last 12 months, claiming bargains are the number one reason.

Finding bargains is a labour that transforms shopping into a productive activity that makes us feel better about ourselves and our purchases. Two in five (44%) will search or wait for a discount code or voucher before buying something, higher social grades (ABC1) are more likely to do so than the rest.

Conversely, a third (34%) of under 25s have felt remorse or regret because they bought something online without thinking about it.

“The findings illustrate a clear trend in shopping behaviour, being driven mostly by young shoppers, who have increased expectations through their experiences with online and mobile. This in turn has raised shoppers’ expectations about the level of personalisation, service, efficiency of shop, and shopping environment, meaning successful physical retail needs to replicate the successful attributes of online – while leveraging the unique tactile experiences shoppers can only get in-store” commented John Gillan, MD Northern Europe and UK, Criteo.

“The only way for retailers and brands to deliver on shoppers’ experience expectations is through the effective collection, use, integration, and optimisation of online and offline shopper data. Using next generation technology such as Artificial Intelligence and machine learning, reams of data can be assembled quickly into clear picture of consumer behaviour and preferences more quickly. The businesses that innovate their use of data to gain a more complete view of their shopper will survive and thrive in this new world.”

### **Study Methodology**

“The Psychology of Shopping: The Impact of Digital on Shopping Behaviour” report was based on a survey of 2,050 consumers from across the United Kingdom, conducted by Walnut Unlimited. Fieldwork took place between 31<sup>st</sup> August – 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2018. For a complete look at The Psychology of Shopping study, view the report [here](#).

### **About Criteo**

Criteo (NASDAQ: CRTO) is the advertising platform for the open Internet, an ecosystem that favors neutrality, transparency and inclusiveness. 2,700 Criteo team members partner with close to 19,000 customers and thousands of publishers around the globe to deliver effective advertising across all channels, by applying advanced machine learning to unparalleled data sets. Criteo empowers companies of all sizes with the technology they need to better know and serve their customers. For more information, please visit [www.criteo.com](http://www.criteo.com).

### **About Dr Nick Gadsby**

Dr Nick Gadsby, founder of The Answer, is a highly experienced Commercial Semiotician and a lecturer in Cultural Anthropology. He specialises in helping brands grow and innovate through harnessing the power of cultural trends. At a time when the world is changing faster than ever before, Nick helps brands see the bigger picture, identify how to strategically position themselves in rapidly evolving markets and understand the factors and psychological mind sets that will drive consumer preferences. Semiotics is a social science that analyses how people and brands make and create meaning through culture and how cultural trends evolve over time.

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