

Clothing Retailing - UK - October 2009

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What is this report about?

There is more choice than ever before in the UK's clothing mass-market. But it has been dominated by price for much of the last ten years, as cheaper sourcing from the Far East has facilitated the growth of value retailers.

What have we found out?

- More than one in four people have not changed their shopping habits for clothes since the recession started. Younger consumers have refused to cut back the amount they spend on looking good.
- With record unemployment amongst younger consumers, tough times are ahead for the youth-focused fashion retail industry.
- Online usage is greatest amongst men. But only 10% of men are shopping online for clothes. Few menswear retailers are specifically targeting this relatively untapped market.
- As a key destination store for the over-45 year old clothes shopper, M&S is well positioned to take advantage of an increasingly ageing population. More mature consumers have proved to be the least likely to have traded down during the recession.
- As talk of recovery starts, will consumers revert to their old shopping habits? Mintel remains unconvinced that value retailers have fundamentally changed consumers clothes shopping habits. In fact, some quarters are showing signs of a stronger desire for valued garments over throw away items.
- People who buy clothes online or from sports shops want familiarity and trust. More brands should take the opportunity to sell direct to consumers and cut out the middleman. Those brands with a strong own offer could profit most.

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