

Who benefits most from online retailing – consumers or retailers?

In March 2020, as the Covid-19 crisis has become established in the UK and consumers have been forced to change their shopping habits, online supermarkets have been overwhelmed with people desperate to book a delivery of the goods that they need for daily life.

The change to online shopping in the UK was already well underway, and has been partly responsible for the closure or severe retrenchment of a large number of high street chains in 2019, from Debenhams to LK Bennett, and from Mothercare to Jamie Oliver's restaurant chains. You can find a more complete list of 2019's closures and bailouts here:

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2019/nov/06/high-street-crisis-big-names-job-losses-store-closures>

Statista is a database company that collates and reports on data collected by market and opinion research institutes and also data derived from the economic sector and official statistics. In May 2019, Statista found that online grocery shopping in the United Kingdom is the fastest growing purchase channel, both in terms of value and growth, according to retail analysts IGD. You can read some highlights of their report here:

<https://www.statista.com/topics/3144/online-grocery-shopping-in-the-united-kingdom/>

The average value of weekly online sales in predominantly food stores more than doubled between 2010 and 2016, reaching 141.9 million British pounds in 2016. With the introduction of online grocery shopping, home delivery and click and collect in the nineties, the market was initially made up of the four major players on the British grocery scene: Sainsbury's, Asda, Morrisons and Tesco.

Since then, online grocery sales have skyrocketed, with the United Kingdom forecasted to become the second largest online grocery market worldwide after China by 2020. With the introduction of new players, such as purely online retailers Ocado and AmazonFresh, the online grocery market share has changed with Tesco, Asda and Ocado the leading online grocery retailers in terms of edible grocery sales.

Use these and other resources to research the market for online retailing in the UK, and then:

1. Prepare a presentation that outlines the impact, in particular to online retailers, but not exclusively, that COVID-19 has had on:
 - a. UK businesses
 - b. Consumers
 - c. Workers
 - d. The wider society in the UK.
2. Answer the following question
“Who benefits most from online retailing – consumers or retailers?”.

You might also find some of the resources from this search on the Tutor2u website helpful:

<https://www.tutor2u.net/search?q=online+retailing>