

NEWS



8 OUT OF 10 UK SHOPPERS PREFER INDIES

A recent survey by Liberis, a UK alternative finance provider, reveals that 8 out of 10 consumers plan to use independent businesses in preference to larger businesses this year.

The survey examines current consumer attitudes towards small businesses, with the data revealing that 65 per cent of respondents were aware that using a smaller provider can be more expensive, but that the benefits of doing so outweighed the increased costs, as 48 per cent still wanted to boost the local economy and support their community.

According to the findings, convenience and leisure are the main reasons why consumers choose a small business over a larger retailer. Fifty-eight per cent of respondents said they use a grocery and convenience store the most, with 55-64 year olds selecting this as their most used type of independent store. Clothing, jewellery, books, music and gift retailers were the second most utilised businesses at 45 per cent.

Almost 50 per cent of those polled said that they shop small to support independent establishments, indicating that this plays an important role in purchasing decisions. Furthermore, 51 per cent of those polled said there is a noticeable difference between the quality of customer service offered in small businesses compared to larger stores.

However, 50 per cent of consumers said that a 'limited product range' selection is the number one drawback to using a small business. Almost half (48 per cent) said that smaller stores tend to be more expensive.

Very few people, meanwhile, stated brand penetration (e.g. online offering, household name and peer recommendations) as an influential factor in their decision to support a small business, where historically, being a household name has gone in a larger brand's favour. However, when asked why consumers shop at larger stores, price was the number reason at 47 per cent, with the 65+ age bracket noting price as their main reason to shop at bigger businesses, indicating that this age group keep tighter control over their finances than other age groups.



JACKET REQUIRED LAUNCHES WOMENSWEAR EDIT

London trade show Jacket Required will showcase a carefully curated edit of womenswear within its next edition.

"Bringing a selection of womenswear to Jacket Required has been something under discussion with brands and buyers for a number of seasons, and it now feels like the time is right," says Alice Elliott, event director. "We have a number of labels which are extremely relevant to the women's market as they stand. The upcoming edition will allow our brands to present a strong womenswear edit of its spring/summer 2018 collection to targeted retailers," she adds.

Now in its 13th season, the show will take place at The Old Truman Brewery between 26-27 July and will showcase s/s 18 collections from established brands such as Clarks Originals, Birkenstock, Deadwood, Girls of Dust, Wrangler and many more.



CONTINUED SUCCESS FOR JUST CONSULTANCIES

Contemporary fashion agency Just Consultancies, founded by Juls and Steph Dawson, has relocated its Manchester showroom to Tazaro House, within the city centre. With new signings from Religion Men and Nicce accessories and footwear, as well as the success of its in-house label Slydes (pictured), the company has also undergone a management restructure with the appointment of Jan Vincent Goddard to northern sales manager at the Manchester showroom.

"Tazaro House is long synonymous with fashion and is rapidly becoming the new fashion hub for Manchester, with more than 15 different brands, agencies and distributors now based there," says Dawson. "We've moved there as the location is now on every northern buyer's agenda, plus the apparent comradery between the different business is exciting for the team at Just to become a part of."



GROWING GLOBAL INTEREST AT MEET THE MANUFACTURER

This year's Meet the Manufacturer event, organised by Make it British, attracted more global interest, with international visitors doubling year-on-year, to account for 8 per cent of total visitor figures.

"When we launched in 2014 we could never have guessed that thousands of people from all over the country, as well as visitors from as far away as America and Japan, would come to a small venue in East London," says Kate Hills, founder and CEO of Make it British. "Meet the Manufacturer is now attracting companies from all over the world and this makes me more enthusiastic than ever about manufacturing in the UK," she adds.

A highlight of the event was British fashion designer Patrick Grant, director of E-Tautz and Norton & Sons of Savile Row, talking about his new Community Clothing project that uses a network of factories in the north of England and Scotland.



FASHION SVP REVEALS NEW FOCUS ON ATHLEISURE

The significant growth of the athleisure wear sector has prompted sourcing exhibition Fashion SVP to launch a dedicated feature for high performance fabrics at its next edition. Athleisure Pace will have a garment display featuring leading apparel producers of athleisure wear, as well as an interactive feature on performance and technical fabric, curated in co-operation with CITEVE, Portugal's key technological institute in the textile and clothing field.

"Athleisure is growing at an exciting rate and consumers are demanding innovative ideas and designs from the brands," says Buzz Carter, director, Fashion SVP. "We're delighted to respond to this fast-moving trend by providing show visitors with up to the minute information and advice."

The next edition of Fashion SVP takes place at London's Olympia on 27-28 June 2017. For further information visit www.fashionsvp.com.



UK CONSUMERS PREPARE FOR PRICE HIKES

Latest research by market analyst Mintel reports that UK consumers are anticipating an expensive future ahead. Over four in five (83 per cent) Brits are currently concerned about seeing price rises on goods and services, with 59 per cent worried about the mounting cost of groceries, 35 per cent worried about the climbing cost of holidays and 26 per cent fearing that clothes prices will soar. According to the findings, Brits are also worried about 'bigger picture' issues. As many as 81 per cent of UK consumers are concerned about the future health of the NHS, while 68 per cent are worried about the UK economy and 67 per cent are nervous about the environment.

People appear less concerned by issues relating to their personal situation, with half (48 per cent) of all adults concerned about their ability to pay the bills and fewer than two in five (37 per cent) worried about their level of debt.



EDEN PARK DRIVES FORWARD WITH GLOBAL GROWTH PLANS

In line with its 30th anniversary celebrations, French lifestyle label Eden Park is accelerating its global growth plans with a presence at Pitti Uomo in Florence this month, as well as Premium in Berlin, ClIFF in Copenhagen and the Magic tradeshow in Las Vegas.

Stocked in 34 countries already, the brand is looking to increase its current retailer base of 536 stockists, with a focus on expanding on an international level.

The s/s 18 season, meanwhile, puts the spotlight on innovation for Eden Park, with the launch of new fabrications for outerwear including linen, nylon and cotton mixes. There will also be a vintage-inspired line of polo shirts, jerseys and multi-coloured sweats and T-shirts in a vibrant colour palette and featuring a specially designed brand crest.

NEWS IN BRIEF

OBITUARY: TOM GILBEY

The influential menswear designer Tom Gilbey died of cancer on 24 May, five days after his 79th birthday. Many of the themes he introduced in the mid-60s, such as the influence of active sportswear on everyday menswear and the use of technical fabrics, did not gain wide acceptance until much later.

British menswear designer David Edgell, who worked at Gilbey's studio from the late 70s until the mid-80s, recalls: "Our acceptance of what constitutes as men's fashion today has a number of roots in the radical vision of Tom Gilbey. Sportswear, casualwear, leisurewear, formalwear and occasionwear were all been influenced to a large degree by Tom during his long career.

"It is ironic that Tom, having created the safari suit, slipped away on 24 May, the same day as the outfit's greatest advocate, Roger Moore, also left us. Such symmetry," he adds.

Gilbey is survived by his second wife, Sally Riley.

DEADLINE LOOMS FOR PRS FOR MUSIC COMPETITION

The deadline for entries for the PRS for Music competition is Friday 16 June at 5pm. Following last year's successful launch, the company is once again offering fashion independents the chance to win a 'Music Makeover'. Last year attracted more than 130 entries, with Accent Clothing in Leeds winning the coveted prize.

For 2017, PRS for Music is once again offering the £5,000 makeover alongside runners-up prizes of £2,500. To enter, retailers need to have a valid PRS for Music licence and complete the quick entry form at www.prsformusic.com/musicmakeover.

OBITUARY: ELLIOTT BROWN

Elliot Brown, managing director EMEA at Perry Ellis International, has died at the age of 47. Brown's career in the fashion industry spanned over 25 years; having started at Harvey Nichols he progressed to a senior role at Marc O'Polo, subsequently holding positions at Wolverine World Wide, Converse, Levi Strauss and Barbour.

Outside of work, Brown developed a passion for participating in triathlons, always performing at his best and facing challenges in a wholehearted manner. He is survived by his wife Zillah and daughter Zara.

PREMIUM BRANDS COMMIT TO MEADOWHALL

Sheffield shopping venue Meadowhall has announced five new lettings to Flannels, Neal's Yard, Godiva, Tag Heuer and Nespresso, plus four store redesigns by House of Fraser, All Saints, Hollister and Hugo Boss.

These lettings and redesigns complement the centre's £60m refurbishment which is currently underway, as well as the £16m retailer investment made by 42 brands that have redesigned stores since the start of the refurbishment last year. A further 31-store reformat project is currently taking place, due to complete in line with the refurbishment programme towards the end of this year.