

News Release

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BUMPER CHRISTMAS FOR THE MOST POPULAR RETAILERS ONLINE

Top 10 sites average 37% YoY growth; 8 of the top 10 are High Street players; Littlewoods and Asda fastest-growers amongst the top 10; 'multi-category home & fashion' is fastest-growing retail sector

London – 13th January, 2009 – Nielsen Online, a service of The Nielsen Company, today reveals the most popular online retailers for the 2008 Christmas period, October to December (Q4), and how they and the key online retail sectors fared compared to Christmas 2007.

- The top 10 retailers online during the 2008 Christmas shopping period (Q4) averaged a 37% increase in Unique Visitors compared to the 2007 Christmas shopping period
- *Amazon*, averaging 15.6 million Unique Britons each month in Q4 (ranked #1), and *Play.com* averaging 5.7 million (ranked #4), were the only pure online players in the top 10, all the others are High Street retailers
- Amongst the most popular retailers online, *Littlewoods* (+66%), *Asda* (+53%) and *Marks & Spencer* (+46%) had the largest year-on-year growth

Most Popular UK Online Retailers: Q4 2008 (October–December)

Rank	Retailer	Q4 2008 Average Monthly UK Unique Audience (millions)	Q4 2007 Average Monthly UK Unique Audience (millions)	YoY Growth	Dec 08 Rank	Nov 08 Rank	Oct 08 Rank
1	Amazon	15.6	13.2	18%	1	1	1
2	Argos	8.2	6.3	32%	2	2	3
3	Tesco	7.3	6.3	15%	3	3	2
4	Play.com	5.7	4.2	35%	4	4	4
5	Marks & Spencer	4.5	3.1	46%	5	5	5
6	Littlewoods	3.6	2.2	66%	7	7	8
7	Currys	3.4	2.5	35%	6	10	10
8	ASDA	3.4	2.2	53%	8	6	9
9	John Lewis	3.2	2.5	31%	9	8	11
10	Next	3.0	2.2	38%	11	12	7

Source: Nielsen Online, UK. E.g. on average 15.6 million Britons visited Amazon per month in Q4 2008, 18% more than the monthly average for Q4, 2007. Amazon was the most popular UK retailer online in Dec 08, Nov 08 and Oct 08

Alex Burmaster, Communications Director, Nielsen Online: "The fact that the leading retailers online managed to attract over a third more visitors than they did for Christmas 2007 meant online retail provided some very bright news amidst the overall gloomy economic picture at the end of 2008.

It's not that online retail will be impervious to the tighter financial environment but it has an opportunity to weather the storm better than other elements of the economy, particularly if retailers promote the web as the best way of finding cheaper goods in the most efficient and convenient way possible."



How the major online retail-focused* sectors performed

- The five major retail-focused* sectors online averaged a 19% increase in Unique Visitors during the 2008 Christmas shopping period (Q4) compared to the 2007 period
- The biggest retail sector, Mass Merchandisers (which includes retailers such as *Amazon*, *Argos* and *Tesco*), increased Unique Visitor numbers by 15% in the 2008 Christmas period compared to the 2007 period
- Amongst the five major retail sectors online, Multi-Category Home & Fashion (which includes sites such as *Marks & Spencer*, *Boots* and *Next*) had the largest year-on-year growth (+30%)

Major UK Online Retail-Focused* Sectors: Q4 2008 (October–December)

Rank	Sector	Q4 2008 Average Monthly UK Unique Audience (millions)	Q4 2007 Average Monthly UK Unique Audience (millions)	YoY Growth
	<i>All UK Internet</i>	35.9	33.9	6%
1	Mass Merchandisers	24.0	20.8	15%
2	Apparel/Beauty	13.9	11.2	24%
3	Home & Garden	11.4	9.5	20%
4	M/C Computers & Consumer Electronics	10.5	10.1	4%
5	M/C Home & Fashion	10.2	7.9	30%

Source: Nielsen Online, UK. E.g. on average 24 million Britons visited a Mass Merchandiser site per month in Q4 2008, 15% more than the monthly average for Q4 2007.

*Major retail-focused sectors (except Mass Merchandisers) do include non-retail sites

Burmester continues, "Across the board, the online retail sectors have done well, all attracting more visitors in the 2008 Christmas shopping period than they did in 2007. The 'Multi-Category Home and Fashion' sector - which includes sites that sell various home & fashion goods including strong growth retailers such as Laura Ashley, BHS and T.K. Maxx - has done particularly well, growing at around five times the rate of overall Internet growth.

Again, this is encouraging for the retail sector in 2009 as people aren't coming online just for small-ticket, everyday items like CD's and groceries but are increasingly looking to buy all manner of items from clothes for all the family to furniture across the entire house."

ENDS

EDITOR'S NOTES

Please source all information to [Nielsen Online](#)

*The major retail-focused sectors (except Mass Merchandisers) do include sites that aren't retail. E.g. Apparel/Beauty sector also contains media sites.

About Nielsen Online

Nielsen Online, a service of The Nielsen Company, delivers comprehensive, independent measurement and analysis of online audiences, advertising, video, consumer-generated media, word of mouth, commerce and consumer behavior. With high quality, technology-driven products and services, Nielsen Online enables clients to make informed business decisions regarding their Internet, digital and marketing strategies. For more information, please visit www.nielsen-online.com. Also, visit our blog at www.nielsen-online.com/blog.

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