

HITWISE RETAIL UPDATE: HIGH STREET RETAILERS PERFORMING STRONGLY ONLINE

Submitted by: Hitwise UK

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Hitwise, the world's leading online competitive intelligence service, reports today that the online retail sector in the UK reached its highest ever share of Internet traffic at the weekend, surpassing 15% of all online visits on Sunday 28th November. At the same time last year, market share of visits to online shopping sites was just 12%.

With only 24 shopping days left until Christmas, this increase in traffic is a promising sign for the retail industry. Despite recent reports that traditional high street retailers are facing a tougher Christmas this year, with many starting to slash prices well in advance of the post-Christmas sales, Hitwise data shows that the online arms of several high street retailers are booming. This suggests that many customers are merely opting out of the Christmas crowds, preferring the convenience of doing their Christmas shopping online.

Hitwise data reveals that 50% of the top twenty UK retail sites visited on Sunday 28th November belonged to bricks and mortar retailers. In addition, the top five websites belonging to high street retailers have all boosted their traffic significantly over the past few weeks: Argos, Tesco, Comet, Currys and Woolworths have all increased their market share within the retail sector by at least 40% since the beginning of October.

Hitwise Search Terms data also shows that the terms 'currys' and 'comet' have increased their share of searches significantly over the past seven days, by 24% and 19% respectively. The popularity of these electronics retailers in the lead-up to Christmas is also reflected in the most popular products searched for online: 'mobile phones' and 'digital cameras' top the list of generic products searched for this month.

Compared with the previous Sunday in November (21st), those Shopping sub-categories that saw the biggest increase in traffic were Flowers & Gifts (18.6% increase in visits), Health & Beauty (17.6% increase in visits) and Books (10.3% increase in visits).

For a full copy of the release, contact:

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About Hitwise:

Hitwise is the world's leading online competitive intelligence service. Each day, Hitwise monitors how more than 25 million Internet users interact with over 500,000 websites across 160 industry categories.

By monitoring more people, more websites, more often, Hitwise provides marketers with timely and actionable marketing insights on how their online presence compares to competitive websites. Companies use this information to maximize the return on their online investment, in efforts such as search marketing, affiliate programs, online advertising, visitor segmentation, content development and lead generation.

Hitwise collects Internet usage information via a combination of ISP data partnerships and opt-in mega panels, and complies with local and international privacy legislation as audited by PricewaterhouseCoopers.

Founded in 1997, Hitwise is a privately held company, headquartered in New York City and operates in the US, UK, Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong and Singapore.

More information about Hitwise is available at www.hitwise.co.uk

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