

DIY and garden centres enjoy a boost in trade over Easter

Submitted by: Ipsos Retail Performance

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The UK retail market benefitted from stronger demand in April, as reflected in the latest footfall figures from Ipsos Retail Performance.

The global retail and footfall consultants compile the Retail Traffic Index (RTI), which is derived from the number of individual shoppers entering over 4,000 non-food retail stores across the UK. In April the RTI rose by 8.4 per cent on March and 1.8 per cent year-on-year on April 2013.

The biggest rise was felt across South West England and Wales. Following the spring floods that hurt footfall traffic earlier in the year, holidaymakers once again flocked westwards over the Easter break, causing shopper numbers to rise in the region by 17.3 per cent on March and 5.3 per cent year-on-year.

“The figures look good on paper, but overall the monthly results aren’t as strong as we had anticipated,” commented Dr Tim Denison, director at Ipsos Retail Performance.

“To our surprise, footfall over the Easter fortnight fell back by 1.6 per cent on the equivalent period last year. The DIY and Garden Centre sector, however, saw very strong results, benefiting from a late Easter is late and good weather. The double digit growth (13.2 per cent) on the 2013 fortnight will have certainly put a spring in the step of these retailers, helped also by the strengthening housing market, giving assurance that home improvements are a worthwhile investment once again.”

Consumer confidence and belief in job security is beginning to strengthen. As more economic indicators are forming a consensus and starting to point in a positive direction, the IMF now forecasts that this year, the UK will be the strongest economy in the G7. This month’s improving Retail Traffic Index reflects growing confidence in the economy and this is beginning to filter through to in-store activity.

“There is a sense that the ship has stabilised, its course has been re-established and the retail market is beginning to make headway again,” added Denison.

“With wage growth set to remain higher than inflation in the coming months and the increased threshold to personal income tax, people will start noticing a little extra money in their pockets. This should spell the end of the so called ‘cost of living crisis’ and confirm that the UK retail market is set for growth in 2014.”

Footfall change: April 2014 vs April 2013

Scotland & Northern Ireland +3.2%

North of England -1.0%

The Midlands +3.5%

South West England & Wales +5.3%

South East England & London +1.4%

Footfall change: April 2014 vs March 2014

Scotland & Northern Ireland +12.9%

North of England +5.2%
The Midlands +6.6%
South West England & Wales +17.3%
South East England & London +7.4%

For more information, please visit www.ipsos-retailperformance.com.

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Notes to Editors:

About Ipsos

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About Ipsos Retail Performance

Ipsos Retail Performance provides footfall monitoring solutions, shopper tracking systems and in-store behavioural research to retailers worldwide. Its core products - Shopper Count, Shopper Interact and Shopper Engage – scientifically measure all aspects of a shopper experience from store entry to exit. It supplies national and international retailers with essential business metrics to drive accountability and performance improvement.

Ipsos Retail Performance is home to the Retail Traffic Index series, which for over 10 years has been the industry's leading tracker of national, regional and sector retail footfall trends. It is also co-founder of the KPMG/Ipsos Retail Think Tank, offering thought leadership on the state of retail health and the future of retailing.

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