Horizons

Fashion 2026



Horizons

Welcome to Horizons

Our insight series that explores how the prevailing **economic, political, societal, technological, environmental** and **media** trends are impacting key consumer categories.

Each report will combine insights collected from our Matters community with trend analysis from our trusted partner, Trajectory.

Our aim is to offer useful insights and practical guidance for advertisers to help them navigate this uncertain period and deliver effective campaigns.

This report focuses specifically on fashion and covers how shoppers discover, decide and buy clothing in 2026.

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Agenda



1. Introduction and Methodology
2. Category Overview
3. Shopping Preferences
4. The Buying (and Selling) Process
5. The Purchase Journey
6. Fashion Content at Mail Metro Media

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Methodology

Part 1:
Horizon Scan

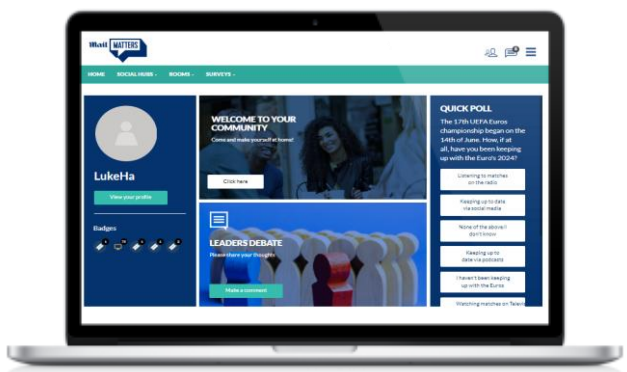
We commissioned a 'Horizon Scan' with Trajectory to identify the key political, economic, social, technological, environmental and consumer trends that will be impacting both consumer and business behaviour throughout 2026 and beyond. We then worked with them to identify the trends most relevant to fashion and accessories.

P POLITICAL
E ECONOMIC
S SOCIAL
T TECHNOLOGICAL
L LEISURE
E ENVIRONMENTAL

TRAJECTORY

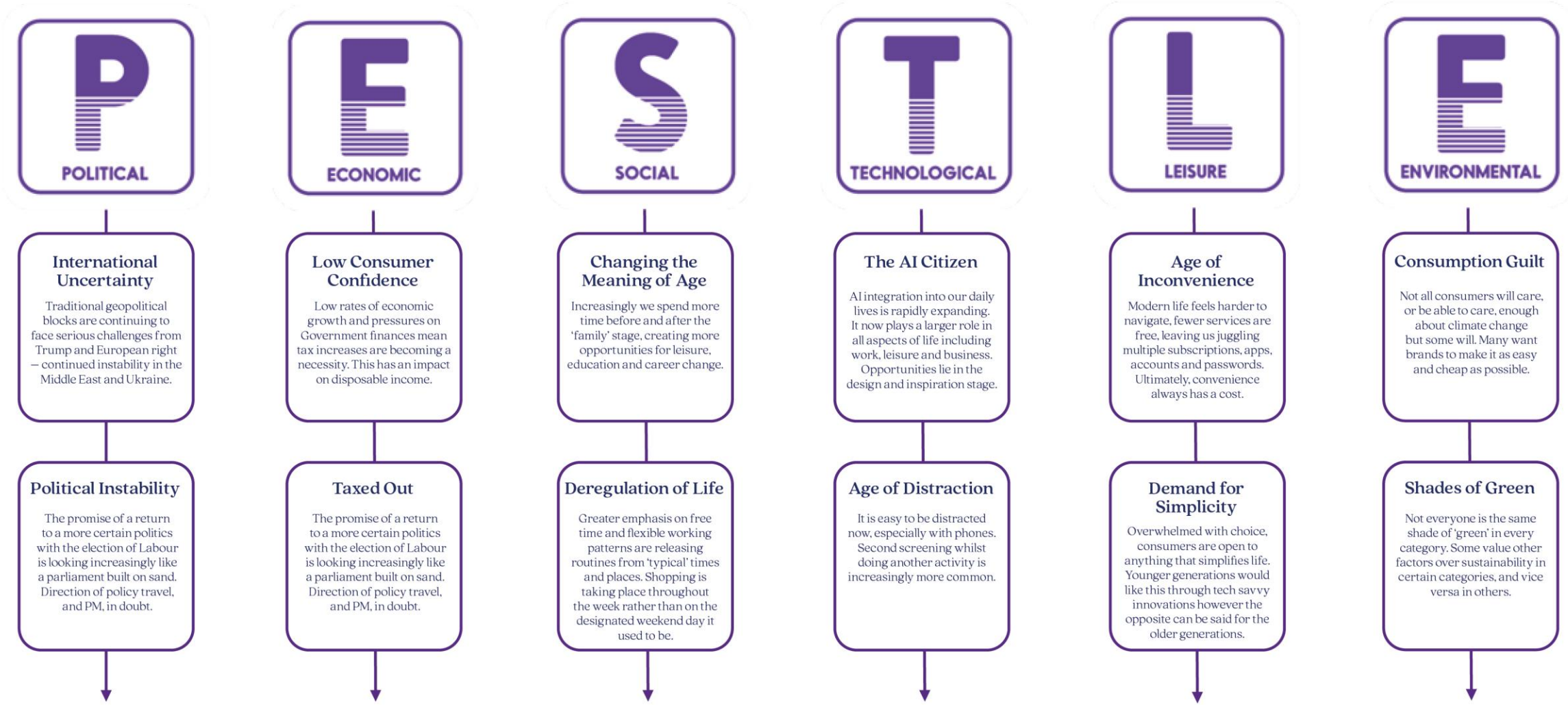
Part 2:
Bespoke Research

Using our Matters reader community and Trajectory's trend framework, this research explores how shoppers discover, decide and buy fashion in 2026, the growing role of social media and creators, and retailer and brand perceptions.



670
Mail Metro Media readers weighted to be representative of readership

The key trends framing the fashion and accessories landscape



*Key Trajectory trends may be supplemented with additional trends from Trajectory or other first and thirdparty trends where appropriate

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Category Overview



The Emotional Link

There are strong emotional links between clothing and self-esteem, highlighted by 3 in 4 agreeing they feel more confident with a nice outfit on.

71% feel more confident with a nice outfit on

This rises to 78% in women vs 63% of men. It's higher for 18-34's (75%) and 35-54's (76%) compared to 55+ (64%).

"I always know when I am wearing something that looks good as it seems to give me extra confidence and makes me smile more."

"Clothes help me to feel creative and confident. I love mixing and matching clothes to see what works together."

"They make me feel better about myself and more confident if I am wearing the right clothes for the situation I'm in...."

64% take pride in their personal style

This is significantly higher for the younger generation (79% for 18-34's).

"I have different styles and wear clothes depending on my mood, the weather, what colour I want to wear."

"I take pride in wearing the latest seasons colours because they make me feel current and fashionable..."

"Like my clothes to make me feel good about myself, like I care about how I look..."

Q. Thinking about your current attitudes to clothing and accessories. Please state your level of agreement or disagreement with each of the following statements. How, if at all, do the clothes you wear influence how you feel about yourself? Horizons Fashion (n=670)

Clothing Spend Priority

Whilst wallets are being squeezed, clothing budgets are continuing to be prioritised. This is particularly true among women, with spend on womenswear being almost two times greater than spend on menswear in 2025 (£32.6bn vs. £16.7bn in 2025).

Ranking out of 10 categories

	All Adults	Women	Men
1	Holidays: 41%	Healthcare: 37%	Holidays: 47%
2	Premium Food: 34%	Holidays: 35%	Premium Food: 36%
3	Healthcare: 31%	Clothing: 35%	Leisure/Ents: 35%
4	Leisure/Ents: 31%	Beauty: 34%	Technology: 27%
5	Clothing: 30%	Premium Food: 32%	Clothing: 25%

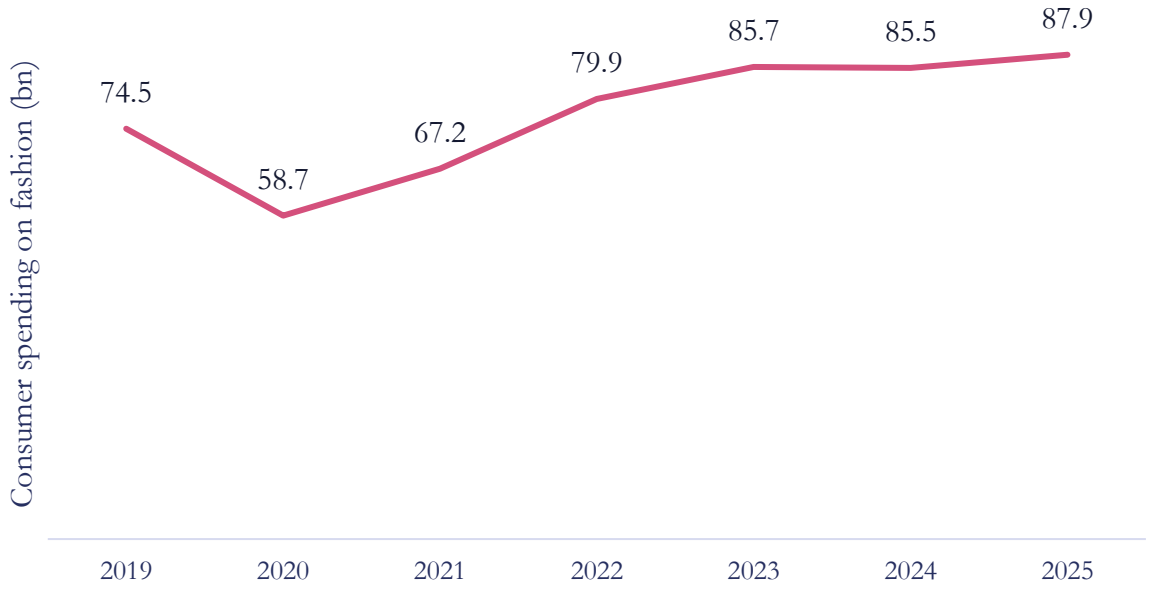
Q: Thinking about your priorities. Which, if any, of the following categories would you most want to continue to spend on if you had to make cutbacks in your overall spending? Source: Horizons Fashion (n=670), Mintel Womenswear, Menswear 2026



Category Value and Frequency of Purchase

Consumer spending on fashion items has stabilised since the pandemic and is expected to continue rising (est. £90.1bn for 2026). That said, the way consumers are shopping is changing, with 35% saying they've bought clothes less frequently in the last 12 months

Consumer spending on fashion over time

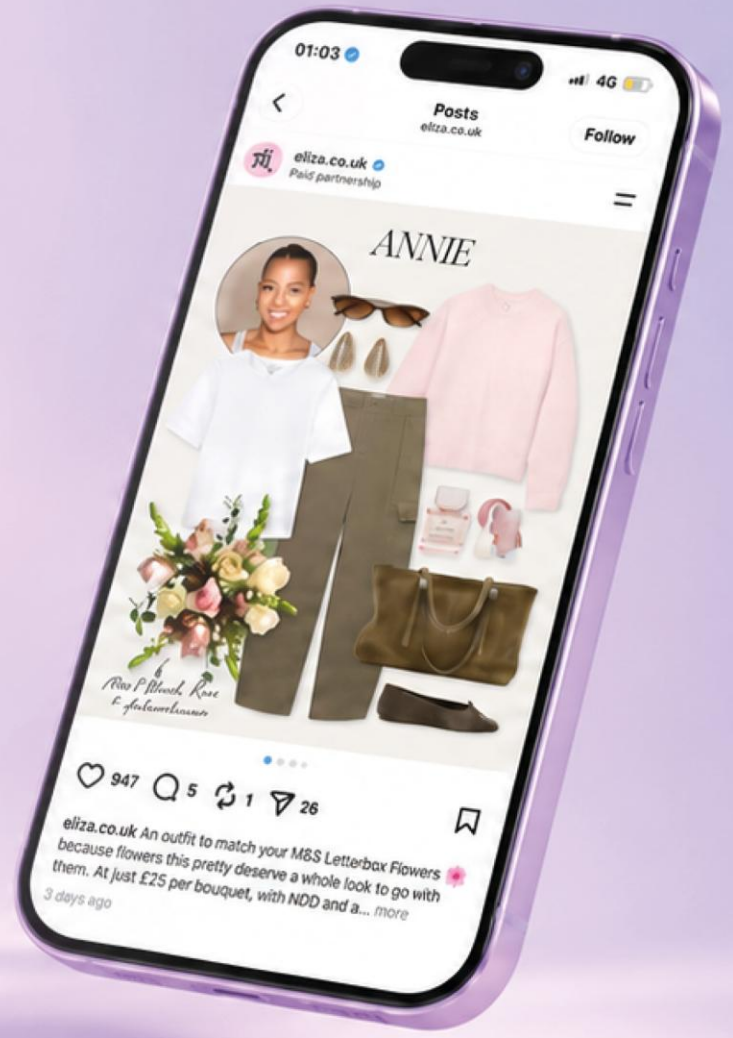




Source: Mintel British Lifestyles 2026, Clothing Retailing 2025

Trend No. 1

The Wishlist Effect



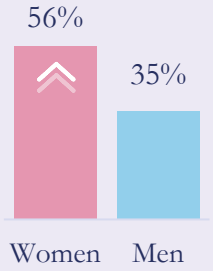
Trend No. 1

The Wishlist Effect

The Stats



Of women say they **bought fewer clothes on impulse in the last 12 months**



Women are **1.6x more likely** than men to agree **'I regularly browse fashion even when I'm not planning to buy anything'**

The Drivers



Low Consumer Confidence

Squeezed finances leading to more considered purchases



The Age of Distraction

Constant access leading to a rise in fashion as a form of entertainment

The Explanation

Fashion browsing online has become a habit in its own right, not just a step before buying.

Squeezed budgets leave less room for spur-of-the-moment spending, so browsing becomes a way to window-shop and wait for the right moment to commit. Constant access to fashion content has also made scrolling enjoyable in its own right.

With less urgency to decide, saving items to a wish list is replacing buying on sight. Almost a quarter of Brits (22%) use wish lists for price drop notifications, while 14% use them to save a product until payday, - evidence browsing is becoming an increasingly longer and deliberate part of the purchase journey.

The Implication

Brands have a real opportunity to stay present throughout the browsing stage. Whilst many retailers already have the tools for this (for example, saved item reminders) the opportunity lies in making them personal, not automated.

Think exclusive offers timed around payday, or a campaign built around the wish list itself, positioning the brand as one that understands the wait rather than rushing the sale. The key is nudging gently, thinking about what triggers someone to buy, and timing around that moment.

Source: Horizons: Fashion 2026, Mintel Clothing Retailing 2025, weareroast.com 'From Dreaming to Deciding: The Role of Wish Lists in Online Purchase Journeys'

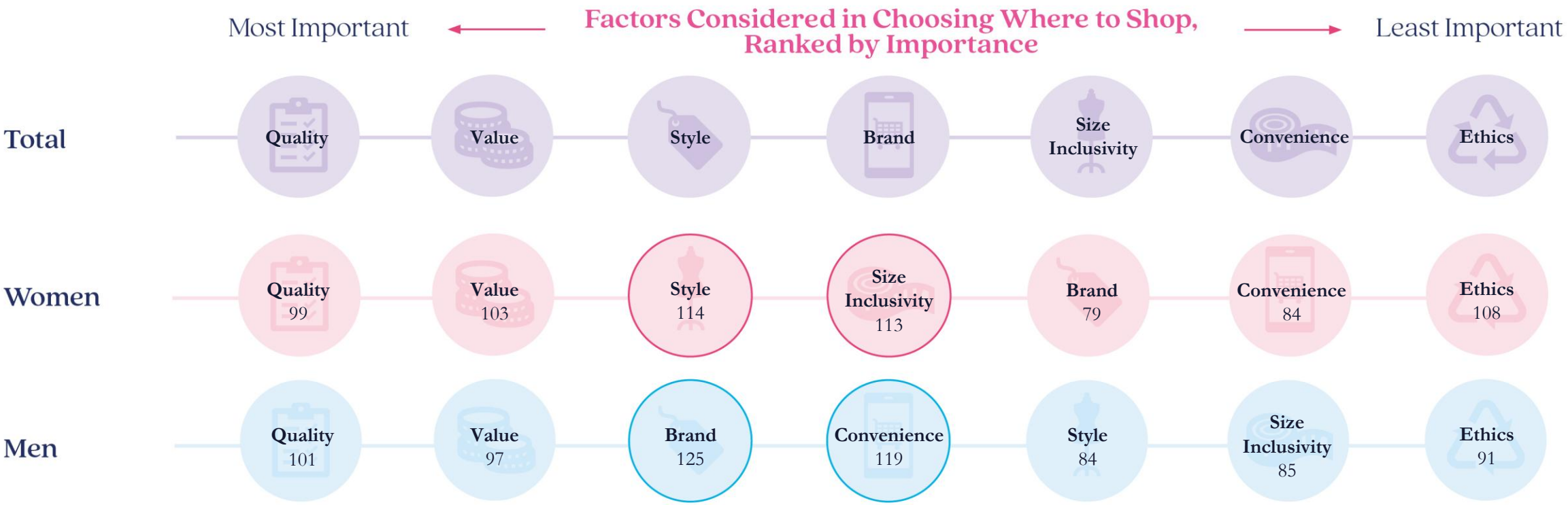
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Shopping Preferences



Criteria of Choice

Quality is the #1 factor considered when choosing where to shop. Whilst women are more likely than men to prioritise style and size inclusivity, men are more likely to be driven by convenience and the brand itself.



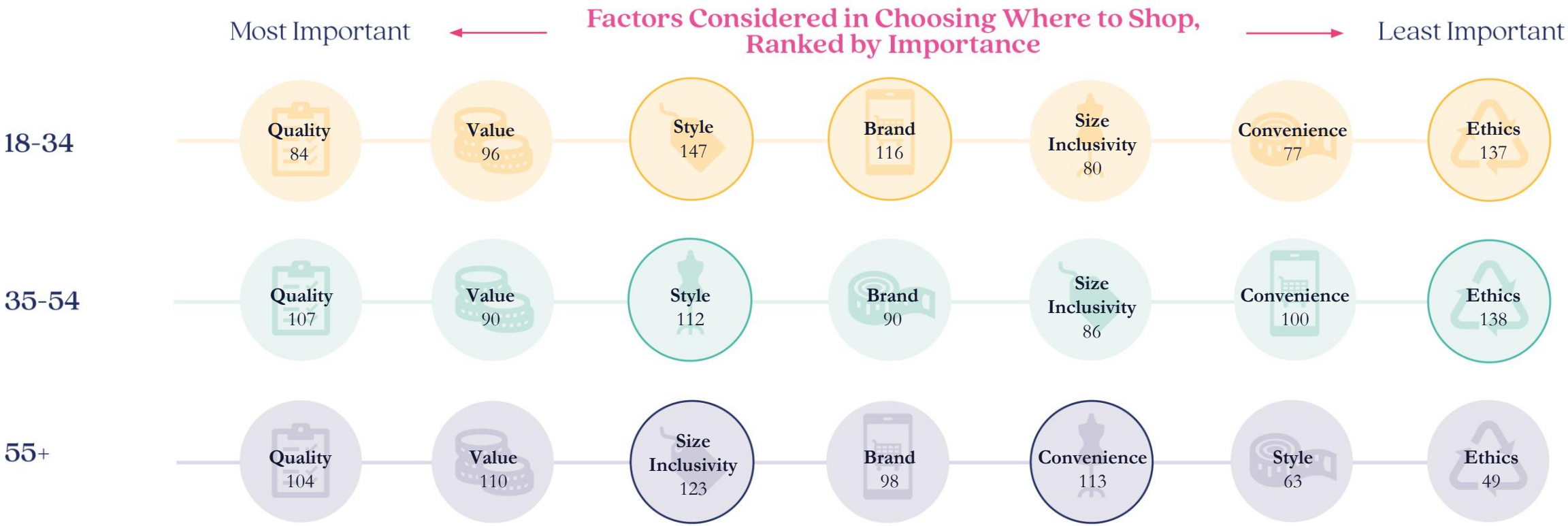
Ranked by % selecting each factor in their top 3; indexes show how each demographic group's priorities compare to the total sample (Total = 100)

Q: Thinking about clothing, what are the most important factors in determining which brand, chain or business you choose? (1 being most important, 7 being least). Please rank in order of priority.

Horizons Fashion (n=408) | Bought clothes in the last 12 months

Criteria of Choice

Whilst quality tops the list for every age group, 18-34s value it less than the average shopper, reflecting a broader spread of priorities. Squeezed finances contribute to ethics being the least prioritised factor overall, under-55s are still notably more likely to value it than 55+ shoppers



Ranked by % selecting each factor in their top 3; indexes show how each demographic group's priorities compare to the total sample (Total = 100)

Q: Thinking about clothing, what are the most important factors in determining which brand, chain or business you choose? (1 being most important, 7 being least). Please rank in order of priority

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Top Ranking Brands by Key Criteria

Readers are clear on the criteria that drive choice and just as clear on who delivers: M&S leads on quality and sizing, Primark on value and Zara on style.

Top ranking brands by key criteria

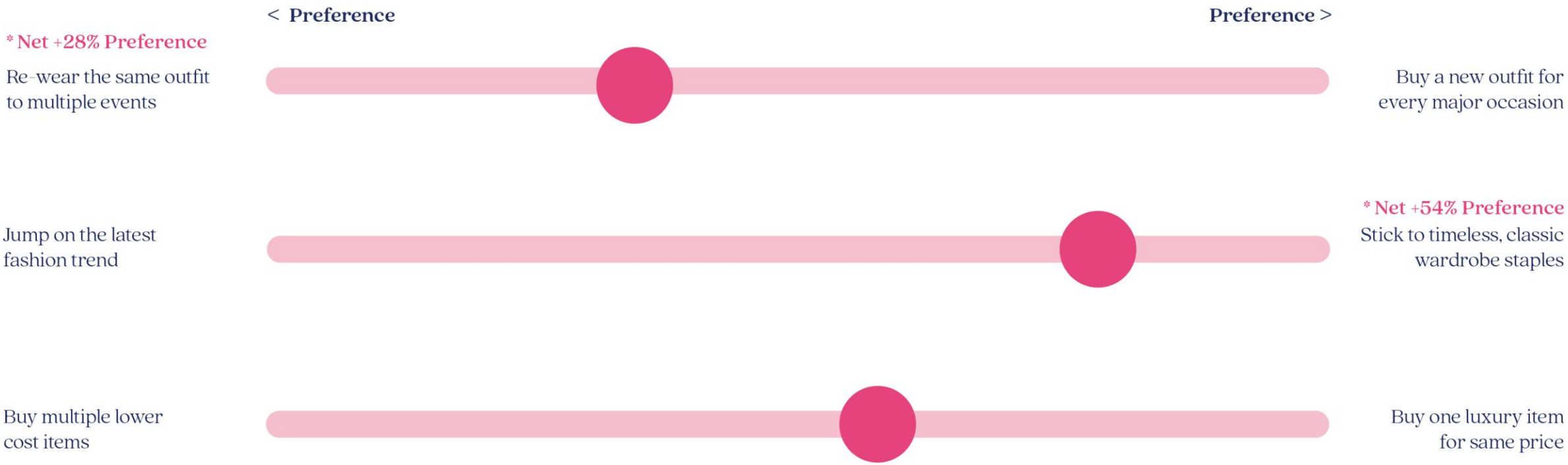
	Quality	Value	Stylish	Brand	Sizing
1	M&S	Primark	Zara	Nike	M&S
2	John Lewis	George (Asda)	River Island	M&S	Shien
3	Tu (Sainsbury's)	Matalan	Next	Adidas	Next
4	Nike	Shein	Reiss	Next	Uniqlo
5	Massimo Dutti	Tu (Sainsbury's)	H&M	John Lewis	Tu (Sainsbury's)

We have a full list of brand perceptions with 22 brands included. Please reach out to the insight team to find out more!

Source: Horizons Fashion (n=670) | Aware of each brand

Shopping Preferences

Our readers are prioritising quality and durability of their clothing, with the majority choosing to re-wear the same outfit and to stick to classic wardrobe stables rather than buy trending items.



Q- Please indicate where your preference lies when it comes to buying and wearing clothing.
Source: Horizons Fashion (n=670)

Trend No. 2

The Quest for Quality



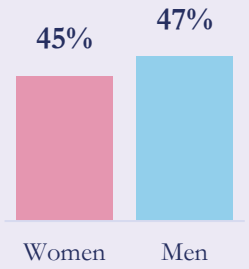
Trend No. 2

The Quest for Quality

The Stats



Of women say clothing quality has become **more important in the last 12 months**



Around half of both women and men think about **'cost per wear'** of an item before purchasing

The Drivers



Low Consumer Confidence

Squeezed finances shifting focus to cost-per-wear, reinforcing quality as an investment



Consumption Guilt

Consumers opting for better-quality items designed to last

The Explanation

Cost of living pressures are squeezing budgets, making shoppers more deliberate with their purchases. They're thinking increasingly in terms of cost-per-wear, sparking an unusual trade-up mindset in a value driven climate.

Beyond being a manifestation of financially savvy behaviour in a time of low consumer confidence, the importance of quality is also being reinforced by the now-mainstream resale market. 55% of women say resale value has grown in importance over the last 12 months and, with side hustle selling booming, quality is becoming increasingly important as people begin thinking about their return on investment later down the line.

The Implication

Quality is being valued as an investment rather than an indulgence and clothing brands have an opportunity to sell durability itself as a reason to buy.

Think social campaigns showcasing adaptability and durability, rather than just claiming a piece is built to last. That same testing could feed a "cost-per-wear calculator" on product pages, giving shoppers a genuine, evidence-based figure rather than a guess. Backing it with a proper "Built to Last" guarantee - whether a warranty or repair promise, makes the quality claim tangible, not just a line in the advertising.

Source: Horizons: Fashion 2026, Mintel Clothing Retailing 2025, weareroast.com 'From Dreaming to Deciding: The Role of Wish Lists in Online Purchase Journeys'

Trend No. 3

Growth of Super-Value



Trend No. 3

Growth of Super-Value

The Stats



Of our audience actively seek out **affordable high-street alternatives/dupes for luxury items**

+41%

Growth in spend on Shein in 2025

The Drivers



Low Consumer Confidence

Financial pressures means consumers seek out lower cost items



The Explanation

There's a divide in how people are coping with financial pressure — whilst there's an increase in the number investing in quality, there exists another important segment who are prioritising affordability, fuelling rapid growth of some extreme-value fashion retailers.

The growth of ultra-low-cost retailers such as Shein and increasing popularity of supermarket brands such as F&F and George is a direct expression of this divide. This value-first mindset can often lead to consumers seeking out dupes or replicas of more expensive items.

This isn't a contradiction of the quality trend - it's the other side of it!

The Implication

If value and quality are two sides of the same response to financial pressure, brands don't need to choose one lane, they need to be clear about which shopper they're speaking to and lean in properly.

For affordability-led retailers, this is a chance to own that reputation, not downplay it. Think campaigns showing real outfits and cost breakdowns, proving style doesn't need to be sacrificed in the name of affordability. Our own series from Eliza, "guess which outfit costs more", has racked up 400m views, proof of the appetite for content that shows shoppers they can have both!

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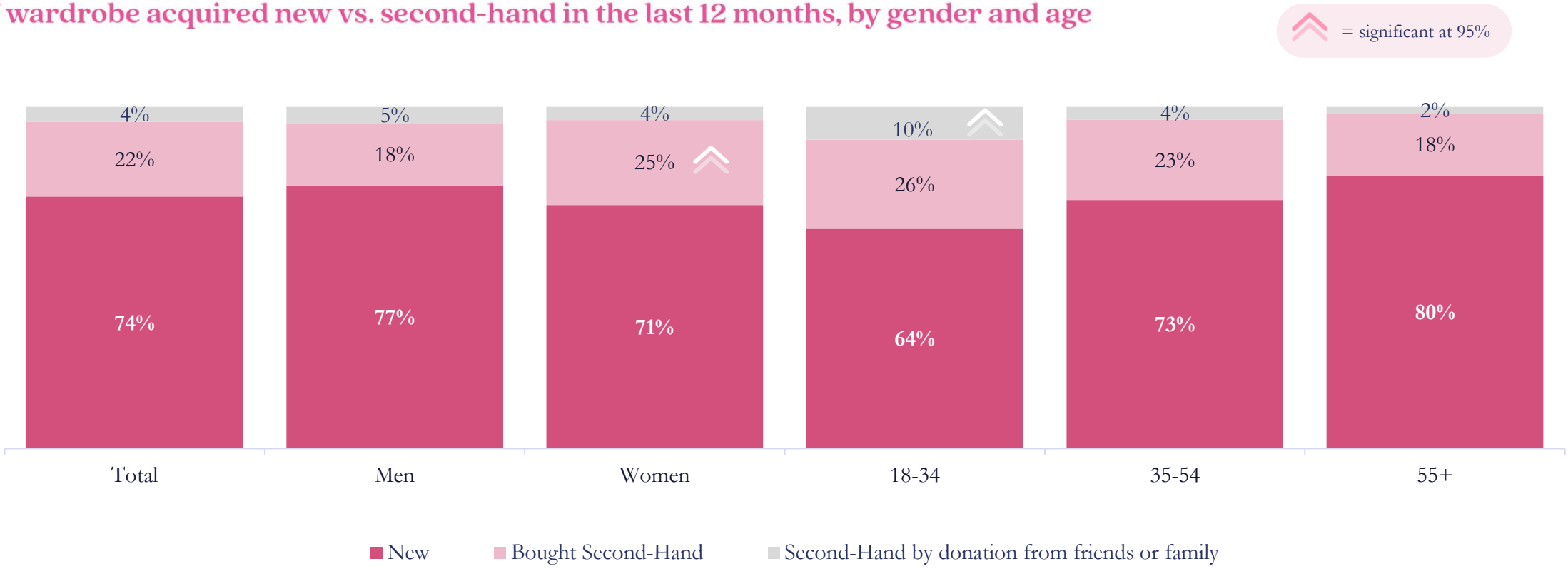
The Buying (and Selling) Process



How Shoppers Acquire their Clothes

Clothes are acquired at roughly a 3:1 ratio of new to second-hand overall.
Women are significantly more likely to buy second-hand than men (1.4x), while 18-34s are 2.2x more likely than the average shopper to have clothes donated by friends and family.

% of wardrobe acquired new vs. second-hand in the last 12 months, by gender and age



Q. Please allocate a percentage on how you bought/acquired your clothes in the last 12 months. Your responses should add up to 100%.
Source: Horizons Fashion (n=408, bought clothes in the last 12 months)

Trend No. 4

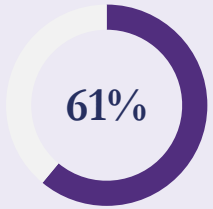
The Resale Renaissance



Trend No. 4

The Resale Renaissance

The Stats



Agree it's become trendy to buy second-hand products from online market places



Of those open to buying luxury items would be open to buying second hand

The Drivers



Low Consumer Confidence

Squeezed finances accelerating second-hand adoption, especially among women



Consumption Guilt

Environmental concerns are leading shoppers to second-hand as a guilt-free way to keep buying

The Explanation

Growth of second-hand is rapid, particularly among women (+11pp YoY). Cost plays a part, but that's not the whole story... second-hand is becoming fashionable in its own right!

61% agree it's become trendy to buy second-hand from online market places, whilst 56% say it's a great way to find unique items. Cultural moments accelerate this further. Following the release of "Love Story", searches for Calvin Klein on eBay spiked to over 3,800 an hour as Carolyn Bessette-Kennedy's '90s style resurfaced, with second-hand offering access to genuine pieces from the era.

The Implication

Both resale platforms and clothing brands have an opportunity to lean into the increasing demand for second-hand. For resale platforms, think "get the look" edits tied to cultural moments such as TV series, movies and era comebacks – giving shoppers a route into a resurfacing trend through genuine archive pieces.

For clothing brands, think about leveraging official pre-loved collections, treating past collections as a style asset and putting a focus on uniqueness of the pieces.

How do they Shop?

Shoppers slightly prefer online shopping, with the top ways readers typically shop being via high street shops, department stores and then brand websites.



71% Shop online



64% Shop in-person

% where most typically buy clothing

1. High street shops **53%**
2. Department stores/ shopping centres **50%**
3. Brand Websites **49%**
4. Second-hand/ Charity shops **27%**
5. Multi-brand marketplaces **26%**
6. Second-hand/resale platforms **20%**
7. Directly through social media apps **12%**

Q- Thinking about how you shop for clothes, how do you typically buy these items?

Source: Horizons Fashion (n=408, bought clothes in the last 12 months), Mintel Clothing Retailing 2025

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Triggers to Purchase



Overall Triggers to Purchase

Seasonal changes remain the dominant driver of clothing purchases, though casual browsing and promotions/sales are also major triggers for purchasing clothing.

Reasons why shoppers typically buy clothing

1. **56%** Seasonal changes
2. **50%** Stumbling across it while casually browsing online/instore
3. **50%** A brand, promotion, sale, or discount code
4. **34%** A specific upcoming event or occasion
5. **28%** Payday*
6. **19%** Emotional triggers, (boredom, stress, "retail therapy")
7. **15%** Seeing it on a friend/ colleague

Q- What were your main reasons for purchasing [clothing item] in the last 12 months? Horizons Fashion (n=408, bought clothes in the last 12 months) *amongst workers

Triggers to Purchase per Clothing Item

The top purchase triggers differ by item: casual browsing drives everyday wear (42%), promotions lead sports and active wear (44%), a specific event drives occasion wear (58%), while seasonal change tops outerwear (60%) and footwear (36%).

Top 3 (of 9) purchase triggers by category

ranked by % selecting each trigger

	 Everyday wear	 Sports/ Active wear	 Footwear	 Occasion Wear	 Outerwear
1	Stumbling across it while casually browsing (42%)	A brand promotion, sale or discount code (44%)	Seasonal changes (36%)	A specific or upcoming event or occasion (58%)	Seasonal changes (60%)
2	Seasonal changes (41%)	Stumbling across it while casually browsing (31%)	A brand promotion, sale or discount code (30%)	A brand promotion, sale or discount code (29%)	Stumbling across it while casually browsing (37%)
3	A brand promotion, sale or discount code (35%)	Seasonal changes (27%)	Stumbling across it while casually browsing (31%)	Seasonal changes (27%)	A brand promotion, sale or discount code (33%)

Q- What were your main reasons for purchasing [type of item] in the last 12 months? Source: Horizons Fashion (n=408, bought clothes in the last 12 months)

Triggers to Purchase Deep Dive

The individual triggers to purchase depend on the person buying the items. Each demographic has a different route to purchase!

Emotional triggers

Women are

2.8x

more likely to purchase sportswear/ active wear because of emotional triggers than men

Seeing it on a social media influencer

18-34s are

2.3x

more likely than the average person to purchase everyday wear after seeing it on a social media influencer

Payday

Those who are struggling financially are

2.4x

more likely to buy everyday wear because of payday than those with healthy finances

Q- What were your main reasons for purchasing [type of item] in the last 12 months? Source: Horizons Fashion (n=408, bought clothes in the last 12 months)

Horizons

Sizing and the Shopping Experience



Sizing Struggles

Sizing inconsistency can be a real struggle for our readers. Over 3 in 4 have experienced sizing issues when shopping. The main issues include; being stuck between two sizes (36%) and struggling to find correct clothing lengths (32%).

78%

Have experienced **sizing issues** when shopping, rising to **85%** of women.

Petite shoppers are

50%

more likely to frequently have to **return items** bought online due to fit issues.

#1

Most common sizing issue is people being **stuck between two sizes**.

64%

Of women online shoppers say knowing which size/fit to choose is the **main challenge** when online shopping.



Q- Which of the following statements, if any, apply to your experiences with clothing sizing when shopping?
Source: Horizons Fashion (n=670), Mintel Fashion Technology and Innovation 2025

The Emotional Impact of Sizing

Sizing struggles carry a real emotional cost and hit harder for plus-size shoppers and women. Plus-size shoppers are 1.4x more likely to agree sizing inconsistency makes them feel self-conscious vs. regular fit and women are 2.2x more likely as men to feel the same.

29%

40% plus-size shoppers
vs 29% regular fit
39% women vs 18% men

Sizing inconsistency makes me feel self-conscious/frustrated about my body shape

36%

46% for plus-size shoppers
vs 36% regular fit

Find shopping for clothes stressful or overwhelming

81%

Say it is important that brands showcase different body types when advertising, rising to 89% of women

24%

Feel extreme pressure to look a certain way based on what they see online/advertising

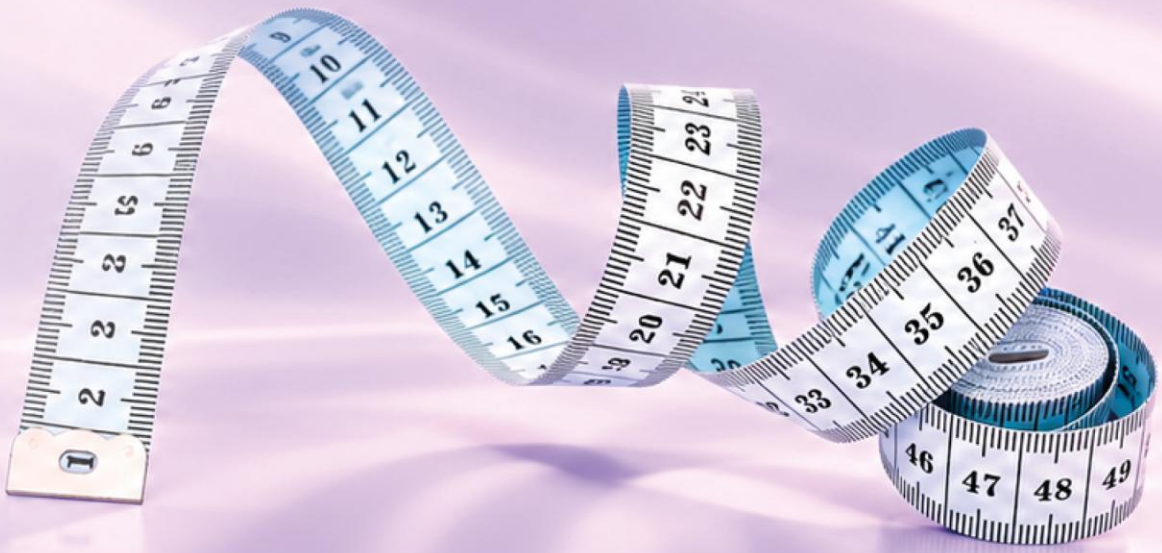


Q- Which of the following statements, if any, apply to your experiences with clothing sizing when shopping?

Q- On a scale of 0-10 (where 0 = no pressure, 10 = extreme pressure), how much pressure do you feel to dress a certain way/look a certain way based on what you see online and in advertising? Source: Horizons Fashion (n=670)

Trend No. 5

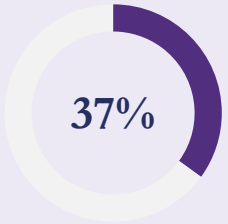
Shrinking Standards



Trend No. 5

Shrinking Standards

The Stats



Of adults agree that the recent popularity of weight-loss medications has had a negative impact on size inclusivity in fashion

NET +20%

Of women feel pressure to look a certain way has got worse over the last 10 years

The Drivers

Deregulation of Life

Social platforms amplify harmful comparison at speed, reversing years of body positivity progress

The GLP-1 Effect

As weight-loss drug use grows, body norms are shifting and pressure to match them is rising with it

The Explanation

Several forces are contributing to this trend.

The rise of weight-loss drugs is one, with 37% agreeing their popularity has hurt size inclusivity in fashion. This tracks with the runway: Vogue Business's Fall/Winter 2026 report found plus-size representation at its lowest level since tracking began three years ago.

Social media amplifies this further, with hashtags glorifying extreme thinness, such as "SkinnyTok", attracting hundreds of thousands of posts before being restricted, showing how fast this pressure spreads online.

The Implication

Brands have a genuine opportunity to be a steadying influence here, rather than adding to the pressure. This isn't just about plus-size representation, it's about making fashion feel like it's for everyone.

Think campaigns that commit to consistent representation across ages, shapes and sizes, since inconsistency is what shoppers notice most. There's also a role for brands to champion "fashion for everyone" messaging at moments pressure tends to spike, such as New Year and back it up by ensuring size ranges actually deliver on that promise.

Source: Horizon's Fashion 2026, Mintel Fashion Diversity and Inclusivity 2026, vogue.co.uk 'The Vogue Business Autumn/Winter 2026 Size Inclusivity Report'

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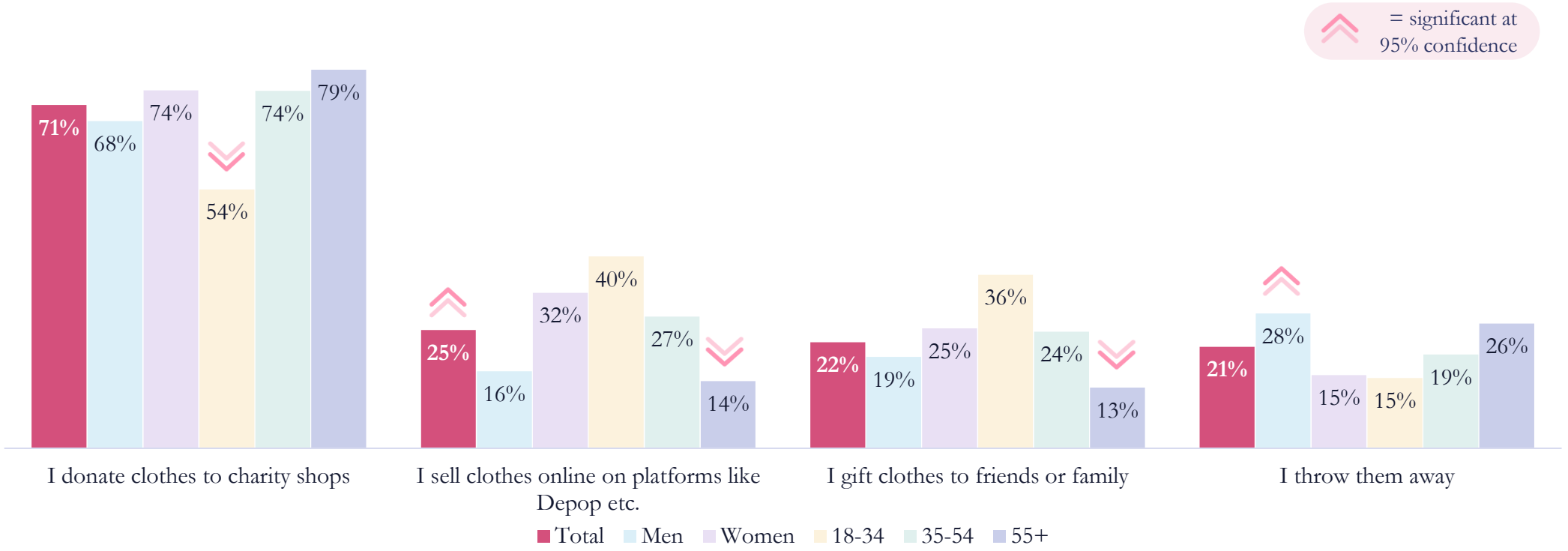
Discarding of clothes



Discarding of Unwanted Clothes

While charity shops dominate for older groups (79%), this drops to 54% for 18-34s, who rely far more on reselling and gifting instead. Men remain far more likely than women to just throw clothes away (28% vs 15%).

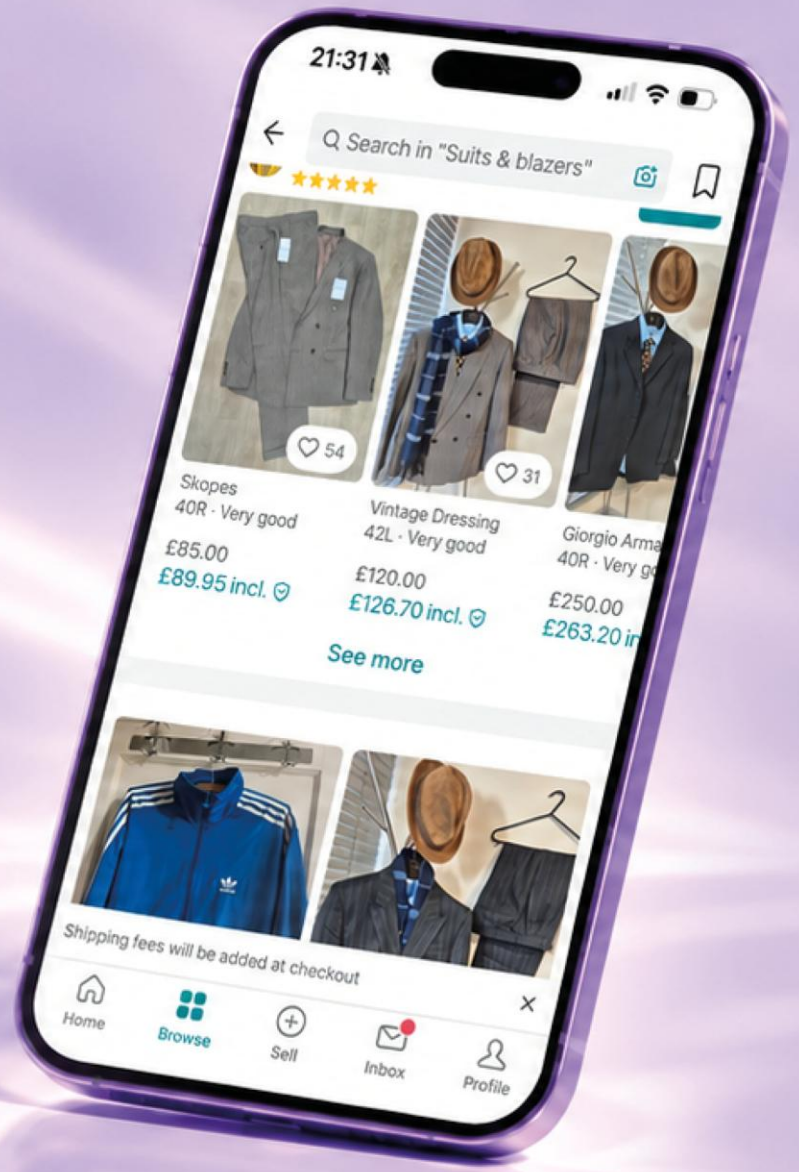
How shoppers discard old clothes



Q- How do you get rid of/discard old or unwanted clothes?
Source: Horizons Fashion (n=408, bought clothes in the last 12 months)

Trend No. 6

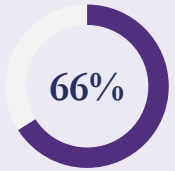
Side Hustle Sellers



Trend No. 6

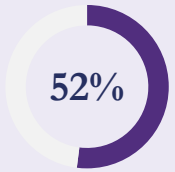
Side Hustle Sellers

The Stats



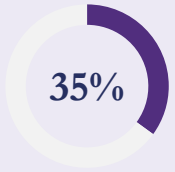
66%

Of people who sell clothes online do so to make money



52%

Say knowing an item has good resale value would encourage them to buy it



35%

Of people who sell clothes online do so to buy new clothes

The Drivers



Low Consumer Confidence

Financial pressures are turning resale into a genuine income stream



Demand for Simplicity

Increasingly frictionless selling experience on resale platforms making selling accessible to all

The Explanation

The end of a garment's life is decreasingly an after thought.

As financial pressures continue, resale offers an easy way to supplement income. 2 in 3 who sell clothes online do so to make money, with resale value increasingly becoming something consumers consider at the point of purchase, not just when they're clearing things out.

For many, it's part of a loop rather than a one-off, with 1 in 3 selling items specifically to fund new clothing purchases.

The Implication

Fashion brands have an opportunity to become a bigger part of this loop, rather than leaving it to resale platforms alone.

Think about leveraging official trade-in schemes, offering store credit for old pieces to capture that reinvestment part of the loop before a shopper spends it elsewhere. A "Fund Your Next Look" campaign could bring this to life. Partnerships with platforms like Vinted and Depop offer a similar route in, giving sellers a brand voucher option alongside cash.

Source: Horizon's Fashion 2026, Mintel Fashion and Sustainability 2026

Horizons

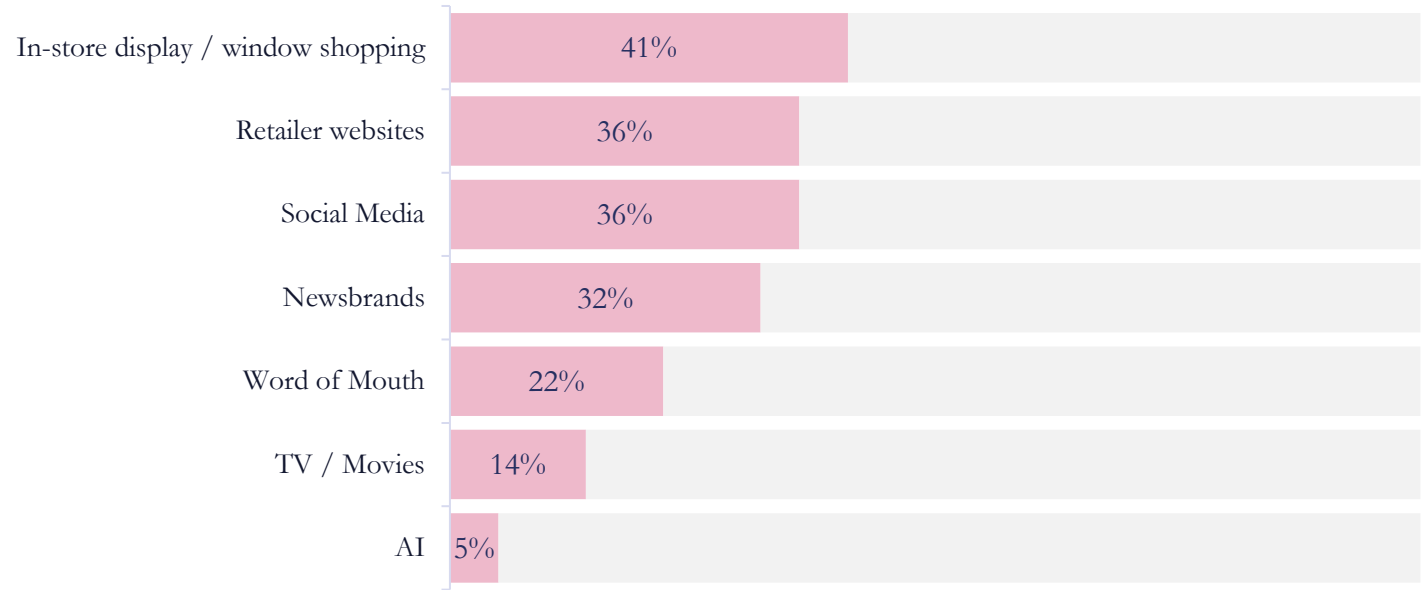
Fashion Purchase Journey



Stage 1: Discovery

In-store shopping is the top channel in the discovery stage of the shopping journey, followed by retailer websites (36%), social media (36%) and newsbrands (32%).

% ranked media channel in top 3 (of 8 asked)



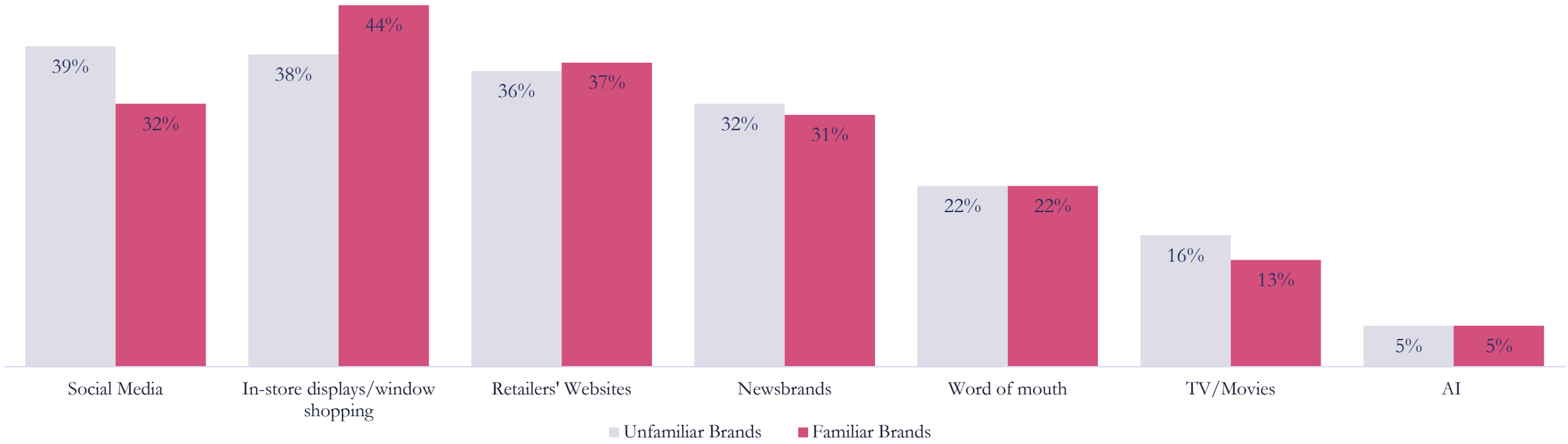
Q- Where do you primarily discover new clothes or accessories from brands you are [familiarity level]?
Source: Horizons Fashion (n=629, bought clothes or accessories in the last 12 months)



Discovery: Familiar vs. Unfamiliar Brands

Social media leads discovery of unfamiliar brands, while in-store displays top the list for brands shoppers already know.

Where do you primarily discover new clothes or accessories from brands?

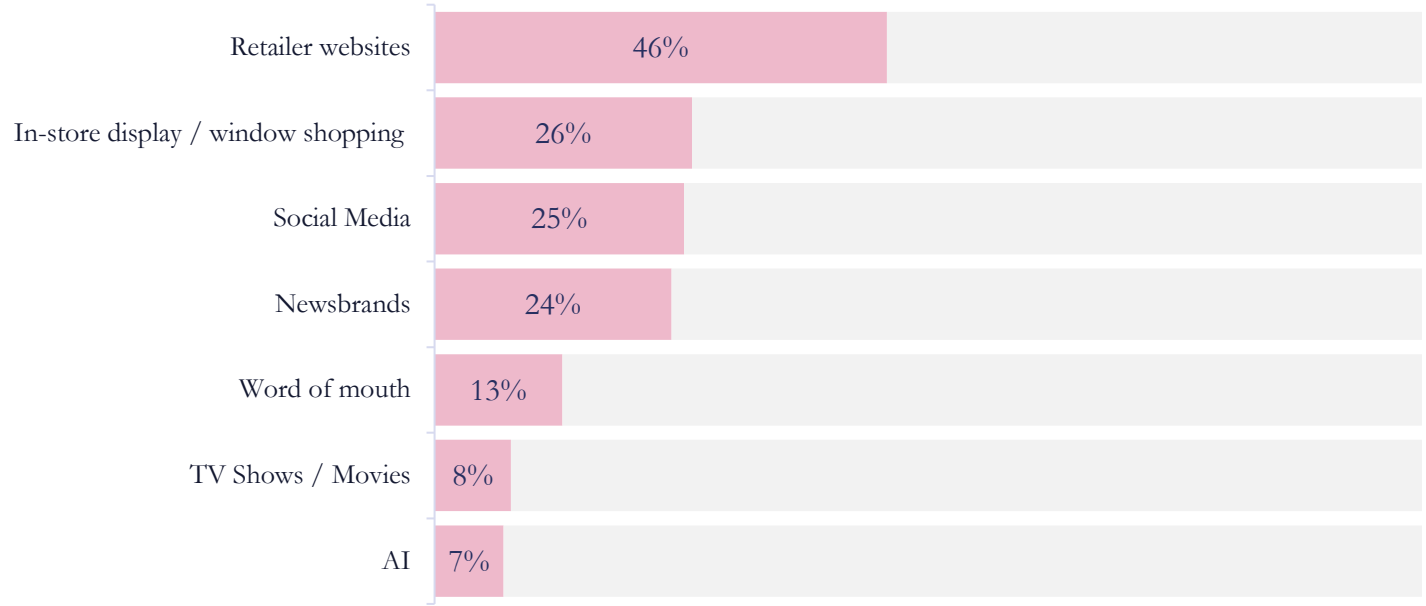


Source: Horizons Fashion (n=408, bought clothes in the last 12 months)

Stage 2: Detail

Retailer websites dominate the detail stage, as shoppers move from social media and in-store discovery to websites for the specifics.

% ranked top 3 media channels (of 8 asked)



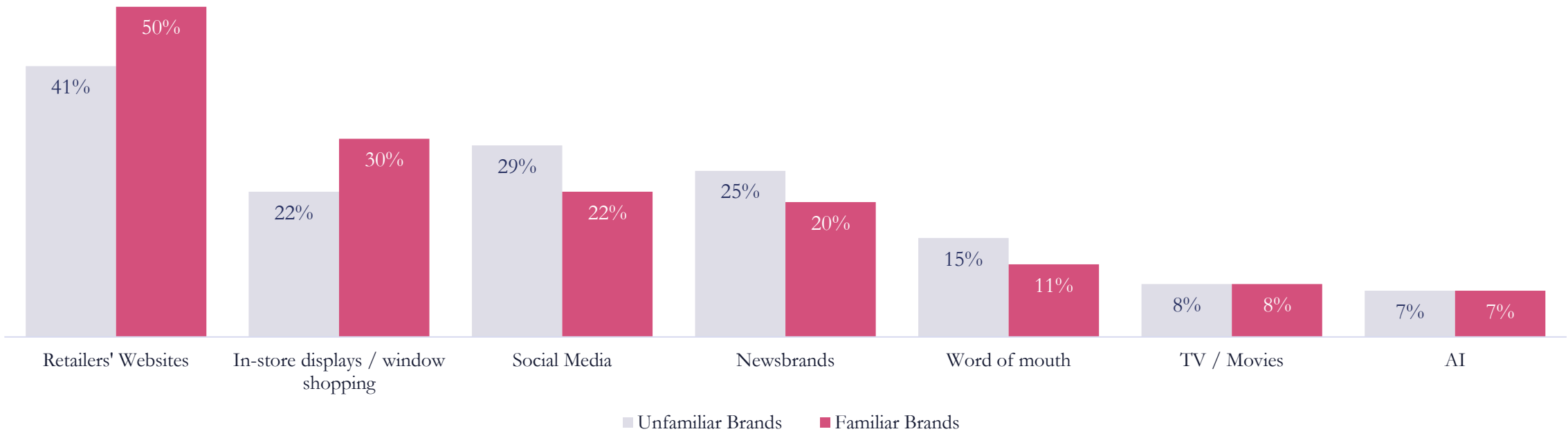
Q. Where do you look for more detailed information on items from these brands?
Source: Horizons Fashion (n=408, bought clothes in the last 12 months)



Detail: Familiar vs. Unfamiliar Brands

Retailer websites dominate the detail stage overall, especially for brands people already know. Social media and newsbrands lean the other way, playing a bigger role for exploring unfamiliar brands in more depth.

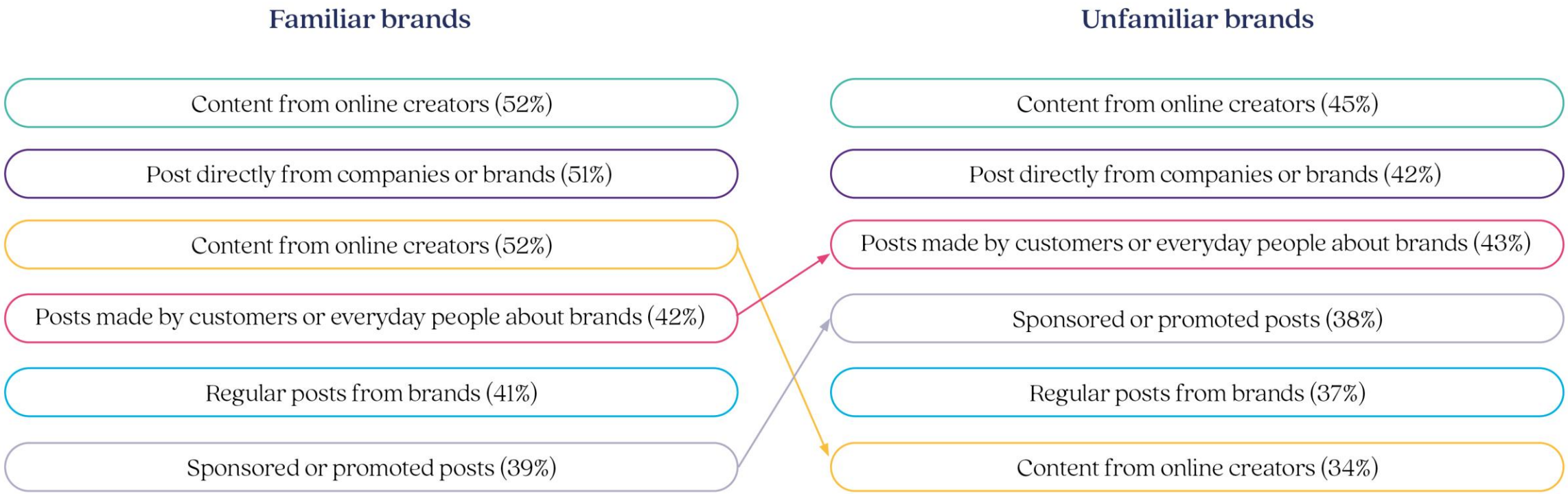
Where do you primarily look for more information on clothes or accessories from brands?



Source: Horizons Fashion (n=408, bought clothes in the last 12 months)

Social Content Used by Brand Familiarity

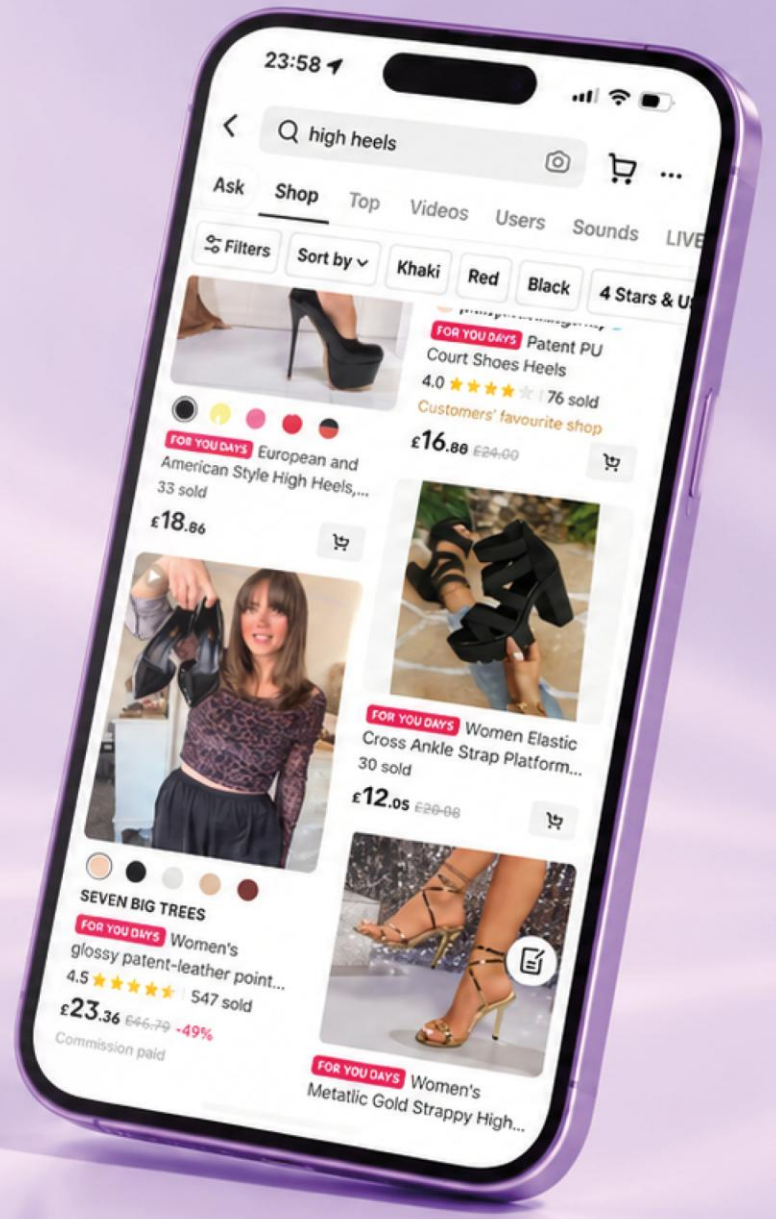
Content from online creators tops the list either way — but for unfamiliar brands, people lean more on posts from everyday customers and sponsored content, while influencer posts and direct brand posts carry more weight once a brand is already familiar.



Q- You said you use social media to discover brands/look for more information you are [familiarity level]. Which type of social media do you use for this?
Source: Horizons Fashion (n=117, use social media for discovery and detail)

Trend No. 7

The Rise (and Rise) of Social Media



Trend No. 7

The Rise (and Rise) of Social Media

The Stats



Of 18–34's shop directly within a social media app (e.g. TikTok shop) vs. 27% of GB average

18–34s are

2.3x

More likely than 35–54's to buy everyday wear after seeing it on a social media influencer

The Drivers



Demand for Simplicity

Discovery, research and purchase now happening without ever leaving the social media apps



Age of Distraction

Algorithm-led feeds blurring browsing for entertainment with browsing to buy

The Explanation

Social media is no longer just where consumers discover fashion, it is also a platform to research and now purchase clothes.

Particularly for younger shoppers, the lines between content and commerce are becoming more blurred. A product can move from a post, to a wishlist, to reviews and then into the basket without the consumer ever leaving the platform.

Convenience is a major part of this trend, but so is the effect of the platform itself. Social feeds provide constant inspiration, while creators, reviews and comments provide the social proof and reassurance that can turn discovery into purchase.

The Implication

Our data shows content from online creators tops the list for discovering and researching brands, with posts directly from brands still an important secondary source.

With this in mind, think about making creators a core part of strategy, not a bolt-on – think an always-on bench of trusted creators doing 'get ready with me' or 'shop my closet' content, tagged and checkout-ready in-feed. Partnerships with TikTok Shop or Instagram Checkout could bring this to life, turning creator content into the storefront itself.

Source: Horizon's Fashion 2026, YouGov Social media shopping trends among Britons 2025

Trend No. 8

‘Boom’ Scrollers



Trend No. 8

‘Boom’ Scrollers

The Stats

+85% Relative increase among 55–74s using social media for fashion inspiration over the last two years

+67% Relative increase in those aged 55–74 using Instagram over the last 5 years (17.5% in 2021 vs. 29.2% in 2026)

The Drivers



Changing Meaning of Age

Later life stages now come with more digital fluency and less appetite for one-size-fits-all marketing



Demand for Simplicity

Discovery, research and purchase now happening without ever leaving the social media apps

The Explanation

Gen X and boomers are often written off as light social media users, stuck on Facebook. That’s no longer true...

Agreement with “I use social media for fashion inspiration” has jumped 85% among 55–74s in two years - evidence this group is actively using social to shape how they shop. This isn’t necessarily true across the board though: 55–74s are 5.8x more likely to agree than those over 75.

The IPA’s Making Sense 8 report supports this, warning against treating older audiences as one static group and splitting “55+” into 55–74 and 75+ for the first time.

The Implication

Brands defaulting to Facebook, or skipping social entirely, for older audiences are leaving opportunity on the table - 55-74s are active on platforms like Instagram, yet rarely spoken to there. Casting matters too: creators genuinely in this age bracket, not younger faces, signal a brand sees this audience - as proven popular by our own YOU social content!

Think an Instagram-first campaign fronted by a 60-something stylist or a paid partnership with an established over-55 fashion creator. Media planning should also reflect the split within this group, targeting 55-74 vs. 75+ separately rather than the traditional ‘55+’ segment.

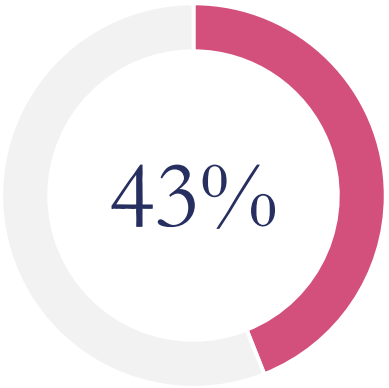
Source: Horizon’s Fashion 2026, TGI July 2021-2026

AI Innovations in Fashion

Nearly half of shoppers (and the vast majority of 18-34s) say they'd use AI when shopping for clothes but actual adoption of virtual try-on lags behind, with just 18% having tried it in the last 12 months.

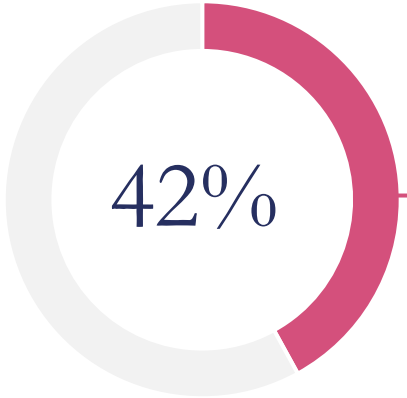
% likelihood to use AI when shopping for clothes in next 12 months

AI personalised style recommendations based on your browsing history



18-34: 86%
35–54: 53%
55+: 16% ⌄⌄

AI-powered virtual try-on tools



18-34:70%
35–54: 54%
55+: 16% ⌄⌄

Only

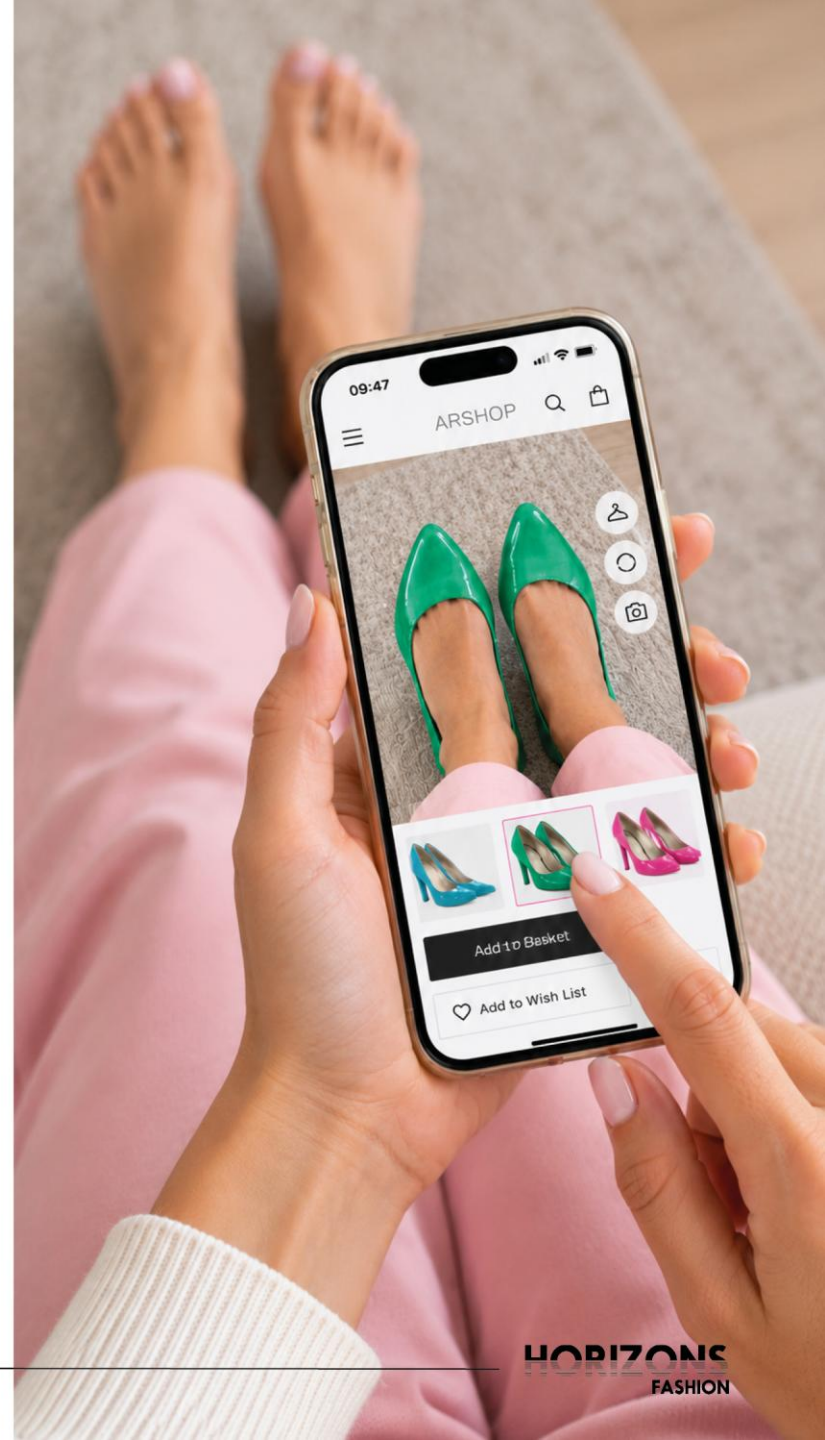
18%

Have actually tried on clothes virtually in the last 12 months

⌃⌃ = significant at 95% confidence

Q- AI (Artificial Intelligence) is increasingly being used in the fashion industry especially when online shopping. How likely are you to use the following applications of AI when you shop?

Source: Horizons Fashion (n=692), Mintel Fashion Technology and Innovation 2025



Trend No. 9

Is AI Assisting?



Trend No. 9

Is AI Assisting?

The Stats

7/8 Average rank when looking for inspiration or more information on brands

42% Would consider AI-powered virtual try-on tools

VS.

18% Have actually used

The Drivers

TECHNOLOGICAL

The AI Citizen

AI is becoming ingrained in many aspects of daily life, but adoption within the fashion category is still catching up



The Explanation

AI is the word on everyone's lips and clothes shopping is no exception – 42% would use AI-personalised style recommendations, rising to 86% among 18-34s. But there's clear disparity between current appetite and adoption - only 18% have actually tried on clothes virtually in the last 12 months.

There are limits too. 75% of Brits feel negative towards AI-generated actors in advertising, suggesting shoppers welcome AI as a tool but resist it replacing the human element of how fashion is sold to them. AI in clothing is early-stage — there's strong curiosity, especially among younger shoppers, but a way to go before mainstream adoption, with clear limits on where shoppers want it kept out of the picture.

The Implication

There's a case for virtual try-on and recommendation tools that ease shopping stress but low adoption means these stay a helpful addition, not the headline for now.

Advertising is different: 75% feel negative towards AI-generated actors, meaning keeping the human touch (real models and human casting) matters, reserving AI for the functional layer, not the brand's face.

Think simple 'find your fit' tools or style quizzes — practical uses that builds trust in the role of AI in the purchase journey gradually.

Source: Horizon's Fashion 2026 | ACI worldwide & YouGov 'Six in Ten UK Consumers Would Stop Using an AI Shopping Agent After One Mistake'

Horizons

Fashion Content at Mail Metro Media



Top Content Mail Metro Media Readers Would Like to See

Product reviews are the content our audience would most like to see. Women are significantly more likely to be interested in outfit inspiration, with men showing greater interest in brand launches. Meanwhile, 18-34s are the audience most likely to seek out outfit inspiration and shopping hauls.

% interested in content topics

	Total	Men	Women	18-34	55+
1	Item Reviews (35%)	Item Reviews (32%)	Item Reviews (38%)	Outfit Inspiration (34%)	Item Reviews (33%)
2	Styling Tips/Guides (27%)	Brand Launches (31%)	Outfit Inspiration (34%)	Clothing Hacks (34%)	Outfit Inspiration (20%)
3	Outfit Inspiration (26%)	New/Trending Items (22%)	Styling Tips/Guides (33%)	New/Trending Items (34%)	Styling Tips/Guides (20%)
4	New/Trending Items (25%)	Styling Tips/Guides (20%)	Clothing Hacks (31%)	Item Reviews (33%)	New/Trending Items (16%)
5	Clothing Hacks (25%)	Outfit Inspiration (18%)	New/Trending Items (29%)	Shopping Hauls (30%)	Brand Launches (13%)
6	Brand Launches (20%)	Clothing Hacks (18%)	Dupes of Luxury Items (18%)	Styling Tips/Guides (30%)	Clothing Hacks (13%)

Q - Which, if any, of the following topics relating to clothing and accessories would you be interested in reading / hearing / watching?
Source: Horizons Fashion (n=408, bought clothes in the last 12 months)

Seriously Valuable Fashion Audiences

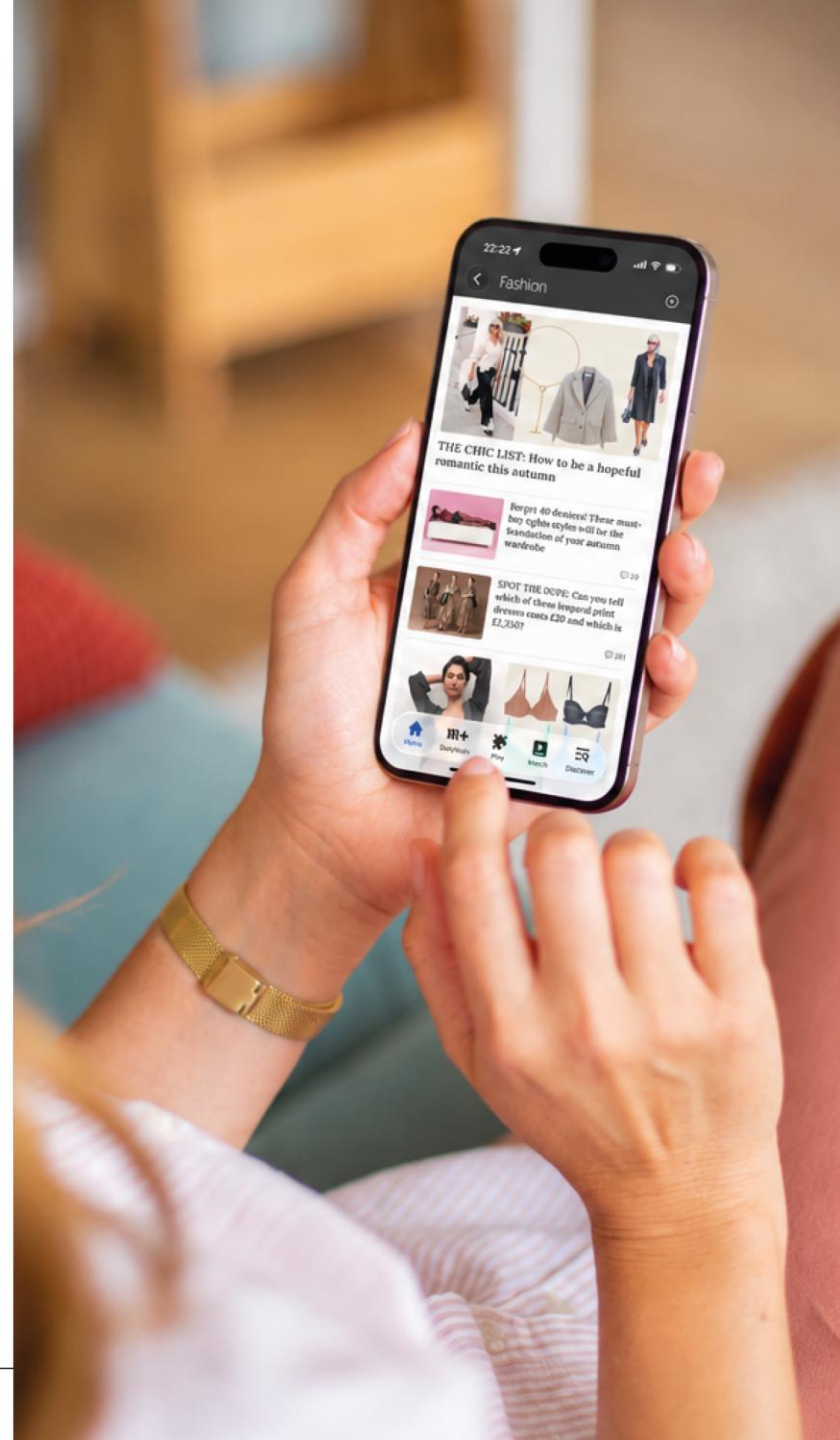
Mail Metro Media's audience account for 75p in every £1 spent on clothing and accessories in Britain! Our diverse print, digital, social and audio portfolio enable fashion brands to reach all types of shoppers; our fashion partnerships deliver an average uplift of +**71%** in brand consideration.

Mail Metro Media reaches **10M** people who regularly use the internet to search for Fashion and beauty content. (74%)

Dailymail.com has written over 8,000 articles about fashion in the last year, attributing to over **291M** article views.

30,000,000 monthly views on Eliza across Instagram and TikTok.

11M Mail Metro Media shoppers buy second-hand clothes always or often.



Source: TGI April 2026, Google Analytics

Seriously Powerful Cross-Platform Portfolio

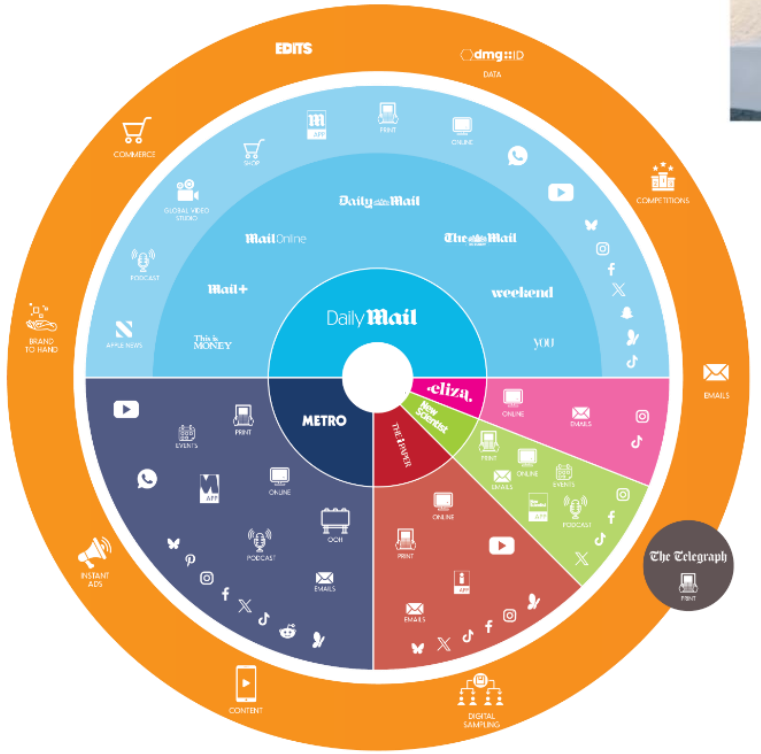
A broadcast publisher with a multi-channel ecosystem - think one partner across print, digital, social, audio, video and commerce.

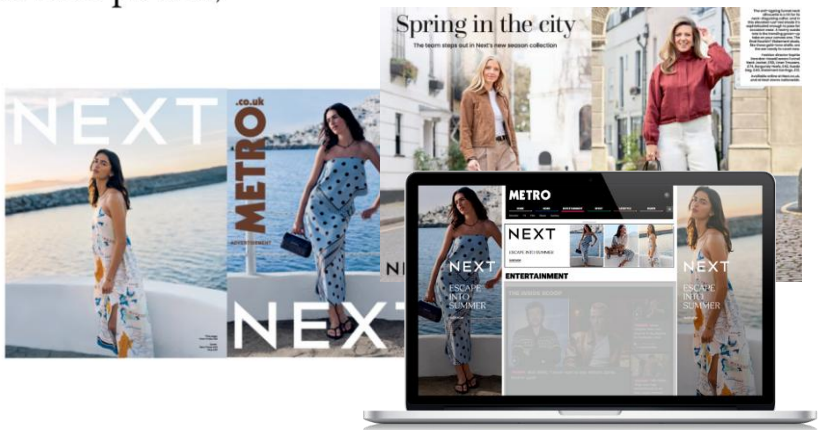


Primark led a social – first campaign to 'break the news' of new items from their major finds range.



Matalan had a big cross media campaign which leveraged an effective use of talent.





Next highlights the power of the long-term partner, where consideration increased by +27% from autumn 2024 to spring 2026.



Vinted worked with Metro to execute a coverwrap showing the benefits of selling unwanted items

Our Commerce Credentials

Almost 2m shoppers actively browse affiliated content on Dailymail.com every month!

Over

950,000

Intent clicks to fashion retailers every year

32,000

Orders generated from affiliated fashion content at Mail Metro Media

£3.5M

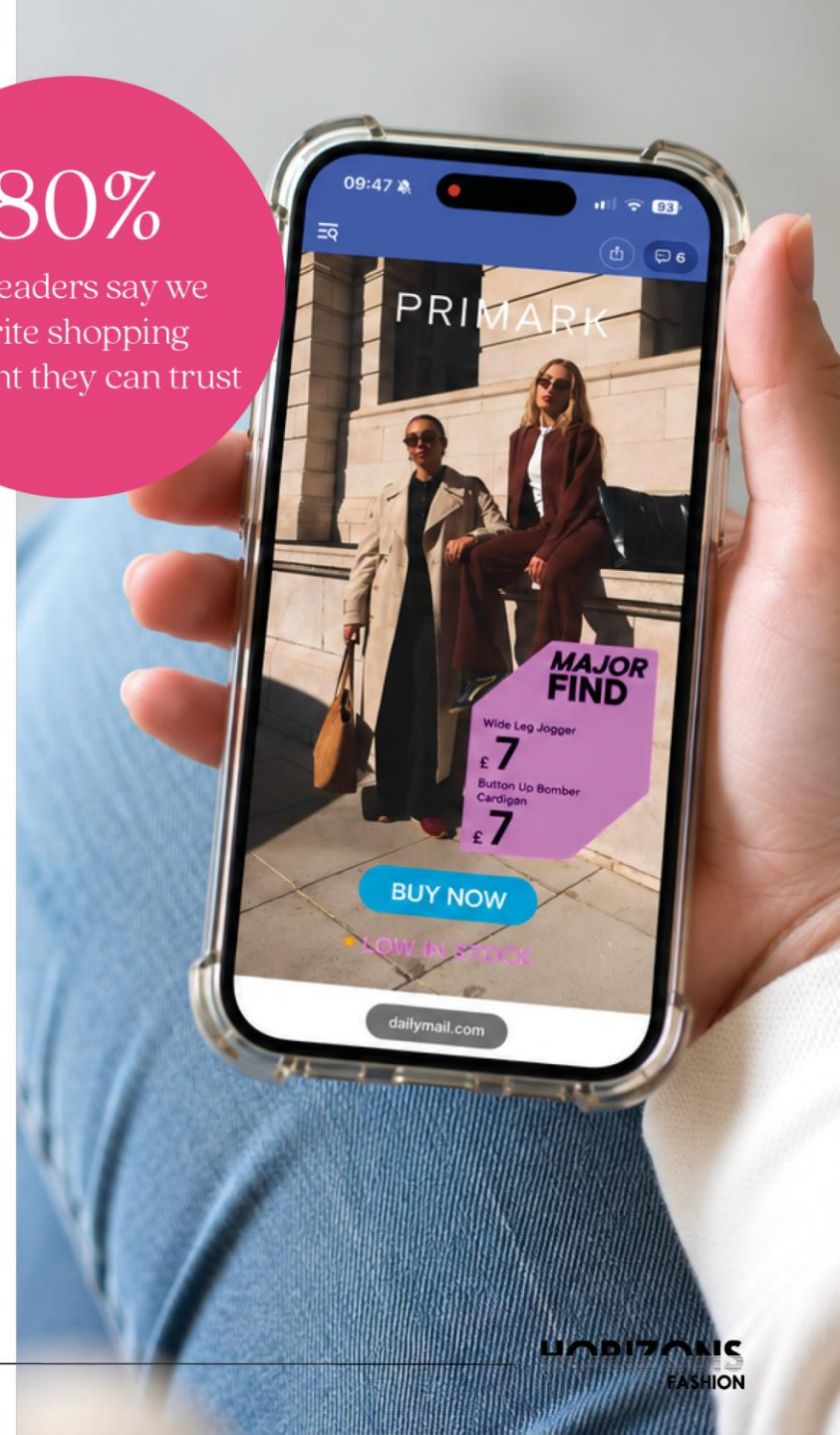
In tracked sales in fashion category

£100+

Average order value

80%

of readers say we write shopping content they can trust



Source: TGI April 2026, Google Analytics

Seriously Popular Fashion Content

Our digital fashion content generates 24M article views every month.

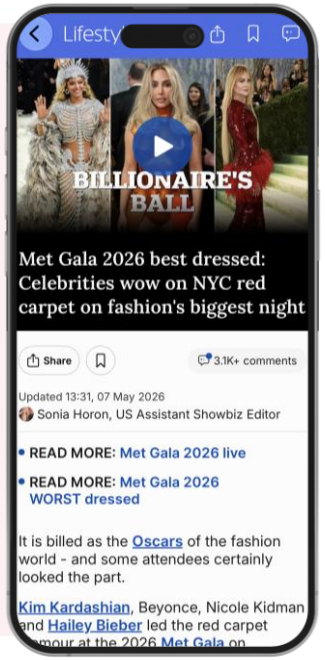
We've had over

291M

views across

8,000

articles featuring fashion related content in the last year



Top 10 fashion articles on DailyMail.com in 2026

#	Article Title	Views
1	Met Gala 2026 best dressed Kim Kardashian and Beyonce reign supreme on the red carpet for fashion's biggest night	608,895
2	Oscars best dressed Emma Stone stuns alongside Nicole Kidman, Kylie Jenner, Kate Hudson and Rose Byrne as they lead fashion parade at the 2026 Academy Awards	519,199
3	Dua lipa stuns in a bespoke Chanel bridal gown and parties into the early hours as she shares the first pictures from her 1 5million Sicily wedding to Callum Turner	384,199
4	Harper Beckham's festival fashion parade teen teams' denim hotpants and a crop top with a £2,500 necklace £120 wellies and a £130 gap jacket by mum Victoria as she watches Cruz perform at Reading.	373,132
5	Princess of Wales nails wedding guest chic in an elegant £750 Roland Mouret outfit as she joins Prince William at Peter Phillips and Harriet Sperling's wedding	373,132
6	Met Gala 2026 worst dressed Kylie Jenner and Katy Perry shock with bizarre outfits on the red carpet	331,293
7	Meghan Markle and Prince Harry take children Archie and Lilibet trick or treating in Santa Barbara with duchess donning colourful butterfly costume while Duke dresses down in jeans and a polo	318,172
8	Fashion fans say Primark has done it again as a chic midi dress sparks a shopping frenzy across the high street	307,578
9	Harper Beckham, 14, puts on a stylish display in a fluffy coat and vintage Chanel bag in Paris with her family after Nicola Peltz's heartbreaking comments about sister-in-law	304,168
10	Margot Robbie continues her period fashion parade in a racy sheer corset gown as she and on-screen love interest Jacob Elordi enjoy another cosy red-carpet display at the Wuthering Heights UK premiere	288,031

Top Digital Themes

Celebrity Outfits

Deals, Dupes and Discounts

Fashion Week

Source: TGI April 2026, Google Analytics

Our Pillars of Targeting

Harness our connections to power results based on fashion advertising outcomes

Demo



Use on-site behaviour & deterministic data.

Example targeting includes:
18-34's, women, ABC1

Interest



Use high frequency of category readership

Example targeting includes:
anyone interested in women's fashion, luxury fashion lovers and fashionistas

Geo



Target according to region, city or district

Target geographical locations including:
shop locations, affluent postcodes, postcodes of delivery regions

Context



Place ads against contextually relevant articles in real time.

Example targeting:
Serve ads alongside editorial content covering men's and women's fashion, fashion event and celebrity style

In-market



Target shoppers who are actively in-market, using browsing and research behaviours to identify audiences with clear purchase intent

Outcomes



Building bespoke client segments based off user interactions

Awareness → Intent

New Data Products

200BN data points from dmg::id fuelling our data products

Audience Takeover

- Data enabled takeover package
- 100% share of voice premium formats, above the fold
- Targeted takeover against our off-the-shelf audience categories
- Best for driving awareness amongst a target audience
- 2.4x higher click-through-rate achieved across a fashion audience takeover vs channel takeover on the same campaign

Exclusive+

- Full service data enabled offering
- Bespoke data strategy
- Optimisations across the campaign
- Data-led post campaign report including data recommendations for future campaigns
- Available on any format

Retarget

- Target recent positive engagers with your brand
- Go beyond standard retargeting; Re-Target includes all positive interactions we have seen with the brand across commerce, editorial, advertising and polls
- Available of any format