



PFS Research Finds Cost and Convenience is Stifling Consumer Desire to Shop Sustainably

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ALLEN, Texas, Sept. 09, 2021 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- A new survey of 4,000 adult consumers and 200 senior decision-makers from the retail industry conducted by PFS, the operations business unit of PFSweb, Inc. (NASDAQ: PFSW), has revealed that consumers in the UK and US desire to shop more sustainably, but poor customer experiences and higher prices are holding them back.

Nearly half (48%) of consumers in the UK and US are now more conscious of how their online shopping behavior impacts the environment than they were before the COVID-19 pandemic. However, this heightened awareness is not necessarily translating into buying habits or being met by retailers, as consumers crave speed and convenience.

The research has uncovered a growing need for retailers to work with consumers to make sustainability more achievable, as despite the importance of sustainability in the purchase process, it seems that cost is still a priority that can trump consumers' environmental aspirations.

Key findings from the research include:

- The top reason holding consumers back from making more eco-friendly purchases is the higher cost of sustainable products (35%). Retailers also agreed with this as the top reason (47%).
- Over half of consumers (55%) agreed they base their purchasing decisions on convenience and cost over sustainability and concern for their impact on the environment. Speed also plays a big factor, with just over half of those surveyed (51%) agreeing that fast delivery is the most important consideration for them when buying a product online.
- Almost four in 10 consumers (38%) agree free returns encourage them to over-purchase items, as they know they can return these items without additional cost.
- 'A more detailed sizing prediction' would encourage 31% of consumers who have returned products purchased online in the last two years to return fewer online purchases, followed by 'a more detailed product description on the website' (29%).

Patrick Lowe, AVP Business Management at [PFS](#), comments, "Retailers understand that consumers have heightened awareness levels when it comes to the impact of how they shop but also that their ideals don't always match the realities. It's a balancing act to appeal to cost-conscious consumers with cost-effective and sustainable options from retailers. Consumers know what they want to do but aren't actively doing it yet."

"It is important that the retail industry – along with other influencers in the supply chain – take steps to give consumers viable sustainable choices when shopping online. Retailers need to work with consumers to make the eCommerce channel more sustainable and incentivize them with innovative product and service offerings. Changes don't need to be widespread or wholesale, but by offering different choices, retailers can start to support shoppers and build loyalty," Lowe adds.

To find out more about the research, read the '[Expectation vs. reality: is sustainability sustainable?](#)' report [here](#).

About the Research

PFS commissioned research agency Arlington Research to survey 4,000 adults about their expectations from brands when it comes to sustainable practices and returns processes. Nationally representative interviews were carried out with adults aged 18+ with quotas set on age, gender, and region at a country-wide level. Respondents came from the UK (2,000) and the US (2,000).

To compare attitudes and expectations of consumers with actions and aspirations of brands, 200 interviews were conducted with those working for retailers or consumer brands selling direct to consumers online or via online marketplaces. Annual sales revenues of these businesses were more than \$15 million (or over £10.5 million). Respondents were director level or above working in customer experience, customer service, eCommerce, operations, supply chain or C-suite roles.

About PFS

PFS, the business unit of PFSweb, Inc. (NASDAQ: PFSW) is a premier eCommerce order fulfillment provider. We facilitate each operational step of an eCommerce order in support of DTC and B2B retail brands and specialize in health & beauty, fashion & apparel, jewelry, and consumer packaged goods. Our scalable solutions support customized pick/pack/ship services that deliver on brand ethos with each order. A proven order management platform, as well as high-touch customer care, reinforce our operation. With 20+ years as an industry leader, PFS is the BPO of choice for brand-centric companies and household brand names, such as L'Oréal USA, Champion, Pandora, Shiseido Americas, Kendra Scott, the United States Mint, and many more. The company is headquartered in Allen, TX with additional locations around the globe. For more information, visit www.pfsccommerce.com or ir.pfsweb.com for investor information.

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