Summer
2025

Emerging Trends

The latest edition

Vypr REPORTS

What's driving **consumer behaviour** in **food, retail, beauty & home**

Contents

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46% of consumers prioritise gut health: Digestive wellbeing tops the list, ahead of brain health (28%) and skin health (13%), highlighting the growing influence of gut health in consumer decision-making and wellness trends.

57% of GLP-1 users would dine out more often if restaurants offered tailored menu options: There's a growing opportunity for the food service sector to cater to the needs of GLP-1 users by offering smaller, healthier portion options.
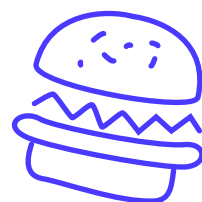
63% of consumers are unfamiliar with blockchain beauty: While blockchain verification is an emerging trend in beauty, a significant portion of consumers still lacks awareness, indicating a need for greater education and transparency from brands.

54% of consumers prioritise durability when choosing cookware: Durability and long lifespan are key factors when consumers make decisions about cookware, followed by affordability and non-toxic materials.

44% of consumers prioritise functionality over aesthetics for pet products: While design-conscious pet products are gaining traction, many pet owners still view functionality as more important than matching home décor.

In-brief

This report explores the emerging trends shaping how consumers eat, shop, live and look after themselves across four core sectors: Food, Retail, Health & Beauty, and Home Living.

As consumers face a cost-of-living squeeze, increasing wellness awareness, and a saturated digital landscape, their priorities and purchasing behaviours continue to evolve.

The findings reveal a clear shift towards **personalisation, practicality and emotional value**. Consumers are seeking experiences and products that balance **joy and indulgence with wellbeing and sustainability**, often turning to new, digital-first ways of discovering, choosing and buying.

Food and Beverage

Consumers are increasingly seeking food and drink products that support their **physical and emotional well-being**, from functional ingredients that promote gut health and cognitive performance to indulgent treats now targeted at adults. Appetite for premium experiences is growing, with deli boxes and treat hampers serving as small luxuries in a challenging economic climate.

In food service, dining habits are shifting. The rise of **GLP-1 medication** is changing how people dine out, while digital menus, calorie transparency and ghost kitchens are reshaping the restaurant experience.

Retail

Social media is fast becoming a key shopping channel, with platforms like **TikTok Shop** changing how consumers discover and buy products. At the same time, traditional channels like **TV shopping** are making a comeback, fuelled by value-driven special offers and trusted brands.

Nostalgia is also playing a growing role in retail. From vintage packaging to retro brand collaborations, consumers are being drawn to products that spark memories and emotional connection, a trend known as **core nostalgia and vibestalgia**.

Health & Beauty

Consumers are demanding greater transparency, sustainability and personalisation in their beauty and personal care choices. New behaviours include growing interest in **blockchain-backed ingredient verification**, the rise of **waterless and clean beauty formats**, and a shift towards functional skincare ingredients in body and hair care, known as the **skinification** trend.

Virtual beauty experiences are also becoming a powerful tool in the purchase journey, with AR try-ons and AI skincare analysis shaping how consumers trial and buy products.

Home Living

The home is becoming a space of **self-expression and emotional well-being**. Consumers are prioritising personal taste and comfort over rigid trends, with the rise of **dopamine décor**, design choices driven by joy rather than aesthetics.

Sustainability remains front of mind, particularly in cleaning and cooking products, where there is growing demand for **low-waste, refillable and energy-efficient solutions**. Alongside this, the humanisation of pets is driving interest in design-led, lifestyle-inspired pet furniture, feeding accessories and toys.

This report uncovers how brands and retailers can adapt to these changing behaviours to remain relevant and ahead of the curve.

Food and Beverage

Mind, body and gut: the rise of functional food and drink

Consumers are increasingly seeking food and drink options that offer more than basic nutrition. Interest is growing in products that support cognitive function, digestive health, and overall well-being. However, our data reveals a clear gap between awareness, intent, and behaviour. This section explores these patterns and what they signal for future consumer behaviour.

Brain foods and cognitive health

Awareness of 'brain foods' is emerging but remains uneven. Around a third of respondents (32%) rated themselves as familiar with the concept, while the majority (41%) sat in the neutral range, aware of the term but unsure of its meaning. Just over a quarter (28%) said they were not familiar, and the most common response was neutral, pointing to a widespread but surface-level understanding.

It is clear that interest in brain-boosting foods is growing, but it is not top of mind for most. Only 16% of respondents actively seek out products like mushrooms, omega-3s and nootropics, while 38% said they are interested but do not prioritise them, and 33% are not actively looking. It is a clear opportunity for brands to raise awareness, share benefits and spark curiosity.

Recent behaviour reflects this. When asked if they had actively sought out foods or drinks marketed for brain health in the past few months, just 30% said yes. The majority (70%) had not, showing that interest exists but action is limited. This suggests room to grow through clearer signposting, education and standout messaging at point of purchase.

Overall, the concept of brain foods appears to be in an early awareness phase. Consumers are interested, but the idea is not yet fully understood or prioritised. For brands, the opportunity lies in making the benefits feel simple, credible and relevant, especially when linked to outcomes like focus, memory or mental clarity.

Functional ingredients and health priorities

Many consumers are not strongly ingredient-led when it comes to overall health. Nearly one in three (31%) said they do not check ingredients at all. Among those who do, omega-3s (18%) and probiotics (17%) were the most commonly sought-after, followed by collagen (8%) and prebiotics (7%). Interest in emerging ingredients like adaptogens was low, with just 4% prioritising them.

Gut health currently ranks as the leading health priority, selected by 46% of respondents. Brain health followed at 28%, and skin health at 13%. This focus on gut health helps explain why familiar ingredients like probiotics and omega-3s are attracting the most attention, while awareness of newer or niche ingredients remains more limited. The strong connection between gut and brain health also presents an opportunity to bring these benefits together in consumer messaging.

Skin-related products, by contrast, see more hesitant engagement. Just 13% of respondents said they buy them regularly, while 26% purchase occasionally. The largest group (31%) are aware of such products but have not yet tried them, and 30% do not believe they make a difference. This blend of curiosity and scepticism suggests the category may benefit from stronger proof points and clearer communication of benefits.

Which of the following is most important to you?

Gut Health
46%

Brain Health
28%

Skin Health
13%

None of the above
13%

Single Answer steer sent to a nationally representative sample

Fibre's growing importance

Protein has long been the dominant focus in food and wellness trends, but there are signs that fibre is starting to share the spotlight. Over a third of respondents (35%) said they try to balance both equally, while 16% actively seek out high-fibre foods. However, 21% still prioritise protein, and 28% said they do not focus on either. These results suggest growing awareness of fibre's importance but also highlight the need for stronger cues and education to bring it further into focus.

Functional beverages

Drinks infused with added health ingredients are gaining traction, though they remain a minority purchase. 40% of respondents said they have bought a drink with added functional benefits such as collagen or protein, while 60% have not. This suggests growing openness to functional formats, but also highlights the need for stronger cues, clearer benefits and better education to encourage trial and repeat purchase.

When asked which ingredient would make them most likely to try a functional beverage, respondents chose vitamin D (37%) and protein (30%) as the frontrunners. Collagen (19%) and fibre (18%) were less influential, suggesting that while fibre is gaining ground in broader health conversations, it is not yet a key driver in the drinks category.

Overall, belief in the benefits of functional food and drink is mixed. The most common response was neutral (15%), suggesting uncertainty across the panel. While 36% gave a positive score, 31% responded negatively. This highlights a divided mindset. Some consumers are on board, but many remain unconvinced. Clearer proof points and stronger everyday relevance could help shift perceptions.

Looking more widely at functional ingredients, willingness to pay more is clearly conditional. While only 14% said they would pay more outright, a further 45% said it would depend on the ingredient, and 21% would do so if the brand was trusted. This shows that added function can justify a higher price, but only when it delivers clear value and credibility.

Which infused ingredient would make you most likely to try a beverage?

Vitamin D
37%

Protein
30%

Collagen
19%

Fiber
18%

Adaptogens
8%

None of the above
28%

Multi-Answer steer sent to a nationally representative sample

The confectionery shift

The confectionery category has traditionally been associated with children, with product formats, marketing strategies and brand narratives often centred around young consumers. However, a potential shift in the dynamics of this market, as adult purchasing patterns and regulatory impacts reshape the landscape. This section explores how adult behaviour, legislation, and changing attitudes are influencing confectionery consumption.

Adult consumption patterns

Confectionery remains a firm part of adult routines. Nearly half of respondents (48%) said they purchase it weekly for themselves, with a further 28% buying monthly. Only 5% said they never buy it, showing that while consumption habits vary, confectionery continues to have strong appeal beyond childhood.

Regulatory impact and purchasing behaviour

The introduction of sugar taxes and character marketing laws in the UK has shaped conversations around confectionery, particularly in relation to children's consumption. However, the data suggests that these regulations have had limited influence on adult purchasing behaviour.

Despite growing regulation, most consumers say their buying habits for children remain unchanged. 40% said they still purchase the same amount of confectionery, while 33% do not buy it for children at all. Just 16% reported buying less due to the UK's sugar tax or character marketing restrictions, suggesting that policy alone has had limited influence on behaviour so far.

The impact of regulation on adult confectionery habits appears even lower. 62% of respondents said they buy the same amount for themselves, while 23% reported buying less. Just 4% said they now buy more. This suggests that, for most adults, current sugar and marketing laws have yet to significantly shift day-to-day behaviour.

Purchasing drivers and reduced sugar preferences

For most consumers, taste is still the number one priority when buying confectionery, chosen by 42%. Price followed at 24%, while brand, ingredients and sugar content were each mentioned by fewer than 10%. Despite increasing scrutiny around health and formulation, indulgence and value continue to drive decision-making in the category.
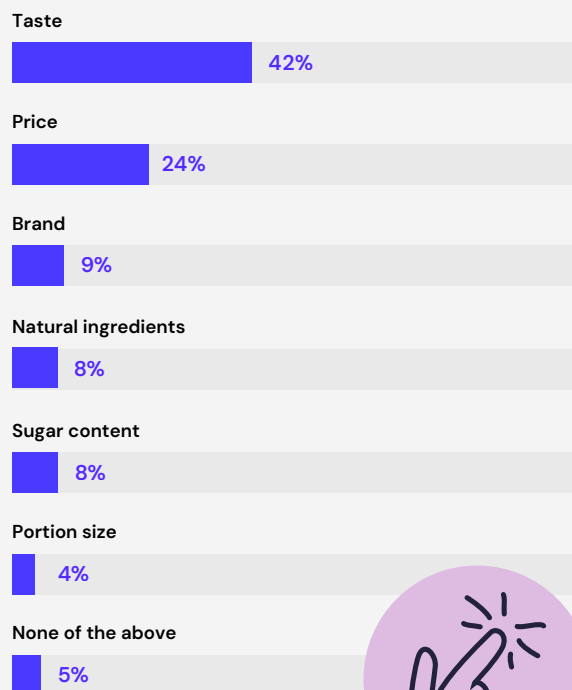
Attitudes toward reduced sugar options remain split. While 44% of respondents said they would be more likely to buy confectionery with reduced sugar or alternative sweeteners, a slightly higher 47% said they prefer traditional sweets. This suggests reformulation may appeal to some, but taste remains a key barrier to broader adoption.

Marketing shifts and consumer perceptions

Most consumers have not noticed a change in how sweets are marketed to children. 64% said they have not seen a difference, while 29% felt there has been a reduction in marketing. This suggests that while policy changes may be in place, their visibility or impact is not yet widely recognised by the public.

Among those who have noticed a shift in sweet product marketing towards children, the most common change was less advertising, cited by 50%. Nearly 30% said there are fewer characters and mascots, and 24% felt there are now more options aimed at adults. These shifts suggest that while not universally noticed, regulatory changes are having a visible impact for some.

If you buy confectionery, what is your main consideration?

Taste
42%

Price
24%

Brand
9%

Natural ingredients
8%

Sugar content
8%

Portion size
4%

None of the above
5%

Single Answer steer sent to a nationally representative sample

Rise of deli & treat boxes

The luxury hamper and premium treat box category is gradually evolving beyond seasonal gifting. What was once a niche market tied to special occasions is now attracting broader interest from consumers seeking indulgence, artisan quality and small moments of affordable luxury. While regular purchasing remains limited, signs point to a shift in how these products are perceived and used. This section explores emerging consumer dynamics in the space and what they reveal about broader shifts in spending behaviour.

Consumer engagement with luxury food boxes

Luxury food experiences like hampers, deli boxes and treat bundles are still niche, but there's clear curiosity. While 45% of respondents said they have no interest, over a quarter (26%) said they are interested in trying one, and another 25% already buy them occasionally for special occasions. Just 5% purchase them regularly, showing that while current uptake is low, there's strong potential for growth among curious but unconverted consumers.

Purchase motivations

Gifting remains the biggest driver behind premium hamper and treat box purchases. Nearly 39% of respondents said they would buy one for a special occasion, compared to just 11% who were motivated by trying high-quality products or 9% who saw them as a personal treat. Convenience and brand values mattered less, suggesting that these experiences are still primarily seen as thoughtful, occasional gifts rather than everyday indulgences.

When choosing a hamper or deli box, value still matters. Over a third (35%) of respondents prioritised value for money compared to buying items individually. High-quality, artisan products came next (26%), followed by the ability to customise contents (20%). Presentation, uniqueness and sustainability were less influential overall, showing that even in the premium space, practicality can outweigh novelty.

Changing spending behaviour

Spending on hampers and treat boxes has remained stable for most, though cost is clearly a factor. While 22% said their spending has stayed the same, 19% reported cutting back due to budget constraints. Only 9% said they're spending more. With 44% never having purchased one, growth may depend on converting new customers rather than increasing spend from existing ones.

Those increasing their spend on hampers are driven by emotion and quality. Over half (52%) said they make great gifts, while 47% cited product quality. A smaller but meaningful segment (23%) said they value the little luxuries despite the cost of living, highlighting how premium treat boxes can offer affordable moments of indulgence in tighter times.

Why are you spending more on luxury hampers and treat boxes?

They make great gifts
52%
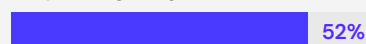
I appreciate the quality
47%

I appreciate the little luxuries despite cost of living
23%

Because I've found them to be more reasonable in price
11%

None of the above
8%

follow-on, multi-answer steer asking why respondents are spending more on luxury hampers

Consumer interests and category opportunities

Among those spending more on hampers or treat boxes, interest skews towards indulgence and occasion-led formats. Luxury chocolate and confectionery boxes came out on top (39%), followed closely by artisan cheese, premium afternoon teas and seasonal boxes (all 35%). Wellness-focused and alcohol-based hampers were less popular, suggesting that for this group, spending more is about elevated treats rather than health or utility.

The data shows growing curiosity around deli boxes and premium treat hampers, particularly as some consumers look for small moments of indulgence amidst ongoing financial pressures. For those willing to spend more, these products offer a way to enjoy affordable luxury at home. Brands like Delli and Modest Milkman are well placed to meet this demand with curated, high-quality offerings. There is also an opportunity for premium retailers such as Fortnum & Mason, Selfridges and Marks & Spencer to craft elevated experiences that feel special, gift-worthy and worth the investment.

Rise of ghost kitchens

Ghost kitchens have emerged as a new fixture in the food service landscape, offering delivery-only meals from commercial or repurposed spaces. Initially driven by the pandemic, they continue to operate as part of a growing convenience culture. But while the model promises flexibility and efficiency, it remains unclear how consumers feel about it. This section explores awareness, adoption and the barriers that may be holding ghost kitchens back.

Awareness and engagement

Consumer engagement with ghost kitchens remains limited. More than 70% of respondents said they have never ordered from one, but the market is split between curiosity and disinterest. While 36% would consider trying a ghost kitchen, 36% are not interested. Only 6% use them regularly, indicating that while awareness may be rising, widespread adoption is still out of reach.

Purchase drivers

Among regular users, convenience and trust are key. Faster delivery times (36%) and strong customer reviews (30%) were the most common reasons for ordering, followed by brand recognition and access to niche menus (both 27%). Fewer were swayed by novelty or price, showing that reliability outweighs cost when it comes to repeat behaviour.

Barriers and reassurance factors

For those open to trying ghost kitchens, branding is not a major concern. Nearly half (44%) said the brand name doesn't matter, though one in three still prefer traditional restaurants. A further 23% said they would need more confidence in the quality, suggesting reassurance and visibility will be key to converting interest into action.

Among those not interested, quality and trust were the primary blockers. Concerns around food quality and freshness topped the list (29%), with smaller groups citing a lack of transparency (11%) or poor customer service (9%). Just 6% said unfamiliar brands were a deterrent, reinforcing that trust in food standards, not branding, is the biggest barrier.

Consumer sentiment towards delivery-only models

Views on ghost kitchens remain divided. Just over 30% of respondents said they prefer restaurants with dine-in options, while a similar number are open to delivery-only models if the quality is good. 16% welcomed the added variety and convenience, but 15% saw ghost kitchens as a negative development. The split shows a category still finding its place, with success likely hinging on consumer confidence and quality control.

How do you feel about the increasing number of delivery-only restaurants compared to traditional restaurants?

I prefer traditional restaurants with dine-in options

31%

I don't mind as long as the quality is good

30%

It's great - more variety and convenience

16%

I think ghost kitchens are a negative trend for food service

15%

None of the above

8%
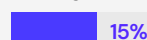
Single answer question sent to nat rep

Overall, ghost kitchens represent a promising but underdeveloped space in food service.

While consumer curiosity is growing, uptake remains low and trust in quality is a significant barrier. The data suggests that building confidence through consistent quality, transparent practices and positive reviews is key to unlocking growth.

Rather than positioning ghost kitchens as a replacement for traditional dining, operators may find more success by offering them as a flexible and convenience-led option that complements existing habits.

Food Service and Dine Out

Appetite for less: the impact of GLP-1s on the dine-out sector

The rise in GLP-1 medication use, such as Wegovy, Ozempic, and Mounjaro is transforming consumer behaviour around food and dining out. As more people begin using GLP-1s, the impact on the dine-out sector could be set to grow. Appetite suppression and changes in dining habits may prompt restaurants to rethink their menus, portion sizes, and overall dining experience to cater to this evolving consumer demographic.

GLP-1 usage prevalence

Around 10% of consumers are currently taking a GLP-1 medication, while another 26% may consider it in the future. This indicates a growing trend that could soon impact a larger portion of the population. For the dine-out sector, this means adapting to smaller portions, altering meal formats, and reconsidering how indulgence is marketed to a shifting demographic with evolving appetites.

Impact on dine-out behaviour
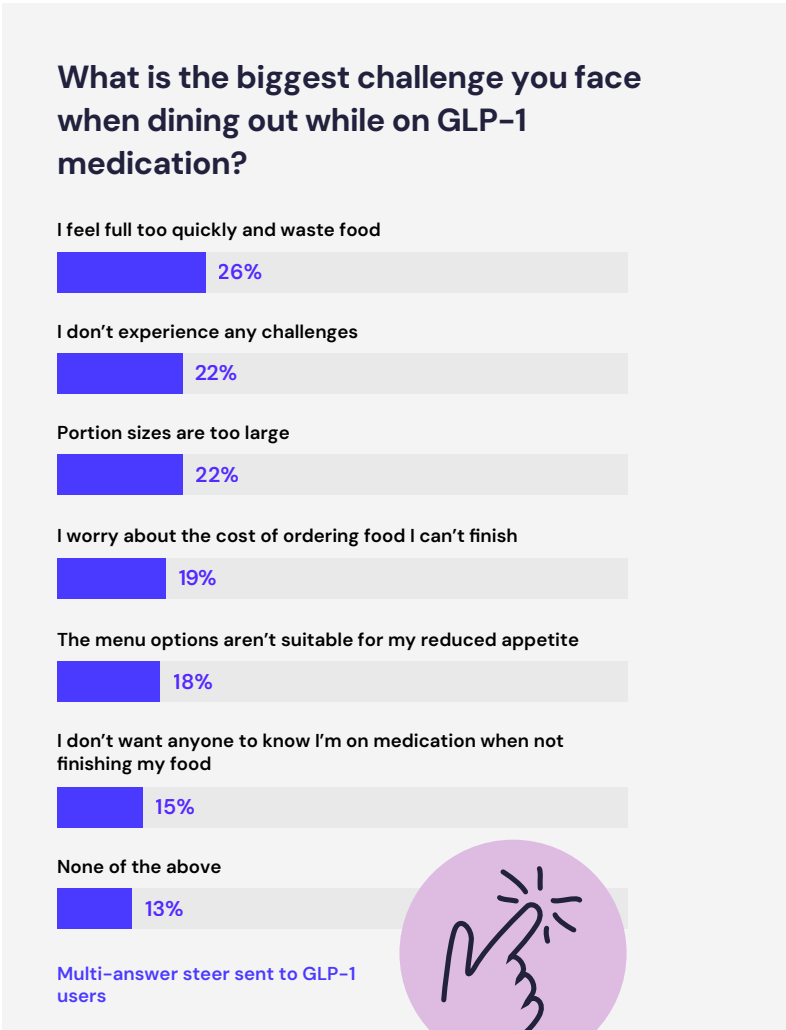
Among those currently on GLP-1 medications, 32% report dining out much less frequently, and 24% dine out slightly less. Only 19% dine out more often, with 25% saying their dining habits have remained unchanged. Overall, this reflects a tendency toward reduced frequency of dining out among GLP-1 users, presenting a challenge for the dine-out sector in retaining this customer base.

For GLP-1 users, the biggest challenge when dining out is feeling full too quickly and wasting food, with 26% citing this issue. Another 22% find portion sizes too large, while 19% worry about the cost of food they can't finish. Other concerns include limited suitable menu options (18%), feeling pressured to order a full meal (13%), and a reluctance to disclose taking medication when not finishing food (15%). However, 22% report experiencing no challenges at all.

Ordering behaviour shifts

GLP-1 users are making noticeable shifts in their restaurant ordering habits. The most common change is opting for smaller portions or appetisers, with 39% of respondents choosing this option. A further 35% focus on high-protein or nutrient-dense meals. Additionally, 17% report no change in their ordering habits, while 9% are more likely to take leftovers home. This suggests a demand for greater flexibility in portion sizes and meal composition.

More than half of GLP-1 users (57%) said they would dine out more often if restaurants offered menu options better suited to their reduced appetites. Another 23% were unsure, while 20% said their dining habits remain unchanged due to their medication. This highlights a significant opportunity for restaurants to enhance accessibility through more tailored menu options.

What is the biggest challenge you face when dining out while on GLP-1 medication?

I feel full too quickly and waste food
26%

I don't experience any challenges
22%

Portion sizes are too large
22%

I worry about the cost of ordering food I can't finish
19%

The menu options aren't suitable for my reduced appetite
18%

I don't want anyone to know I'm on medication when not finishing my food
15%

None of the above
13%

Multi-answer steer sent to GLP-1 users

Spending behaviour shifts

Since starting GLP-1 medication, 40% of GLP-1 users reported spending less on dining out because they eat less. Meanwhile, 22% are spending more as they focus on higher-quality meals, and 20% have maintained their dining spend, while 18% indicated that they spend the same but opt for different types of meals. These shifts reflect that GLP-1 users are either reducing their spending or choosing to spend more on premium meal options, depending on their evolving dining habits.

The rise of this medication is reshaping dine-out behaviour of GLP-1 users, with consumers adjusting their dining habits to accommodate smaller appetites and health-focused preferences. As a result, restaurants may need to adapt by offering smaller portions, more flexible menu options, and a focus on high-quality meals. This shift presents an opportunity for food service providers to rethink their approach to portion sizes, pricing, and the overall dining experience to cater to this emerging demographic, while also aligning with broader trends towards healthier, more mindful eating.

Menus transparency: why clarity, calories & digital access matters

As health consciousness and ethical consumerism continue to shape dining habits, consumers are increasingly prioritising the visibility of nutritional, ingredient and sourcing information when dining out. In parallel, the growing use of digital menus, particularly QR code formats, has transformed how diners interact with restaurant menus and access information. This section explores consumer attitudes towards transparency and digital menus and the implications these trends have for operators in the dine-out sector.

Calorie information transparency

Consumer opinions on displaying calorie information on menus are varied. While 39% of respondents don't mind either way, 23% like the option to see calorie counts but prefer to choose when to view them. Another 23% prefer to see calorie information on all menus, while 12% find calorie counts triggering and would prefer not to see them. Only 3% selected other options. This suggests a wide range of preferences, with some seeking greater transparency and others feeling it's unnecessary or unhelpful.

Digital menus

The growing use of digital menus has sparked mixed reactions. While 43% of consumers prefer traditional printed menus, 27% appreciate having the choice between digital and printed options. 16% find digital menus frustrating, and 9% value them for their convenience and eco-friendliness.

Ingredient and allergen transparency

A majority of consumers (56%) believe that all restaurants, including independents, should be required to display ingredient and allergen information to make ordering easier and safer. 21% feel it depends on the type of restaurant, while 19% think ingredient details should be available but not required on every menu. Only 3% selected other options, highlighting strong support for food transparency.

Sustainability and sourcing information

When it comes to food sourcing and sustainability, 29% of consumers prefer this information to be displayed in a separate section on the menu for those interested, while 28% would like it included alongside each dish on the printed or digital menu. 23% prefer it available via QR code or website, and 15% feel restaurants don't need to provide this information. This reveals a divide in consumer expectations, with some wanting transparency and others feeling it's unnecessary.

Types of transparency consumers want

The most sought-after sustainability and nutritional transparency details include ingredient sourcing, such as locally sourced or organic products (34%), followed by calorie and macronutrient breakdowns (28%). 22% are interested in certifications like Fair Trade or Rainforest Alliance, and 19% want information on sustainable packaging and waste reduction. Carbon footprint details are less popular, with 16% wanting this information. However, 32% feel they don't need any transparency on the menu, indicating a significant portion of consumers are satisfied without it.

The data clearly shows that consumers are seeking greater transparency around calorie, ingredient, and sustainability information, with many preferring to have this available on menus. However, preferences differ on how it should be presented, with some wanting optional details and others seeking more flexible menu options. For brands, this highlights an opportunity to adapt by offering transparent, easily accessible information while balancing consumer demands for simplicity and convenience. By meeting these expectations, restaurants can build trust, cater to health-conscious diners, and align with growing trends towards sustainability.

How should restaurants display information about food sourcing and sustainability on their menus?

In a separate section on the menu for those interested
29%

Clearly on the printed/digital menu alongside each dish
28%

Available via QR code or website but not on the main menu
23%

Restaurants don't need to provide this information
15%

None of the above
5%

Single answer steer sent to nat rep

Growing Retail Trends

In-app social media shopping and the rise of TikTok shop

The retail sector is being reshaped by new patterns of discovery and purchasing behaviour. As traditional retail channels compete with online and digital formats, one of the fastest-growing areas of consumer engagement is **in-app social media shopping**. What began as product discovery on platforms like Instagram and TikTok has evolved into **frictionless, impulse-driven commerce**, where entertainment, social validation and transaction happen simultaneously.

This section explores how consumer behaviour is shifting in response to social commerce and the growing influence of platforms like **TikTok Shop**. Analysing what drives trust, engagement, and hesitation and what this means for retailers and brands.

Discovery, trust & behaviour

Consumer behaviour around purchasing products based on social media influencer recommendations shows a clear divide. While 47% of consumers never buy products influenced by social media, 27% occasionally do so, and just 5% purchase regularly. Younger consumers are much more likely to be influenced, with 35% of 18–25-year-olds occasionally purchasing based on influencer recommendations, and 10% doing so regularly. In contrast, 73% of consumers aged 55 and older never buy influenced products, and only 14% occasionally do. This highlights a generational divide, with younger consumers more receptive to influencer marketing than older demographics.

When it comes to trusting an influencer's product recommendation, nearly half of consumers (49%) say they don't trust them at all. Among those who do trust recommendations, key factors include positive consumer reviews (17%), real, unfiltered product results (15%), and influencers who disclose pros and cons (15%). These findings suggest that transparency and authenticity play an important role in building trust with consumers.

Influential platforms for social media purchases

Although 47% of consumers say they don't buy based on social media, Instagram is the most influential platform, driving 15% of consumer purchases. YouTube follows with 11%, and TikTok and Facebook influence around 10%. Pinterest has a smaller influence, at just 2%. This suggests that visual and video-based platforms like Instagram and YouTube are most effective at driving purchasing decisions, with TikTok showing growing influence.

What factors make you trust a social media influencer's product recommendation?

I don't trust influencer recommendations
49%

The product has lots of positive consumer reviews
17%

They show real, unflitered results of the use of the product
15%

The disclose honest pros and cons of the product
15%

The influencer is a professional/expert in the product category
14%

They have a long-term partnership with the brand
10%

Multi-answer sent to a national representative sample

Engagement with in-app social media shopping

While 44% of consumers have never purchased a product directly from a social media platform, 29% have made occasional purchases, and 22% would consider buying through these platforms in the future. Notably, older millennials (ages 35–44) show the show the highest engagement with in-app shopping, with over 40% saying they purchase directly from social media platforms. This indicates that while trust remains a barrier for many, certain age groups are more comfortable with in-app shopping.

Advantages and concerns of in-app shopping

The biggest advantage of shopping directly through social media platforms is the ability to view real user videos and reviews (14%), with 14% also valuing the better prices and deals compared to traditional retail. Additionally, 14% appreciate the convenience and speed of in-app shopping. However, 44% of consumers report that they don't see any advantages to shopping via social media, highlighting a reluctance to embrace this model.

The biggest concerns with social media shopping are a lack of trust in sellers or brands (47%), followed by worries that product quality may not match what is shown (38%) and difficulties with returns and refunds (34%). Long shipping times (17%) and a lack of concerns (6%) are less significant. These concerns underline the barriers to widespread adoption of in-app shopping, with trust and product reliability remaining key factors.

It's clear that many consumers are still cautious about purchasing through social media, platforms like Instagram and YouTube have significant influence. Transparency, including honest product reviews and clear disclosures, is key to building trust. To drive growth, brands and platforms should focus on improving product reliability, simplifying returns, and enhancing the in-app shopping experience. Addressing these concerns will help increase consumer confidence and engagement with social media commerce.

The resurgence of TV shopping & advertising

In a world dominated by digital shopping and social media commerce, traditional TV shopping channels like QVC and Ideal World may seem outdated. But is there still a place for them in today's retail landscape? This section explores the shifting dynamics of TV shopping, examining what drives its appeal and how it is evolving to remain relevant in an increasingly digital-first world.

Influence and consumer engagement

While TV shopping channels may not be a primary shopping avenue for many, they still have a notable influence. 44% of consumers say they never buy from TV shopping channels, but 26% have purchased once or twice after seeing products on TV. 16% consider these products, and 7% are regular buyers. This suggests that while TV shopping isn't a dominant force, it continues to drive occasional but meaningful purchases.

When it comes to TV shopping, 36% of consumers see no advantage compared to online shopping, preferring the latter. However, 22% appreciate the live product demonstrations TV shopping channels offer, and 13% value access to exclusive deals and payment plans. Another 13% trust established TV shopping brands more than social media sellers. This indicates that while TV shopping may not be preferred by all, it still holds appeal for some due to its live demonstrations, deals, and trusted brands. 40% of consumers say TV ads have no influence on their purchasing decisions.

Among those who are influenced, 29% are most impacted by traditional TV commercials during regular programming, while 11% are swayed by dedicated shopping channels like QVC or Ideal World. Sponsored product segments on talk shows or morning programs have a smaller impact, influencing 8% of consumers. This suggests that traditional TV commercials remain the most effective form of TV advertising, though dedicated shopping channels also maintain a niche influence.

Have you purchased a product as a direct result of seeing a TV shopping channel (e.g. QVC, Ideal World)...
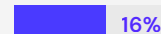
No, I would never buy from TV ads or shopping channels

44%

Yes, I've purchased once or twice

26%

No, but I consider products I see advertised on TV

16%

Yes, I regularly but from TV shopping channels

7%

None of the above

7%

Single answer steer sent to nationally representative sample

Adapting to younger generations

To make their content more appealing to younger generations, 26% of consumers suggest TV shopping networks focus on shorter, more engaging content rather than long presentations. 22% believe that TV shopping will always appeal more to older generations, while 22% think streaming on platforms like YouTube or TikTok Live would be effective. 15% also suggest incorporating more tech-focused or trending products. This shows that younger audiences are looking for faster, more accessible content that aligns with their digital habits and interests.

Engagement with live shopping

Most consumers (58%) say they would not engage with live shopping on any platform, including TV shopping networks. However, 29% say they might watch live shopping events but are not necessarily inclined to make a purchase. 13% prefer social media for live shopping experiences, indicating a smaller but engaged audience for this format. This suggests that while live shopping has appeal for some, it is not yet a dominant force in consumer purchasing behaviour.

Popular TV shopping products

Among those who purchase from TV shopping channels, the most popular product categories include homeware and kitchen gadgets (19%), beauty and skincare (17%), and tech and electronics (15%). Exclusive or limited-time products also appeal to 15%, while fashion and accessories attract 13%. This indicates that TV shopping channels see stronger engagement for home, beauty, and tech products.

TV shopping channels continue to influence a segment of consumers, though they are not the primary shopping method for most. Younger audiences are looking for faster, more engaging content, with live demonstrations and exclusive deals being key drivers for engagement. To better capture this market, TV shopping networks should consider adapting to digital platforms and focus on content that resonates with younger, tech-savvy consumers. Despite the growth of online shopping, TV shopping channels still hold a niche but valuable role, especially for categories like homeware, beauty, and tech. For brands, integrating these insights into their strategies can help them remain relevant in an increasingly digital-first shopping environment.

Nostalgia core & vibestalgia

One of the most intriguing trends in retail is the resurgence of nostalgia marketing where brands tap into familiar aesthetics, pop culture references, and design cues from past decades to drive consumer engagement. This trend has evolved beyond straightforward retro references, developing into what is often described as "Vibestalgia": a modern form of nostalgia focused on evoking a feeling or mood rather than strict historical accuracy.

Vibestalgia blends references from the 80s, 90s and early 2000s with contemporary aesthetics, appealing to consumers' desire for comfort, playfulness, and a sense of belonging amid uncertain times. This trend is particularly visible across product packaging, advertising, fashion collaborations, and experiential retail environments.

This section explores how consumers respond to nostalgia–led retail strategies, what they value, and the commercial implications for brands and retailers.

Emotional responses to nostalgic branding

Consumers demonstrate clear preferences when it comes to nostalgic aesthetics in consumer goods, with Classic Minimalism leading at 26%, followed by 90s/Y2K vibes at 19%. The 80s Arcade & Vaporwave aesthetic captures 17%, while 16% lean towards modern, futuristic designs. Other styles, such as 2000s Pop Culture and 70s Retro, each appeal to around 12%. Nearly 20% of respondents, however, don't resonate with any nostalgic styles, showcasing the varied ways in which nostalgia-driven design connects with different consumer segments.

The return of vintage or retro-inspired designs garners mixed reactions. While 35% of consumers say it depends on the product, 31% enjoy retro designs but don't let them influence their purchasing decisions. Only 15% are more likely to buy a product with a vintage design, while 10% prefer modern options. This indicates that while nostalgia appeals to many, it doesn't always drive purchases.

What makes nostalgic products feel authentic

For products to feel authentically nostalgic, 32% of consumers highlight the emotional connection to their childhood or teen years as key. 25% appreciate a modern twist on a classic product, while 23% value accurate retro design and packaging. Limited-edition re-releases of discontinued items appeal to 19%, and 14% are drawn to the exclusivity or collectability factor. However, 17% of consumers are indifferent to nostalgic products, suggesting that nostalgia-driven designs don't always influence purchase decisions.

Which nostalgic aesthetic do you find most appealing when shoopping for consumer goods?

Classic minimalism (heritage branding, timeless elegance, old-school luxury)
26%

90s/Y2K (chrome finishes, funky fonts, Lisa Frank/MTV vibes)
19%

80s arcade & vapor-wave (neon lights, pixel-graphics, synthwave)
17%

None of these - I prefer modern, futuristic aesthetics
16%

2000s Pop culture (flip phones, MySpace aesthetic, limited-edition collabs)
12%

70s retro (bold colours, psychadelic patterns, classic branding)
11%

None of the above
20%

Multi-answer sent to a nationally representative sample

Purchase behaviour driven by nostalgia

Nostalgia can spark interest, with 40% of consumers open to purchasing a product if it reminds them of a past era, provided they like the product. 31% have bought nostalgic items once or twice due to their appeal, but 22% say nostalgia does not influence their buying decisions. Only 7% regularly purchase nostalgic products, further highlighting that while nostalgia can capture attention, it's not always the deciding factor in purchases.

Appetite for nostalgia–led retail experiences

Nostalgia–driven shopping experiences resonate differently with consumers. 41% appreciate them but say they don't influence where they shop, while 23% prioritise good products over store design. 21% find nostalgic experiences fun and immersive, while 10% prefer sleek, modern shopping environments. This indicates that while nostalgia enhances the shopping experience for some, it doesn't drive purchasing decisions for all.

Desired nostalgic brand experiences

The type of nostalgic experiences consumers find engaging varies. 28% are drawn to re-released classic products like retro snack packaging, while 24% enjoy limited-time pop-ups with throwback aesthetics like 80s arcades or 90s malls. 23% would appreciate in-store experiences that evoke a past era, and 20% are influenced by nostalgic advertising. However, 13% prefer brands to focus on the future, while another 13% are interested in influencer collaborations featuring retro designs. This suggests that while nostalgia can drive engagement, it doesn't appeal universally, with some consumers preferring modern or innovative approaches.

When asked which brands they would like to see bringing back nostalgic vibes to their packaging and marketing, consumers provided a range of spontaneous responses. Analysis of the free text comments reveals three clear patterns:

1. **Mainstream FMCG brands from the 80s, 90s and early 2000s**
Many consumers referenced brands like Kellogg's, Nestlé, and Coca-Cola, asking for the return of classic packaging and original mascots. This reflects a desire to reconnect with the brands they grew up with — particularly in categories like cereals, soft drinks and confectionery, where nostalgic visuals evoke childhood memories.

2. **High street fashion and beauty brands from the Y2K era**
Respondents mentioned brands like The Body Shop, Tammy Girl and Claire's Accessories, signalling interest in seeing retail brands revive their playful, colourful early 2000s branding and in-store experiences. This aligns with broader Y2K aesthetic trends visible across TikTok and fashion.

3. **Video game and toy brands**
Several consumers cited brands like Nintendo, Lego and Barbie, reflecting a desire for nostalgia-led packaging and collaborations. This echoes wider market trends, such as Mattel's highly successful Barbiecore revival and the enduring popularity of retro gaming re-releases.

Here are three of the most interesting consumer quotes from the free text responses:

"I'd love to see Kellogg's bring back their original cereal box designs from the 90s. They were so fun and colourful compared to now."

"More brands should do what Mattel did with Barbie. Lean into the nostalgia, but with a modern twist that makes it cool again."

"I want to see old high street brands like Tammy Girl or Miss Sixty revive their early 2000s aesthetic. It was tacky but in the best possible way!"

These responses demonstrate that consumers want more than visual references; they want brands to fully embrace the playfulness, optimism and cultural texture of past eras, while making it relevant and desirable today.

For brands looking to tap into the power of nostalgia, there are clear opportunities to engage consumers across various product categories. Nostalgia-driven marketing resonates particularly in FMCG, high street fashion, and toys, with consumers eager to see familiar packaging and designs from their past. Brands should consider embracing retro aesthetics, but with a modern twist to keep them relevant. Additionally, experiential retail and nostalgia-led collaborations can drive engagement, especially when they evoke the cultural and emotional connection to past eras. However, not all consumers are equally influenced by nostalgia, so brands should also balance these approaches with contemporary, innovative offerings to appeal to a broader audience.

Health, Beauty & Personal Care

Blockchain, clean & sustainable beauty

The beauty and personal care sector is experiencing shifts in consumer preferences, with increasing focus on values such as transparency, sustainability, and ethical sourcing, alongside traditional concerns like product efficacy. In response, brands are exploring emerging technologies, including blockchain verification, waterless formulations, and clean beauty principles. How are these changing consumer behaviours and preferences shaping the beauty landscape, and what does this mean for brands aiming to meet evolving expectations?

Awareness of blockchain beauty

Familiarity with blockchain beauty is still limited among consumers. A significant 63% of respondents are unfamiliar with the concept, while 25% have heard of it but don't fully understand it. Only 11% are very familiar with blockchain beauty and actively seek out brands using this technology for ingredient verification and transparency. This indicates that while blockchain beauty is an emerging trend, it still has a long way to go in terms of consumer education and widespread understanding.
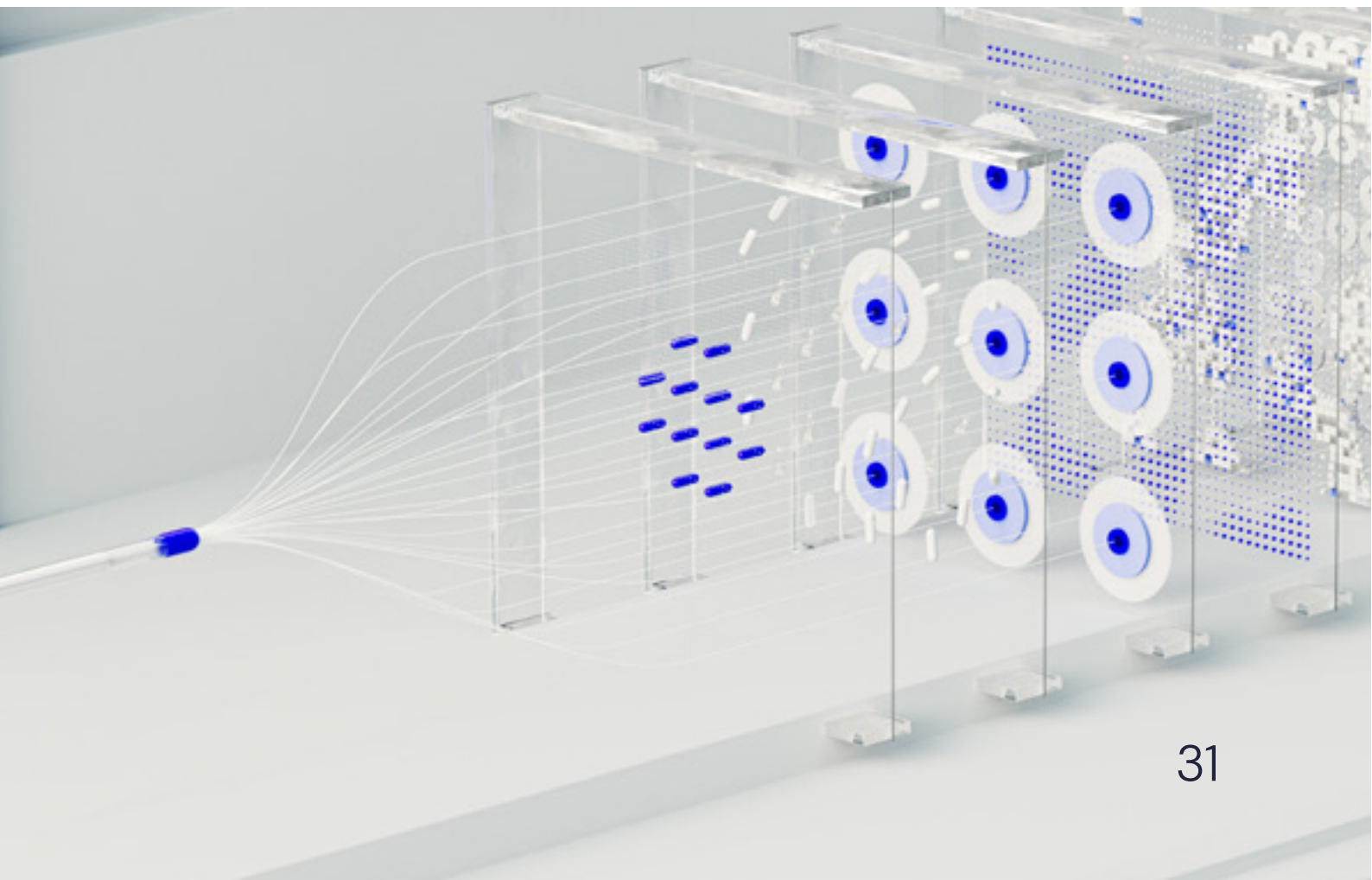
Rise of ingredient-checking behaviour

Transparency is important for many consumers, though it isn't always a deciding factor. Nearly half (45%) say their trust in beauty brands using blockchain verification depends on the brand and product. However, 29% trust brands more when they provide full transparency, while 26% don't consider blockchain verification when purchasing beauty products. For some, factors like product efficacy and brand reputation outweigh concerns about transparency.

Ingredient-checking apps like YUKA are not yet widely used by consumers. 47% say they don't check ingredients through apps, and while 20% are interested in using them, only 6% use these apps regularly. 16% check ingredients occasionally, indicating that while there is some interest, these apps have not yet become mainstream tools for beauty product decisions.

Among those who use ingredient-checking apps regularly, 57% avoid purchasing beauty products that score poorly. 37% sometimes decide against a product if the concerns seem significant, while 6% don't rely on these platforms when making decisions. This highlights how ingredient-checking apps are a crucial resource for some consumers, particularly those focused on product transparency and safety.

Have you ever decided against purchasing a beauty product after seeing a negative rating on YUKA or a similar ingredient checking app?

Yes, I avoid products that score poorly
57%

Sometimes - if the concerns seem significant
37%

No, I don't rely on these platforms to make decisions
6%

Follow-on steer to those who use ingredient checking apps regularly

What matters most in clean and sustainable beauty

Consumers prioritise cruelty-free and vegan ingredients, with 34% placing importance on them, while 33% value refillable or zero-waste packaging. Ingredient transparency and ethical sourcing are key for 30%, but 18% report that sustainability does not influence their choices. Carbon-neutral supply chains are a consideration for 17%, and only 9% of consumers prioritise waterless formulations. These findings demonstrate that while sustainability is a key factor in many purchasing decisions, it remains secondary for some.

Behaviour around sustainable beauty formats

Sustainable beauty formats like waterless products showed mixed appeal. While 34% of consumers would consider trying them, 32% don't feel waterless products make much of a difference. Around 24% have tried a few but don't actively seek them out, and just 10% consistently look for waterless beauty options. This suggests that while some interest exists, the trend has not yet reached mainstream popularity.

Global Influence: K-Beauty and sustainable innovation

While 64% of consumers do not follow K-Beauty trends, 17% enjoy it but do not associate it with sustainability, and 12% are unsure about its connection to sustainable practices. Only 7% view K-Beauty as a leader in sustainable and innovative beauty solutions. This suggests that K-Beauty's reputation for sustainability and innovation is still emerging and not yet widely acknowledged by most consumers.

Brands and retailers have an opportunity to drive consumer engagement by educating them on emerging trends like blockchain beauty and waterless formulations. While these concepts are not yet mainstream, transparency and sustainability remain important to a growing segment. By emphasising the benefits of ingredient verification and ethical sourcing, brands can build trust and appeal to consumers increasingly focused on clean beauty. Retailers should focus on clear communication and showcasing how these innovations contribute to product efficacy, helping to bridge the gap between awareness and purchase.

The skinification of body & hair

A growing trend within the beauty and personal care industry is the "skinification" of non-skincare categories, particularly hair care and body care. This refers to the adoption of skincare principles, ingredients and routines in other areas of personal care, bringing with it a shift in how consumers approach their beauty routines.

Skinification blends the scientific, ingredient-conscious language of skincare with broader beauty categories, positioning hair and body products as part of a holistic, health-first beauty regimen. This section explores how familiar consumers are with the concept, whether it is influencing their behaviour, and what it signals for the future of the category.

Awareness of skinification
The concept of skinification in relation to hair and body care is still relatively unfamiliar to many consumers. A significant 73% of respondents have never heard of the term, while 19% are aware of it but don't fully understand its meaning. Only 8% are familiar with the concept and know exactly what it entails. This suggests that, while skinification is an emerging trend, there is a notable lack of awareness and understanding among the broader consumer base, highlighting the need for brands to focus on education and awareness in the market.

Consumer interest in skincare-inspired ingredients
Consumers show mixed reactions when it comes to skincare-inspired ingredients in hair and body care products. While 49% say their interest depends on the brand and product, 38% do not believe skincare ingredients make a significant difference in these categories. Only 13% actively seek out products with skincare-inspired formulations. This indicates that, although there is some curiosity, skincare ingredients are not a decisive factor for most consumers when choosing hair and body care products.

Does the idea of skincare-inspired ingredients in hair & beauty products make you more likely to try them?

Maybe – it depends on the brand and product

49%

No, I don't think skincare ingredients make a difference in hair/body care

38%

Yes, I love using skincare ingredients in my hair/body care

13%

Single-answer steer sent to a nationally representative sample

Preferred skincare ingredients for hair and body care

There are varied preferences regarding which skincare-inspired ingredients consumers are most interested in for hair and body care products. The most popular choices include:

- **32%** Peptides *(strengthening & anti-aging)*
- **25%** Hyaluronic acid *(hydration)*
- **21%** Ceramides *(moisture barrier support)*
- **17%** Niacinamide *(brightening & barrier repair)*
- **16%** AHAs/BHAs *(exfoliation & renewal)*
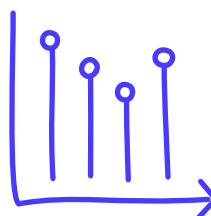
*multi-answer

However, 45% of consumers either believe skincare ingredients don't belong in hair and body care or selected none of the above options. This reveals a significant portion of the market remains unconvinced by the trend of skinification.

Is skinification just another trend?

When asked about whether skinification is the future of hair and body care, or merely a passing trend, 33% of consumers say they don't follow beauty trends and 23% believe it's just a trend that won't last - while 19% find the concept interesting but doubt it will fully take over. Only 17% see skinification as the future, expecting more skincare-level formulas to emerge in hair and body products. These results suggest that while there is curiosity, the majority of consumers are uncertain about the long-term potential of skinification.

Understanding the benefits of skincare ingredients

Regarding the benefits of skincare ingredients in hair and body care, 41% of consumers admit they don't know how these ingredients can help. 35% have some understanding but would like to learn more, while 17% believe these ingredients make no difference in hair and body care products. Only 8% fully understand their potential benefits. This indicates a knowledge gap and presents an opportunity for brands to educate consumers about the advantages of skincare ingredients in these product categories.

For brands, the future of hair and body care will be shaped by the same principles that have transformed skincare: transparency, science-led claims, functional ingredients, and a wellness-first mindset. While the concept of skinification is still emerging, there is clear interest in skincare-inspired formulations, particularly those that offer tangible benefits like hydration, anti-aging, and barrier support. However, the market remains divided, with many consumers unsure of the long-term impact of this trend. Brands that can educate consumers, build trust through transparency, and highlight the functional benefits of these ingredients will be best positioned to lead the next wave of innovation in hair and body care.

Beauty goes virtual

The rapid evolution of digital technology and AR (Augmented Reality) innovation has paved the way for a new frontier in the beauty and personal care sector: virtual beauty experiences. These include tools such as AR makeup try-ons, AI-driven skincare analysis, virtual consultations and virtual shade matching. Originally a niche offering, these experiences surged during the pandemic as consumers sought digital alternatives to in-store sampling. However, has their appeal endured beyond lockdown restrictions and become ingrained in the way consumers discover, evaluate, and purchase beauty products?

Consumer engagement with virtual beauty experiences

Virtual beauty experiences, such as AR makeup try-ons and AI-driven skincare analysis, are still not a dominant part of most consumers' beauty routines. Over half (51%) of respondents have never used these tools and don't see the need for them. However, there is interest, with 21% expressing a desire to try them and 18% having used them once or twice. Only 10% of consumers regularly engage with virtual beauty tools, indicating that while interest is growing, virtual beauty experiences are not yet a core aspect of consumer beauty routines.

Preferences in virtual beauty tools

Consumers show a clear preference for AI-powered skincare analysis, with 22% interested in skin health scanning and personalised recommendations. Virtual consultations with beauty experts are also popular, appealing to 16% of respondents. AR makeup try-ons, such as lipstick and foundation shade matching, attract 10%, while AI-generated personalised product recommendations attract 9%. Despite this interest, a significant 32% of consumers still prefer in-person beauty experiences, demonstrating that virtual options still have a long way to go before they can replace traditional methods.

Which type of virtual beauty experience interets you the most?

None – I prefer in-person beauty experiences

32%

AI-powered skincare analysis (e.g. skin health scanning, personalised recommendations)

22%

Virtual consultation with beauty experts (e.g. live chats, video consultations)

16%

AR try-ons for makeup (e.g. vistual lipstick, foundation shade matching)

10%

AI-generated personalised product recommendations

10%

None of the above

26%

Multi-answer steer sent to a nationally representative sample

Influence of virtual beauty on purchase decisions

Virtual beauty experiences currently have a limited influence on purchasing decisions. Nearly 50% of respondents do not use these tools, and 26% say that while these experiences help, they still prefer testing products in person. For 19%, virtual experiences have little impact on purchase decisions, and only 5% view them as very important. This suggests that while some consumers value virtual beauty tools, they are not yet a major factor in influencing product purchases.

Building trust in virtual beauty experiences

Trust in virtual beauty experiences could be enhanced through several improvements. About 32% of consumers believe they will never fully trust these tools. However, 15% would feel more confident if virtual experiences integrated real customer reviews and feedback, while 14% prefer AI recommendations based on their skin type and concerns. The ability to consult a live expert alongside virtual tools is valued by 13%, and another 13% seek more accurate AR try-on results. These insights suggest that consumers are looking for greater authenticity and personalisation in virtual beauty experiences to build trust.

Future of virtual beauty vs in-store shopping

Most consumers do not believe that virtual beauty experiences will completely replace in-store shopping. While 37% think virtual beauty cannot fully replace in-person experiences, 28% believe virtual beauty will be useful but prefer in-store shopping. Another 28% haven't considered it, and just 7% think digital beauty experiences will become the new norm. This highlights that although virtual beauty tools show potential, they are unlikely to replace the tactile, immersive nature of in-store shopping for most consumers.

Overall, virtual beauty experiences are still emerging, with many consumers either unfamiliar or unsure about their value. While interest is growing, these tools currently have limited influence on purchasing decisions. Trust can be strengthened through better integration of customer reviews, personalised recommendations, and more accurate AR try-ons. Despite their potential, most consumers continue to prefer in-store shopping, highlighting that virtual experiences may complement rather than replace traditional methods. Brands should focus on building trust and providing a seamless mix of digital and in-person experiences to meet consumer expectations.

Home Living

Dopamine décor vs trend-led interiors

In the world of home living and interiors, a clear behavioural shift is emerging. While past years have seen consumers influenced heavily by trend-led design, following minimalism, Scandi neutrals or specific seasonal aesthetics. A growing movement is now encouraging individuals to decorate their spaces in a way that prioritises personal joy, boldness and emotional wellbeing. This is known as **"Dopamine Décor"**: the practice of creating spaces that spark happiness, often through bold colours, eclectic patterns and expressive design.

This section explores how consumers are balancing trend-following with personal expression, and what this means for brands and retailers in the home living space.

Awareness of dopamine décor

The concept of "dopamine décor" remains unfamiliar to most consumers. Around 72% have never heard of it, 15% have heard of it but don't fully understand it, and just 13% are familiar with the concept. While dopamine décor is gaining some attention, it hasn't yet reached widespread consumer recognition.

However, when prompted with an explanation of dopamine décor, consumer reactions varied. About 36% appreciate some colour but prefer balance, suggesting openness to bold designs in moderation. 20% feel overwhelmed by too much boldness and prefer calm, neutral spaces. On the other hand, 17% enjoy playful, colourful spaces, feeling happy and energised, which aligns closely with the essence of dopamine décor.

How does a bold, colourful, or expressive home environment (dopamine decor) make for feel?

It depends – I like some colour but in a balanced way
36%

Overwhelmed – I prefer calm, neutral spaces
20%

Happy and energised – I love playful and expressive spaces
17%

Indifferent – Home decor doesn't really impact my mood
14%

None of the above
13%

Sent to a nationally representative sample

Balancing personal expression and trends

43% of consumers prioritise personal expression when decorating their homes, reflecting their personality in the space. 24% strike a balance, incorporating personal touches while following some trends. A smaller group (16%) doesn't put much thought into home décor, and 10% follow trends to keep their home looking stylish. This shows that most consumers value personal expression in their home design, while some embrace trends.

Looking at specific décor styles, 28% of consumers prefer minimalist décor, favouring clean lines and neutral tones. 27% don't have a defined style, and 23% prefer timeless, classic designs. 9% identify with maximalism, and 7% are drawn to dopamine décor. This highlights that minimalist and classic styles dominate, with dopamine décor appealing to a smaller segment.

Impact of home décor on wellbeing

38% of consumers believe their home environment significantly impacts their mood, while 36% feel better in a space they like, but don't consider it essential. A smaller portion (20%) feel home décor doesn't influence their mental wellbeing. This suggests that while home décor plays a vital role for many, its impact isn't universally felt.

When considering the specific elements that contribute to a positive mindset, 40% of consumers cite clutter-free, organised spaces as the key factor, while 30% value comfort, such as soft fabrics and cosy lighting. Additionally, 27% appreciate personal décor and colour, and another 27% enjoy nature-inspired elements. Only 14% feel that home décor doesn't impact their wellbeing, pointing to organisation, comfort, and personalisation as the main contributors to a positive home environment.

It's clear that home décor choices are deeply linked to consumers' mental well-being, with many valuing comfort, organisation, and personal expression. While dopamine décor shows potential, it remains a niche trend for now. Brands should focus on offering a mix of timeless designs and personalised touches, while also communicating how their products contribute to a positive, emotionally supportive environment. By addressing these consumer preferences, brands can stay relevant and drive engagement in this evolving space.

Sustainable cleaning & cooking

As the conversation around sustainability extends beyond food and fashion, consumers are increasingly applying eco-conscious values to their home environments, specifically how they cook, clean and consume energy. From the rise of energy-efficient appliances to the popularity of eco-friendly cookware brands like Our Place, Ninja and stainless-steel specialists, there is growing interest in products that promise lower environmental impact, ethical production and healthier living.

The question is how consumers balance sustainability with practicality when it comes to home products and what it means for retailers and brands.

Sustainability in home product choices
When choosing home products like cookware and cleaning supplies, sustainability is a significant consideration for many consumers. Nearly 49% of respondents say sustainability is somewhat important, preferring eco-friendly options but not always prioritising them. Around 31% focus more on performance and price than sustainability, while 20% actively seek out sustainable products. While there is growing awareness of environmental impact, not all consumers make sustainability a top priority when purchasing home products.

Popular eco-friendly home products

In the past year, consumers have shown interest in a variety of eco-friendly home products. The most commonly purchased items include energy-efficient kitchen appliances, such as air fryers and induction cooktops (33%), non-toxic cookware like stainless steel and ceramic options (22%), and refillable or plastic-free cleaning products (22%), such as Smol and Purdy & Fig. Additionally, 21% of respondents purchased natural or biodegradable sponges and cloths. However, 13% of consumers reported not purchasing any sustainable home products, indicating that a portion of the market has yet to engage with these eco-friendly options.

Prioritising factors in cookware choices

When choosing cookware, durability (54%) and affordability (46%) are the top priorities for consumers. Non-toxic materials, such as PFAS-free coatings, are important to 30%, while sustainability factors into the decision for 19%. However, 10% of consumers don't consider these aspects, suggesting that although eco-conscious choices are valued, they are not always the top priority for everyone.

Perceptions of refillable and low-waste cleaning products

Regarding refillable and low-waste cleaning products, 44% of consumers view them as a good idea but haven't switched yet. 17% actively use these products, while another 17% prefer traditional cleaning products. 14% don't believe sustainable cleaning products make a significant difference. This suggests that while interest in sustainable options is evident, traditional cleaning products still hold strong appeal for many.

Barriers to switching to sustainable home products

To encourage consumers to switch to more sustainable home products, 35% would be motivated by lower prices that match traditional products, while 16% would be swayed by better performance. 15% would prefer greater availability in mainstream stores, and 14% are looking for clearer health benefits, such as fewer toxins. This indicates that cost, performance, and accessibility remain key barriers, with health benefits also playing a role in motivating some consumers to make the switch.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, consumers are increasingly interested in sustainable home products, particularly energy-efficient appliances and non-toxic cookware, but price and performance remain key considerations. While eco-friendly cleaning products are gaining traction, many are still hesitant to make the switch.

For brands, the opportunity lies in offering sustainable products that balance affordability, performance, and health benefits, with an emphasis on making them more accessible and appealing to mainstream consumers.

What would encourage you to switch to more sustainable home products?

Lower prices to match traditional products

35%

Better performance compared to traditional products

16%

Nothing – I'm happy with what I currently use

15%

More availability in mainstream stores

15%

Clearer health benefits (e.g. fewer toxins, safer for my home)

14%

None of the above

5%

Sent to a nationally representative sample

44

Furnishings & furry friends

The bond between humans and pets has evolved beyond companionship. Increasingly, consumers are seeking to integrate their pets' lifestyles seamlessly into their own living environments, whether that's through stylish furniture, coordinated dining sets, or human-inspired pet toys. This growing trend blends design-conscious home living with the emotional significance of pets as part of the family.

This section explores how consumers are responding to this trend and the behaviours shaping the growing market for human-like, design-led pet products.

Consumer response to design-conscious pet products

Consumers show varied reactions to pet products designed to match human furniture and home aesthetics. While 43% are uninterested, 26% have seen these products but haven't purchased any, and 19% find the idea appealing. Notably, 12% of consumers actively love the concept, suggesting a niche but growing market for design-conscious pet products. This indicates an opportunity for growth, particularly among pet owners who value home aesthetics.

The importance of matching pet products to home style varies among consumers. While 28% prioritise functionality over aesthetics, 22% have never considered the idea of matching pet products to home décor. 16% regard it as a nice-to-have, while 11% consider it essential for their pet's furniture and accessories to blend in with their home décor. This reveals a significant portion of the market values cohesive design, indicating potential demand for products that merge practicality with aesthetic appeal.

Interest in stylish pet feeding setups

Consumers are showing a growing interest in pet feeding setups that complement their dining spaces. While 25% prefer traditional pet bowls, 17% might consider a stylish and practical design. 13% love the idea of matching pet dining products, suggesting a growing willingness among pet owners to invest in aesthetically pleasing pet accessories. This trend points to a potential opportunity for brands to create feeding products that blend seamlessly into home environments.

Human-inspired pet products

When it comes to human-inspired pet products, 33% of consumers still prefer traditional pet products. However, 19% are interested in mini furniture items for pets, like pet sofas and beds, while 15% are attracted to human-like toys, such as mini plush coffee cups. 14% would consider matching dining sets, highlighting a growing interest in pet products that reflect human lifestyle and design preferences.

Which types of human-inspired pet products interest you most?

Non - I prefer traditional pet products
33%

Mini furniture (e.g. pet sofas, beds)
19%

Human-like toys (e.g. mini plush coffee cups, designer-style toys)
15%

Matching dining sets (e.g. pet bowls, placemats)
14%

None of the above
28%

Sent to a nationally representative sample

Willingness to pay for aesthetic pet products

While 32% of consumers prioritise budget-friendly pet products, 28% would consider paying more for pet items that are both stylish and affordable. 13% are willing to invest in premium pet products, indicating that there is some demand for high-end, design-conscious pet accessories. However, price sensitivity remains a key factor for most shoppers. This suggests brands should balance style with affordability to cater to a wider audience.

The market for human-inspired pet products is evolving, with increasing interest in pet accessories that align with home aesthetics. While affordability and practicality remain the primary factors for most consumers, there is a growing segment that values stylish, design-conscious pet items. Brands have the opportunity to tap into this niche by offering products that blend aesthetics with functionality, catering to pet owners who want their pets' belongings to seamlessly fit into their home décor. However, maintaining affordability will be key, as price sensitivity remains a significant consideration for many consumers.

Key takeaways

1. Consumers are balancing value, wellbeing, and self-expression.

Across food, retail, beauty, and home, consumers are reassessing their needs and desires. In a time of economic uncertainty, they are seeking products that provide not only practicality but also personal joy and a sense of belonging. Brands can tap into this by offering products that resonate with consumers on an emotional level, while remaining functional and value-driven.

2. Wellbeing is reshaping food and drink choices

Consumers are shifting focus from taste alone to products that support their holistic wellbeing. In the food and drink sector, this means incorporating ingredients that promote gut health, brain function, and emotional wellness. For brands, this translates into an opportunity to offer functional foods that go beyond indulgence, as well as premium experiences (like treat boxes) that still feel accessible in daily life.

3. Digital and health trends are reshaping how we dine

Consumer dining habits are shifting under the influence of health trends and digital advancements. With the growing use of GLP-1 medications, digital menus, calorie transparency, and ghost kitchens, the focus is increasingly on health-conscious, convenience-driven dining options. Brands and operators in the food service sector should consider integrating these trends into their services to meet consumer demand for healthier, more accessible dining experiences.

Key takeaways

4. Retail is becoming digital, nostalgic, and value-driven
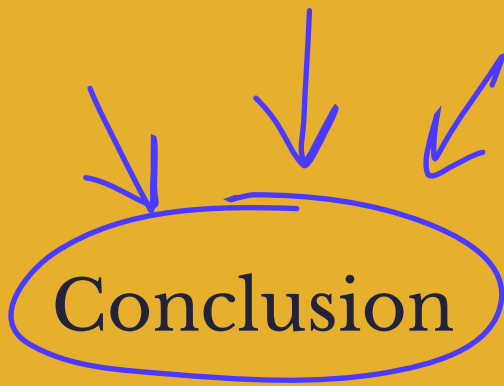
Younger consumers, particularly those engaging with platforms like TikTok Shop, are driving in-app shopping and spontaneous purchasing. At the same time, TV shopping channels and nostalgia-driven marketing are seeing a resurgence. Retailers should invest in a more dynamic, digital-first shopping experience, while also capitalising on the emotional appeal of nostalgia, which continues to resonate with a wide range of consumers.

5. Consumers want transparency and personalisation in beauty

Shoppers in the beauty sector expect traceable ingredients, clean formulations, and personalised experiences. Blockchain technology, skinification, and virtual beauty tools are changing the way consumers interact with beauty brands. For beauty retailers and brands, this is an opportunity to invest in transparency and personalised offerings, allowing consumers to make informed choices with confidence.

**6. The home is a space for self-expression and sustainable living**

Consumers are increasingly prioritising self-expression in home décor, with a focus on dopamine décor and sustainability. There's also a rise in demand for eco-friendly cleaning products, energy-efficient appliances, and durable cookware. Additionally, the trend of humanising pets is driving interest in aesthetically pleasing, design-conscious pet products. Brands in home living should embrace sustainability and offer products that reflect consumers' desire for a blend of functionality, style, and environmental responsibility.

Conclusion

Across every category, from food and retail to beauty and the home, consumer behaviour is being redefined by a desire for balance. People are navigating a world shaped by economic pressure, wellness priorities and digital saturation. In response, they are seeking solutions that reconcile cost with quality, indulgence with function, and personal joy with broader purpose.

While trends differ by sector, one truth stands out: relevance now depends on a brand's ability to meet both practical and emotional needs. Whether through functional foods that support cognitive health, nostalgic retail that sparks connection, or sustainable homeware that reflects mindful living, the opportunity lies in aligning with how people actually live, not just how they shop.
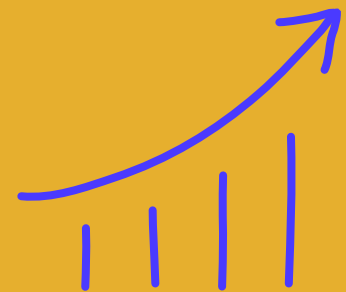
To stay ahead, brands must go beyond observing trends and act with agility, empathy and clarity. The most successful will be those that earn trust through transparency, spark curiosity through innovation, and offer products and experiences that feel both deeply personal and unmistakably valuable.

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14%

ice
65%

Sustainability
26%

Reviews from others
15%

Something else
9%

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