UK Peak Trading Insights 2021

JULY 2021
Introduction
Background - Follow up study

In March - we delivered our first insights into consumer spending in a post lockdown world, their plans for their savings, changes in purchasing habits and where spending will happen

Key findings in March

81% of the British public has saved money over the last 12 months (during lockdown)

£141bn total amount saved across Futures UK audience

£4,808 was saved on average per household

Where & how would they would spend this?

Consideration spend areas:

- Holidays
- Going out
- Gifts for others
- Home decor and Garden products
- Personal tech
- Home tech
- Gaming

So what’s next ahead of Peak trading?

We conducted a 2nd Survey looking into consumers plans ahead of the biggest spending period of the year - Black Friday weekend and Christmas.

82% will be the same or more engaged in BF this year

55% say they will make Christmas the biggest celebration yet

So we will now take you through all consumer plans for peak trading period and where the saved spend will be placed and when.
“It’s Beginning To Look A Lot Like Christmas”
Christmas, Black Friday, and the Future Audience
Independent research powered by our insight platform - *The Lens* - lets us look into general UK trends as well as specific Future audiences.

**Methodology**

Online survey with over 30 in-depth questions about Christmas planning, budgets, gifting, shopping and preparing.

The data collection took place in June 2021.

**Format**

2,000 respondents were recruited independently via our research platform - *The Lens*.

The sample is nationally representative for the UK. The percentage split was ensured for:

- Gender
- Geography
- Age
- Social class

**Sample**

According to the latest TGI data, we reach 29.3m adults in the UK on monthly basis. That’s 55% of the country population.

This is reflected in the nationally representative sample, where 54% (995) confirmed that they’ve read / visited at least one of the Future brands recently.

**Audience**

Source: “Christmas & Black Friday 2021”, The Lens, Future plc, UK, June 2021, N=1,982
Today’s festive playlist

Prologue
Black Friday

Part 1
“We Need A Little Christmas”

Part 2
“Santa Claus Is Coming To Town”

Part 3
“It’s the Most Wonderful Time of the Year”

Part 4
“No Place Like Home For Christmas”

Part 5
“All I Want For Christmas Is you”

Part 6
“Step into Christmas”

Source: “Christmas & Black Friday 2021”, The Lens, Future plc, UK, June 2021, N=1,982;
Before Christmas, comes Black Friday.

This well-established and critical period in the retail calendar has been growing in importance for some years.

Both as a standalone consumer event, and as a gateway into the full-on festive period, let’s take a look at how things may shape up this year.
Majority will be very engaged in this year’s Black Friday and Cyber Monday weekend.

Source: “Christmas & Black Friday 2021”, The Lens, Future plc, UK, June 2021, N=1,982
Black Friday Tech Shopping

2 in 5 of the UK population don’t yet know what tech products they’d look for during Black Friday.

That number goes down to only 1 in 5 when we’re looking at Future audience. Many of them have already started planning what equipment they will be purchasing in November.

Source: “Christmas & Black Friday 2021”, The Lens, Future plc, UK, June 2021, N=1,982
Black Friday Shopping

Other popular items bought this Black Friday will include **clothes / shoes, cosmetics** and **toys** categories.

Would you also consider buying other items during Black Friday/Cyber Monday?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Future</th>
<th>UK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clothes / shoes</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cosmetics / Beauty products</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toys</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewellery</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House decoration</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiences</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports equipment / accessories</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: “Christmas & Black Friday 2021”, The Lens, Future plc, UK, June 2021, N=1,982
The Role of Black Friday

54%

“I’ll make most of my Black Friday purchases online this year”
(UK: 42%)

42%

“Black Friday shopping will be my main way of sourcing gifts for Christmas”
(UK: 30%)

Source: “Christmas & Black Friday 2021”, The Lens, Future plc, UK, June 2021, N=1,982
Shopping confidence

**Online shopping channels** occupy top 3 positions when it comes to the shoppers confidence this Black Friday / Christmas season.

How confident will you feel shopping for Christmas / Black Friday products in the following places this year?

Source: "Christmas & Black Friday 2021", The Lens, Future plc, UK, June 2021, N=1,982
Black Friday 2020

Last year’s Black Friday and Cyber Monday site visitation and sale value achieved via Future’s eCommerce channels were strong.

£26m
UK SOV across Black Friday Content

24m
UK Unique Page Views (BF)

£8.4m
UK SOV (BF) for Amazon

Source: Hawk UK eCommerce 23rd Nov-3rd Dec 2020, 23rd Nov-29th Nov 2020
We really do. Actually, many of us probably need (and look forward to) having a BIG Christmas this year. Let’s look into some early opinions and views about the festive season 2021.
The Best Christmas Ever

55% (UK: 44%) are determined to make Christmas bigger and better than ever this year.

41% (UK: 33%) also agrees that if they can’t have a traditional family Christmas this year, that will be worse than anything they’ve dealt with so far in this crisis.

Source: “Christmas & Black Friday 2021”, The Lens, Future plc, UK, June 2021, N=1,982
Still The Big Event

1 in 2 (47%)

say that Christmas this year is the main thing they are looking forward to
(UK: 39%)

“I was going to host Christmas last year, but couldn’t due to covid. I’m planning to go all out this year to make up for it!”

Source: “Christmas & Black Friday 2021”, The Lens, Future plc
Coronavirus Learnings

Looking for gifts online will be the #1 lockdown learning used by the consumers this Christmas. Cooking from scratch (traditionally #1 learning over the lockdown period, now #2), using technology to connect with others or shopping for groceries online, will also be much more popular this year.

What kind of skills acquired or developed during the lockdown period will you use this Christmas?

Source: “Christmas & Black Friday 2021”, The Lens, Future plc, UK, June 2021, N=1,982
Christmas marketing timing

We know that last year, the UK public had a split opinion whether festive advertising should start earlier or later (similarly to this year).

However, the Future audience is +38% more likely to say that they’d like to see it earlier than usual this year and get into the festive spirit sooner.

When do you want brands and shops to start advertising Christmas and getting into the festive spirit?

- **Future**
  - Earlier than usual: let’s get into the festive spirit as soon as possible: 33%
  - No change - it should be just the way it was last year: 24%
  - Later than usual: we need a break from the stress of Christmas this year: 21%

- **UK**
  - Earlier than usual: let’s get into the festive spirit as soon as possible: 46%
  - No change - it should be just the way it was last year: 52%
  - Later than usual: we need a break from the stress of Christmas this year: 24%

Source: “Christmas & Black Friday 2021”, The Lens, Future plc, UK, June 2021, N=1,982
Christmas adverts
tone

Getting family together (either remotely or in-person) should be the key focus of the Christmas messages.

Future audience is more likely to want an all-out celebratory tone of marketing. They will also seek practical tips and useful information which will help them make it happen.

Which of the below descriptions about Christmas advertising resonate with you the most?

- Christmas adverts should be focused on getting the family together either remotely or in-person
  - Future: 42%
  - UK: 41%

- Christmas adverts this year should be an all-out celebration – bigger, louder, and more colourful than ever!
  - Future: 33%
  - UK: 29%

- Christmas adverts in 2021 should mainly give us practical tips and useful information which can actually help with all the planning and preparations
  - Future: 33%
  - UK: 28%

- Christmas adverts this year should be more restrained and somber – they need to recognize that this year has been very difficult for everyone and we don’t need added pressure
  - Future: 30%
  - UK: 28%

- Christmas adverts should be more relaxed this year - festive tone is not something I’m interested in
  - Future: 26%
  - UK: 25%

Source: “Christmas & Black Friday 2021”, The Lens, Future plc, UK, June 2021, N=1,982
It's almost unbelievable that today's song had its first recorded version in 1934 by banjoist Harry Reser and his band. Most certainly they already knew back then that for Santa to come, some spare budget and savings will be needed.
Budgeting

Approximately 1 in 4 is expecting their Christmas and/or Black Friday budgets to increase this year.

Will have the same amount or more money to spend this year comparing to 2020.

Source: “Christmas & Black Friday 2021”, The Lens, Future plc, UK, June 2021, N=1,982
UK Household Savings

Many forms of savings and investments have been made by the British public.

% of Household with savings (achieved over the course of the pandemic):

March:

81%

UK average: 77%

3% spent all of their savings in the last 3 months

June:

78%

UK average: 70%

A third haven’t spent any of the savings, while about a half spent 40% or less between March and June.

Source: “Christmas & Black Friday 2021”, The Lens, Future plc, UK, June 2021, N=1,982
I haven’t been able to book any holidays abroad for this summer so we’ll have some spare cash for this Christmas.

"I haven’t been able to book any holidays abroad for this summer so we’ll have some spare cash for this Christmas."

I’ve wanted the new Xbox for a while now but it’s been out of stock so I’m hoping it will come back for Black Friday.

"I’ve wanted the new Xbox for a while now but it’s been out of stock so I’m hoping it will come back for Black Friday."

Prioritising

£198bn
Total amount saved and not spent yet (UK). [Future audience = £101bn].

82%
say that these savings will be used (partially or fully) towards their Christmas and / or Black Friday shopping (UK: 69%)

"82% say that these savings will be used (partially or fully) towards their Christmas and / or Black Friday shopping (UK: 69%)"

£198bn
Total amount saved and not spent yet (UK). [Future audience = £101bn].

82%
say that these savings will be used (partially or fully) towards their Christmas and / or Black Friday shopping (UK: 69%)

Source: “Christmas & Black Friday 2021”, The Lens, Future plc, UK, June 2021, N=1,982
Gifts vs Black Friday budgeting

The consumer budget splits almost equally between typical Christmas gift shopping (non-Black Friday) and Black Friday deals spend.

Future audience will spend more during their Christmas (+29%) and Black Friday shopping (+54% vs UK).
### Premiumising and upgrading

Additional savings will help with **upgrading the gifts** and **premiumising the food choices** for the Christmas period.

**What else will that budget be used for this Christmas season / Black Friday?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paying for nice gifts for my family &amp; friends</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paying for premium food and drinks for Christmas</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upgrading technology and/or appliances before Christmas (e.g. new tv, new oven etc.)</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investing in my house / redecorating before Christmas</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buying tech or appliances for my home during Black Friday promotions</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting new house decorations and/or nice Christmas tree</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treating myself to something expensive for Black Friday</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Booking a trip or experience for the future during Black Friday sale</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Going on a longer holiday during Christmas</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: “Christmas & Black Friday 2021”, The Lens, Future plc, UK, June 2021, N=1,982
Gift types

Food/drinks, clothing and toiletries are the top three gift types considered for this Christmas.

Future audience is significantly more likely to consider buying a watch (+54%), sports equipment (+48%), homes furnishings / home accessories (+35%) and computer games / console games (+34%).
Not many people would disagree that one of the most loved things about Christmas celebrations is the great **food**. We’ve asked a few questions to discover what makes it all so delicious.
Premiumising process

A series of consumer decisions builds the premiumisation behaviour. Majority will upgrade, but will stay within their current supermarket to do it for the entire or most of their baskets.

Are you planning to buy more premium food and/or drinks this Christmas when compared to your regular grocery shopping?

- Stay with my usual supermarket: 72%
- Switch to a more premium supermarket: 28%
- Upgrade some of my product choices: 82%
- Upgrade all or most of my product choices: 18%
- Upgrade all or most of my product choices: 55%
- Upgrade all or most of my product choices: 45%
- Upgrade all or most of my product choices: 75%
- Upgrade all or most of my product choices: 25%

Source: "Christmas & Black Friday 2021", The Lens, Future plc, UK, June 2021, N=1,982
Supermarkets

Shoppers show varied tendencies to the premiumisation concept, with some torn between staying and switching, or upgrading and continuing with their regular choices.

Source: “Christmas & Black Friday 2021”, The Lens, Future plc, UK, June 2021, N=1,982; Supermarket shoppers who are more likely to do this specific action for Christmas 2021.
This year, which, if any, of the following factors influence the shop or supermarket you choose for food and drink at Christmas?

Quality and price of the products are the two most important factors when choosing the right supermarket this Christmas.

Future audience is more likely to look at the health, eco and online reliability aspects.
So many of us will be decorating and preparing our homes for the season of joy, happiness and wonder. Here is a quick look into the key motivations to do all the work.

“No Place Like Home For Christmas”
Christmas at Home

6 in 10 (63%) will be doing some DIY, painting, or re-decorating ahead of Christmas in their homes this year. (UK: 47%)

“It is just general maintenance of the house”

44%
(UK: 47%)

“I just like the house to look its best at Christmas”

42%
(UK: 39%)

“I like to keep up with the latest home décor trends”

29%
(UK: 23%)

“Having spent so much time at home this year because of the virus, there are things I want to change”

25%
(UK: 23%)

Source: “Christmas & Black Friday 2021”, The Lens, Future plc, UK, June 2021, N=1,982
“All I Want For Christmas Is You”

Buying Christmas gifts is an incredible shopping mission, with a lot of factors to consider. We’ll look more into one of the most important drivers - passions.
Future Audience - Top Passions

99% of our audience has at least one passion

Top 20 PASSIONS include:

- Listening to music: 48%
- Food / Cooking: 43%
- Reading books: 39%
- Travelling: 38%
- Wine / Spirits: 32%
- Gardening: 31%
- Technology: 31%
- Football: 29%
- Fashion: 28%
- Beauty / Cosmetics: 27%
- Hiking / Walking: 27%
- Gaming: 24%
- Interior decoration: 23%
- Photography: 22%
- Science: 21%
- Cars / Motoring: 20%
- Luxury products & experiences: 19%
- Cycling: 18%
- Space / Astronomy: 17%
- Arts & Antiques: 16%

Passions and gifting

74% would like to receive Christmas gift(s) related to their passion(s) and interests
(UK: 62%)

AND

86% Will try to match Christmas gifts for others with their interests
(UK: 78%)

Yes, all or most of them will be linked to people's passions 25%

Yes, some of them will be linked to people's passions 42%

Yes, but only a few of them will be linked to people's passions (e.g. just for my close family members) 19%

Source: "Christmas & Black Friday 2021", The Lens, Future plc, UK, June 2021, N=1,982
Passions and gifting

Top reasons for buying a passion-related gift for someone at this Christmas

- 37%: It will actually be used by the receiver
- 33%: It will be money well spent
- 32%: It will make them happier than a general / less specific gift
- 32%: It will show how much I care about them
- 29%: It will be more genuine
- 28%: It will support them doing something they love
- 26%: It will be less likely to be thrown away or forgotten
- 22%: It will make me feel good as a giver
- 21%: It will be a great way of saying ‘thank you for everything’ or ‘well done’
- 11%: It will mean that I can expect a relevant gift back from them

Source: “Christmas & Black Friday 2021”, The Lens, Future plc, UK, June 2021, N=1,982
"Step Into Christmas"

Pre-Christmas preparations and research which shoppers will be (or already are) doing, has become an established part of the festive season. Let’s take a closer look.
Looking forward to Christmas

Christmas is something the **Future audience looks forward to all year round**, so they’re likely to start their preparations and research earlier than the average UK consumer.

Source: “Christmas & Black Friday 2021”, The Lens, Future plc, UK, June 2021, N=1,982
The average research time for Christmas and Black Friday spending

**Research time**

Approximately for how many weeks do you research information (online or offline) before you make the most important Christmas gift purchases and Black Friday shopping decisions?

- **6.2 weeks**
  - Pre-Christmas research
  - (UK: 5.7 weeks)

- **5.3 weeks**
  - Pre-Black Friday research
  - (UK: 4.8 weeks)

Source: “Christmas & Black Friday 2021”, The Lens, Future plc, UK, June 2021, N=1,982
A Keen Future Audience

UK public is more likely to start all the steps later than the Future audience. On average, Future audience is +20% more likely to start everything before the beginning of November.

Source: "Christmas & Black Friday 2021", The Lens, Future plc, UK, June 2021, N=1,982
Research methods

**Browsing websites** (retailer or general) for ideas and inspiration will be the **primary action** taken by the shoppers before making Christmas and Black Friday purchase decisions.

*Word of mouth* is much more important when it comes to *Christmas research*.

### Top 6 sources of ideas and inspiration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Christmas</th>
<th>Black Friday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Browsing retailer websites directly</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Browsing general websites for ideas</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talking to friends and family</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looking around in-store</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV programmes / adverts</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online expert content/reviews/recommendations</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: “Christmas & Black Friday 2021”, The Lens, Future plc, UK, June 2021, N=1,982

Q: When searching for Black Friday items and Christmas presents this year, which, if any, of the following places do you think you will look for ideas and inspiration?
Apart from the popular value-for-money and discount type of content, many will search for cooking inspiration as well as gift ideas related to passions and family activities ideas.

**Content type**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>42%</td>
<td>Best value-for-money deals for gifts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40%</td>
<td>Discount vouchers for shopping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35%</td>
<td>Cooking recipes for Christmas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33%</td>
<td>Gift ideas related to my passions and/or my friends’ and family’s hobbies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29%</td>
<td>Family activities ideas for Christmas time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27%</td>
<td>Practical tips on how to make this Christmas amazing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23%</td>
<td>House decoration inspiration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23%</td>
<td>Healthy gifts inspiration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21%</td>
<td>Ranking of top retailers to shop at this Christmas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17%</td>
<td>Anything not related to Christmas/holiday season!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14%</td>
<td>Stories from famous people on how they make Christmas special</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Q: And what type of Christmas articles and content would you be interested in reading / watching / hearing?
Summary

01 Christmas & Black Friday will be big this year
So many people are already looking forward to Black Friday and Christmas 2021, and even more say that it’s going to be a bigger and better than 2020. There is no doubt that we’ll make the celebrations super special this year.

02 Online shopping on top of the list
As the confidence in online shopping grows, looking for gifts digitally will be the #1 lockdown learning used by consumers this Christmas as it overtook a long-time leader (“cooking from scratch”).

03 Advertising focused on family & celebration
8 in 10 think that Christmas ads should be live either earlier or at the same stage as usual. In terms of the tone, “family”, “uplifting”, “traditional”, “celebratory” are the key watchwords for brands.

04 Lockdown savings powering the budgets
Nearly £200bn is still in consumers’ wallets after accumulating savings for 18 months of lockdown and restrictions. Majority will use them to premiumise Black Friday purchases and Christmas gifts and food.

05 The important role of passions in gifting
Passionate audiences anticipate the gifts which will tap into their interests. They will also purchase gifts for others related to the receivers’ hobbies. They want the gifts to actually be used, and the receiver to feel happy and loved.

06 Making the right decision = spending time on research
Similarly to us right here, right now, the consumers will spend a lot of time preparing, reading, listening and watching the right content for Christmas inspiration and Black Friday help. Online and search will be key.

Source: “Christmas & Black Friday 2021”, The Lens, Future plc, UK, June 2021, N=1,982
Thank You