

Ireland is ideal first-step export market

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Almost half (48%) of shoppers in Ireland make purchases via their smartphone, compared to 33% of shoppers in the UK, according to a study commissioned by Royal Mail. In Ireland, mobile data is cheaper than anywhere else in Europe which could explain why consumers use their smartphone to shop online more than those in the UK. Mobile optimisation is important for UK retailers looking to attract online shoppers in Ireland.

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The study, part of Royal Mail's Delivery Matters series, is the first time Ireland has had its own dedicated report. It asked over 1,500 online shoppers in Ireland about their shopping habits and preferences. On average, Irish online shoppers spend £75 (€85) per month with 51% of purchases consisting of clothes, compared to 45% in the UK. Buying holidays and travel is more popular for online shoppers in Ireland than other markets with 25% of those living in Ireland doing so, compared to 19% in the UK.

Eight in ten (81%) shoppers in Ireland purchased from a UK website in a three month period. The average shopper in Ireland purchasing from a UK website spends £51 (€58) a month and buys from

UK brands at least once a month.

Ireland's online shoppers are driven to purchase from UK websites by price (45%), availability (42%) and quality (16%). Almost half (49%) are likely to choose a UK online retailer while they shop generally, compared to 34% who seek out a specific website.

Delivery satisfaction is a strong driver of repeat purchases for Ireland's online shoppers. 94% agree that they are more likely to shop with an online retailer again if they're satisfied with the delivery, higher than the international average of 91%. Clear, upfront delivery information is key to satisfying online shoppers in Ireland. If retailers get it right, they set themselves up for repeat business.

Online marketplaces in Ireland are thriving with shoppers using them more frequently than those in the UK. 78% of online shoppers use marketplaces compared to 69% in the UK. Delivery ratings are important to Ireland's shoppers when it comes to marketplaces. Eight in ten (79%) are heavily influenced by marketplace delivery ratings and take these into account when making purchases. This is a lot higher than the UK (54%) and international average (76%). Similar to the UK, Ireland's shoppers

have a clear preference when it comes to online marketplaces with eBay (77%) and Amazon (72%) the most popular.

According to Ireland's Central Statistics Office, exports to Great Britain increased by 8% in 2017, when compared to 2016. Imports from Great Britain to Ireland also increased by 10%.

A spokesperson for Royal Mail said "Ireland is an ideal first-step export market for UK businesses looking to dip their toes into overseas markets. They are in the same time zone, speak English, have a strong transport infrastructure and consumers have a positive perception of British quality. For retailers looking to export to Ireland, mobile optimisation should be a top priority to target the high proportion of smartphone shoppers. Ireland's shoppers use their smartphones far more than any other device and more than any other countries in Europe."

If you are looking to export to Ireland, follow

these tips from Royal Mail:

Go mobile

Make mobile optimisation a top priority if you want to target online shoppers in Ireland. They use their smartphones far more than any other device and more than any other countries in Europe.

Value is vital

Matching shoppers' expectations of value for money is a top priority. Affordability and good value are pillars of the purchase decision. Crucially, as cart abandonment levels show, this extends to delivery charges.

Focus on delivery

UK online retailers should offer Ireland's shoppers free delivery and returns wherever possible, along with tracking. These are pivotal in building shopper confidence and encouraging repeat business.

Source: [Royal Mail](#)

