International Post Corporation

Consumers drive growth in UK subscription box market as popularity soars

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Consumers in London, West Midlands and Northern Ireland are most likely to be signed up to subscription services, according to Royal Mailâ€™s new UK Subscription Box Market report.

Almost half (45%) of Londoners are signed up to at least one subscription box, followed by 37% and 36% of shoppers in the West Midlands and Northern Ireland, respectively.

However, when it comes to the highest average number of subscription boxes per person, subscription box shoppers in the North East take top place at 5.2. Londoners come a close second signing up for 5 subscription boxes per person on average, followed by consumers in the East Midlands at 4.6.

The UK subscription box market is set to be worth £1.8 billion by 2025, according to Royal Mail's UK Subscription Box Market report.

Retaining customers for the future

The popularity of subscription boxes remains strong with high levels of loyalty. Fewer than a quarter (24%) of subscription box shoppers said they intended to cancel their subscriptions any time soon.

Retailers are also looking to make subscription boxes more popular by introducing more flexibility. For example, subscription retailers are increasingly looking to offer subscription box holidays for when the recipient either doesn't need any more of that item or if they are going to be away.

Embracing sustainability for the future

As UK shoppers continue to embrace subscription-based models for goods and services, subscription box businesses are increasingly focusing on environmental, social and governance (ESG) requirements and keeping emissions low.

With the UK's largest "Feet on the Street" network of over 85,000 postmen and women, Royal Mail already has the lowest reported CO2e emissions per parcel amongst major UK delivery companies.

Bloom & Wild, for example, strongly embraces sustainability practices. Some of its initiatives include its 100% recyclable letterbox packaging, offsetting all of its

carbon emissions and a strong focus on minimising waste by using sophisticated forecasting algorithms and eco sales for loyal customers.

Henry Mower, Director of Fulfilment & Delivery at Bloom & Wild says: “It’s really important to our customers and our team that we minimise our impact. We’re committed to our existing sustainability initiatives and are always looking at new ways to help us do that.”

Nick Landon, Chief Commercial Officer at Royal Mail, said: “Subscription boxes have become a big part of many people’s lives over the last year and we expect this trend to continue. At Royal Mail, we are well placed to support businesses as they introduce or scale up their subscription box models.

“With the UK's largest "Feet on the Street" network of over 85,000 postmen and women, Royal Mail is playing a key role in keeping carbon emissions low. A large proportion of subscription items are sent in smaller boxes and so are ideally suited for our low emission on-foot delivery service.”

Joseph Robinson, Retail Consulting Director at GlobalData, said: “The popularity of subscription boxes soared during the pandemic, amid the more general acceleration in online retail growth. Subscription services minimised the need to go to shops when consumers felt less comfortable doing so, a trend that is expected to continue post-COVID-19 as shoppers opt for convenience.”

Source: Royal Mail

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