

An aerial photograph of a river delta, likely the Columbia River, showing intricate patterns of sandbars and channels. The water is a deep, dark blue, while the sandbars are a mix of light tan and dark brown. The foreground shows a grassy area with patches of blue and green vegetation.

SUSTAINABILITY, ETHICS, AND THE MODERN SHOPPER

As more consumers migrate to shop online as a result of COVID-19, we assess their attitudes and actions around sustainable and ethical shopping, and how brands and retailers must respond.

INTRODUCTION

It's hard to believe we've been living in the shadows of COVID-19 for 18 months. And, while individuals and organizations have struggled with the consequences of country-wide lockdowns, and associated restrictions on work- and leisure-related activities, they have perhaps provided one cause for celebration, at least: a much-welcomed "breather" for the planet.

People the world-over have rejoiced in the fact that our ecosystems have had time to heal after much environmental strain; cities typically polluted by smog embraced much cleaner air and clearer skies; noise pollution was reduced significantly as many people were working from home; and dolphins were even spotted in Venice's canals.

In recent years, consumers have become more wary of where and how they purchase in an effort to be more sustainable and environmentally friendly. And, perhaps, the recent increased attention on the improvement of our planet's health owing to worldwide lockdowns has encouraged this further.

However, we also cannot ignore that the way consumers purchase has significantly changed in the past 18 months (and, perhaps, for good), due to the same lockdowns that have helped heal our ecosystems. Consumers have been encouraged to purchase necessities online, while physical stores have been forced to temporarily, and in some cases permanently, shut their doors. This is, unfortunately, likely to have caused a major setback to 'ethical consumerism'.

As the collective power of the consumer wallet can force profit-oriented corporations to take note of consumer preferences like sustainability and ethics, it's important for them to know, then, whether modern-day consumers still aim to purchase in an environmentally friendly way, or whether the availability of goods supersedes the need for environmental ethics.

With data taken from our 2021 reports "The Future Shopper", "Living in the Lap of Luxury Online", and "Fighting for the Future of Fashion", I will elucidate the importance of sustainability and ethics on the modern-day consumer, in the wake of COVID-19.



RACHEL BELL
WUNDERMAN THOMPSON COMMERCE

A NOTE ON THE RESEARCH

Research for "The Future Shopper Report 2021", "Living in the Lap of Luxury Online", and "Fighting for the Future of Fashion" was conducted by independent research consultancy Censuswide.

The Future Shopper: 28,426 consumers who shop online at least once a month were interviewed online between 26.03.2021 and 14.04.2021, across the following 17 regions: Europe: UK, Spain, France, Netherlands, Germany; APAC: China, Japan, Thailand, Indonesia, Australia, India; LATAM: Brazil, Argentina, Mexico, Colombia; USA; UAE

Living in the Lap of Luxury Online: 3,070 online shoppers who have bought a luxury item online at least once in the last year in the UK, US and China. The research was in field between 8th – 19th January 2021.

Fighting for the Future of Fashion: 2,052 consumers who have bought fashion online at least once in the last month in the UK between 03.02.21 – 09.02.21.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CONSUMERS CARE ABOUT SUSTAINABILITY AND THE ENVIRONMENT WHEN THEY SHOP

60% of Future Shopper respondents actively choose companies that are more environmentally responsible

71% of our Future Shoppers said they wished brands and retailers would offer better environmental practices

80% of fashion shoppers say sustainability is important to them when they make a fashion purchase online

12% of fashion shoppers feel encouraged to purchase an item online if there is content available outlining the sustainability credentials of the product

28% of luxury shoppers would switch a brand/retailer for better sustainability/provenance of products

BUT FASTER, MORE CONVENIENT DELIVERY OPTIONS STILL SURPASS ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS

91% of our Future Shopper respondents want convenient, speedy delivery

22% wish companies they purchase from would consider the environment more when delivering their item

AMAZON WINS AGAIN

Only 14% of Future Shopper respondents said they would pick another retailer over Amazon for better environmental practices

46% Compare this to 46% who would choose another retailer over Amazon for cheaper pricing

Only 8% do not want to support the increasing growth of Amazon

60% of US Future Shoppers have already used Amazon Day, Amazon's more environmentally friendly delivery option

BUYING SECOND-HAND PRODUCTS IS BECOMING NORMALIZED

34% of fashion shoppers have already bought second-hand fashion items online

68% of luxury shoppers are likely to purchase second-hand

DOES A GENERATIONAL DIVIDE EXIST WHEN IT COMES TO ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS?

65% of 25-34-year-old Future Shoppers choose brands that are environmentally responsible, compared to 45% of over-55s

Only 1-17% The percentage of consumers who think ethics aren't important ranges from just 1-17%

27% of 16-24-year-old fashion shoppers have become less environmentally friendly over the last 5 years, compared to just 9% of over-55s

52% of over-55 fashion shoppers would not consider buying second-hand clothes, compared to just 23% of 25-35-year-olds

SUSTAINABILITY IS CONSISTENT ACROSS THE GLOBE

Future Shopper consumers from 14 of the 16 countries surveyed wish retailers and brands would offer better environmental practices, with percentages of those who agree ranging from 64% to 85%

3 of the top 5 countries with the greatest proportion of consumers who wish that retailers and brands offered better environmental practices are in Asia



80% OF FASHION SHOPPERS THINK SUSTAINABILITY IS IMPORTANT WHEN THEY MAKE A FASHION PURCHASE ONLINE

CHAPTER 1: OFFERING BETTER ENVIRONMENTAL PRACTICES

With each new lockdown announcement, throngs of consumers would rush to their local supermarket and panic-purchase essentials like toilet paper, antibacterial products, and even bread and pasta. Empty shelves were a common sight, and it became increasingly difficult for consumers to purchase even the simplest necessities.

It wouldn't be surprising, then, if consumers were forced to shift their priorities from shopping sustainably and ethically, to shopping conveniently. However, it appears that any fears we may have had that consumers were focusing less on environmental ethics have been unfounded.

80% of our fashion shoppers told us that sustainability is important when they make a fashion purchase online, with 12% even feeling encouraged to purchase a fashion item online if there is content available outlining the sustainability credentials of the product they wish to purchase.

Likewise, 60% of our Future Shopper respondents actively choose companies that are more environmentally responsible, while 67% said they consider a company's ethics and morals when they make purchasing decisions.

Luxury shoppers share a similar opinion to our surveyed fashion shoppers; when asked whether sustainability and provenance

of products would affect their opinion of a brand, 60% of luxury shoppers and 55% of fashion shoppers said they would think more of the brand. Furthermore, 28% of luxury shoppers admitted they would go as far as to switch a brand/retailer for better sustainability/provenance of products.

Going even further, 71% of Future Shoppers said they wished brands and retailers would offer better environmental practices, such as less packaging, reduced carbon footprint, and eco-delivery vehicles. When we asked the same question in our 2020 Future Shopper report (in which the survey was conducted before the start of the pandemic), we got the exact same figure. What's more, only 6% of our Future Shoppers don't think brands and retailers should offer better environmental practices.

It's safe to say, then, that the events of the past year haven't forced consumers to put their morals on the backburner in order to focus on being able to get their weekly groceries. This means that retailers and brands not only need to step up to the challenge of fulfilling increased online orders thanks to COVID-19, but they also need to take their own sustainability into consideration to keep their eco-friendly customers happy.

Premier Foods released a sustainability update ahead of the COP26 conference. The brand famous for its Mr Kipling and Bisto Gravy said it is on a mission to push into the plant-based sector and plans to triple its animal product-free sales to £250 million by 2030. The brand also aims to reach net zero for direct emissions by 2040, and to have a gender-balanced board by 2030.

NEXT STEPS:

Take our client, Unilever, as an example. Unilever and Wunderman Thompson Commerce launched a [direct-to-consumer platform](#) to make sustainable living commonplace. As a unique feature, the platform encourages their customers to shop sustainably in bulk, and reward them when they do so. A leaf icon indicates the most sustainable products, with these 'Eco-Products' offering a discount. In doing so, they have actively encouraged their customers to integrate environmental consideration into their shopping habits, by making eco-friendly products accessible to all.

So, work to get your house in order – non-sustainable and non-environmentally friendly practices will be found out, and will increasingly alienate more of your customers.

Promote what you're doing right. Consider making public your environmental and ethical business credentials and strategy. We can help you with this. Speak to [Shalina Ganatra](#), Client Consultant, Wunderman Thompson Commerce.

Consider providing information about the origin and sustainability of your products on your product information page. Speak to our PIM team about developing a Product Information strategy. Contact [Dennis Peek](#), PIM Lead, Wunderman Thompson Commerce.

EXPERT OPINION:

Consumers claim they are increasingly considering a company's environmental and ethical credentials as part of their purchasing decision-making. So, it's important for companies to be honest, authentic and clear with their customers on how they apply sustainable practices to their business.



RACHEL SMITH
CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE DIRECTOR,
WUNDERMAN THOMPSON COMMERCE

CHAPTER 2: MORE ENVIRONMENTALLY AND ETHICALLY FRIENDLY DELIVERY

For a majority of people across the world in the past 18 months, online delivery has become exceptionally important. When shops have been forcefully closed simultaneously, with no indication as to when they would open again, the only option for most people was to get their essentials, including groceries, pharmaceuticals, and even entertainment, delivered straight to their door. And, from an environmental and ethical standpoint, online deliveries are arguably the area of digital commerce that have the biggest impact.

With significantly more online orders to fulfill, there will no doubt have been more delivery vans and trucks on the roads. Furthermore, couriers and their delivery drivers are put under insurmountable pressure to ensure all deliveries are made on time; so much so, it's very common to be met with a message on a retailer's site informing you that deliveries may take longer than usual due to increasingly high volumes of traffic and orders to fulfill.

Contrasting with chapter 1, where we revealed that customers aim to shop sustainably, the responses around delivery are a little more ambiguous. On one hand, modern-day consumers are clearly accustomed to getting their orders as soon, and as easily, as possible; the results of our Future Shopper report show that convenient delivery (92%), speedy delivery (90%), and free delivery (91%) are important to consumers when they make a purchase online, with only 22% of consumers wishing the company they purchase from would consider the environment more when delivering their item to them.

However, the country where the product is manufactured and shipped from is important, too. Indeed, 67% of our Future Shopper consumers said that where the product was made, and where the country the product is being delivered from (73%), are important factors when purchasing products online.

We can't be certain whether the origin of the product is important to consumers because they are trying to minimize their carbon footprint by reducing the number of planes in the sky or trucks on the road, or simply because they are more concerned about having to wait longer to receive their package due to lengthy shipment times. The results of our luxury report indicate that some shoppers, at least, care about where their product has been made, as 28% would switch a brand or retailer based on the sustainability/provenance of products.

91% OF
CONSUMERS WANT
CONVENIENT, SPEEDY,
FREE DELIVERY



NEXT STEPS:

Sustainability at the cost of all else could be a recipe for disaster, costing your business dearly. But sustainability coupled with experience and service could see you triumph.

Whilst ensuring you build your business and its operations ethically, with sustainability in mind, make sure that range, ease, speed and convenience can be delivered in parallel. Speak to **Rachel Smith**, Customer Experience Director, Wunderman Thompson Commerce.

Your capability and capacity to deliver to customers is becoming ever more critical. Talk to us about how your delivery process can be streamlined. Speak to **Tim Reay**, Client Consultant, Wunderman Thompson Commerce.

EXPERT OPINION:

Ever since the emergence of online shopping, consumers' desire for convenience, cost and prompt delivery has edged to the top of the list in almost every sector; however, a new wave of environmentally conscious consumers is now sweeping the market, with companies such as Lush, Patagonia and IKEA leading the pack. What's more, consumers are not only shunning those brands and retailers that cannot reduce their carbon footprint or introduce eco-friendly measures, but they are also actively swaying their purchasing decisions away from those that don't match their sustainable expectations.

Many retail companies are now facing a conundrum; they have to both meet the demands of the environmental shopper while not reneging on qualities such as price, convenience, speed of delivery and free returns – some of which run contrary to the ethically conscious consumer. The brands and retailers that strike this balance perfectly will win out both in the long- and short-term.



RACHEL SMITH
CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE DIRECTOR,
WUNDERMAN THOMPSON COMMERCE



CHAPTER 3: SUSTAINABILITY AND AMAZON

You'll find it near impossible to have a discussion surrounding consumer perceptions of just about anything without Amazon being mentioned; indeed, the Seattle giant is an organization that no retailer or brand can ignore. But do consumers believe Amazon to be sustainable and ethical enough not to choose another retailer or brand in their place?

Well, it looks like our consumers don't have an issue with how environmentally friendly and ethical Amazon is, or, at least, it's not enough of an issue for consumers to choose a different retailer over the famous marketplace; only 14% of our Future Shopper respondents said that they would pick another retailer over Amazon for better environmental practices (e.g. less packaging, reduced carbon footprint, eco-delivery vehicles), and 13% for better brand ethics.

We previously mentioned in Chapter 1 that 71% of these same consumers wish brands and retailers would offer better environmental practices. Could this mean that consumers believe Amazon is already doing its part to be as environmentally friendly as possible? Or are the deals just too good to pass up?

It looks like the latter may be true, considering a weighty 46% of respondents would choose another retailer or brand over Amazon for cheaper pricing, and 20% for more convenient delivery options. Furthermore, only 13% of consumers prefer to support other independent retailers, rather than shopping on Amazon, and an even smaller 8% do not want to support the increasing growth of Amazon at all. While it wouldn't be surprising that some of these people strive for 'ethical consumerism', and avoid Amazon in favor of more environmentally friendly, local retailers, it's still a pretty small number of people.

ONLY 14% OF FUTURE SHOPPER CONSUMERS
WOULD PICK ANOTHER RETAILER OVER AMAZON
FOR BETTER ENVIRONMENTAL PRACTICES

So, for retailers and brands who aren't selling on Amazon, you can't really breathe a sigh of relief. While sustainability and better environmental practices are important for today's consumers, a majority of Amazon users clearly do not see enough of an issue with Amazon's current environmental and ethical practices to stop shopping on the marketplace. And things may only get better for the brand... with the help of "Amazon Day"

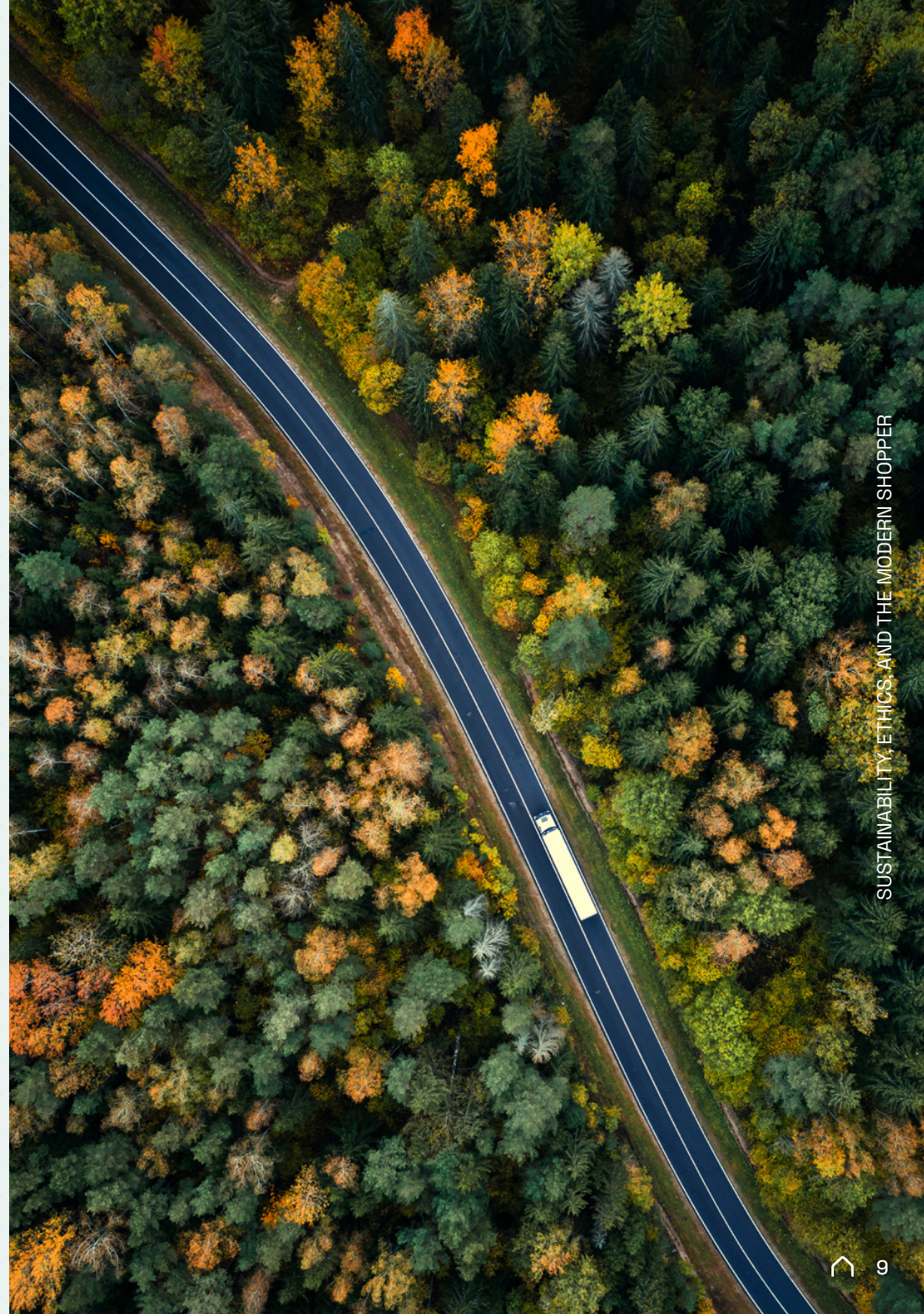
Amazon is offering consumers a more environmentally friendly delivery option, "Amazon Day", allowing consumers to select a single day to receive multiple ordered items that would typically arrive on separate days. Indeed, 34% of our UK audience have already used Amazon Day, with Japan at 30%, and the US double that at 60%. This initiative may just appease the 14% of consumers who would choose another retailer over Amazon due to better environmental practices like eco-friendly delivery.

NEXT STEPS:

It's clear that, when push comes to shove, consumers care more about what Amazon can offer them as an online marketplace, rather than their stance on sustainability. It's important, then, that you take note of what Amazon does well and assess the merits of adopting similar strategies and tactics. On the flipside, we'd encourage you also to consider "what Amazon can't do" (aka #WACD), and one of the key criticisms leveled against it is a lack of, or unclear, purpose. So, making a strong and deeply authentic case for sustainability and ethics for your brand could help it resonate more powerfully with eco-friendly consumers. Patagonia is a stellar example here.

Work with our Customer Experience and eCommerce Operations team, to plan and deploy optimal delivery solutions. Speak to [Rachel Smith](#), Customer Experience Director, or [Krantik Das](#), Strategy Director, Wunderman Thompson Commerce.

By working with our AI specialists, Satalia, we can introduce route optimization solutions that cut costs and carbon significantly. Speak to [Adam West](#), Head of Marketing, Satalia.





CHAPTER 4: REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE!

With apps like Etsy, Depop and Vinted becoming more popular, particularly among younger consumers, it appears that today's shoppers (at least, those with smartphones), are becoming increasingly thrifty. Indeed, Vinted has 20 million users, and Depop 18 million users, worldwide on the lookout for second-hand clothes they can purchase for a bargain!

Certainly, when we asked our fashion shoppers whether they would consider buying pre-loved (second-hand) fashion items online, 34% said they have already done this before, and 38% would consider it. Both men and women appear to be similarly inclined to purchase second-hand goods online, as 36% of women and 30% of men have done this before, and 37% of women and 40% of men would consider doing so.

Our luxury shoppers share a similar sentiment, with 32% saying they were "very likely" to buy pre-loved luxury items online, and 36% saying they were "somewhat likely". Moreover, male luxury shoppers appear to

be keener to purchase second-hand luxury items online, with female shoppers being more hesitant; 37% of men and 27% of women were "very likely" to, and 33% of men and 39% of women were "somewhat likely" to.

Over one-third of our fashion and luxury shoppers are keen to purchase second-hand clothes. That's a pretty significant figure! But what does that mean for brands and retailers? Perhaps they can take a page from our client, IKEA, who recently launched a new circular hub in every store across the UK, where customers can buy pre-loved or ex-display items in-store or online via Gumtree. Not only will this encourage those who have a passion for reusing and upcycling to visit your online/physical store, it may also help improve consumers' perceptions of your brand – remember, 60% of luxury shoppers would think more of a brand that was more sustainable. Regardless, second-hand thrifting is clearly a space brands and retailers need to keep an eye on.

**34% OF FASHION
SHOPPERS HAVE
ALREADY BOUGHT
PRE-LOVED ITEMS**

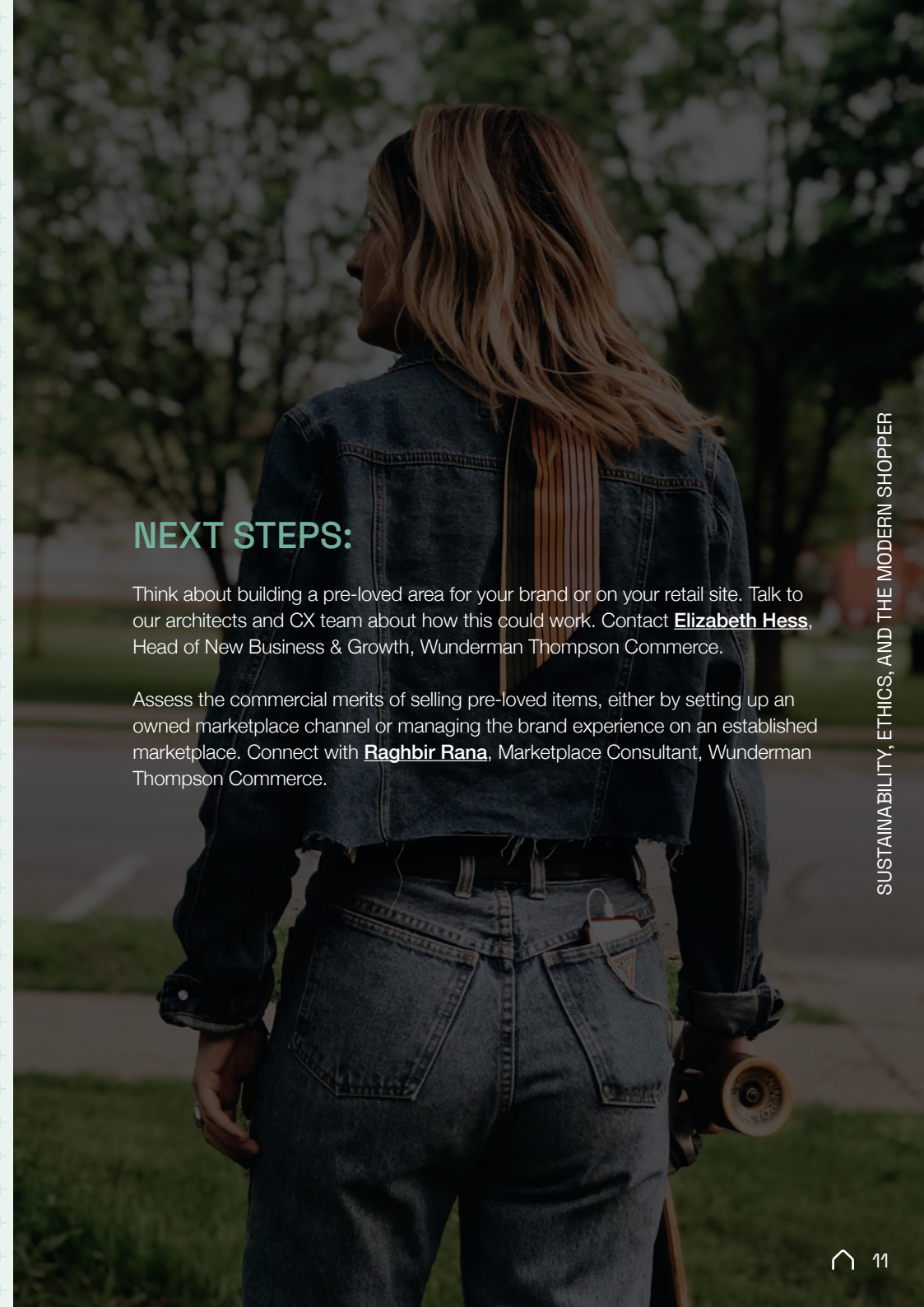
HOW LIKELY ARE YOU TO BUY PRE-LOVED / PRE-OWNED (SECOND HAND) LUXURY ITEMS ONLINE?

	VERY LIKELY: ALL	VERY LIKELY: MEN	VERY LIKELY: WOMEN	SOMEWHAT LIKELY: ALL	SOMEWHAT LIKELY: MEN	SOMEWHAT LIKELY: WOMEN
CLOTHING	33%	38%	28%	34%	30%	38%
ACCESSORIES	31%	35%	27%	39%	36%	42%
JEWELRY & WATCHES	31%	35%	28%	36%	35%	38%
TECHNOLOGY	32%	39%	25%	36%	32%	41%
CARS	34%	39%	28%	34%	33%	36%

NEXT STEPS:

Think about building a pre-loved area for your brand or on your retail site. Talk to our architects and CX team about how this could work. Contact **Elizabeth Hess**, Head of New Business & Growth, Wunderman Thompson Commerce.

Assess the commercial merits of selling pre-loved items, either by setting up an owned marketplace channel or managing the brand experience on an established marketplace. Connect with **Raghibir Rana**, Marketplace Consultant, Wunderman Thompson Commerce.





CHAPTER 5: THE GENERATIONAL DIVIDE: WHO CARES MORE?

Our three research reports have shown that sustainability is important to people of all ages. But are there certain groups who shop more environmentally conscientiously than others? One would expect younger age groups to care more about how their shopping impacts the environment, as they have been raised with greater exposure to the subject of environmentalism and climate change than older consumers. Our research indicates exactly this.

Younger consumers are more environmentally and ethically conscious

83% of 25-35-year-old and 81% of 16-24-year-old fashion shoppers believe sustainability to be important when making a purchasing decision, compared to 70% of over-55s (although, this figure is still encouragingly high!). Likewise, 65% of our 25-34-year-old Future Shoppers actively choose companies and brands that are environmentally responsible, compared to just 45% of over-55s.

Younger shoppers are not only environmentally conscious, but also appear to be the most influenced by a retailer or brand's ethics. 70% of under-45 Future Shoppers agree that a company's ethics and morals play an important part of their purchasing decision, compared to 58% of over-45s. Likewise, 22% of under-45s neither agree nor disagree, compared to 31% of over-45s.

70% OF FUTURE SHOPPERS AGED UNDER-45 SAY A COMPANY'S ETHICS AND MORALS PLAY AN IMPORTANT PART IN THEIR PURCHASING DECISION

However, it's good to see that all age groups disagree to a similarly low extent; the percentage of consumers who think ethics aren't important when making a purchasing decision ranges from just 7% to 14%.

Younger consumers are more likely to choose another retailer over Amazon

Unsurprisingly, younger respondents in our Future Shopper survey are more likely to choose another retailer over Amazon for better environmental practices, than older consumers; 17% of 16-24-year-olds, compared to 9% of over-55s and 11% of 45-54-year-olds, would choose another retailer if they offer better environmental practices, such as less packaging, reduced carbon footprint, and eco-delivery.

Similarly, 16% of 16-24-year-olds would choose another retailer over Amazon for better brand ethics, compared to 8% of over-55s.

Younger consumers are more likely to thrift

It appears that millennial fashion shoppers (aged 25-40) are more likely to have already purchased second-hand items than older consumers; 40% of 36-44-year-olds and 34% of 25-35-year-olds said they have already bought pre-loved items before, compared to just 25% of over-55s.

While younger consumers are less likely to have already purchased second-hand clothes before, they are more likely than other ages groups to consider buying pre-loved items. 41% of our 16-24-year-old fashion shoppers, and 43% of 25-35-year-olds haven't purchased second-hand fashion items online but would consider doing so.

Moreover, 52% of over-55 fashion shoppers said they would not consider buying second-hand clothes, compared to just 23% of 25-35-year-olds.

Consumers of all ages have become more sustainable

Surprisingly, the number of fashion consumers who believe they are more environmentally

and ethically conscious than they were 5 years ago is relatively consistent across all age groups, with only a difference of 10% between the age groups with the highest and lowest percentages of a "more" result (52% of 25-35-year-olds and 42% of 45-54-year-olds).

It's encouraging to see that shopping environmentally consciously is not just a young person's game; 50% of both our 16-24-year-old and 55+ fashion shoppers believe they are more environmentally conscious now than they were 5 years ago. Moreover, the number of fashion consumers over-45 who believe they have become less environmentally friendly than 5 years ago is actually lower than consumers under-45; 27% of the youngest age group (16-24-year-olds) have become less environmentally friendly, compared to just 9% of over-55s.

However, this may be because the older generations are more stuck in their ways, with 41% of over-55s and 47% of 45-54-year-olds admitting they had experienced no change in their shopping habits.



WHAT, IF ANY, ARE THE MAIN REASON(S) YOU WOULD CHOOSE ANOTHER RETAILER OVER AMAZON WHEN SHOPPING ONLINE?

	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+
BETTER BRAND ETHICS	16%	15%	14%	11%	8%
BETTER ENVIRONMENTAL PRACTICES	17%	16%	14%	11%	9%

HAVE FASHION SHOPPERS BECOME MORE ENVIRONMENTALLY CONSCIOUS OVER THE LAST 5 YEARS?

	16-24	25-35	36-44	45-54	55+
MORE	50%	52%	47%	42%	50%
LESS	27%	21%	18%	11%	9%
NO CHANGE	23%	26%	36%	47%	41%

CHAPTER 6: CONSUMER VIEWS ON SUSTAINABILITY ACROSS THE GLOBE

It could be all too easy for consumers to overlook how environmentally friendly and sustainable brands and retailers they purchase from are (or are not); as a majority of the world's population reside in urban areas, they may be so isolated from the natural world that they aren't aware of the environmental damage major organizations are contributing to on a daily basis.

However, the results of our Future Shopper report reveal that attitudes towards sustainability and ethics across the world are fairly consistent, with consumers from 15 of the 16 countries included in our Future Shopper survey agreeing that retailers and brands should offer better environmental practices, with percentages ranging from 57% to 85%.

What's the most sustainable region?

Three of the top 5 countries with the greatest proportion of Future Shoppers who wish that retailers and brands offered better environmental practices are located in Asia; China (85%), Thailand (84%) and India (82%) all score very highly, with only 2%, 1% and 5% respectively disagreeing.

Japan appears to be an outlier to this trend. Only 49% of consumers agree that retailers and brands should offer better environmental practices. However, this may not be because they believe sustainability isn't important, as a weighty 40% of them say they neither agree nor disagree. While we can't be certain why this is the case, could this be because retailers and brands in Japan already consider the environment enough for consumers to not be so concerned?



I WISH RETAILERS AND BRANDS OFFERED BETTER ENVIRONMENTAL PRACTICES (E.G. LESS PACKAGING, REDUCED CARBON FOOTPRINT, ECO-DELIVERY VEHICLES)

COUNTRY	AGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE
CHINA	85%	2%	14%
THAILAND	84%	1%	14%
COLOMBIA	84%	2%	13%
MEXICO	84%	2%	14%
INDIA	82%	5%	13%
BRAZIL	81%	3%	16%
UAE	76%	5%	19%
USA	74%	7%	20%
SPAIN	72%	6%	22%
FRANCE	69%	6%	24%
UK	68%	6%	26%
GERMANY	67%	10%	23%
ARGENTINA	66%	5%	28%
AUSTRALIA	64%	8%	28%
NETHERLANDS	57%	10%	33%
JAPAN	49%	12%	40%

I ACTIVELY CHOOSE COMPANIES/BRANDS THAT ARE ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE

COUNTRY	AGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE
THAILAND	84%	1%	15%
CHINA	81%	2%	16%
INDIA	80%	6%	14%
COLOMBIA	76%	4%	19%
BRAZIL	74%	5%	22%
MEXICO	72%	5%	23%
UAE	71%	7%	22%
USA	68%	10%	22%
SPAIN	57%	11%	32%
ARGENTINA	55%	10%	35%
AUSTRALIA	51%	14%	35%
FRANCE	50%	12%	38%
UK	47%	17%	36%
GERMANY	43%	20%	37%
NETHERLANDS	37%	22%	41%
JAPAN	34%	19%	47%

Unsurprisingly, a very similar trend is also seen when we asked our Future Shopper consumers whether they actively choose companies or brands that are environmentally responsible. Again, 3 of the top 5 are located in Asia; Thailand (84%), China (81%) and India (80%) all score very highly, with only 1%, 2% and 6% respectively disagreeing. Japan, once again, is an outlier, with only 34% agreeing that they choose companies that are more environmentally responsible.

Four of the bottom 5 countries with the lowest proportion of our Future Shopper respondents who actively choose brands/retailers that are environmentally responsible are in Europe; Netherlands (37%), Germany (43%), UK (47%), and France (50%). However, these countries also have the largest proportion of consumers who neither agree nor disagree that they actively choose environmentally responsible companies. Similar to Japan, as mentioned previously, could this be because these consumers believe the companies/

brands available to them are already environmentally responsible enough, so they don't have to worry about whether the brand is environmentally responsible?

Moreover, our luxury shoppers in the US and China believe they have become more environmentally conscious over the last 5 years, with 79% and 77% agreeing respectively, compared to 55% in the UK.

How do different countries feel about Amazon?

When it comes to choosing another retailer over Amazon for better environmental practices, all countries surveyed are relatively consistent across the board, with results from 15 of the 17 ranging between 11% (Thailand) and 20% (China). Japan, once again, is an outlier at just 4%. China and India appear in the top 5, again, at 20%.

WHAT, IF ANY, ARE THE MAIN REASON(S) YOU WOULD CHOOSE ANOTHER RETAILER OVER AMAZON WHEN SHOPPING ONLINE?

COUNTRY	BETTER BRAND ETHICS	BETTER ENVIRONMENTAL PRACTICES
CHINA	22%	20%
INDIA	25%	20%
USA	21%	17%
GERMANY	8%	17%
FRANCE	12%	17%
INDONESIA	13%	15%
SPAIN	10%	15%
UAE	19%	15%
MEXICO	14%	14%
COLOMBIA	10%	14%
UK	14%	14%
BRAZIL	10%	13%
AUSTRALIA	14%	13%
NETHERLANDS	9%	11%
THAILAND	11%	11%
ARGENTINA	8%	9%
JAPAN	6%	4%



NEXT STEPS:

Getting your eCommerce strategy right is clearly not as simple as implementing the same strategy on a global scale; consumers in different countries have different wants and needs when shopping online, and expect brands and retailers to deliver what they want. You need to tailor and personalize your eCommerce strategy depending on the location of your target consumer. Speak to [Krantik Das](#), Strategy Director, Wunderman Thompson Commerce.

Make sure you consider improving your brand's Amazon strategy, to focus on consumers who do use Amazon and its services, like Amazon Day. Speak to [Helmut Rieder](#), Head of WPP's Center of Excellence for Amazon in Europe.



CONCLUSION

So, there you have it – a condensed view of the importance of sustainability and ethics to shoppers across 3 independent, multi-market consumer reports in 2021.

We've established that COVID-19 has, fortunately, not had a significant negative influence on consumers' perceptions of sustainability and ethics, as a majority of our respondents strive to purchase from environmentally and ethically friendly brands and retailers, and also wish these organizations would offer more environmentally friendly practices.

What's more, a significant number of our surveyed shoppers believe they have become more environmentally conscious when shopping over the last 5 years. And, with more attention being focused on our planet's health, the number of people who shop more environmentally consciously is likely to rise. This may also influence the growing number of younger consumers who would consider purchasing pre-loved items.

However, it's clear that ethical consumerism isn't always the leading factor when consumers purchase online; while consumers strive to choose environmentally friendly organizations to shop from, they aren't as phased when it comes to delivery; so much so, that over 9 in 10 consumers believe convenience, speed and cost are the most important factor when making a purchase, while only 22% wish retailers and brands would consider the environment more when they deliver their item.

Additionally, when push comes to shove, pricing and free delivery all come first as reasons why a consumer would choose another retailer or brand over Amazon, with few people choosing another retailer or brand over Amazon for environmental or ethical reasons.

Armed with this knowledge, it's now over to retailers and brands to get their sustainability and ethics strategies right!

HOW WE CAN HELP

As a WPP agency, we seek to use the power of creativity to build better futures for our people, planet, clients and communities. We strive to help our clients achieve their sustainability goals and targets through the work we do for them. We aspire to gain knowledge and understanding of the positive and productive uses of technology to foster change and reduce our carbon footprint.

To assist us, we regularly undertake market research to understand consumer sentiment on environmental preservation, and the extent to which this influences their shopping habits. The research means that we can closely track changing consumer attitudes to sustainability and what this means for our clients and their customers, so that we can recommend and introduce experiences that support this.

SUSTAINABILITY IN ACTION

Clients must balance a complex set of social and environmental challenges with changing consumer expectations and constant technological developments. While challenging, today's landscape also offers major opportunities to create new markets for more inclusive and sustainable products and services.

Wunderman Thompson has helped a number of clients on programs promoting sustainability including [Unilever](#), [DFS](#), [IKEA](#), [World Wildlife Fund](#) and [Alaska Mountain](#).

Contact us to discuss how we can help your organization.

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ABOUT WUNDERMAN THOMPSON COMMERCE

At Wunderman Thompson Commerce we inspire people to transact.

Wunderman Thompson Commerce is a global eCommerce consultancy, comprising 1700+ commerce experts across more than 25 offices worldwide. We define and deliver digital growth for ambitious brands, retailers and manufacturers through connected customer experiences, increasing results, at scale, for our clients.

As a business, we have a responsibility to preserve and contribute positively to sustainable causes and the impending climate issues we face. As the climate crisis has worsened in recent years, we have seen an increase in demand, from both clients and consumers, for more ethical and sustainable practices at the forefront of the business agenda. It's clear that sustainable business models are needed now more than ever to enable business, society and the environment to thrive into the future.

Our clients include Bayer, Bosch, DFS, Johnson & Johnson, MAC, Nestlé, Sainsbury's, Selfridges, SharkNinja, Shell, Specialized, Tempur and Tiffany & Co.

Wunderman Thompson Commerce is a WPP agency, recognized as a Leader in The Forrester Wave™: Commerce Services, Q1 2021. More details on the achievement can be found [here](#).

For more information on Wunderman Thompson Commerce, please visit us at www.wundermanthompson.com/service/commerce and follow us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Instagram](#).

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