Why women could be the future of online retail

A report by VoucherCodes.co.uk reveals women could be more likely to embrace online shopping than their male counter parts.

- **Future of Online Retail report reveals women currently shop online more than men**
- **Half of consumers still uncomfortable buying furniture and groceries online**

A report by VoucherCodes.co.uk* reveals women could be more likely to embrace online shopping than their male counter parts. The Future of Online Retail report, which examines the UK's online shopping battleground, along with the trends and factors influencing purchase behaviour, highlights some interesting differences in the behaviour of the two sexes.

Gender Divide
When men and women were asked what they have never purchased online across clothes, groceries, furniture, beauty products, holidays, electronics and entertainment, 1 in 5 women (19 per cent) said they had in fact purchased all of these products online at some point, whilst just 13 per cent of men stated they had. The biggest gender divide appears when it comes to buying clothes online with over a quarter of men (27 per cent) claiming they have never purchased clothes online, while just 19 per cent of women said they have never done this.

When it comes to items men and women say they will never buy online in the future, women once again seem less inclined to say no to online shopping, whilst men are more reticent. Half of women (50 per cent) say they will shop online in the future when it comes to clothes, beauty products, holidays, furniture, entertainment, electronics and groceries. However, just two in five men (42 per cent) say this is the case.

Shopping Categories
Despite the prevalence of ecommerce in the modern world, many shopping categories are still unpopular with consumers. Nearly half of UK consumers have never bought furniture (48%), groceries (45%) or health & beauty products (44%) online. In contrast a staggering 86 per cent of consumers have picked up entertainment products such as DVDs and CDs over the internet.

Transactional Barriers
The research also examined what consumers saw as the biggest barriers to buying online. Two out of five consumers (40%) claimed they feel the need to see the physical object before purchasing it, making this the biggest barrier to ecommerce. The second biggest issue was a lack of information about items, which a third of respondents (33%) cited as an issue.

Max Jennings, co-founder of VoucherCodes.co.uk comments: "The Future of Online Retail shows that women in particular have embraced online retail and are more inclined to make purchases across a large range of product categories. Whilst male shoppers have traditionally been considered the early adopters of ecommerce, it is clear women have very much embraced online shopping and are keen to take advantage of solutions such as apps that offer targeted rewards and discounts.

"The fact so many consumers still feel uncomfortable transacting online highlights the huge job retailers have on their hands when it comes to changing consumers' behavior. However, as brands continue to invest in smart online and multichannel solutions, transactional barriers such as lack of information and the need to physically see an object will continue to be eroded."

Notes to editors:
* The Future of Online Retail Report was conducted between 12th – 15th October 2012 amongst 2001 UK adults online looking at their shopping habits and influences.
