Fluid
COMMERCE

B2B 100: Ecommerce Report

A benchmark report of 100 B2B retailers across industrial, science, health and safety, catering, education and office suppliers.

How are mid-market B2B retailers performing in ecommerce across speed and security, mobile UX, search and navigation, payment and checkout, community and loyalty, delivery and returns, and more?

2020 Magento Edition

Business and Industrial (B2B) 100: Ecommerce Report

A benchmark report of 100 B2B retailers

This report was created by **Fluid Commerce**, an ecommerce growth agency based in Manchester working with online brands to build and grow successful ecommerce stores.

All research was implemented in Manchester, UK between 6th October 2020 and 19th October 2020. All research is reported and scored based on the researcher's judgement but does relate to documented guidelines. Points were given generously, but if a policy was unclear, no scoring point was given.

Contents

The Top 20 B2B Retailers

Top 20 Retailers

Cablecraft

cablecraft.co.uk

76/100

Tools4Trade

tools4trade.co.uk

75/100

Tufferman

tufferman.co.uk

74/100

Chelford Farm Supplies

chelfordfarmsupplies.co.uk

73/100

Building Supplies Online

building-supplies-online.co.uk

71/100

Top 20 Retailers

Powertool World

powertoolworld.co.uk

71/100

Peli Products UK

peliproducts.co.uk

71/100

SGS Engineering

sgs-engineering.com

70/100

Dental Sky

dentalsky.com

69/100

Scruffs

scruffs.com

69/100

Top 20 Retailers

Envelopes
worldofenvelopes.com

69/100

Scott + Sargeant
scosarg.com

69/100

Ironmongery World
ironmongeryworld.com

68/100

Morelli
morelli.co.uk

67/100

Whisper Pumps
whisperpumps.com

67/100

Top 20 Retailers

Cleanroom Shop UK

cleanroomshop.com

67/100

Brookes

ebrookes.co.uk

67/100

Bella Barista

bellabarista.co.uk

65/100

Industrial Scientific Supplies

industrialscientific.co.uk

65/100

Packaging Chimp

packagingchimp.co.uk

65/100

B2B Retailers

The Lower Rankings

Lower Rankings

Able Cleaning & Hygiene	44/100	CoolMed	62/100
Ai Engineering	51/100	Craigmore	61/100
Anchor Safety	63/100	Croylek	51/100
Array Ink	46/100	Cut My Plastic	52/100
BBwear	56/100	Cutting Edge Services	55/100
Beaucare	54/100	DC Paint Solutions	42/100
Best Workwear	50/100	Diesel Generator Direct	57/100
Bike Dock Solutions	49/100	Direct Water Tanks	49/100
Blake Envelopes	45/100	DP Building Systems	58/100
Bonus Trading	54/100	Easy Equipment	54/100
Brewfitt	49/100	Ecomax	44/100
Broxap	57/100	EPSL Educational Printing	36/100
BuildingMaterials.co.uk	60/100	Essential Supplies	58/100
Butts of Bawtry	49/100	Furniture Work	49/100
Catering 24	61/100	Geaves	49/100
CE Online	54/100	Go Displays	57/100
Chefline	44/100	Hanna Instruments	64/100
Comms2Go	50/100	Ingenia	37/100
Compass Plumbing	57/100	Invopak	54/100
Cooksmill	51/100	Labelzone	64/100

Lower Rankings

Luminati	48/100	Signgeer	63/100
Manningham Concrete	44/100	Sousvide Tools	60/100
Mick George	61/100	Sure Green	61/100
Mister Bagman	58/100	Target Transfers	55/100
MKM Extrusions	38/100	Techsil	48/100
Mo and Co	40/100	Thirstybox	61/100
Mr Paper	35/100	Thomas Ridley	65/100
Multi-Hire Power Tools	61/100	Tibard	42/100
My Tool Shed	63/100	Till Rolls Direct	40/100
Office Rubber Stamps	55/100	Titman	44/100
Our Soles	52/100	TME	49/100
Plastock	56/100	Tradelines	38/100
Powertools2U	51/100	Trutex	58/100
Protective Masks Direct	57/100	UK Packaging	48/100
Risk Books	27/100	UK Trade Fix	62/100
Roofing Megastore	56/100	Universal Site Supplies	61/100
Ross Handling	50/100	Vuba	48/100
SafetyBuyer.com	55/100	Welding Supplies Direct	64/100
Scotload Direct	56/100	Wishtrac	57/100
Sign Trade Supplies	46/100	Xamax	51/100

Benchmarking

How the Industry Compares

Benchmarking

56/100

Average Score

The average score for all B2B retailers in the report is 56 out of 100.

Sector Scores

62/100

Tools & Supplies

61/100

Science & Medical

58/100

Cleaning & Safety

55/100

Machines & Appliances

55/100

Food & Catering

54/100

Workwear & Apparel

52/100

Office, Stationery & Packaging

52/100

Specialist & Other

50/100

Shopfittings & Signs

47/100
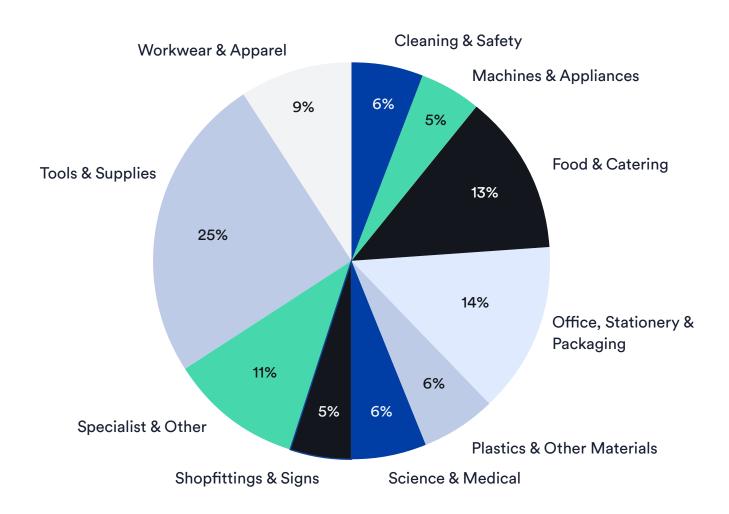
Plastics & Other Materials

Retailer Overview

Who Was Included

Retailer Overview

We strive for diversity in the types of Magento retailers we include in our report, and this page documents the retailer makeup of those included. This includes the split of retailers on Magento 1 and Magento 2, and a split of sub-verticals too.
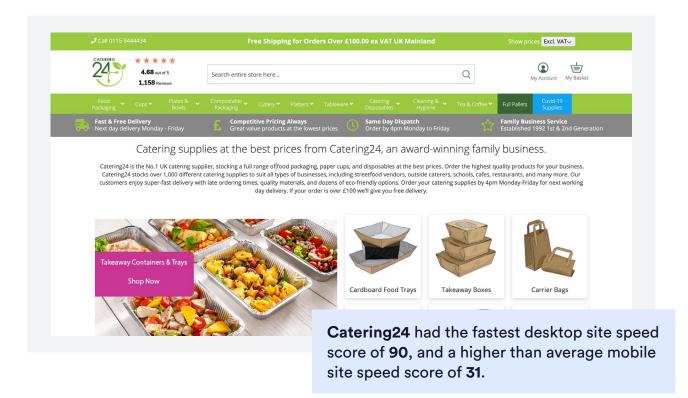

Magento 1 — 25%
Magento 2 — 61%
Unknown Version — 14%

- Workwear & Apparel — 9%
- Cleaning & Safety — 6%
- Machines & Appliances — 5%
- Food & Catering — 13%
- Office, Stationery & Packaging — 14%
- Plastics & Other Materials — 6%
- Science & Medical — 6%
- Shopfittings & Signs — 5%
- Specialist & Other — 11%
- Tools & Supplies — 25%

Report Criteria

Insights and Analysis

Speed and Security

For business and industrial retailers, speed and security is key. Busy customers need a fast site to make sure they can make their purchase as quickly as possible. A slow loading site can seem untrustworthy and trust is paramount for shopping experiences that have wider consequences for a business. This is why security certificates are also an essential tool in gaining trust among consumers within the B2B sector more important for retailers in the sector.

We measured retailers' site speed scores using Google PageSpeed Insights. The average business and industrial site speed score for desktop was **42**, while the average site speed score for mobile was a low **20**. This metric acts as a good benchmark for retailers to compare against, and gives us an idea of which retailers are focusing on improving site speed and which retailers are in need of some improvement.

Security is also an important factor to consider when optimising user experience. Only one of the retailers included in this report had not invested in a SSL certificate, whilst **8%** of retailers had EV (Extended Validation) SSL, the highest form of SSL certificate available. Retailers with EV SSL include Anchor Safety, Cut My Plastic, Sousvide Tools, Target Transfers, Thomas Ridley, Manningham Concrete, Compass Plumbing and MKM Extrusions.

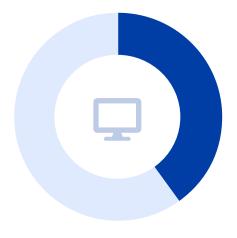**Catering24** had the fastest desktop site speed score of **90**, and a higher than average mobile site speed score of **31**.

Speed and Security
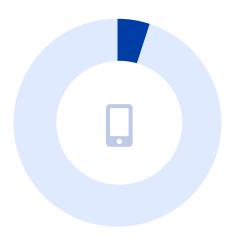
Key Takeaways

47 average speed on desktop

20 average speed on mobile

44% of retailers had a desktop speed score above 50

5% of retailers had a mobile speed score above 50

8% of retailers had EV SSL

Mobile UX

A strong mobile user experience is expected by all customers, whether this is for B2C or B2B customers. There are still many business and industrial retailers who are not meeting customer expectations and as a result, many retailers are providing a poor customer experience and missing out on strong conversion rates.
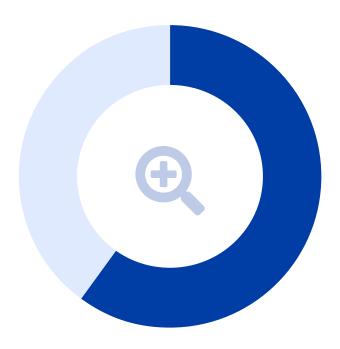
All of the business and industrial retailers in the report were mobile responsive and so had a basic standard of mobile experience.

60% of business and industrial retailers had intuitive product zoom with pinch or tap gestures. The key to a strong mobile experience is intuitiveness, and many retailers seem to be struggling here with just over half of retailers optimising the zoom functionality for mobile.
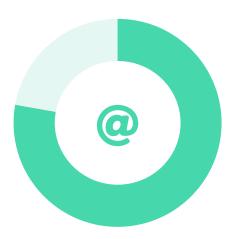
78% of business and industrial retailers had input-specific email keyboards during checkout, which is a strong percentage. A significantly smaller percentage **(28%)** of retailers had similar input-specific number keyboards. Most retailers who offered input-specific number keyboards also offered input-specific email keyboards, with **27%** of retailers offering both.

Mobile UX

Key Takeaways

60% of retailers had intuitive mobile product zoom

78% of retailers had input-specific email keyboards

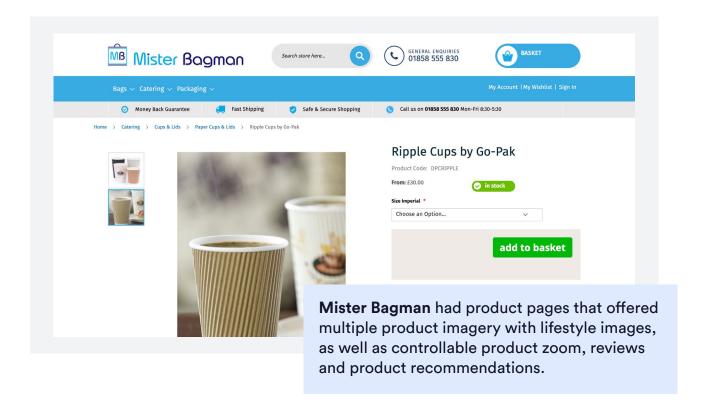**28%** of retailers had input-specific number keyboards

Product Page UX

Retailers selling to businesses need to communicate everything about a product clearly, and so a product page is an important page to focus on. This is where customers learn about the specifications and the benefits of your product. In general, business and industrial retailers performed relatively well in this areas, most likely due to the increased expectation of product data and information.

85% of business and industrial retailers in the report had desktop product zoom, with **69%** of retailers utilisting a more advanced controllable product zoom. This allows for customers to inspect and evaluate their potential purchase in detail.

Only **38%** of business and industrial retailers had lifestyle product imagery, which can help boost conversion by adding trust and reassurance by allowing shoppers to visualise their purchase.

70% of retailers had multiple product images, which produces a similar affect to lifestyle imagery, detailing the product in various positions and packaging.

Finally, **60%** of business and industrial retailers had product recommendations on product pages, in a 'You may also like...' or 'Other customers bought...' section.
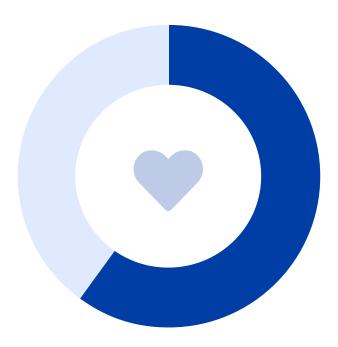

Mister Bagman had product pages that offered multiple product imagery with lifestyle images, as well as controllable product zoom, reviews and product recommendations.

Product Page UX

Key Takeaways

85% of retailers had desktop product zoom

69% of retailers had controllable product zoom

60% of retailers had product recommendations on product pages
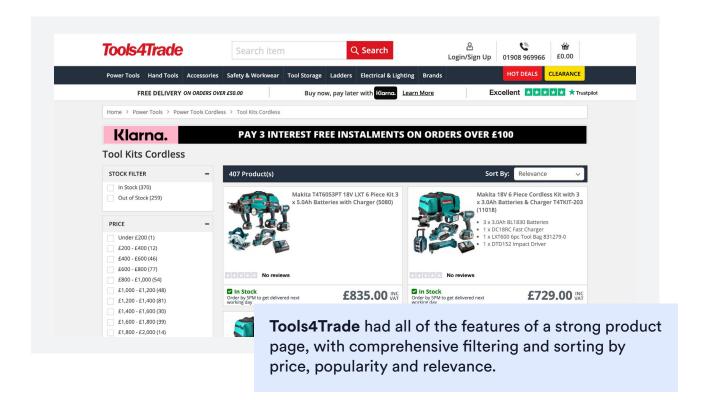
Sorting and Filtering

Sorting and filtering features are standard UX elements, although those in the business and industrial sector seemed to perform well. **85%** of business and industrial retailers had sort functionality, with **80%** of retailers offering 'sort by price' functionality, which is a strong percentage.

However, only **17%** of business and industrial retailers offered 'sort by popularity' or 'sort by best sellers' functionality. While some retailers had curated sort lists, such as 'recommended', 'promoted' or 'featured', we only offered scoring points to retailers who had positioned these lists as uncurated lists.
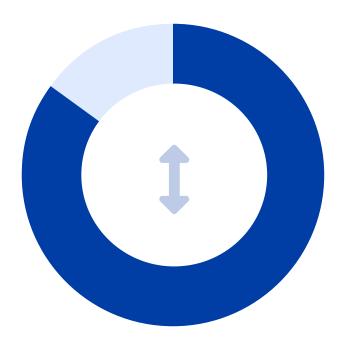
76% of business and industrial retailers had filtering functionality, with many retailers offering various filtering options dependent on the product range. Some offered simple filters such as price, size and colour, while others went further and offered filtering by brand, purpose etc.

When it came to other UX features for easy navigation, **85%** of business and industrial retailers used breadcrumbs on collection pages. The faster a customer can find the product they're looking for, while not feeling lost within the process, the higher the conversion rate is likely to be and B2B retailers seemed to perform well here.

Tools4Trade had all of the features of a strong product page, with comprehensive filtering and sorting by price, popularity and relevance.

Sorting and Filtering

Key Takeaways

85% of retailers had sort functionality

80% of retailers had
sorting by price functionality

17% of retailers had
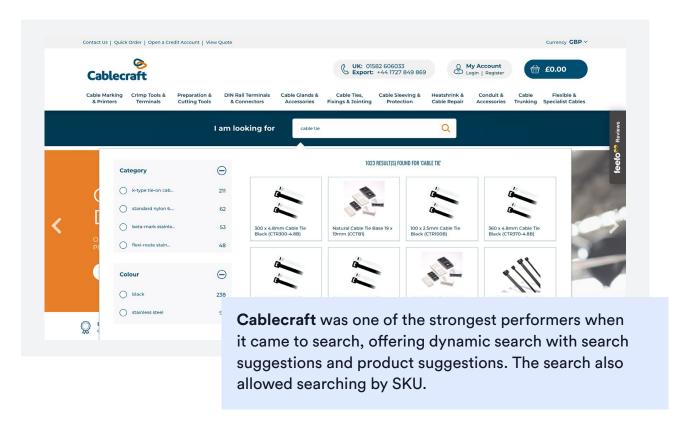sorting by popularity functionality

Site Search

Retailers are now capable of offering a comprehensive, and sometimes personalised, search experience. Because of this, customers now expect to be able to find something quickly and easily with the use of site search.

Retailers in the business and industrial sector excelled at site search, most likely due to the specificity of products in the sector and the need for customers to find exact products quickly.

For the purpose of this report, we analysed how each retailer's search performed before the 'enter' key was actioned, focussing on rewarding retailers who didn't force shoppers to take that extra step. A briliant search experience is dynamic and will offer suggestions before you've finished typing your search query.

97% of business and industrial retailers had a standard site search, with only **3%** not offering any kind of search functionality. **32%** of business and industrial retailers had a dynamic site search that offered both search term suggestions and product recommendations. **56%** of retailers had dynamic search that offered search term suggestions, and **58%** of retailers had dynamic search that offered product recommendations.

Cablecraft was one of the strongest performers when it came to search, offering dynamic search with search suggestions and product suggestions. The search also allowed searching by SKU.
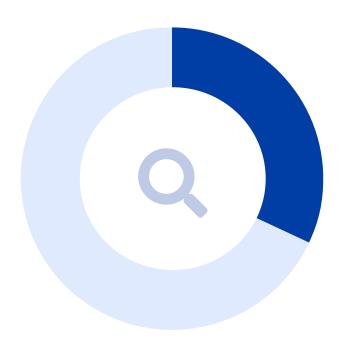
Site Search

Key Takeaways

56% of retailers had dynamic search with search term suggestions

58% of retailers had dynamic search with product recommendations

32% of retailers had dynamic search with both search term suggesions **and** product recommendations
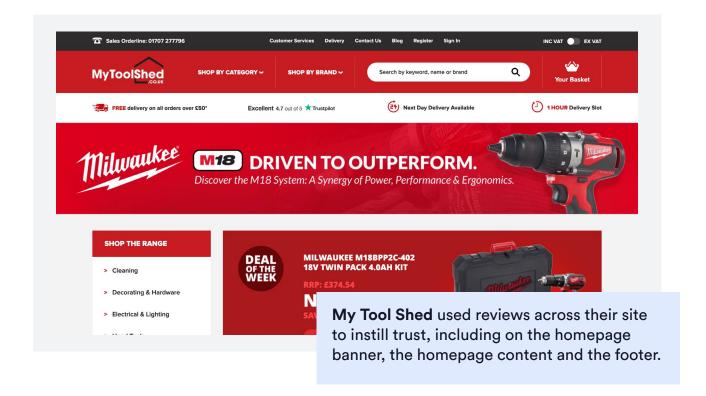
Reviews and Trust

A lower than expected number of business and industrial retailers take advantage of reviews and user-generated content to boost trust and improve conversion rates. Trust is crucial in experiences where a purchase isn't a personal purchase, but a purchase for a wider team or company.

Only **66%** of business and industrial retailers showcase reviews on product pages, and only **54%** showcased reviews on homepages. Some retailers are using reviews in order to offer a positive customer experience but there are a large number of retailers who are not utilising reviews. A key reason for the industry not using reviews more could be due to a preference of businesses not to be public about suppliers.
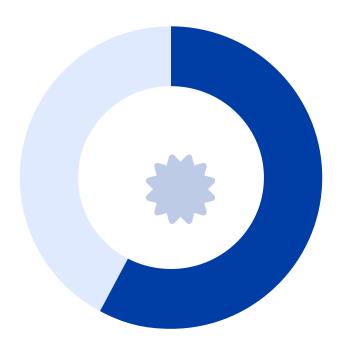
In this report, we have not distinguished between product-specific reviews, but have awarded scoring points for any showcased reviews. Some retailers have better results when showcasing brand reviews on product pages, and others with product reviews on homepages, and so we have not distinguished here.

58% of business and industrial retailers also had reassurance messaging in the header, promoting key brand values and offers, such as 'free delivery'.

My Tool Shed used reviews across their site to instill trust, including on the homepage banner, the homepage content and the footer.

Reviews and Trust

Key Takeaways

58% of retailers had reassurance messaging in the header

66% of retailers showcased reviews on product pages

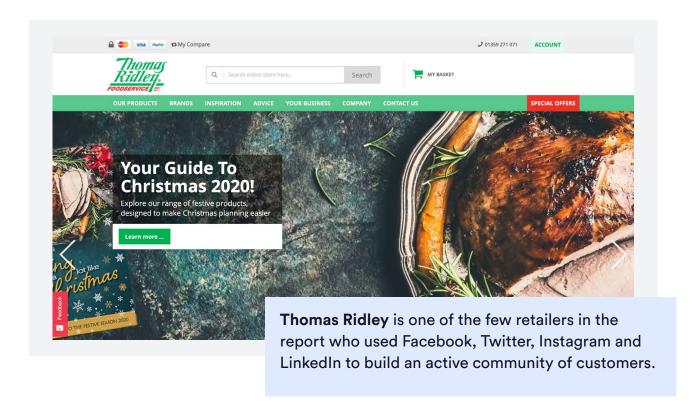**54%** of retailers showcased reviews on homepage

Community and Loyalty

There is an increasing trend in B2B retailers embracing community and social media as a strategy for building loyalty and trust in their brand and proposition. However, there is still a long way to go.

Only **5%** of business and industrial retailers promoted loyalty programmes, however many did offer special incentives with trade accounts. Brands with loyalty programmes in this industry tend to sell products that are repeat purchases and and bought at regular intervals throughout the year.

78% of business and industrial retailers had helpful blogs or articles on their site to promote how-to guides or legal information. It is clear that the industry still uses blog content as a useful way to share useful and helpful content, as this is an easy way for businesses to read and digest important information.
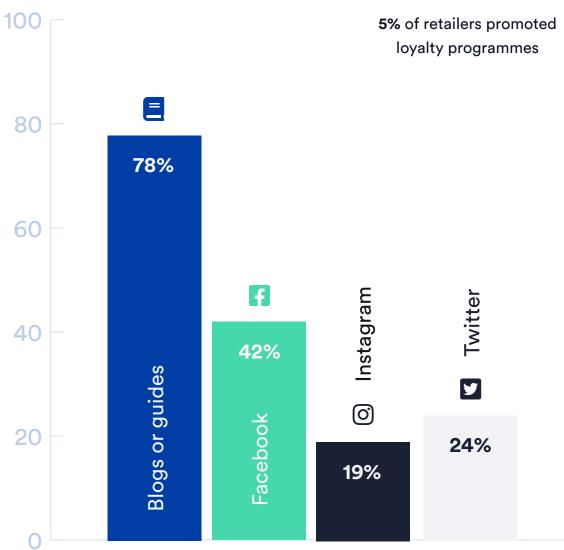
For social media, Facebook is still the predominant platform with **42%** of business and industrial retailers having an active Facebook presence (defined as within the last two weeks). Twitter is the second most popular platform at **24%**, followed by LinkedIn at **21%**, whilst Instagram trails behind at **19%**.

Thomas Ridley is one of the few retailers in the report who used Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn to build an active community of customers.

Community and Loyalty

Key Takeaways

5% of retailers promoted loyalty programmes

Community Platforms

- Blogs or guides: **78%**
- Facebook: **42%**
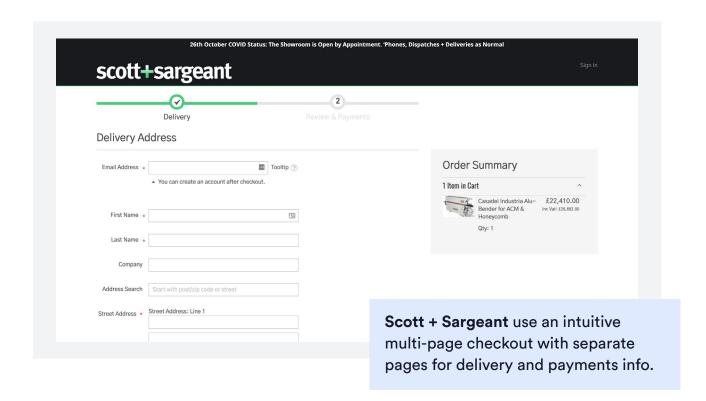- Instagram: **19%**
- Twitter: **24%**

Checkout - Part 1

Most of the business and industrial retailers in this report set a standard for best practice for a checkout experience.

Many retailers had a consistent checkout experience that hit many scoring points such as an intuitive multi-page process, product imagery, input-specific keyboards and more. However, there was a percentage of retailers who were using an outdated default Magento checkout page, or an uncustomised checkout page that lacks many features that shoppers now expect.

67% of business and industrial retailers had an intuitive multi-page checkout. This may be designed with multiple pages or multiple sections, as long as these sections are not all visible at once.

Most retailers displayed product imagery in the cart at **97%**, and **50%** of business and industrial retailers displayed product imagery in the checkout.

When it comes to the checkout, it is clear that the majority of business and industrial retailers are succeeding at creating a seamless experience, with some trailling behind.
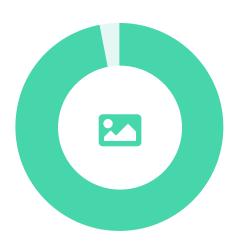

Scott + Sargeant use an intuitive multi-page checkout with separate pages for delivery and payments info.

Checkout

Key Takeaways

67% of retailers had an intuitive multi-page checkout

97% of retailers had product imagery clearly in the cart or basket

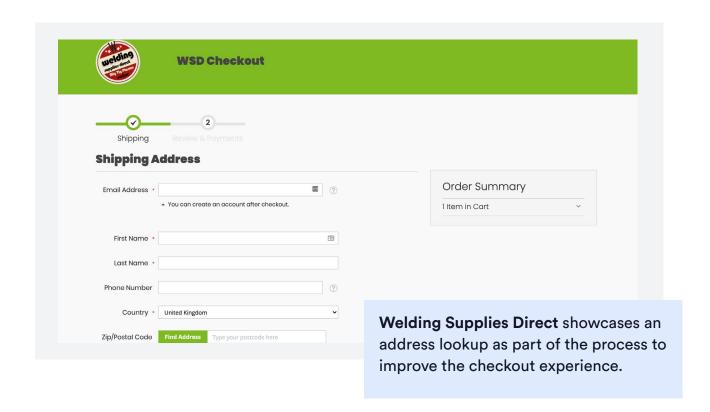**50%** of retailers had product imagery clearly in the checkout

Checkout - Part 2

Other elements of the checkout that were considered include a removed navigation, postcode search and guest checkout, amongst others.

Within the checkout, **52%** of business and industrial retailers had a removed navigation. This has become industry best practice, and so it is surprising that there is still a significant number of retailers who continue to offer distractions at the checkout stage, with the opportunity for shoppers to easily abandon cart.

87% of business and industrial retailers offered guest checkout, but **13%** of business and industrial retailers had mandatory account creation. This higher-than-expected number of retailers with no guest checkout is surprising and is potentially a significant barrier to conversion for these retailers.

Similarly, only **45%** of business and industrial retailers had an element of postcode or address search functionality in the checkout. While this is a simple UX feature, this can speed up the checkout process considerably. This functionality allows for retailers to begin to type their postcode or first line of address, with suggestions appearing for their full address.
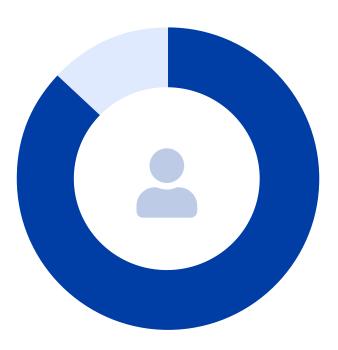

Welding Supplies Direct showcases an address lookup as part of the process to improve the checkout experience.

Checkout

Key Takeaways

52% of retailers had a removed navigation in the checkout

45% of retailers had address lookup in the checkout
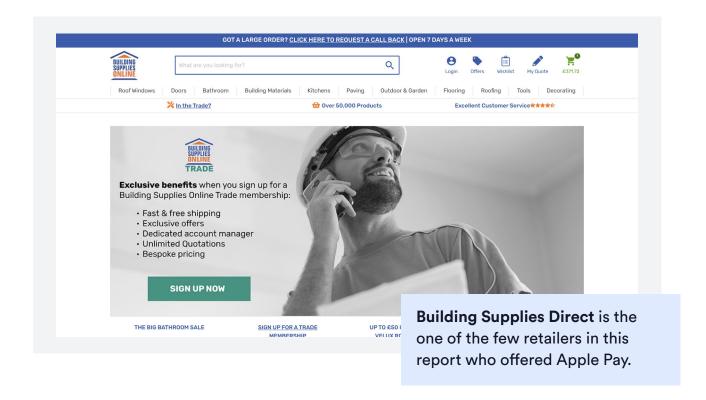
87% of retailers offered guest checkout

Payments

When it comes to payment innovation, business and industrial retailers seem to be falling behind the curve, in comparison to other retailers.

72% of business and industrial retailers clearly displayed the available payment methods before the checkout, either on product pages or in the footer. This can add transparency to the checkout process and increase the add-to-cart rate for retailers.

When it comes to payment methods, **70%** of business and industrial retailers offered payment by PayPal. While this is clearly the most used payment method, this is a lower percentage than other industries. Only **5%** of business and industrial retailers offered Apple Pay or Google Pay which is surprisingly lower than average.
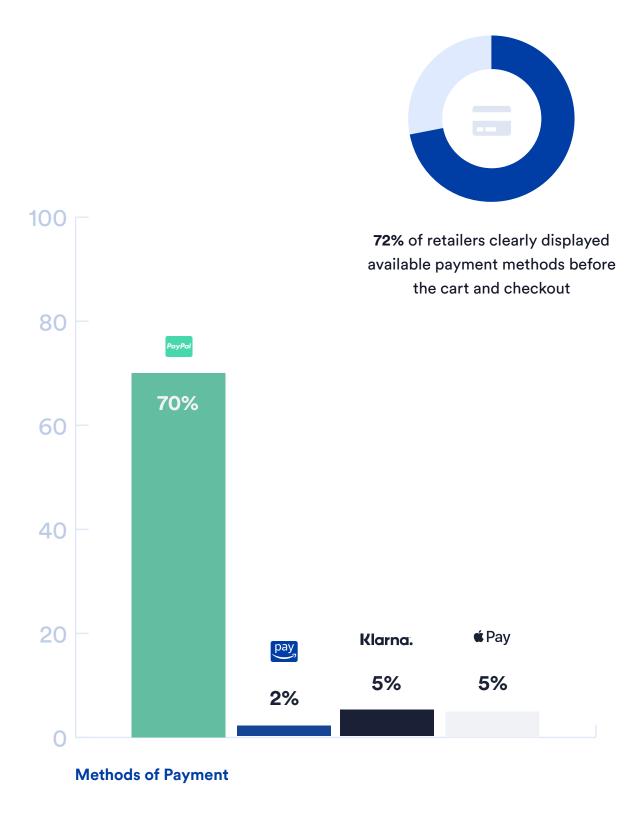
Many business and industrial retailers are stuck with legacy systems and this includes their payment setup. Many are still offering manual invoicing and credit accounts, which complicate an integration with faster technologies such as Apple Pay.

In addition, just **2%** of business and retailers retailers offered Amazon Pay. This is lower than average once again, and another example of where many retailers can improve.

Building Supplies Direct is the one of the few retailers in this report who offered Apple Pay.

Payments

Key Takeaways

72% of retailers clearly displayed available payment methods before the cart and checkout

PayPal

70%

pay

2%

Klarna.

5%

** Pay**

5%

100

80

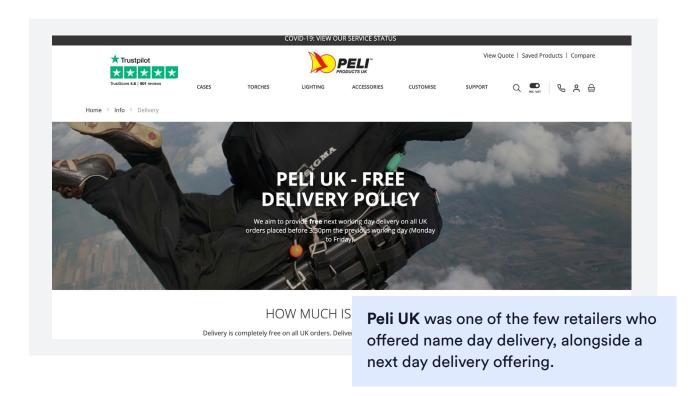60

40

20

0

Methods of Payment

Delivery

Delivery is an interesting trend to recognise in this report, and one of the only tenets of ecommerce that has been undeniably affected by the coronavirus pandemic and lockdown. In this report, points for delivery were given based on usual delivery policies, despite any delays expected during the pandemic. Points are given generously, but if a policy was unclear, no scoring point was given.

68% of business and industrial retailers had both clear delivery and returns information (with **84%** of retailers having clear delivery information and **75%** of retailers having clear returns information). Setting expectations with transparency and honesty is even more important in the current climate and even if retailers cannot provide a brilliant delivery experience, clear information should be communicated where possible.

54% of business and retailers retailers could offer next day delivery (with this information taken from their usual delivery policies). The average cost for this service was **£9.34**.

Despite both delivery times and options being affected by the current crisis, many retailers were still offering flexibility and choice for customers.

Peli UK was one of the few retailers who offered name day delivery, alongside a next day delivery offering.
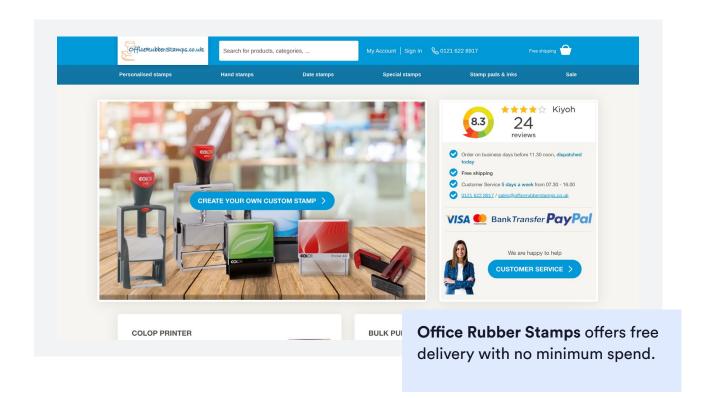
Delivery

Free delivery is another often discussed topic in ecommerce. Some retailers are happy to always offer free delivery, while others will only offer free delivery after a minimum spend. While the majority of customers may expect a delivery charge, especially when making a lower value purchase, free delivery can be an easy way to delight a customer and improve your overall conversion rate.
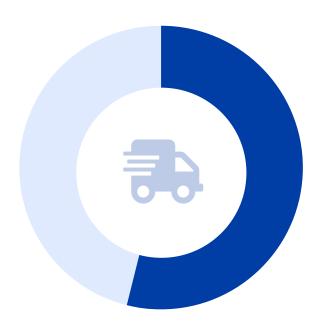
A significantly low **3%** of business and industrial retailers always offered free delivery with no minimum spend.

56% of business and accessories retailers offered free delivery after a minimum spend. This can also be a good way of increasing average basket value, where a shopper may add items to their basket to meet the free delivery threshold - however in an industry where a basket may only include one or two high value items, this may not be as effective. The average minimum spend for free delivery was **£98.34**.

Retailers may not be familiar paying an extra delivery charge on products over a certain value and many will expect the charge to be waived on products in the £0,000s - similar to how there would be other perks and benefits when making a purchase in store.

Office Rubber Stamps offers free delivery with no minimum spend.

Delivery

Key Takeaways

54% of retailers offered next day delivery, at an average cost of **£9.34**.

68% of retailers clearly displayed links to their delivery **and** returns information on their site.
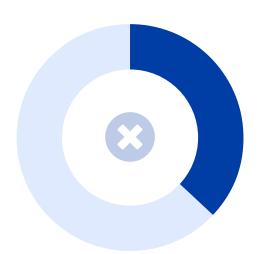
Delivery

3% of retailers offered
free delivery with no minimum spend

56% of retailers offered
free delivery after a minimum spend

37% of retailers
did not offer free delivery

Scoring Criteria

How Retailers Were Scored

Scoring Criteria

The **Business and Industrial (B2B) 100** retailers were chosen to represent the average ecommerce retailer. These retailers are based across the UK, across various sub-verticals and various stages of growth. The final list of a hundred retailers gives us useful insight into the industry that other retailers can benchmark themselves against.

The scoring system is based on Fluid's view of ecommerce best practice, covering speed and security, user experience, search and navigation, community and loyalty, payment and checkout, and delivery and returns. Scores are weighted across 48 criteria (and 21 scoring points). **Retailers' final scores are converted to a percentage using the formula: =100/21*(Score).**

Speed and Security

1 pt for a Google PageSpeed Insights score between 90 - 100, and **0.5 pts** for a score between 50 - 89, for mobile and desktop.

0.5 pts pts for SSL and **1 pt** for EV SSL.

User Experience

0.5 pts for product imagery, **0.5 pts** for lifestyle product imagery, and **0.5 pts** for multiple product images.

0.5 pts for product zoom on desktop, with an extra **0.5 pts** for controllable zoom functionality.

0.5 pts for product recommendations on product pages.

Mobile UX

1 pt for product zoom on mobile, with intuitive mobile zoom gestures (pinch, double tap etc.)

0.25 pts for email-input keyboards on mobile, and **0.25 pts** for number-input keyboards on mobile.

0.5 pts for 'add to cart' confirmation messaging and actions on mobile.

0.5 pts for mobile responsiveness.

Navigation

0.25 pts for breadcrumbs on collection pages, and **0.25 pts** for breadcrumbs on product pages.

0.5 pts for filtering options on collection pages. **0.25 pts** for sorting by price functionality, and **0.25 pts** for sorting by popularity functionality on collection pages.

Scoring Criteria

Search

0.5 pts for on-site search.

0.25 pts for dynamic on-site search with search suggestions and **0.25 pts** for dynamic on-site search with product recommendations.

Reviews, Trust and Loyalty

0.5 pts for reviews on the homepage, and **0.5 pts** for reviews on product pages.

0.5 pts for reassurance icons or messaging in the header.

0.5 pts for a promoted loyalty programme.

Community

0.25 pts for an active Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or LinkedIn profile, updated within the last two weeks (**1 pt** total).

0.25 pts for a blog or helpful guides section.

Payments

0.5 pts for clear payment icons before the cart.

0.25 pts for offering Klarna or similar scheme, **0.25 pts** for offering PayPal, **0.25 pts** for offering Amazon Pay and **0.25 pts** for offering Apple Pay or Google Pay.

Checkout

0.5 pts for product imagery in the cart.

0.5 pts for product imagery in the checkout.

0.5 pts for a multi-page checkout.

0.5 pts for removed navigation in the checkout.

0.5 pts for address lookup in the checkout.

0.5 pts for guest checkout.

Delivery and Returns

0.5 pts for clear, easy-to-find delivery information and **0.25 pts** for clear, easy-to-find returns information.

0.5 pts for next day delivery and **0.5 pts** for named day delivery.

0.5 pts for free delivery (with or without a minimum spend).

Points for delivery were given based on usual delivery policies, despite any delays expected during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Points were given generously, but if a policy or functionality was unclear or unusable, no scoring point was given.

Get started

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🐦 fluid_commerce

📷 fluidcommerce

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