

# In France, the Pandemic Has Boosted Ecommerce for Good

## ARTICLE |

### eMarketer Editors

**T**he stringent lockdown in France has boosted ecommerce dramatically as consumers purchase more products online and make fewer in-store trips.

According to the Fédération du e-commerce et de la vente à distance (FEVAD), retail ecommerce sales in France declined in March 2020 but recovered rapidly in April. Across 40 digital retailers surveyed, ecommerce sales (excluding grocery) were up between 11% and 21% in April. Retailers of tech and entertainment products reported sales gains of 26% to 27%, compared with the beginning of March. If grocery sales were included, April ecommerce sales would have posted even greater increases.

“Crucially, many consumers don’t anticipate reverting to pre-pandemic buying behavior after the crisis abates,” said Karin von Abrams, eMarketer principal analyst at Insider Intelligence and author of our latest report, “[France Ecommerce 2020](#).”

In an April 2020 GlobalWebIndex survey, 23% of internet users in France ages 16 to 64 said they expected to visit physical stores less frequently post-pandemic, and 27% planned to spend less time in-

store. Some 15% of respondents said they would adopt click and collect, and 17% would shop more online for home delivery.

**Coronavirus Impact: Expected Post-Outbreak Shopping Behaviors Among Internet Users in France, Germany and Italy, April 2020**  
 % of respondents

	France	Germany	Italy
Digitally buy more for home delivery	17%	26%	32%
Digitally buy more for in-store collection	15%	9%	14%
Spend more time digitally browsing/researching before visiting stores	14%	18%	22%
Visit stores less frequently	23%	34%	29%
Spend less time inside stores	27%	35%	33%
Make more use of self-service checkouts	10%	14%	11%
None	41%	31%	30%

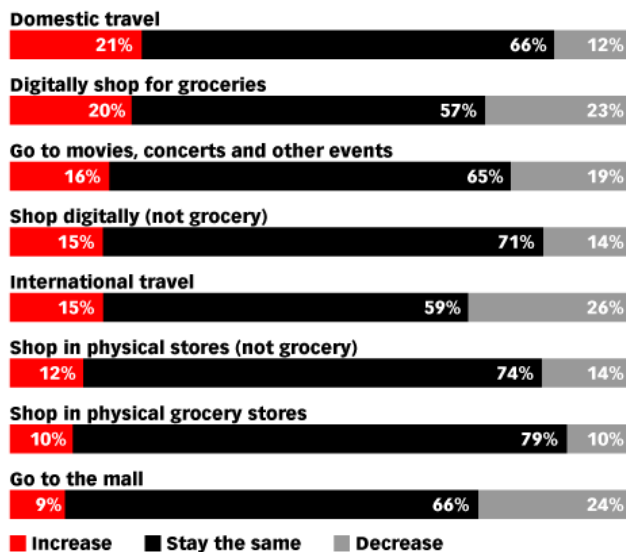
*Note: ages 16-64*  
 Source: GlobalWebIndex, "Coronavirus Research: Multi-Market Research Wave 3," April 29, 2020

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Some consumers plan to do more online shopping in the future. In an April 2020 survey conducted by McKinsey & Company, 20% of adults in France thought their digital grocery shopping would increase after the pandemic, and 15% thought they would shop more online for nongrocery items. Some 14% of respondents said they expected to shop less in physical (nongrocery) stores, and 24% planned on fewer visits to shopping malls.

## Change in Consumer Behavior After the Coronavirus Pandemic\* According to Adults in France, April 2020

% of respondents



Note: ages 18+; numbers may not add up to 100% due to rounding;

\*compared to before the coronavirus pandemic

Source: McKinsey & Company, "COVID-19 Consumer Sentiment Pulse" as cited in company blog, April 24, 2020

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"During lockdown, some consumers may have overestimated how much their future behavior will change and may readily revert to older habits later this year or next if physical shopping feels genuinely safe again," von Abrams said. "At the moment, that seems a long distance away."

Moreover, the convenience of ecommerce may win some shoppers over permanently—and not just grocery shoppers. The GlobalWebIndex survey found that many internet users in France who expected to buy more digitally post-pandemic were also interested in shopping more in other product categories. Some 15% said they would be more likely to order clothes online, as well as food and grocery items. Double-digit percentages of respondents also thought they might order more cosmetics, beauty products, household essentials, personal care items and personal electronics online.

For more on ecommerce behavior in France and how the country's retail landscape compares with Western Europe, eMarketer PRO subscribers can read our recent report:

**Report** by Karin von Abrams Jun 11, 2020

## France Ecommerce 2020

### FRANCE ECOMMERCE 2020

Digital Sales Soar as Total  
Retail Suffers

JUNE 2020  
eMarketer Research  
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