



Strictly embargoed until 07:00 on 12 January 2021

Very.co.uk has record-breaking Christmas and Black Friday

Multi-category online retailer [Very.co.uk](https://www.very.co.uk) increased retail sales by 25.2% year-on-year in the seven weeks up to and including 25 December 2020 to record its best ever Christmas trading period. This follows strong trading throughout 2020.

The brand is owned by the UK's largest integrated online retailer and financial services provider [The Very Group](https://www.theverygroup.com), which also operates [Littlewoods.com](https://www.littlewoods.com).

Very.co.uk highlights

- Strong retail sales growth, up 25.2% year-on-year over the seven week period
- Home and electrical were the standout categories, up 46.2% and 44.8% respectively
- Over 500,000 new customers, up 25.5% year-on-year
- 139m website visits, up 49.7% year-on-year, with 100% site resilience
- Sales via the Very mobile app up 33% year-on-year
- Retail sales for the Black Friday promotional period (6 November to 2 December) up 25.8% and web traffic up 55% year-on-year, representing Very's best ever Black Friday period
- 3.9m orders processed – peaking at 265 orders per minute – through the Group's new highly automated fulfilment centre, which launched in March 2020
- Delivered up to an industry-leading Christmas cut off time of 7pm on 22 December
- The Group was well prepared for Brexit and has seen no significant operational impact as a result of the new UK-EU trading relationship

Very.co.uk retail highlights

Home and electrical the star categories

- As consumers continued to invest in their homes, the home category grew 46.2%, led by bedding and soft furnishings (+61.0%); furniture (+47.5%) and beds (+47.2%). Very also saw 200.5% growth in home improvement, comprising flooring and paint, as more customers started DIY projects during the pandemic.
- Customers prioritised entertaining their families this Christmas, with electrical up 44.8%. This was buoyed by gaming, up 106.4% following the launches of PS5 and Xbox Series X consoles, and vision, up 45.3%.
- As the whole family continued new, healthy habits, fashion and sports increased 4.1%, driven by womens sportswear (+37.6%), mens sportswear (+22.2%) and kids sportswear (+33.1%).
- Continuing trends for wellbeing and self-care during the pandemic helped 'other' categories – driven by fragrance and beauty (+12.2%), and cycling (+4.7%) – grow 4.0%.
- Among the top sellers by total sales were:
 - PS5 and Xbox Series X games consoles
 - Apple AirPods
 - Samsung 4k Ultra HD TVs
- Among the top sellers by units were:
 - Apple AirPods
 - Fleece pillows
 - Amazon Echo Dot smart speakers

Group highlights

Including Littlewoods, group retail sales grew 18.1% in the seven weeks to 25 December 2020.



Revenue, including financial services income, at Very increased 23.3% year-on-year, while overall group revenue grew 15.3% year-on-year to surpass £500m for the period for the first time.

Even better customer service

- 150,000 customers a week used the Very Assistant chatbot, which draws on artificial intelligence to automatically recognise and answer customer service queries in a text chat environment.
- As a result of the success of the chatbot, improved customer service performance and enhanced delivery processes, customer service contact reduced 25% year-on-year.
- Over 500 UK customer care colleagues worked from home for the first time during peak.

Personalised customer experience

- Very further enhanced its customer focus, using artificial intelligence to provide additional, highly tailored product recommendations that complemented items already added to customers' baskets.
- With a new targeted promotions feature on the Very app, the company offered app customers exclusive deals that were relevant for them via push notifications.
- On Black Friday, Very customers saw deals on whatever page they landed, not just on the homepage. Relevant, targeted promotions were added to every product page, allowing customers to find the right products at the best price.

Operational highlights

- Delivered 7.8m Very and Littlewoods parcels up to an industry-leading Christmas cut off time of 7pm on 22 December via delivery partners Yodel, Arrow XL and Royal Mail.
- 3.9m orders processed from the Group's new state of the art fulfilment centre, Skygate, which can take an item from order placement to dispatch in just 30 minutes. The fastest item processed during peak at Skygate took just 18 minutes.

Henry Birch, CEO at The Very Group, said:

"We are delighted with Very's outstanding performance, which shows UK families were more determined than ever to celebrate this Christmas, despite all the challenges of 2020. Because we sell everything our customers could possibly want except food, are online only and offer a range of payment options, we were perfectly placed to help a record number of people make the most of the festive period.

"Christmas shopping started early at Very and our committed team worked tirelessly to deliver for our customers. Continued appetite for entertaining the family and home improvement during the pandemic resulted in strong growth across our electrical and home categories, in particular.

"Our record-breaking performance was supported by our new fulfilment centre, which processed 3.9m orders during peak; an incredible achievement for a facility that only launched in March this year, when the first national lockdown was announced.

"While the economic picture remains unpredictable, we have strong momentum as we begin the year. I believe our resilient, flexible and proven business model, which is online, multicategory and offers customers flexible payment options, will continue to help us thrive in 2021."

Ends



THE VERY GROUP

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Notes to editors

About The Very Group

[The Very Group](#) is the UK's largest integrated pureplay digital retailer and financial services provider, with annual sales of over £2bn.

Our largest and fastest growing retail brand is [Very.co.uk](#), supported by the [Littlewoods.com](#) and [Littlewoodsireland.ie](#) brands.

We receive an average of 1.9m website visits every day with 82% of online sales completed on mobile devices.

We sell 1,900 famous brands, including big name labels and our own exclusive brands. We serve four and a half million customers, delivering 49 million products every year.

We exist to make good things easily accessible to more people and our aim is to be the number one destination for shoppers who value flexible ways to pay.

By offering customers the brands they love and options to spread the cost, we help them say yes when it really matters.

We have over a hundred years of history behind us, but at our heart there is a passion for change – to constantly improve what we do, to innovate with data and technology at our core and to be the best possible place to work.

For more information, visit [our website](#) or follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).



Littlewoods