COVID Changed Women's Shopping Behaviors, Desires, And Expectations According To New National Study From Meredith And The Harris Poll

More than 8 in 10 women say their shopping habits have permanently changed since the pandemic

NEW YORK, Nov. 16, 2021 /**PRNewswire**/ -- The COVID-19 pandemic has created space for women to reprioritize their energy and resources, including re-evaluating what matters most when it comes to retail, according to a new exclusive national study from **Meredith Corporation** and The Harris Poll.

"Women are using their time during the pandemic to re-evaluate all aspects of their lives, from everyday routines to deeper evolution around their life goals and health," said Britta Cleveland, Meredith's Senior Vice President for Research Solutions. "This means change ahead for retail, as women look to turn their new priorities into action."

Among the many other notable findings, the Meredith-Harris Poll**study** reveals three key shopping trends accelerated by the pandemic:

#1: Creating demand now starts with digital
#2: In-store retail needs a glow-up as digital shopping grows
#3: Women are intentionally directing spending to brands that support their values and community

As the largest media company focused on adult women in the U.S., Meredith is committed to improving women's lives through daily information and inspiration. The company's trusted multi-platform brands, which include PEOPLE, Better Homes & Gardens, Allrecipes, Southern Living, and REAL SIMPLE, focus on entertainment news, house and home, food, style, health, fitness, travel and luxury, and parenting.

The study, Shopping Confessions, is the third annual collaboration between Meredith and The Harris Poll.

Previous collaborations between the two produced "**Gen Z Women**," a 2020 study revealing this demographic's unique perspectives on life, career, relationships, racial injustice, and social media, and "**Burnout Flashpoint**," a 2019 study delving into the stress epidemic affecting the American woman.

Looking more closely at this year's study:

Digital is the future to cultivating desire

Modern window shopping and checkout is being fueled by digital wish lists, social media, influencers, and editors/experts.

Digital discovery continues to be optimized as retailers work to bring the serendipity of new finds online. Nearly 6 in 10 Gen Z women (59%) find out about new products from social media advertising. More than half (52%) say email outreach has driven purchases, but a slightly higher percentage (56%) admit they are "drowning in junk email from stores / brands that I have purchased from."

When it comes to influence, priorities are shifting from size and status toward authenticity and expertise. Survey data show that micro influencers (fewer than 100,000 followers) have the greatest

trust when it comes to product recommendations. Similarly, editors and subject matter experts are more trusted than celebrities.

Women are resetting their in-store retail expectations

Her in-person shopping expectations are rising as she's increasingly comfortable shopping across digital platforms.

Women are excited to get back to in-store shopping, citing the tactile experience and instant gratification as the most anticipated elements. Women 40 and under are particularly seeking the social experience that comes with shopping in-store. Yet women imagine this experience looking different than it did pre-pandemic, with heightened expectations and new needs. Nearly half (47%) of women 40 and under admit, "everything looks outdated to me now as we exit the pandemic, so I'm looking forward to seeking new experiences."

Women 40 and under are more likely to be wooed by upgrades such as in-store food and beverage offerings and comfortable lounge spaces, while women over 40 are more concerned with COVID safety precautions.

Women are more intentional about buying brands that align with their values

Research suggests that one lasting impact to post-COVID retail expectations is heightened intentionality around purchase choices, including brands that have a positive impact on society.

Survey data shows that women are voting with their wallets to prioritize employee treatment, "give back" programs, and small business support. The pandemic has driven this small business-first mentality as 70% of women attest, "I witnessed a lot of local businesses struggle or go out of business, so I'm trying to shop locally more often."

Sustainability is also an increasing driver for brand preference, as 59% of women across generations agreed that "shopping online is often wasteful with its packaging," and 56% of women agreed with the statement, "I'm staying away from fast fashion because it's unsustainable."

For additional information

To learn more about the study, please **RSVP** to join Meredith and The Harris Poll for the Shopping Confessions summit from 3:30 to 4:30 pm Eastern Standard Time on November 16. To schedule a presentation, get customized insights that relate to your brand, or gain more details on any groups represented in the data, please see the appropriate contacts listed at the end of this release.

Survey Methodology: This survey was conducted online within the U.S. by The Harris Poll on behalf of Meredith from July 30 to August 11, 2021, among 2,623 women. The study also comprised qualitative diaries and interviews with 21 women who varied in race, age, and sexual orientation. Survey audience included Black (n=326), Latina (n=381), AAPI (n=213), 1st/2nd Generation American (n=1,218), and LGBTQIA (n=386) women. The generational breakdown was as follows: Gen Z (n=771), Millennials (n=810), Gen X (n=517), and Boomers (n=525). Women 40 and under refers to Gen Z and Millennials combined (n=1,581), and women above 40 refers to Gen X and Boomers combined (n=1,042).

ABOUT MEREDITH CORPORATION

Meredith Corporation (NYSE: MDP) is a multi-platform media and marketing company that provides information and inspiration to women's lives daily through our trusted brands, including PEOPLE, Better Homes & Gardens, Allrecipes, Southern Living, and REAL SIMPLE. We create content and experiences focused on entertainment news, house and home, food, style, health, fitness, travel and luxury, and parenting – priority topics for our largely female audience.

With our long history of demonstrated integrity, editorial excellence, and deep consumer insights, we have earned relationships with 190 million Americans across media platforms, including digital, magazines, performance marketing, and brand licensing. Our rich proprietary data and sophisticated technology platform provide unparalleled insights and best-in-class advertising and performance marketing solutions.

Meredith's Local Media Group portfolio includes 17 television stations concentrated in large, fast-growing markets, with seven stations in the nation's Top 25 markets, including Atlanta, Phoenix, St. Louis, and Portland.

ABOUT THE HARRIS POLL

The Harris Poll is one of the longest-running surveys in the U.S., tracking public opinion, motivations, and social sentiment since 1963. It is now part of Harris Insights & Analytics, a global consulting and market research firm that strives to reveal the authentic values of modern society to inspire leaders to create a better tomorrow. **harrispoll.com**

SOURCE Meredith Corporation

For further information: Business and Research, Britta Cleveland, Senior Vice President for Research Solutions, Phone: (212) 499-1800, E-mail: Britta.Cleveland@Meredith.com; or Media, Mike Lovell, Executive Director, Corporate Communications, Phone: (515) 284-3622, E-mail: Mike.Lovell@Meredith.com

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