



Consumer Brands Shifting Marketing Dollars To Military Channels

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As a marketing channel, the military has proven to be a safe haven for leading brands during the COVID 19 crisis who are looking for short term stability while building long term loyalty.

According to recent sales figures released by the Army and Navy, increases in spending within the U.S. military channel have increased at record levels during the past month.

The Army, in a recent article in Stars and Stripes, reported on-line sales in April at its Army and Air Force Exchange (AAFES) stores rose 157 percent over last year, while on-line sales climbed 72.8 percent.

At the Navy Exchange (NEX) stores, retail sales spiked 64.2 percent for the month of April and 35.2 percent year to date.

As a retail channel, the US military represents a substantial and steady source with more than 12 million authorized shoppers accounting for \$17.1 billion in sales.

"Military families from all branches of service provide a reliable and high-quality consumer audience for stimulating trial and developing brand loyalty for Nestle Purina's portfolio of products, even during volatile times such as the crises period we're facing now" said Debbie Kesler, Military Account Manager, Nestle Purina PetCare. "The military families globally continue to provide a safe and steady consumer audience for our growing array of pet products."

Others echo the fact that, now more than ever, marketing to members of the military has proven to be an opportunity to generate brand loyalty among a stable consumer base.

"As we navigate the COVID-19 new normal. We are thankful for the partnership we have forged

with our military consumers over the decades. During this time, we value their continued loyalty and patronage,” said Winston Lowe, Reynolds Consumer Products.

bBIG Communications, the market leader in US Military digital consumer shopping confirms that the military market has become an attractive channel to many consumer brands because of its stability, with its members having job and healthcare security, as well as its demographic as most of its members are young, educated and just getting started raising a family.

“It’s a great opportunity for brands that market to families to begin generating brand trial and loyalty,” said David Gibson, president of bBIG Communications. bBIG is the leading marketer within the military exchange stores as well as on-line with a database of nearly three million active military personnel that it markets to with monthly on-line circulars that include cost saving, loyalty programs.

As a result, many brands are finding a concentrated pool of young, stable shoppers with families who are accustomed to on-line shopping but for the first time they are now looking for a wide array of household items.

“The military consumers have proven to be a stable audience for our brands and product lines in 2020, both before and during the COVID-19 pandemic” said JD Fenessy, National Sales Director Military Del Monte Foods. “We see the military market as not just an avenue to generate sales in the short term but as a quality community for investment in our brands down the road as well.”

Sites like [MyMilitarySavings.com](https://www.mymilitarysavings.com) and MilitaryWivesSaving.com serve as shopping hubs and lifestyle communities for US military personnel and their families with ongoing savings of consumer goods through partnerships with leading consumer packaged goods companies.

“We’ve seen an increase in the number of brands looking to tap into this market because of the stability it offers,” said Gibson.

Gibson notes bBIG actively measures sales results from its in-store and on-line campaigns and is seeing a wide range of products across many categories that are now flourishing within the military channel.

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