

Shopping Behavior for CPG Brands Continues Shifting Two Years after COVID-19 Declared a Pandemic

Per Catalina Data, Many Categories Continue Outpacing Pre-Pandemic Spending

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[/EINPresswire.com/](https://www.einpresswire.com/) -- Two years after the World Health Organization officially declared COVID-19 a global pandemic on March 11, 2020, shopper intelligence leader Catalina has continued to monitor its Buyer Intelligence Platform to closely track the pandemic's impact on buying behavior at grocery stores across the U.S. Many categories that experienced high growth during the pandemic's first year have retreated partially, but remain higher than pre-pandemic levels. Other previously struggling categories have seen modest increases over the past year.

The COVID-19 Effect Grocery Buying Behavior 2 Years Later



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Grocery categories such as Home Health Testing, Cleaning Products and Comfort Food were among those most impacted during the first two years of the pandemic.

Also, in looking at the past two years of data beginning with the week ending Feb. 15, 2020, when coronavirus concerns first started to grow, shoppers made more trips than average in March 2020 when the pandemic set in, but drastically reduced trips that April as they began sheltering at home. The subsequent impact of lockdowns, masking and social distancing paved the way for a lasting decline in weekly, in-person shopping trips starting in May 2020, compared to the prior year. That trend continues as guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) continue to shift. While people by and large have been shopping less, they continue to buy more in-store. Spending per trip has increased by 22 percent on average, compared to pre-pandemic levels. Overall, average weekly spending on groceries has increased by 16%.

The [Top 10 categories](#) seeing the greatest sales growth during year one of the pandemic have either seen strong year-over-year increases since 2019 (pre-pandemic) or experienced declines last year. These include Home Health Testing, Liquid Hand Soaps, Cheese Slices, Bacon, Personal Moist Towelettes, Refrigerated Snacks/Cakes, Disinfectant Cleaners, Camping Sports & Accessories, Breaded Frozen Vegetables and Frozen Cookie & Brownie Dough. The majority are still above where they were when the pandemic began.

A year ago, face masks accounted for 80% of the home health testing category. Their strong sales performance has continued even as masking guidelines established by the CDC have evolved, and COVID-19 home testing kits were launched in April 2021.



A look at sales data from select baking categories shows that the popularity of home baking during Year 1 of the pandemic may have dissipated a bit but is still strong.

The data also reveals that people by and large are still conscious about fighting germs, just not as much, with sales for liquid hand soaps, personal moist towelettes, and household disinfectants all dropping in 2021, but currently still reflecting higher sales than pre-pandemic levels.

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Our data analytics help retailers and CPG brands identify relevant audiences and develop marketing, media and activation strategies that both predict and influence purchase decisions in real time.”

Sean Murphy, Catalina's Chief Data & Analytics Officer

Three of the Top 10 categories are foods that continue to show an increased appetite for convenience and/or comfort, including processed cheese slices, bacon, refrigerated cookie & brownie dough and snacks/cakes, and frozen breaded vegetables. An outlier includes the camping/sports accessories category, which continues to reflect consumers wanting to spend more time outdoors.

[BAKING](#)

The rise of home baking as a hobby has stuck, though not at the same level as Year 1, as categories like flour, condensed milk, baking extracts and waxed paper products have fallen, but are still higher than pre-pandemic levels. Scratch baking may not be quite as popular with yeast sales continuing to decline over the past year, but brownie, cookie and cornbread mixes

continue to sell well.

ADULT BEVERAGES

With most bars and restaurants either closed, open only for takeout, and/or offering limited seating, adult beverages experienced strong in-store sales upticks the first year of the pandemic. There was a pull-back as more people started socializing and dining out again in 2021-22, though sales of alcoholic beverages are still above pre-pandemic levels.

PERSONAL CARE

With so many Americans working or studying from home during Year 1 of the pandemic, sales of personal care products initially dropped but then started to recover as COVID

transmission and hospitalization rates began to fall early in Year 2. They then started to decline again when the Omicron variant began to spread later in the year.

APPLYING THE DATA

According to Catalina's Chief Data & Analytics Officer Sean Murphy, Catalina's data scientists and advanced analytics teams rely on the company's extensive Buyer Intelligence Platform for insights on evolving shopping behavior. "By applying our analytics skills and a combination of Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning tools to such data, we can more effectively help retailers and CPG brands identify relevant audiences and develop marketing, media and activation strategies that both predict and influence purchase decisions in real time," said Murphy.

Download Infographic: <https://www.catalina.com/shopper-insights/infographic-covid-buying-behavior-impact>

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The COVID-19 Effect Grocery Buying Behavior 2 Years Later: PERSONAL CARE



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With so many sheltering at home during Year 1 of the pandemic, sales of personal care products declined, only to see a modest increase in Year 2.

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/565683925>

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