



24 September 2020

PRESS RELEASE

Consumers welcome increase in green packaging for online goods

As online ordering rose rapidly in 2020, particularly during the Coronavirus lockdown, consumers across the UK have welcomed the increased use of sustainable packaging by online retailers but have signalled that there is more to be done to make their packaging even greener.

Macfarlane Packaging today (24 September) releases the results of its fifth annual “unboxing” survey of UK consumers where respondents lift the lid on their experiences of opening online deliveries. The 2020 survey looked specifically at the quality of packaging and the environmental credentials of retailers’ packaging choices.

Results from the consumer survey show a welcome increase in sustainable packaging, with 63% of survey respondents saying that packages were recyclable compared to 51% in 2019. Findings also demonstrate an opportunity for retailers to improve customer experience with pack branding and clear returns information. The survey shows that 32% of respondents received packs without branding and 33% of packages had no returns information.

During the COVID lockdown restrictions, many eCommerce stores experienced a dramatic increase in online orders. As people were told to stay at home, buying habits changed instantly with online shopping growing 129% week on week* putting many shipping operations under strain. Yet our survey results showed that 89% of respondents said that the packaging appeared to be of the same overall quality as before the pandemic.

Commenting on the survey results, **Laurel Granville, Marketing Director of Macfarlane Packaging**, said: *“2020 has been an extraordinary year for us all and we know that consumers are rapidly moving to online shopping. Our survey shows that despite the restrictions during lockdown, retailers are continuing to focus on improving the unboxing experience for their customers.*

“Our survey this year also reveals that, in response to consumer demand, retailers have been making encouraging improvements in their environmental packaging and this has been noticed by consumers. It also highlights the opportunities to improve the unboxing experience for their customers through the use of packaging branding and the inclusion of returns information.”

“At Macfarlane Packaging we offer expert advice in packaging across a diverse range of sectors and hope that this consumer feedback is of benefit to retailers on the areas that people place most importance.”

The completed surveys covered goods in the Fashion, Health and Beauty, Home and Garden and Food and Drink sectors, with goods ranging from cosmetics and perfume to large furniture. The survey was carried out across summer 2020 and was designed to provide retailers with valuable feedback from consumers.

Full details of the survey responses can be found here:

<https://www.macfarlanepackaging.com/unboxing-2020/>

The annual unboxing survey provides retailers with valuable consumer feedback on the experience of receiving and opening items that were purchased online. The experience of opening a package containing a product ordered online has become known as “unboxing”. Video and consumer reviews of not only products but the packaging that they arrive in are an important consideration for retailers.

Source: <https://internetretailing.net/covid-19/covid-19/online-shopping-surges-by-129-across-uk-and-europe-and-ushers-in-new-customer-expectations-of-etail-21286>

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Notes to Editors:

- Macfarlane Group PLC is listed on the London Stock Exchange (LSE: MACF) in the Industrials Sector
- The company is headquartered in Glasgow, Scotland and has more than 70 years' experience in the UK packaging industry. Macfarlane Group's businesses are:
 - **Macfarlane Packaging** is the leading UK distributor of a comprehensive range of protective packaging products
 - **Labels** designs and prints high quality self-adhesive and resealable labels, principally for FMCG companies
 - **Packaging Design and Manufacture** designs and produces protective packaging for high value, fragile products
- Macfarlane Group employs over 925 people at 31 sites, principally in the UK, but also in Ireland and Sweden.
- The company has 15,000+ customers in the UK, Europe and the USA providing 600,000+ lines to a wide range of industry sectors including: consumer goods; food manufacturing; logistics; internet retail; mail order; electronics; defence and aerospace.