



Trendspotting

WITH CRAIG LEVITT

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Trendspotting: Online grocery sales up 17 percent to \$7.8 billion

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Inflation and COVID-19. It seems neither can be avoided, and they both continue to send grocery shoppers to digital devices.

According to the Brick Meets Click/Mercatus Grocery Shopping Survey fielded July 29-30, online grocery sales for July jumped 17 percent year over year to \$7.8 billion.

During July, more than 68 million households went online to buy groceries, a 3 percent gain versus last year, but only the Pickup and Delivery segments benefited from that increased demand. Pickup's monthly active user base expanded more than 5 percent and Delivery's expanded nearly 4 percent during the month. Ship-to-Home's MAU base decreased more than 4 percent.

"COVID-19 concerns coupled with inflation have forced a tradeoff between two fundamental desires for shoppers — not getting infected and not paying more than necessary," said David Bishop, partner at Brick Meets Click. "While online shopping — especially delivery — costs more than in-store shopping, using an online service may help prevent illness, which could cost more in the long term due to lost wages and other life complications."

The research found that only one-fifth of households were "not at all concerned" about catching COVID-19, and 36 percent of those households indicated using a grocery Pickup and/or Delivery service during the past month. As concern increased to "slightly," "somewhat," "very," and "extremely," Pickup and/or Delivery usage rates rose six, 15, 20 and 53 percent, respectively.

The crosswinds caused by inflation and COVID-19 also likely help to explain shifts in where households are shopping online for groceries. Compared to July of last year, mass merchants, which appeals to more cost-conscious shoppers, experienced an increase of just over 1 percent in the number of MAUs while grocery's MAU base decreased more than 10 percent.

[Craig Levitt](#)

About Craig Levitt |

When his dreams of becoming a professional hockey player came crashing down due to lack of talent, Craig Levitt turned to journalism. He graduated from Hofstra University in 1992 and has covered various areas of the retail food trade since 1996. Craig joined The Produce News in 2017 and is now managing editor. In his spare time, Craig still plays men's league hockey (poorly) and enjoys walking the aisles of his favorite supermarket with his wife and two daughters.

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