

HOW TO SELL ONLINE IN FRANCE ?

CHLOE SCHEPMAN

SYNOPSIS

A Mature and booming eCommerce Market

French market specificities

B2B ecommerce

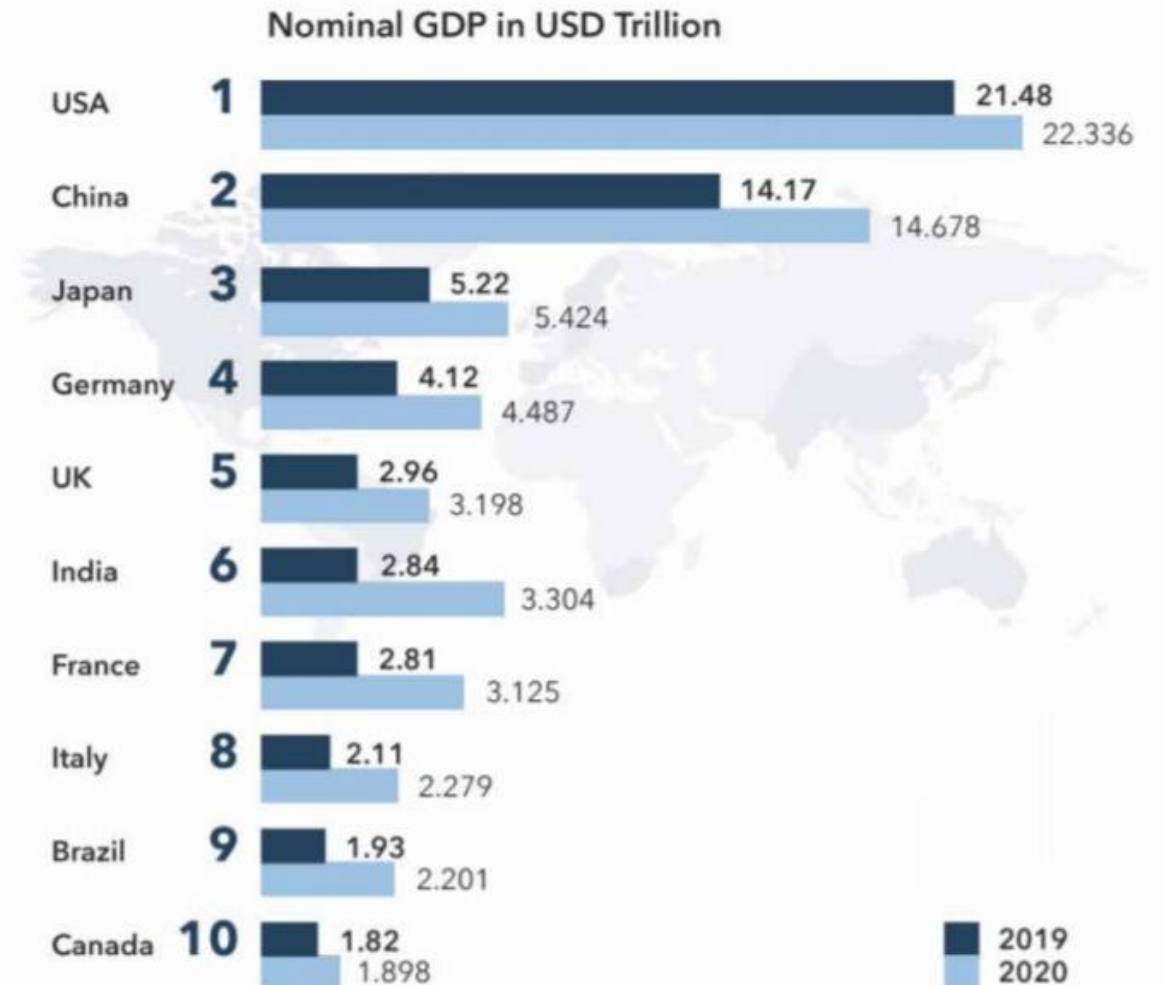
FRANCE: A MATURE ECOMMERCE MARKET

FRANCE: A MATURE ECOMMERCE MARKET

As the world's sixth-largest eCommerce market and seventh-largest economy, France is a highly appealing destination for online merchants.

TOP 10

The World's Biggest Economies for 2019 and 2020



In France...

(Ecommerce Foundation France 2020 Report)

64%
of shoppers buy
cross-border



The challenge for online businesses is NOT convincing the French to buy online, or even spend their eCommerce Euros abroad, as the country has a healthy majority that does both.

What cross-border sellers need to do to be successful in France is understand and cater to the country's unique buying and payment preferences, navigate local banking and legal requirements, and find a way to wrestle market share away from Amazon and the other dominant retailers.

COUNTRY SNAPSHOT



Key facts 2020: France

Capital	Paris
Population	65.1m
Population, aged 15–64 years	40.3m
Households	29.8m
Urban population share	80%
Total current GDP ¹	US\$2,715.8bn
Current GDP ¹ per capita	US\$42,059
Consumer spending ¹ per capita	US\$21,973
Internet penetration	78%
Smartphone penetration	67%
Broadband subscriptions ²	45.5
Average connection speed	24.9 Mbits/s
Social media penetration	55.8%

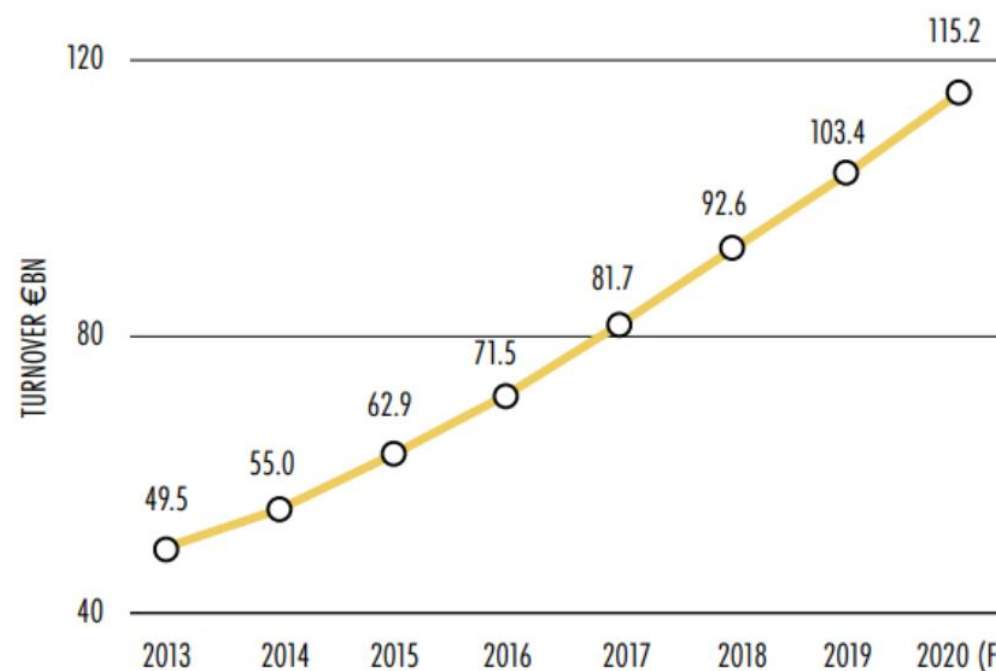
DAZZLING GROWTH OF THE E-COMMERCE MARKET IN 2020

Big brands, independent retailers and online marketplaces combine to create a destination buzzing with healthy competition.

French shoppers have high purchasing power, enjoy buying online and are open to new retailers, making France an ideal destination for both new and established e-commerce businesses.

B2C ECOMMERCE TURNOVER IN €BN, 2013-2020 (F)

The graph shows the B2C ecommerce turnover in France, including goods and services



SOURCE: FEVAD

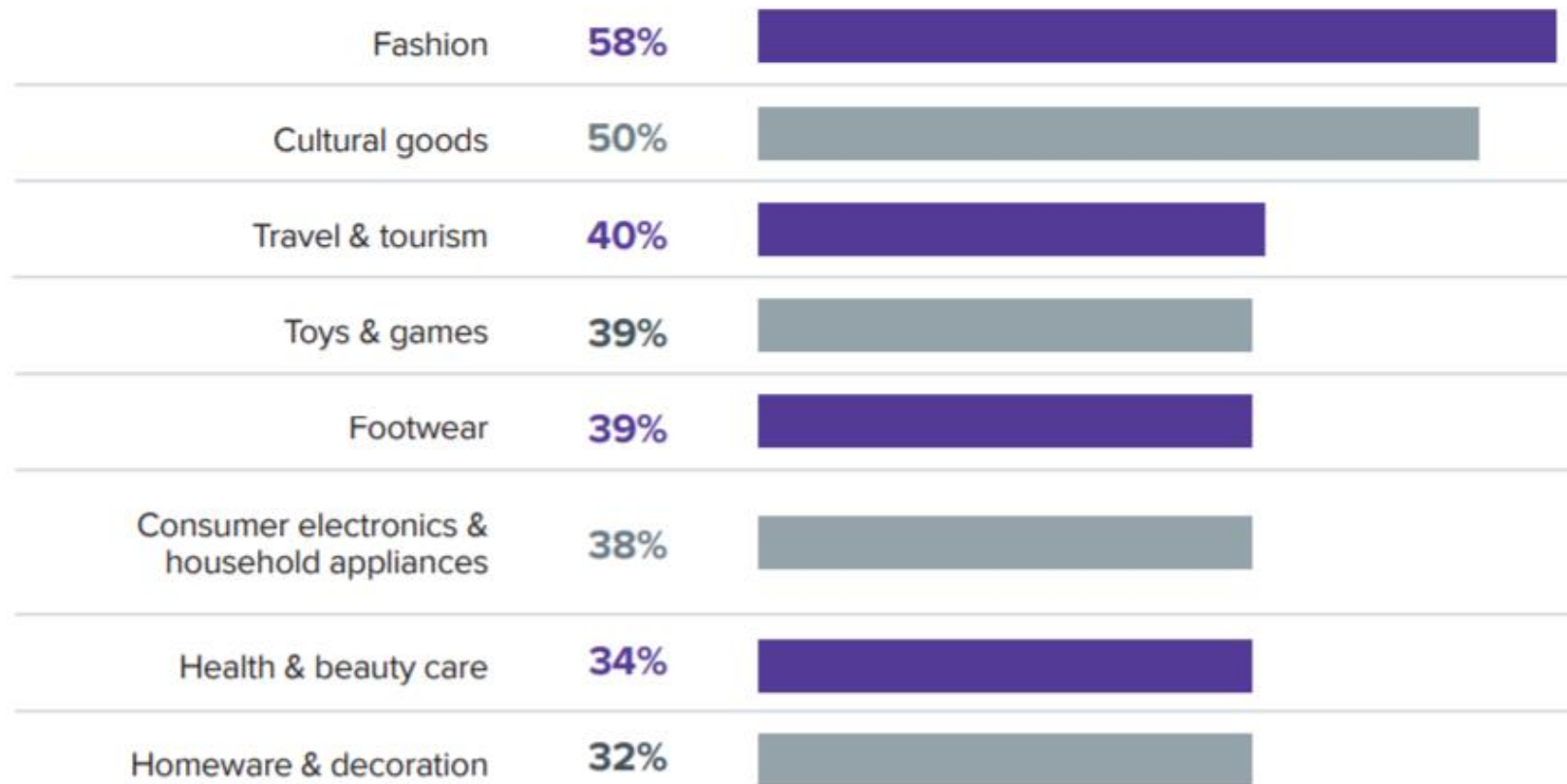
FRENCH MARKET SPECIFICITIES

FRENCH MARKET SPECIFICITIES

French shoppers are happy to shop around and spend at new online stores, but demand reliability and transparency from retailers.

French consumers are spending more online than ever before, with yearly e-commerce spend per person forecast to reach €2,428 in 2020. For retailers looking to sell to France, gaining buyers' trust is essential.





WHAT ARE THE FRENCH BUYING ONLINE?

Fashion, cultural goods and
tourism hold the biggest shares

LOCAL LANGUAGE IS KEY

There is a common expectation that both listings and customer service is provided in the local language.

For many French online marketplaces, it is a requirement.

This factor indicates the importance of taking language and specific cultural characteristics into account, in order to achieve success in the French e-commerce market.

Find yourself a good translation provider to ensure your listings are of a high quality.

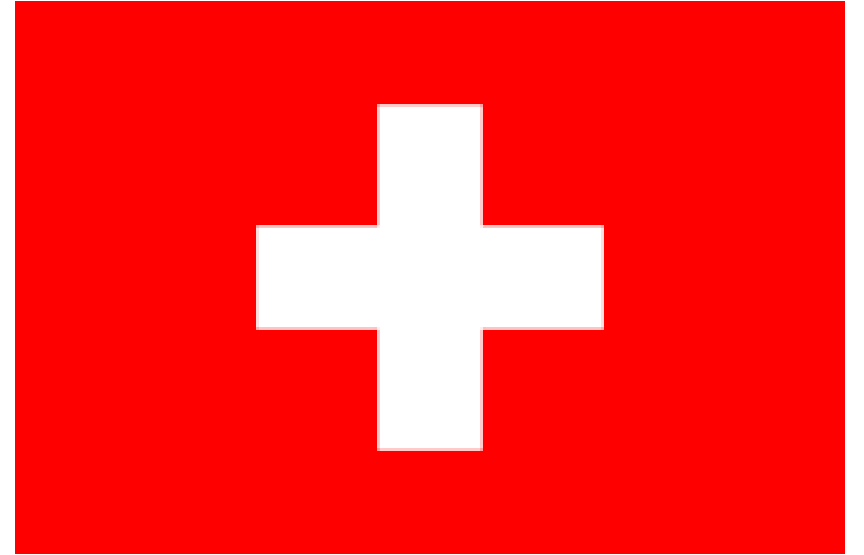


Speaking their language

61% of the French population don't speak English, so most websites selling in France use .fr domains and are in French. Operating in the French language is certain to build customer loyalty, but for international retailers France's competitive marketplaces and platforms offer an easy way to break down the language barrier.

THE GOOD NEWS IS...

Targeting the French market implies accessing neighbouring French-speaking markets, such as Belgium or Switzerland, which account for around 5 million inhabitants with significant online spending habits.



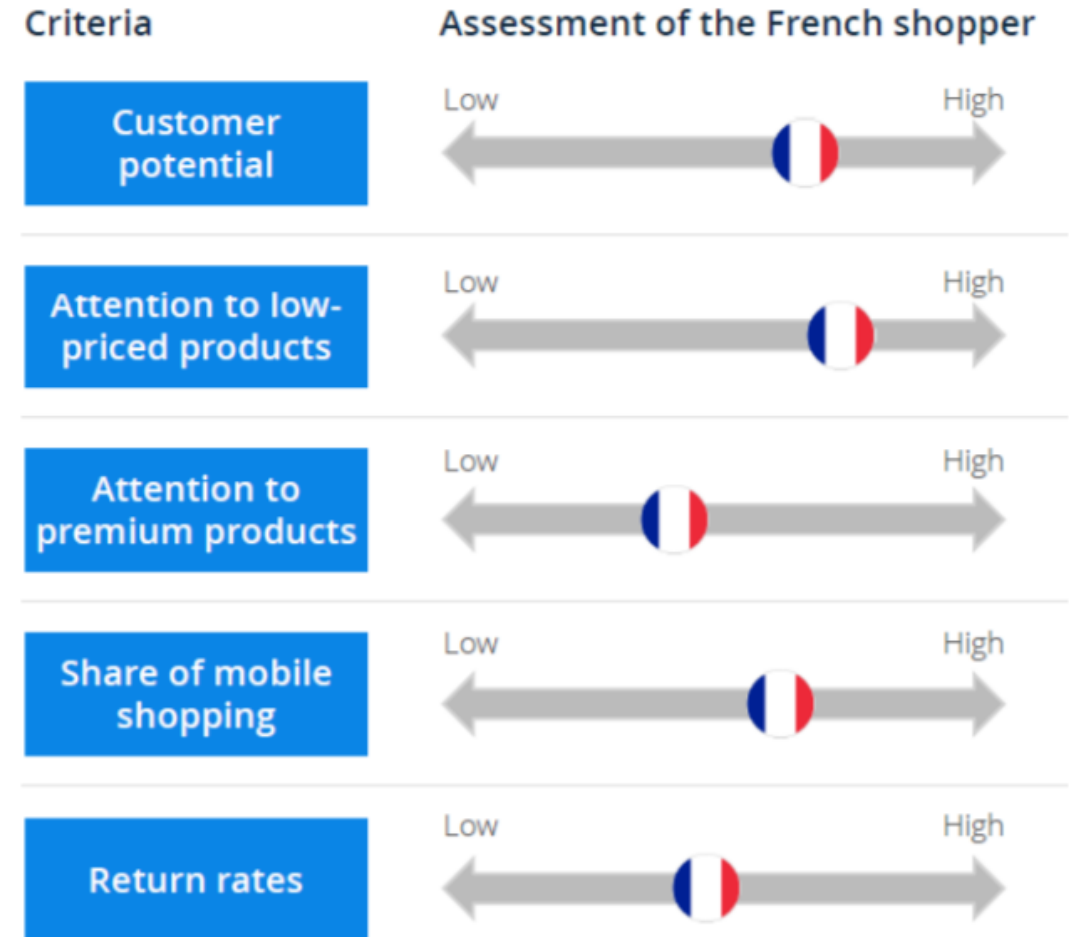
THE FRENCH ONLINE SHOPPER

The French are notorious bargain hunters: 80% compare pricing across merchants before an online purchase

Why do the French shop online?



(Ecommerce Foundation France 2020 Report)



French e-commerce at a glance

The French e-commerce market is high-tech and growing fast.
Let's look at the statistics:



€2,428

**Average
e-commerce
spend**

per e-shopper in 2020



100%

**of the Top 15
retailers**

report mobile traffic to be
higher than desktop



80%

of consumers

compare prices before
purchasing non-grocery items



40%

use Apple Pay



29%

use Google Pay



80%

use bank card

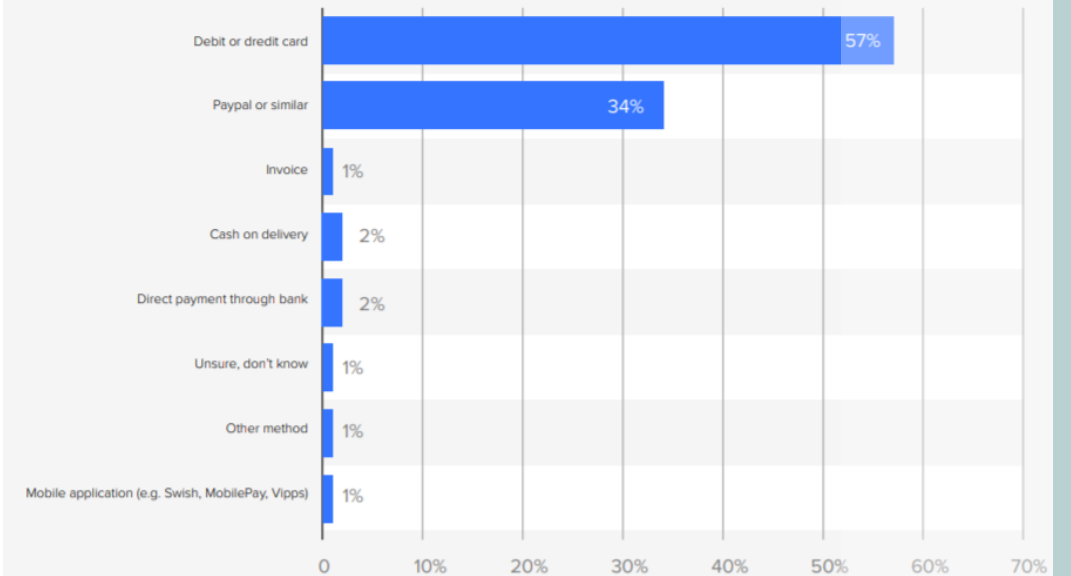
PAYMENT METHOD PREFERENCES

Just as in the UK and other Western European countries, the bank (credit or debit) card is France's most widely used payment method.

=> bank cards first, followed by eWallets, and then direct debit.

While the French clearly prefer bank cards, not just any card will do. In France, the card market is dominated by the local issuer Cartes Bancaires, which makes accepting its network and CBs (Cartes Bancaires) mandatory for any merchant.

Which of the following methods do you prefer to use when you pay for a product you have bought online?



Source
PostNord
© Statista 2020

Additional Information:

France; 2017 to 2020; 1,070 respondents; 15-79 years; Base: have shopped online; Online survey

6 out of 10 French prefer to pay online with a bank card



DELIVERY CHANNELS

The 3 most important delivery factors are delivery cost, the ability to choose where the delivery is to take place, and a fast delivery process.

French really prefers click-and-collect delivery. This can be attributed to the successful implementation of the system in France, especially in the groceries sector, and to the bad customer service from delivery companies (for home delivery).

There's also a preference for free delivery, so if you can also offer this that you should, even if it's just by offering it for a minimum order value i.e. free delivery on orders over €40. Same day delivery is not a high priority for French online shoppers.

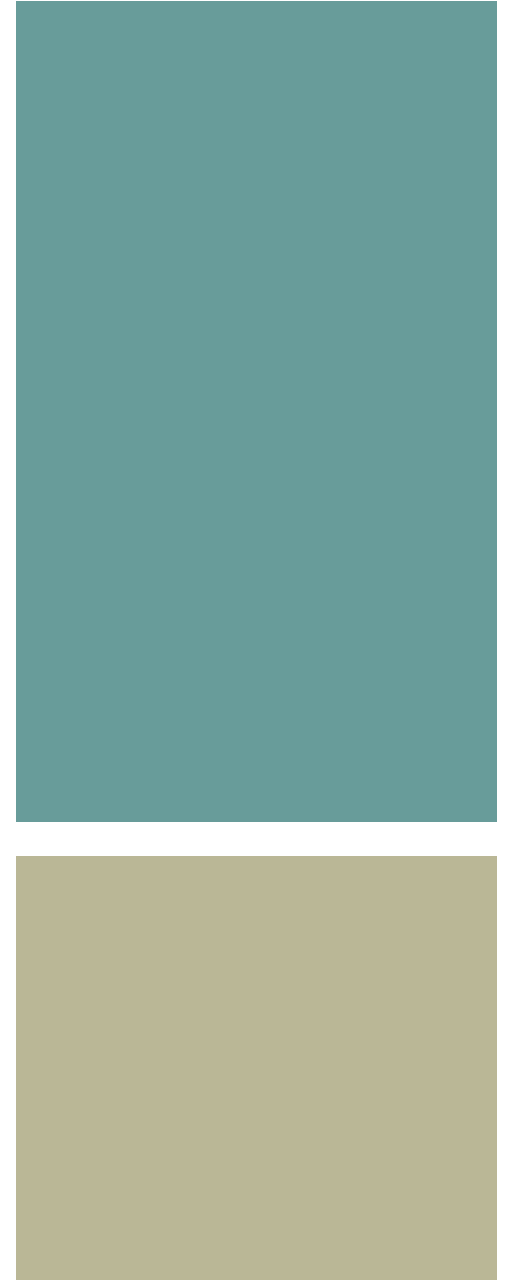
France is also one of the leaders in the European market, in terms of logistics and multi-channel distribution. The French logistics and shipping markets have been currently dominated by the La Poste Group, along with its associate brands, Chronopost, Colissimo, and its subsidiary, DPD France.

COMPETE ON PRICE

If you make the decision to sell into France, it is important that you take pricing very seriously, simply because cost will be a huge factor in the consumer's purchasing decision.

French customers do also expect special offers and discounts, which is why it is recommended that you invest in advertising, something that most French marketplaces provide options for.

To give you an example, 2-3 day flash sales are incredibly popular, particularly in the Fashion industry, which is the most popular eCommerce industry in this country, followed by consumer electronics and entertainment/educational items.



FUTURE MARKET PREDICTIONS



Going mobile

M-commerce in France is growing 4 times faster than e-commerce, with mobile purchases overtaking desktop sales for the first time at the tail-end of 2019. With the introduction of 5G, mobile sales are set to rise even more. Despite lagging behind other EU countries in the past, French m-commerce and e-wallet usage are booming, particularly among female shoppers.

Younger shoppers may have driven the m-commerce boom, but statistics show more and more shoppers of all ages are buying on their smartphone or tablet devices. For retailers, this means a mobile-friendly shopping experience is essential for selling to the French population.



Sustainability is key

In line with a wider global awareness of brand ethics and sustainability, French consumers are increasingly aware of the environmental impact of e-commerce. They are demanding sustainability from online retailers as well as physical shops.

French consumers expect sustainable packaging, ethically-sourced products and eco-friendly waste policies from retailers. As a trend that boosts customer loyalty and helps protect the environment, sustainability should be at the forefront of any e-retailer's strategy.



Diversifying purchases

Clothing, footwear and other fashion items remain the most popular purchase for French online shoppers. However, thanks to high levels of confidence online and an openness to new retailers, French shoppers are making increasingly diverse purchases online.

Groceries and household appliances in particular, are goods which French consumers have been previously hesitant to buy online, but are now showing the most rapid growth.

(eMarketer)

EXPORTING TO FRANCE



Build trust

85% of French shoppers are aware of their rights under GDPR legislation and **76%** are concerned about how websites collect and use their data.

French shoppers are clued-up online and want retailers they can trust; building a local presence using a .fr domain name is a great way to gain trust with French consumers.

(xSellco)



Optimise delivery and returns solutions

While the number of French consumers wanting same-day delivery is low (**21%**), many demand an efficient delivery service tailored to their lifestyle, at home or in a pick-up point.

Offering a reliable delivery service with transparent costs ensures French consumers will have a positive experience with your business and encourage them to return. And don't forget to make your returns service as simple and efficient as possible: **14%** of French shoppers worry about the ease of receiving and returning items.

EXPORTING TO FRANCE



Notifications

French shoppers like to be kept up to date with their parcel's progress, with **75%** wanting to receive updates at every stage of delivery. **72%** like items to arrive in great condition, and **64%** of French consumers are happiest when items arrive perfectly packaged and on the date expected.

(Asendia/Royal Mail)



The power of the Marketing Mail

Do not underestimate the power of the mail channel as a media. **83%** of French people daily open their mailbox. Addressed mail is the 2nd media (after TV) driving them to discover a new product or a brand. Even pure players such as Amazon, Cdiscount, Zalando or Spartoo send target catalogues to generate visits and cross-selling with additional products.

(Kantar Media 2018)

SUMMARY

French consumers are eager to buy online in another country as long as they can find a better product or better conditions to obtain it.

To be successful, the e-tailer should:

- translate its content into French,
- provide a user-friendly mobile app;
- offer a credit card payment alongside the electronic wallet solutions

The benefits of selling to France include...

- Access to a fast-growing, high-spending market
- Reach customers who are confident shopping online and open to new retailers
- An excellent logistics network
- Great potential for a wide range of retailers

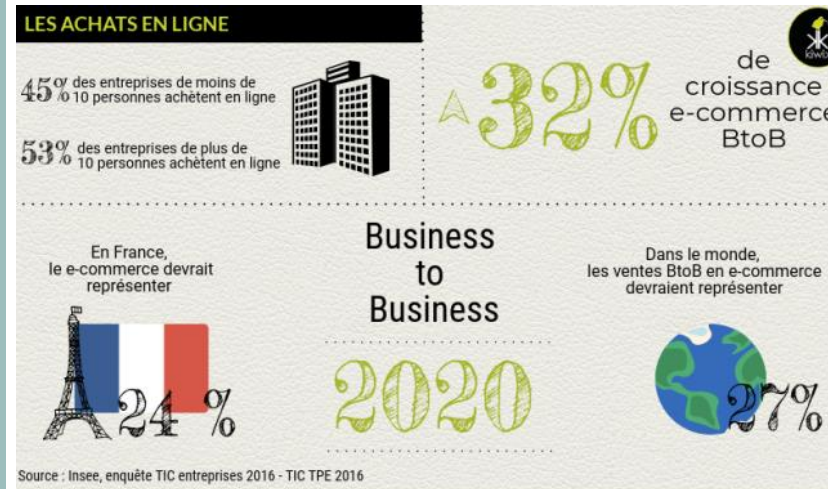
B2B E-COMMERCE

B2B E-COMMERCE IN FRANCE

€150 billion in 2019 and is expected to grow significantly in the next coming years.

E-commerce platforms such as Amazon (Amazon Business) — makes the entry barrier low in order to get started with E-commerce

While the B2C eCommerce market in France is thriving, the B2B market is even stronger, making up 57% of all online sales.



powered by
PIKTOCHART

E-COMMERCE B2B EN FRANCE EN 2019

+ 150 MILLIARDS D'EUROS DE VENTE DE PRO À PRO RÉALISÉS SUR DES SITES WEB B2B

DONT **+ 15 Md €** PAR PME < 10 SALARIÉS

15% / AN
DE CROISSANCE SUR LES 3 DERNIÈRES ANNÉES

4% DU CHIFFRE D'AFFAIRES TOTAL DES ENTREPRISES B-TO-B RÉALISÉ VIA UN SITE E-COMMERCE

2^e en Europe



SOURCE: FEVAD.COM

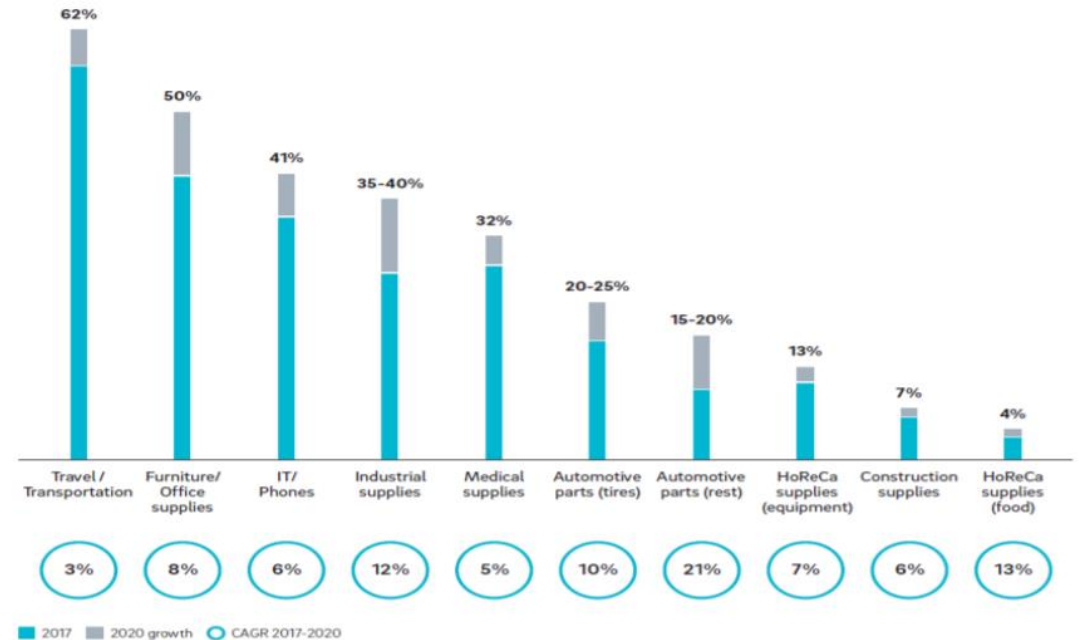
© PIERRE PLISSONNEAU
WWW.PIWEB.FR

Sectors like Travel/transportation, furniture/office supplies have been among the sectors that have most quickly adopted to B2B ecommerce

The more mission critical a purchase is and the more frequently you use the good, the more likely it is that a company will use more old school sales channels. The less critical the purchase is (pens, paper, etc.), the more likely companies are to use B2B

Room for growth = niche market with specialist knowledge.

SHARE OF B2B E-COMMERCE PER CATEGORY IN FRANCE 2020 [%]



FRANCE B2B E COMMERCE

While France has a healthy B2C eCommerce market, the country has an even stronger B2B market that makes up 57% of all online turnover.

B2B represents a huge opportunity for online sellers.

Market Concentration



Source: Mordor Intelligence



TOP E-COMMERCE WEBSITES IN FRANCE COMPARED BY MONTHLY TRAFFIC

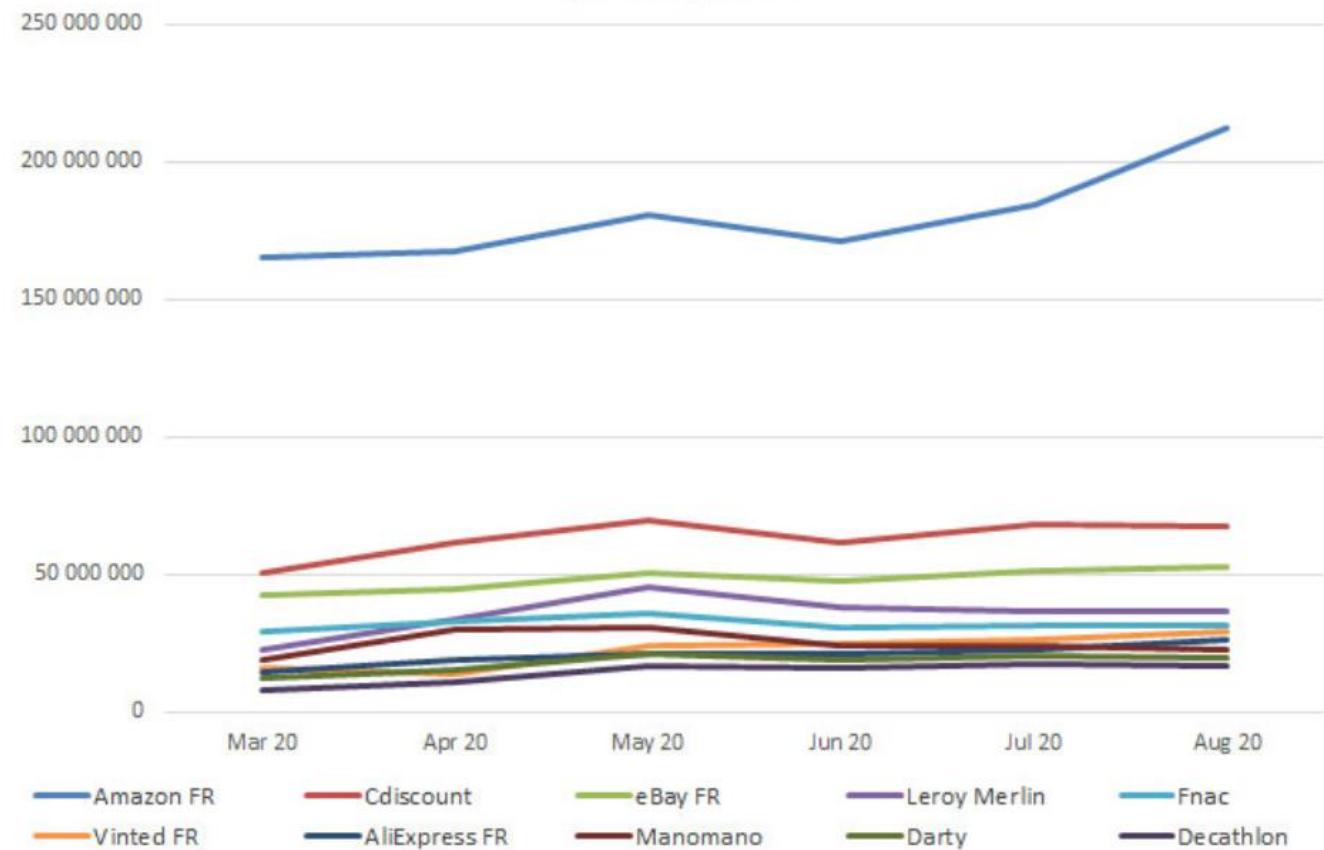
Domination of Amazon, which stands at 210 million monthly visits per month.

The pack of followers is led by Cdiscount at 67 million with the others trailing in the range of traffic volumes from 15 to 55 million visits per month.



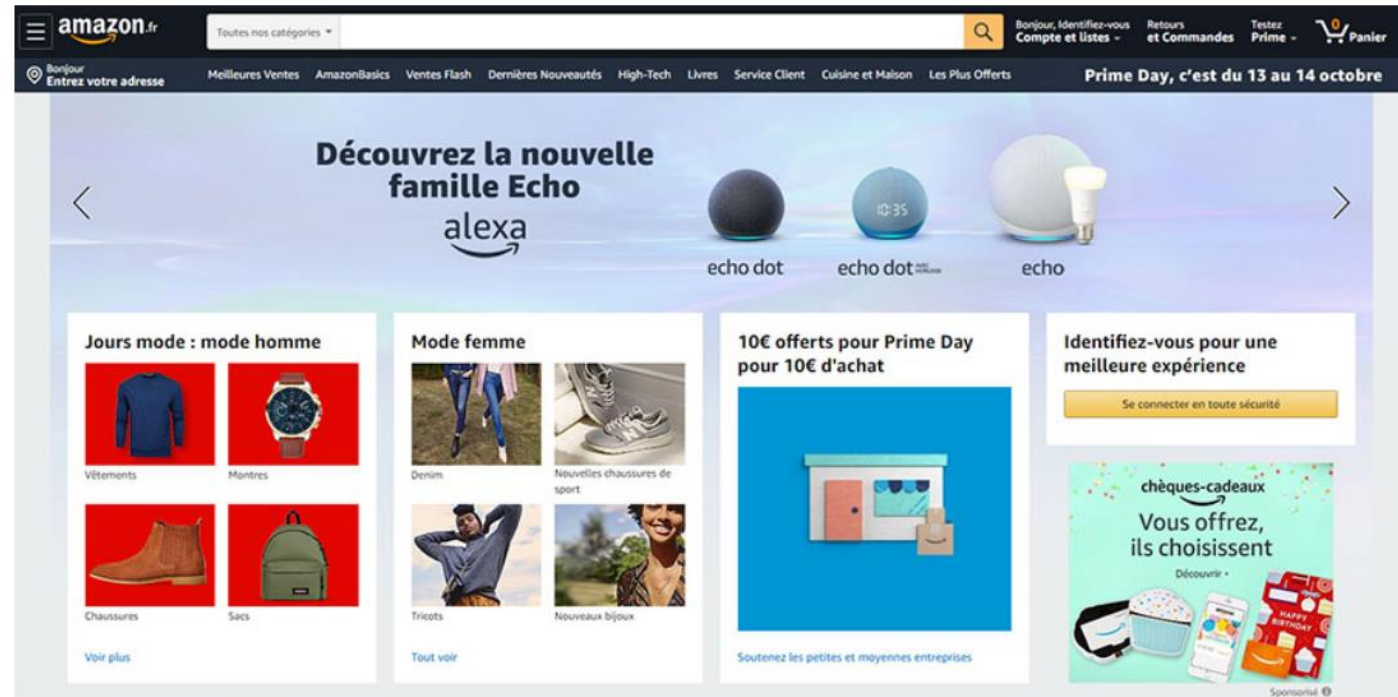
Top 10 e-commerce sites - France 2020

by monthly traffic



Source: SimilarWeb, October 2020

AMAZON FR



Founded in the US in 1994, Amazon started as an online bookstore that later diversified to products including media, electronics, apparel, furniture, food, toys, and jewelry. Having expanded to many countries, including France, Amazon has become the uncontested global leader of e-commerce and developed further into brick-and-mortar retail with the acquisition of Whole Foods Market, as well as publishing, electronics, cloud computing, video streaming, and production.

Website: [amazon.fr](https://www.amazon.fr) – Estimated monthly traffic: 212 Million visits

If you're already an Amazon seller, then you know this one pretty well.

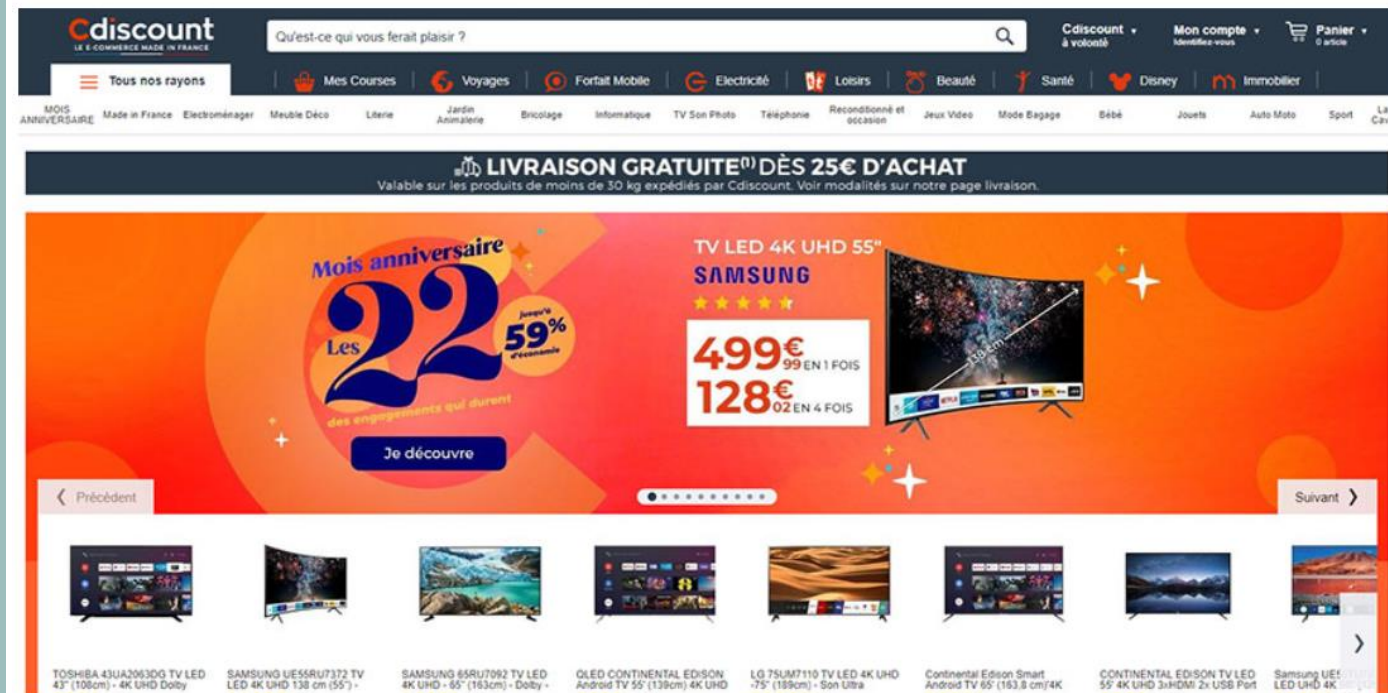
Amazon has tailored its hugely successful template to France. Apart from language and localization, Amazon.fr is essentially the same website as any other Amazon marketplace.

Amazon is also one of the easiest marketplaces to start with.

With a simple registration, you can make use of Amazon's unified European account, providing you with direct access to Amazon's marketplaces in France, Germany, Spain, Italy and the UK.

With 19 million monthly visitors, expanding into Amazon France could represent a relatively easy win. One important step is required – translating your listings into French.

CDISCOUNT



Cdiscount is an e-commerce website providing a wide range of products including electronics, household appliances, media equipment, hygiene, family and baby care products, furniture, tools, gardening products, as well as groceries, and more. Founded in 1998, Cdiscount is a subsidiary of Groupe Casino, a French multinational retail company.

Website: [cdiscout.com](https://www.cdiscount.com) – Estimated monthly traffic: 67.3 Million visits

Cdiscount is France's most popular homegrown eCommerce website and Amazon's biggest competitor.

Cdiscount has built its reputation as a marketplace that offers best discounts on a range of items, including technology, house appliances, furniture, wine and more.

The French retailer says attracts 20 million unique monthly visitors and turned over €2.671 billion on its marketplace in 2019.

In order to sell on Cdiscount you must apply on their site.

- No registration or listing fee
- A monthly charge of €39.99
- Sales commission depends on the category and varies between 5 and 20 %

SELLER'S STARTING KIT

General questions

Shipped by
Cdiscount

Cdiscount Ads

International sales

Cdiscount PRO
Marketplace

Cdiscount à Volonté

General questions

What is Cdiscount Marketplace?

Cdiscount Marketplace is a marketplace that lets professional sellers sell their new or used products to private or professional buyers on the Cdiscount.com website.

What am I committing to when I sell on Cdiscount Marketplace ?

How do I register and create my professional Seller account ?

How will you support me in getting started on Cdiscount Marketplace?

What products can I sell?

How do I sell my products ?

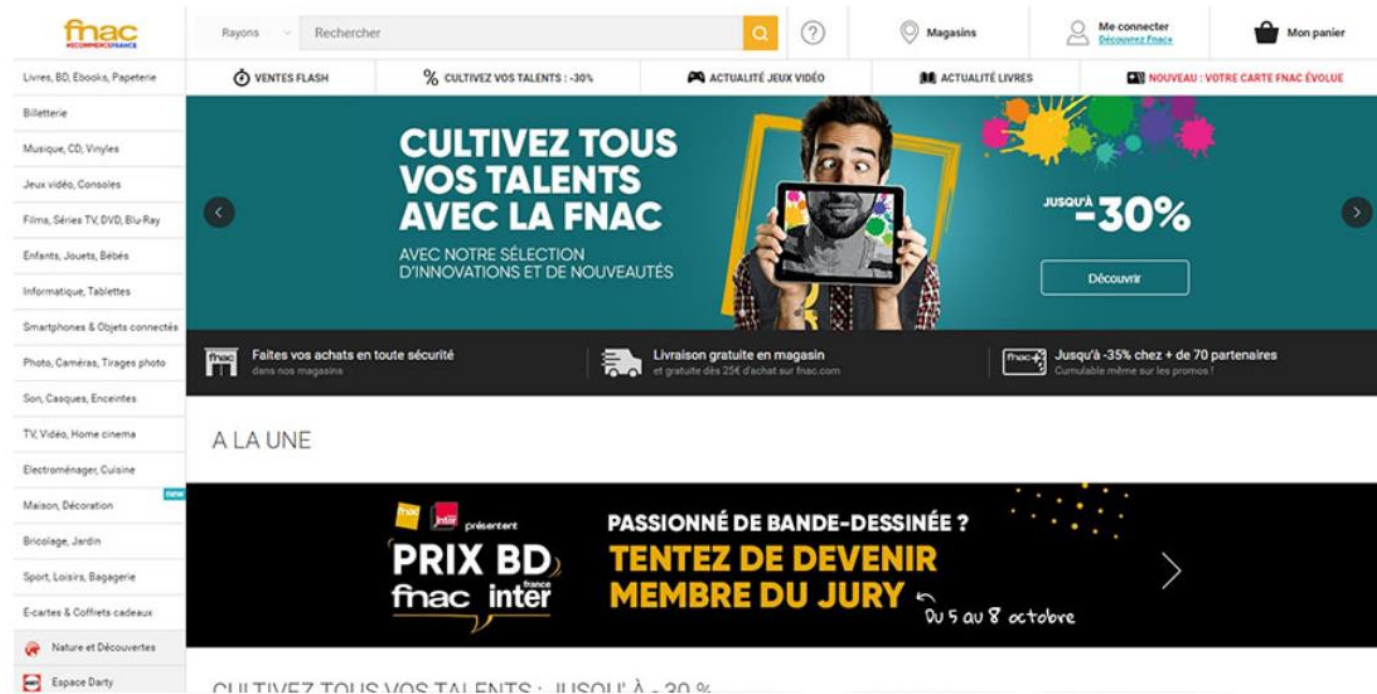
Auchan is one of the world's largest retailers which expanded into the world of online marketplaces back in 2015. Whilst Auchan's core business is the grocery and clothing sector, they also feature home-ware, electronics, and sporting goods categories and is open to third party sellers.

- No fee for listing
- A monthly subscription of €49 excluding VAT.
- The amount of commission depends on the sale price (including tax and shipping cost).

Auchan claim to receive 364,000 unique visitors every day!



FNAC



Fnac is originally a chain of stores selling cultural and electronic products including audio, books, CDs, computer software and hardware, DVDs, televisions, video games, and now even bicycles and small vehicles. Having expanded to Spain, Portugal, Belgium, Brazil, and Switzerland, Fnac has also developed its activities online through an e-commerce store.

Website: [fnac.com](https://www.fnac.com) – Estimated monthly traffic: 31.5 Million visits

DARTY



Darty is an electrical and electronics retailing company. Operating a chain of more than 200 stores dedicated to electrical appliances, electronics, computers, and media equipment, Darty has started selling its products online in 1999. Since its acquisition in 2015, Darty is now owned by the Groupe Fnac Darty, which also operates Fnac (see #5).

Website: [darty.com](https://www.darty.com) – Estimated monthly traffic: 19.7 Million visits

Fnac is one of the most recognizable retail outlets in France since its founding in 1954 as a seller of cultural and electronic products. It has become another competitor to Amazon in France, specifically in the media and consumer electronics categories and its merger with Darty in the summer of 2016.


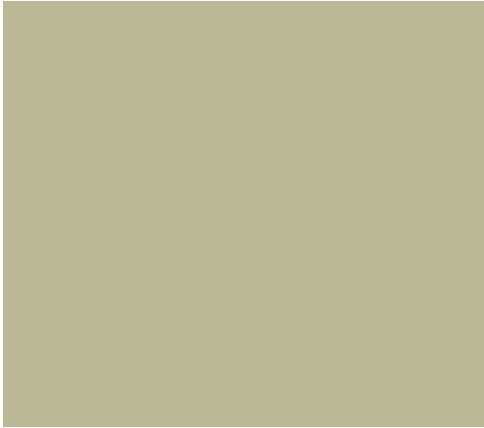
Fnac has invested heavily in creating an omnichannel customer experience. This has involved forging a closer relationship between its 160 stores and online marketplace. If a store is out of stock on a certain product, Fnac's stores send customers to its online marketplace to purchase the item. This encourages in-store buyers to visit – and buy – from its online marketplace.

Fnac's strong store presence in France gives it logistical strength – allowing it to offer a 'click-and-collect' option for buyers to pick up their purchase in-store if preferred. It has also launched a competitor to Amazon Prime, called Fnac Express+. Like Prime, this service offers buyers same-day delivery.

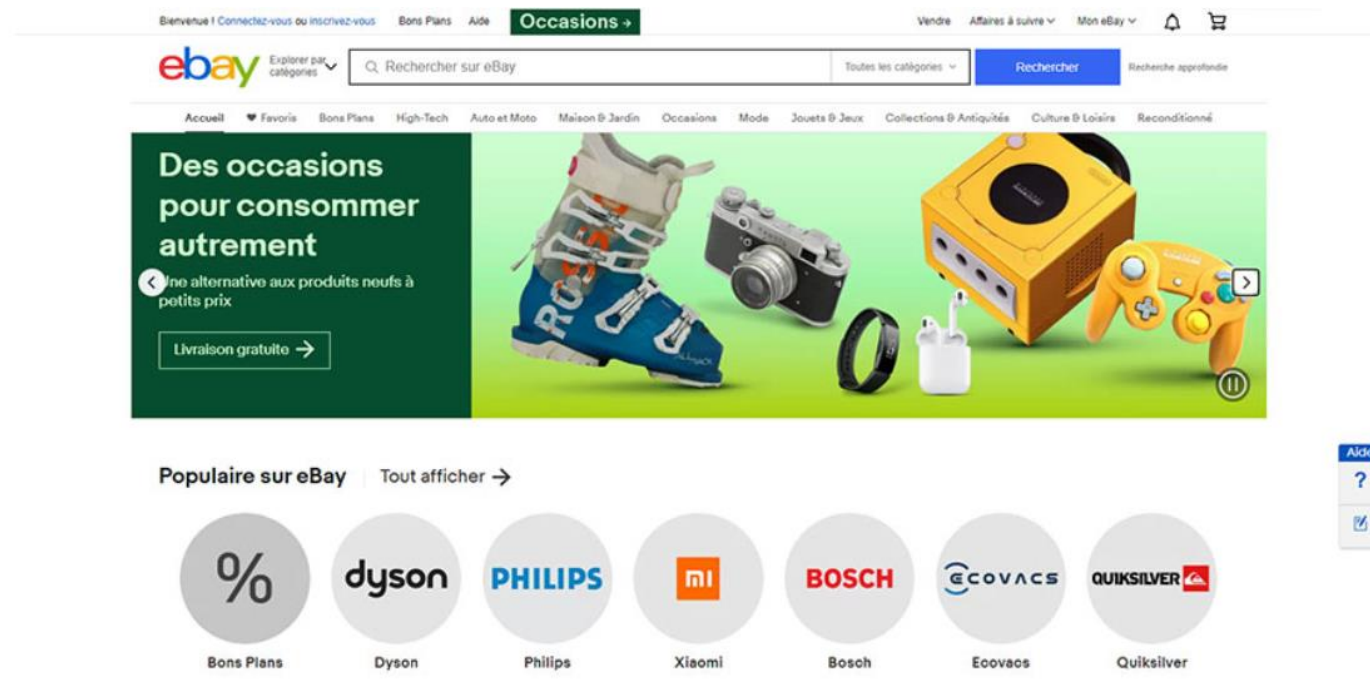
Fnac has expanded its marketplace to Belgium, Spain, Portugal, Switzerland, as well as a host of countries in Africa and the Middle East.



The cost of selling on Fnac Darty is quite nominal.

- Fnac Darty does NOT charge any seller registration fee, and you need to pay No subscription before the first sale.
 - The monthly seller subscription – €39.99 excluding VAT.
 - The product sellers commission – between 6% to 16% (depending upon the product category)
- 
- 

EBAY FR



A pioneer of e-commerce, eBay is an American online marketplace that allows people and businesses to sell directly through its online auction platform. Founded in 1995, eBay has expanded to more than 20 countries including France, organizing the sale of products ranging from cars and vehicles to electronics and fashion, home and garden to sports and toys, and even business and industrial products.

Website: [ebay.fr](https://www.ebay.fr) – Estimated monthly traffic: 53 Million visits

eBay.fr is one of the easiest places to start selling online in France, especially if you're already selling on eBay.

If you list your products as available for shipping to France, eBay will automatically list that item on eBay France. The auctions site also offers a number of free translation tools, via its app store, to help sellers localize listings for non-English marketplaces.

eBay remains a dominant player in the French eCommerce market, with 8.5 million visitors every month.

However, it does have a worthy France-based competitor in Rakuten PriceMinister.

RAKUTEN

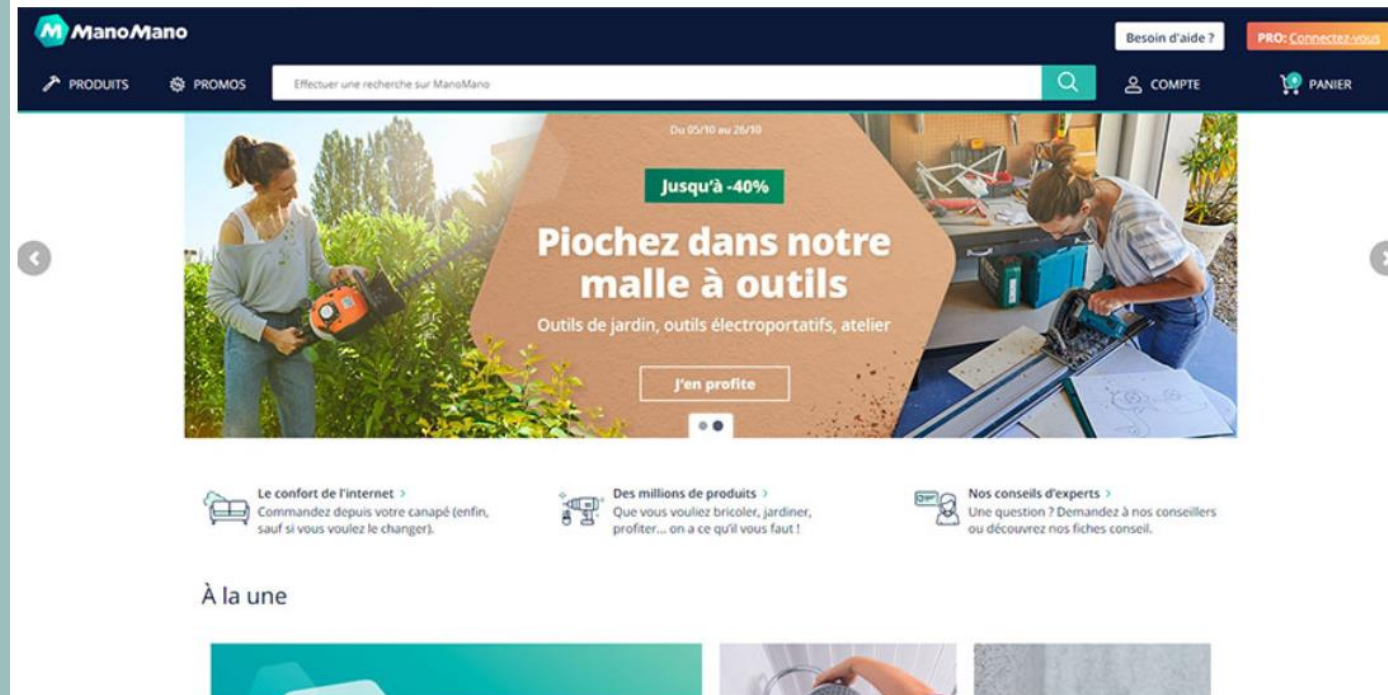
The website boasts 17 million members in France. France makes up one third of its online visitors, and it processes between 30,000 and 50,000 transactions per day.

The level of seller competition is similar to Cdiscount, with 5,000 professional sellers active on the website. It also has a 50/50 gender split from its online visitors, with the average age at 26-50 years old, according to Lengow.

Rakuten is seen as eBay France's biggest competitor, and it shares some traits with the global auction site, like allowing you to customize your storefront.



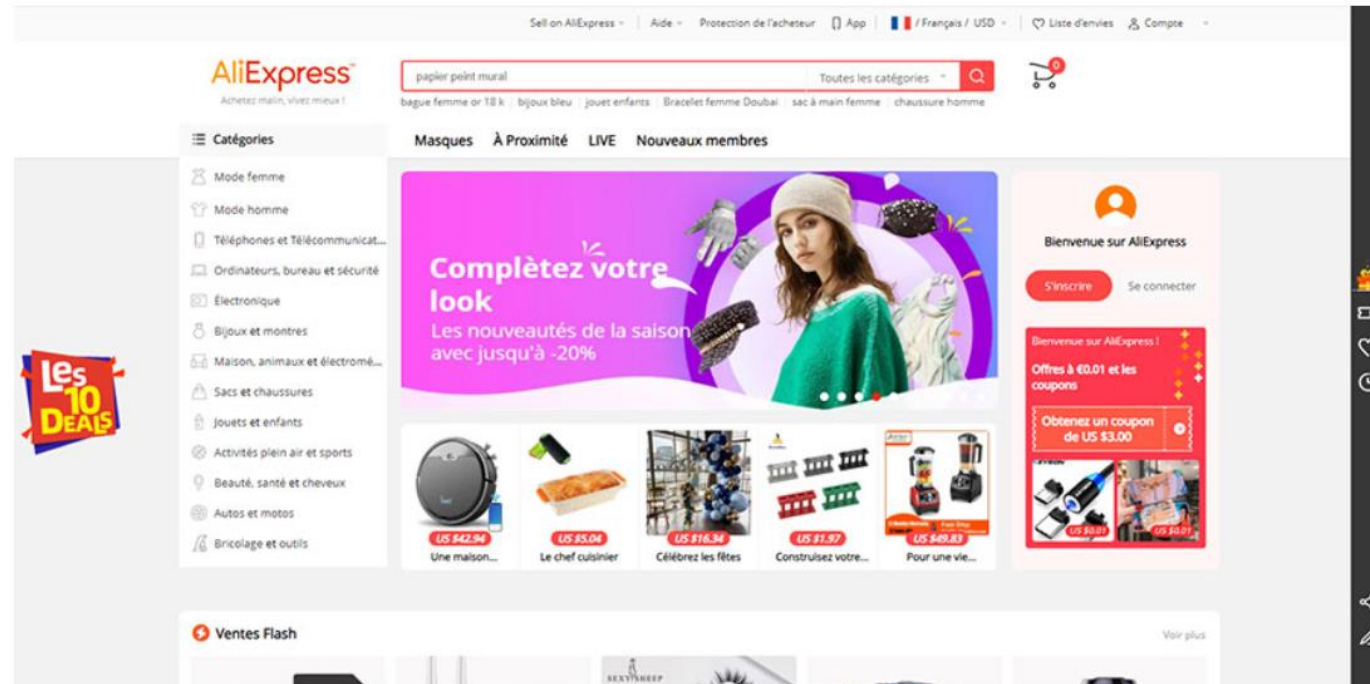
MANOMANO



ManoMano is a specialized e-commerce brand in the field of DIY and gardening, owned by the company Colibri SAS. It operates a marketplace where businesses can sell a range of products including tools, gardening, and DIY materials, furniture, as well as other products for home decoration, works, and repairs. Launched in 2012, Manomano has now also expanded to Belgium, Spain, Italy, the United Kingdom, and Germany.

Website: [manomano.fr](https://www.manomano.fr) – Estimated monthly traffic: 22.3 Million visits

ALIEXPRESS FRANÇAIS



AliExpress is a specialized online retail store and marketplace. AliExpress allows companies and individuals to sell through its platform a broad range of products including clothing and accessories, mobile phones and electronics, jewelry, home decoration, and sports products. Based in China and owned by the Alibaba Group, AliExpress particularly gathers a range of products from China and other Asian countries to be sold internationally, notably in France.

Website: fr.aliexpress.com – Estimated monthly traffic: 25.9 Million visits

B2B MARKETPLACES IN FRANCE



AGRICULTURE

Équipements

votre
Machine.com

Agriaffaires.com
Le 1^{er} site Internet agricole

E-FARM.COM

WeFarmUp

Produits

AGRI MARKETPLACE
FAIRTRADE MADE EASY

Agriconomie.com

MH
MESHETARES.COM



BTP

Équipements

MachineryZone

WIPOZ!

IRON
PLANET

kintessia

DISTRIartisan

Produits

BACKACIA

FM

Materiopro

Warmango



SOURCING

ye9ply



PrestaShare



NEW DEAL
THE LEAD STORE

GREAT
CONTENT

COMPANEO

L'EXPO
PERMANENTE



99d

askeet

kips.io

HODNOS

comitéo

Expertaly

media
square

AppNexus



FRANCE BARTER
Réseau d'échanges BtoB





GÉNÉRALISTE



TRANSPORT



CHRONOTRUCK

Uber Marketplace



CARGONEXX



SeaRates



SpaceFill



JURIDIQUE - FINANCE





ALIMENTAIRE



IMMOBILIER



MODE



HIGH TECH - DATA



RECRUTEMENT



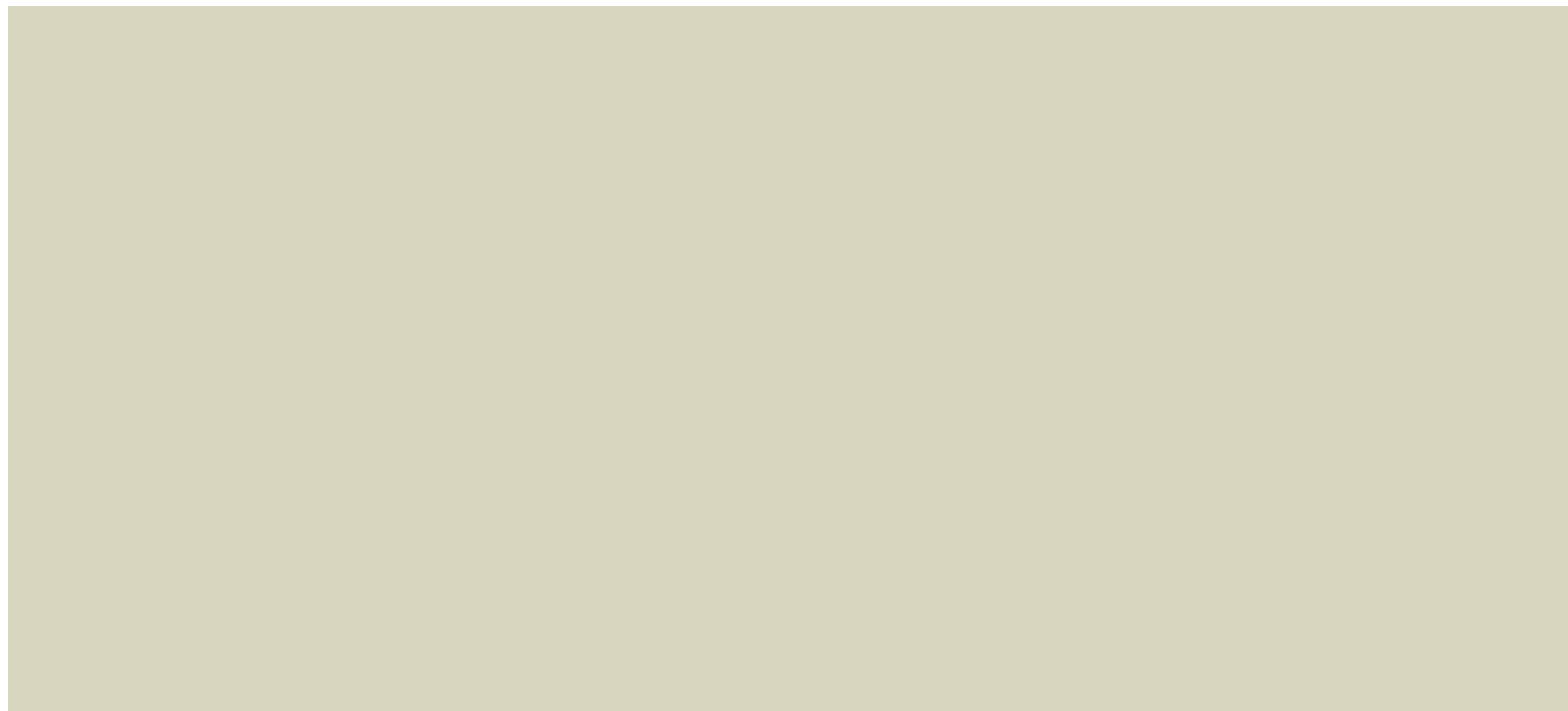
SANTÉ



HOW TO IDENTIFY A RELEVANT MARKET PLACE FOR YOUR BUSINESS?

Here are 2 websites dedicated to marketplaces research:

- The more efficient : <https://www.lengow.com/marketplace-finder/>
- <https://www.webretailer.com/b/online-marketplaces/#Europe>
- https://www.great.gov.uk/selling-online-overseas/markets/results/?category_id=&country_id=144&commit=&page=1



FRANCE IS NOW WAITING FOR
YOU!