

PRESS RELEASE

Upturn in April does not yet compensate all online retailers for corona-related minus

Berlin 12.05.2020 | In April, German online retailers were able to make up significantly for the decline in sales recorded in March. Overall, e-commerce with goods was 17.9 percent up compared to the same month last year and reached a volume of EUR 6.82 billion including VAT (April 2019: EUR 5.78 billion including VAT). This is shown by a special evaluation of the consumer survey "Interactive Retailing in Germany" of Bundesverband E-Commerce und Versandhandel e.V. (bevh), which is conducted throughout the whole year.

Cumulative sales development in March and April

However, not all product ranges were able to compensate for the minus recorded in March. Cumulated for the months of March and April, sales in the important "Clothing" segment amounted to EUR 1.75 billion including VAT, which is still 8.8 percent less than compared to the same period last year (EUR 1.92 billion including VAT). The decline in shoe sales was even more pronounced with -11.3 percent. With -40.3 percent "Jewellery/Watches" and Auto&Motorcycle/Accessories with -23.7 percent were the segments with the strongest decline. The buying restraint in these categories corresponds to the general consumer reticence in the retail sector as a whole and to the current, exclusively needs-driven way of shopping.

The fact that in general, April overcompensated for the weak month of March with a cumulative plus of 2.3 percent is in particular due to the strong growth in the categories "food" (+101 per cent), "pharmaceuticals" (+87.3 per cent), "drugstore goods" (+55.1 per cent) and "pet supplies" (+20.2 per cent). However, it was precisely these product categories that were also continuously accessible in the stationary retail sector during the lockdown phase.

"The enormous increase concerning daily consumer goods shows above all that consumers in Germany appreciate and use e-commerce as a reliable supplier, especially in such a crisis," said bevh President Gero Furchheim. "We are proud of the performance of our employees in the sector and the delivery services, with whom we were able to fulfil our supply mandate under challenging conditions."

Sales development from January to April

From January to April, e-commerce achieved a volume of 23.3 billion euros including VAT. Despite the corona-related drop in turnover in March, industry sales are now 5.8 percent higher compared to the previous year. In March 2020 alone, e-commerce had lost 18.1 percent compared to March 2019. In both years Easter was in the middle of April, so that there was no calendar-related bias.

"There is still a long way to go to get to the new normality and the pandemic is far from being over," adds Gero Furchheim. "What is important now is to drive the many encouraging initiatives forward that make the local offering digitally accessible and connect customers with retailers in the long term. E-commerce is more than a lifeline in the Corona pandemic - also for primarily stationary retailers. E-commerce is an indispensable building block for any modern retail concept."

The following tables show the **developments in April 2019 compared to April 2020**, the developments in **March + April 2019 compared to March + April 2020** and the developments **from January to April 2019 compared to January to April 2020** by individual product categories:

Turnover in e-commerce in goods, April 2019 vs. April 2020

	April 2019	April 2020	Change
Clothing	1.068	1.201	12,40%
Home textiles	85	102	20,80%
Shoes	338	357	5,40%
Books / eBooks / audiobooks	305	353	15,50%
Image & sound carrier / video & music downloads	212	230	8,40%
Electronics & Telecommunication	1.118	1.251	11,90%
Computer/accessories/games/software incl. Downloads	508	629	23,70%
Hobby & leisure products	248	276	11,10%
DIY & Flowers	240	283	17,80%
Furniture, lamps & decoration	413	469	13,50%
Household goods & appliances	355	431	21,50%
Drugstore goods	165	285	72,80%
Food	136	308	126,80%
Jewellery & watches	55	41	-25,20%
Car & motorbike/ accessories	161	90	-44,00%
Toys	87	114	31,60%
Office supplies	45	63	40,40%
Medicines	59	109	86,50%
Pet supplies	116	155	33,90%
Other	69	74	6,40%
IN TOTAL	5.782	6.819	17,90%

(Figures in million euros, including VAT)

Turnover in e-commerce in goods, March + April 2019 vs. March + April 2020

	March + April 2019	March + April 2020	Change
Clothing	1.922	1.753	-8,80%
Home textiles	171	179	5,00%
Shoes	624	554	-11,30%
Books / eBooks / audiobooks	563	574	2,10%
Image & sound carrier / video & music downloads	391	376	-3,80%
Electronics & Telecommunication	1.883	1.855	-1,50%
Computer/accessories/games/software incl. downloads	881	916	4,10%
Hobby & leisure products	429	398	-7,30%
DIY & Flowers	363	415	14,50%

Furniture, lamps & decoration	731	699	-4,40%
Household goods & appliances	644	709	10,10%
Drugstore goods	277	430	55,10%
Food	213	428	101,10%
Jewellery & watches	129	77	-40,30%
Car & motorbike/ accessories	280	214	-23,70%
Toys	171	184	7,70%
Office Supplies	90	94	5,00%
Medicines	105	197	87,30%
Pet Supplies	212	255	20,20%
Other	134	138	2,90%
IN TOTAL	10.212	10.445	2,30%

(Figures in million euros, including VAT)

Turnover in e-commerce in goods, January - April 2019 vs. January - April 2020

	January - April 2019	January - April 2020	Change
Clothing	4.199	4.246	1,10%
Home textiles	401	431	7,60%
Shoes	1.388	1.378	-0,70%
Books / eBooks / audiobooks	1.249	1.295	3,60%
Image & sound carrier / video & music downloads	868	903	4,10%
Electronics & Telecommunication	3.921	4.075	3,90%
Computer/accessories/games/software incl. downloads	1.874	2.005	7,00%
Hobby & leisure products	913	923	1,10%
DIY & Flowers	690	750	8,70%
Furniture, lamps & decoration	1.579	1.659	5,00%
Household goods & appliances	1.415	1.536	8,60%
Drugstore goods	578	769	33,00%
Food	418	669	60,20%
Jewellery & watches	326	293	-10,20%
Car & motorbike/ accessories	598	544	-9,00%
Toys	396	434	9,70%
Office Supplies	210	225	7,00%
Medicines	229	336	46,40%
Pet Supplies	470	540	15,00%
Other	305	289	-5,30%
IN TOTAL	22.026	23.301	5,80%

(Figures in million euros, including VAT)

About the study:

The German E-Commerce and Mail Order Association (bevh) is conducting the consumer survey "Interactive Commerce in Germany" for the sixth time in a row - since 2018 with the new partner BEYONDATA GmbH. In the study, 40,000 private individuals from Germany aged 14 years and older are surveyed from January to December about their spending behaviour in online and mail order retail and their consumption of digital services (e.g. travel or ticketing). The final result of the study will be published at the beginning of 2021 after the completion of the survey.

About bevh

The German E-Commerce and Distance Selling Trade Association (bevh) is the industry association of interactive retailers (i.e. online and mail order companies). Besides e-commerce businesses, there are also reputable service providers affiliated to bevh. Following mergers with the Federal Association of Online Groceries and the Federal Association of German Mail Order Booksellers, bevh represents the small and large players and more than 75 percent of the industry's turnover in the end customer business in Germany. bevh represents the industry's interests vis-à-vis the legislator and institutional bodies. Furthermore, the association's tasks include informing its members about current developments and trends, organising the mutual exchange of experience and providing professional advice.

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