

UK eCommerce

With 32 million UK consumers spending almost £70 billion online by 2011, the UK is the most lucrative eCommerce market in Europe.

Source: Forrester UK eCommerce Forecast 2006/11

Technology for Retail

The UK retail sector spends in excess of £3 billion per annum on technology. Key growth areas to make operations more efficient and consumer centric include outsourcing and offshoring, standardisation of business processes, personalisation of customer services and next generation greener shared IT platforms.

Technology spend is mostly on services for retail outlets such as point of sale automation and automated inventory tracking.

Online Retail

The retail sector has revenues of around £300 billion per annum with UK online sales currently exceeding £20 billion per annum. Leisure travel is the strongest sector for online purchases with both apparel and groceries also likely to be areas of significant growth.

There are five UK retailers in the Fortune Global 500.

Access to Talent and Technology

Over 27% of UK jobs are ICT-related, one of the highest in the world. A key challenge and opportunity for the sector is exploiting the rapid evolution of technology. The UK, having three of Europe's top five Technology Universities and many other world-class Research and Teaching Universities as well as an extensive industry ecosystem, is well positioned to respond to the talent and technology challenges. Examples of world-class research strengths include: information security; intelligence management; network security; and search technology.

Technology Financing

The UK venture capital market is the largest in the EU, accounting for 40% of European fund-raising, and second only to the US globally. The economic impact of the private equity industry is substantial and is continually growing. Supported at one end by networks of Angel financiers and at the other by Public Markets, raising finance to support robust business propositions is rarely an issue.

In addition, a large amount of Government R&D spending is focused on ICT research and Knowledge Transfer Networks help to stimulate collaborative R&D between academia and industry in UK and internationally.



“Statistics show that two thirds of international advertising and branding agencies have their European headquarters in London, because it is so culturally diverse. We knew that if we wanted Alibaba.com to be a success in Europe we should be in London and tap into this talent.”

Maggie Choo

Director of International Business Development and Marketing (EMEA),
Alibaba.com