

Insights

By consolidating the new learnings of the Tipping Point report with the findings of other Covid-19-related surveys, we have developed insights that show how the digital and e-commerce landscape in Ireland is changing and what that means for SMEs and the organisations and Government departments that represent them:

1



Solidarity and support for local business

Solidarity and support for Irish businesses may never be stronger. To turn the positive sentiment into sales, Irish businesses must dial up their online competitive advantages of trust, reliability, and solidarity when their websites are competing with online international sellers. Irish consumers perceive that local SMEs lag on price and product range.

2



Tectonic plates are shifting – faster

We are moving from a face-to-face, person-to-person economy to a delivery economy. Covid-19 has been the catalyst, accelerating changes already in motion.

The Covid-19 experience has changed consumers' shopping habits for good. Those businesses thinking that this is a temporary blip are mistaken. For SMEs, getting online used to be a very slow process – now it's only taking weeks.

3

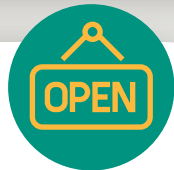


Digital investment pays off

In a difficult period for many SMEs, those that have invested in their digital and online presence have reaped the rewards at a time when other businesses are struggling.

Although it's easy for some SMEs, most SMEs who invest need some assistance with selection and installation of digital tools.

4

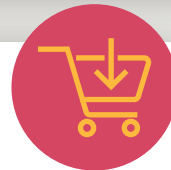


Government finance can act as an accelerant

Government financing is now available on a massive scale to help SME recovery. Representative organisations, having secured the funding, now need to advocate to ensure that SME projects include digitalisation and initiatives to modernise and digitise SMEs' sales processes.

Digital tools can improve SMEs' productivity and competitiveness. Digital marketing can boost sales and cashflow.

5



Spending more online, but keen to get back in-store

While there is a consumer desire for in-store experience, the 'new normal' is still evolving. We are not yet post-Covid-19. Social distancing means ongoing queues and customer limits, which may be off-putting for consumers.

An online sales channel will be important to capitalise on consumers who turn away from physical stores if they see a queue.

6



The ongoing legacy of the pandemic

Work from home, shop from home, entertain at home: city centres are hollowed out as fewer workers commute on public transport. This will represent an opportunity for towns to reinvigorate themselves.

Services can be delivered online too. Covid-19 has broken the mould and proven that medical consultations, gym classes, and legal appointments can all be done successfully over online platforms, such as Zoom and Teams.