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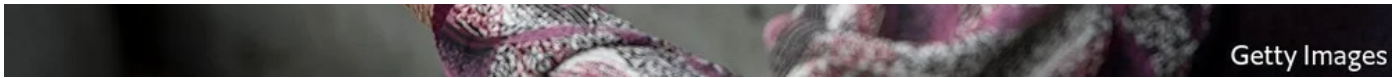
May 8th 2021 edition

The boomer boom

# Older consumers have learned new tricks in the pandemic

Companies had better keep up





Getty Images

May 8th 2021



**B**ABY BOOMERS, aged 57-75, are as the name implies, plentiful. Healthier and more adventurous than similarly aged cohorts in the past, since 2018 over-65s have outnumbered the under-fives. They are also wealthier. America's boomer-led households spend \$64,000 a year, almost twice as much as those headed by youngsters born from 1997 onwards. Together with the earlier "silent" generation, they account for two-fifths of American consumer spending. Yet brands and retailers have long given older shoppers short shrift, focusing most of their attention on the wrinkle-free. As with many things, the pandemic is demanding a rethink.

For one thing, fear of covid-19, more deadly for the elderly, has ushered oldies online. Last year British over-65s made up 30% of consumer-goods purchases online, up from 20% in 2019. In August Britain's Office for National Statistics reported that 65% of them had shopped online in the preceding 12 months,

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