

RETAIL

## Nordstrom named consumers' favorite fashion retailer

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*Nordstrom was named consumers' favorite premium retailer. Image credit: Nordstrom*

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By STAFF REPORTS

Department store chain Nordstrom came out on top of new fashion retail rankings by Market Force due partly to its atmosphere and selection.

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Nordstrom's loyalty index was 56 percent, placing it above more mass players such as Lane Bryant and Dillard's. While consumers' decisions of where to shop are largely driven by value, 37 percent consider customer service a key differentiator, showing the continued importance of sales associates.

Market Force's research is based on a survey of more than 10,000 consumers from the United States and Canada from varying income levels. The research asked the respondents to rate their satisfaction and their likelihood to recommend a store to others, with their sentiment compiled to form a loyalty score.

### Selection and service

Nordstrom topped the rankings for its selection, consumers' ability to find their size and checkout speed. It also placed second in attributes such as loyalty card value, ease of finding a desired item and the ability to create a "look."

Last year, Nordstrom vowed to work to make its women's clothing section more inclusive by asking brands to expand their sizing options to include women outside of the "standard" and "plus-size" categories.

The new sizing options are available at the retailer's Century City location in Los Angeles. Top brands have signed on and Nordstrom hopes to extend this campaign to other locations around the country in the future ([see story](#)).

The only area in which Nordstrom placed toward the bottom of rankings was on delivering value for money.



*Nordstrom has worked to be more size-inclusive. Image credit: Nordstrom*

While only 43 percent of consumers surveyed said they were helped by a sales associate on their last visit, Nordstrom exceeds the average, with 77 percent interacting with frontline staff.

Despite the growing notion that in-store retail is falling, about three-quarters of consumers have shopped at their favorite retailer's store in the past 90 days, with 14 percent shopping in-store at least six times.

In comparison, 42 percent have visited their favorite apparel retailer's Web site in the last 90 days, and 69 percent have made a purchase.

Market Force also found that consumer confidence has dipped, with only 28 percent of this year's respondents hopeful about the economy, compared to 40 percent of last year's participants.

About two-thirds of consumers plan to keep their fashion shopping budget the same as last year, while only 9 percent are expecting to spend more.

"Retailers spend good money to market, promote and advertise their brands to lure shoppers into their door, but if their frontline representatives are failing to engage customers and deliver on the brand promise and fundamental customer service basics, they could easily lose that sale to their competitor next door," said Brad Christian, chief customer officer at Market Force, in a statement.

"Our research shows that just 54 percent of shoppers felt the associate fully understood their needs, which underlines the need to consistently train and assess associates to ensure they're executing on best practice sales processes," he said.

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