

June 2025

# THE DATA BEHIND *SHE BUILT THIS:*

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A data-first look at changing consumer behavior and what it means for women-built businesses



# CONSUMER PRIORITIES ARE SHIFTING

## The UK Is Behind - But Momentum Is Building

The UK has 30% fewer female entrepreneurs than other developed economies (NatWest Review), not due to lack of talent, but a lack of visibility, belief, and support.

Yet consumer behaviour is shifting.

Just as in the US where 87% of consumers prefer cause-led brands (Cone Communications, 2017), UK consumers are increasingly values-driven, with 64% prioritising brands that support causes they believe in (rising to 66% among women).

The economic case is compelling: women currently make up only one in three UK entrepreneurs, resulting in around 1.1 million “missing” women-led businesses (Alison Rose Review, 2019).

Closing this gap by enabling women to start and scale at the same rate as men could add up to £250 billion in Gross Value Added (GVA) to the UK economy (The Rose Review, 2019; gov.uk), equivalent to four years of economic growth.

We asked 1,000 people across the UK - spanning all ages, incomes, genders, and regions - a few simple questions about female-founded businesses. **Here's what they told us.**



## Awareness Isn't Just a Barrier — It's a Massive Opportunity

When asked whether they'd be more likely to purchase a product if they knew it was founded by a woman, only **30%** of UK consumers said yes. At first glance, that might seem modest, but the real insight lies just beneath the surface.

A significant **53%** of respondents were neutral. They weren't opposed - they simply hadn't formed an opinion yet. That's more than half of consumers sitting in the "undecided" category; a group that's highly open to influence.

Among women specifically, the trend is similar; **34%** said they'd be more likely to buy a female-founded product. But again, **50%** remained neutral.

This "moveable middle" represents a major growth opportunity. These aren't disengaged shoppers - they're just waiting for a reason to care. And that reason often comes down to one thing: visibility.

The data shows that with the right messaging, branding, and clearer signposting at the point of purchase, this neutral group can be persuaded, and quickly! The potential to convert passive interest into real action is both measurable and commercially significant.

## Visibility Changes Everything

When women-built products are clearly labelled, intent to purchase increases dramatically.

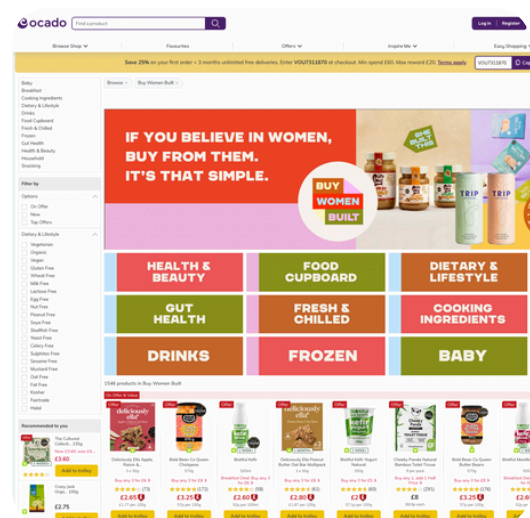
- **43%** of all consumers said they'd be more likely to support a female-founded brand *if it was easy to identify*.
- Among women, that figure rises to **50%**.

Visibility tools - such as the *Buy Women Built* Kitemark or a dedicated retail aisle - remove that barrier. When a product carries the *Buy Women Built* label:

- **62%** of shoppers say they'd be more likely to choose it over an alternative.
- Among women, this figure increases to **74%**.

This shows a clear behavioural shift. Compared to the earlier figure of **30%** for supporting female-founded products, the **62%** figure for *Buy Women Built*-labelled products represents nearly **double the purchase intent**. It is clear that the kitemark helps customers easily identify women-built brands and understand who they're supporting and why it matters.

What's powerful is that this doesn't shift based on income level or location; it is consistent nationwide.



## Visibility Drives Sales, Not Just Sentiment

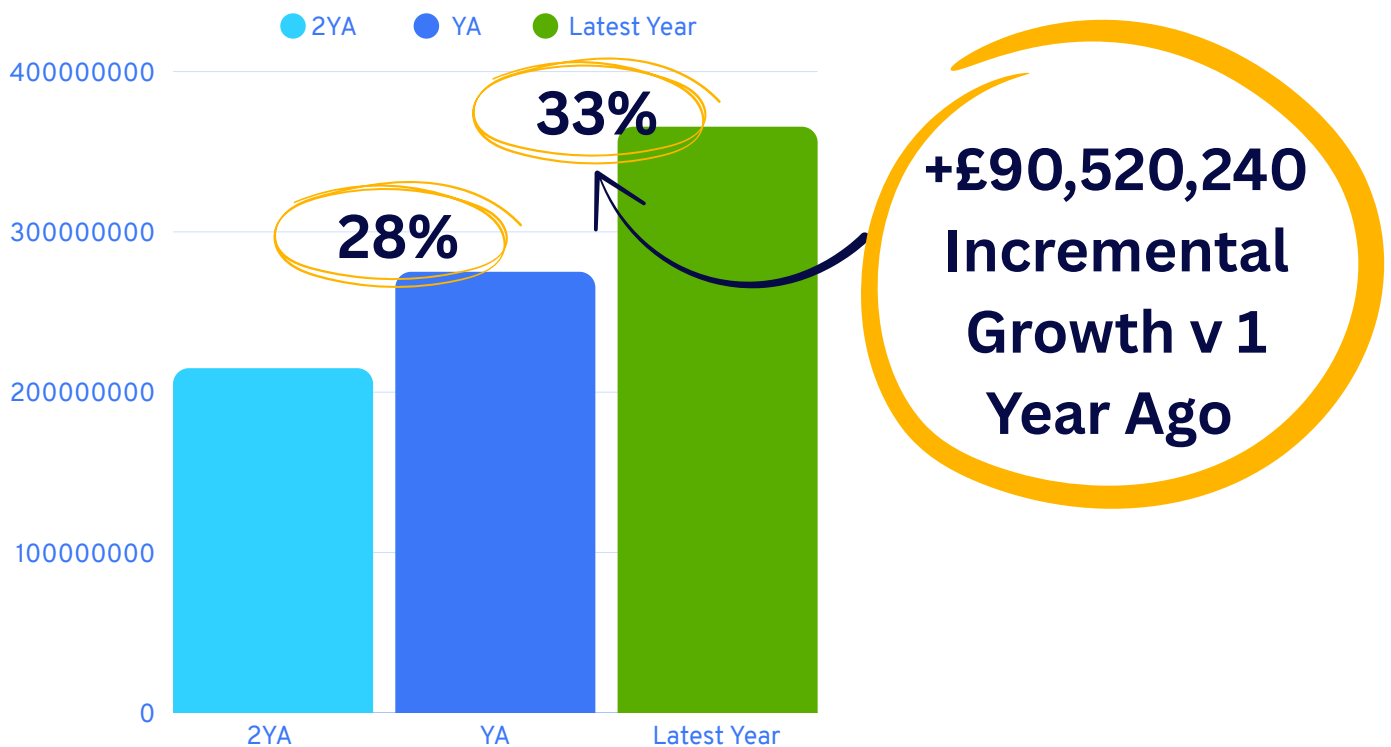
The correlation between visibility and sales isn't just theoretical; it's backed by commercial data.

Female-built brands carrying the *Buy Women Built* identity are showing significant growth in market performance. On average, these brands are growing at a rate of 30% (Total Buy Woman Built Members, Value Sales, NielsenIQ Scantrack, Total FMCG, we 17.05.25), compared to 3% growth across the total FMCG market (Total FMCG, Value Sales, NielsenIQ Scantrack, we 17.05.25).

That's a tenfold difference. And it's not just a result of price inflation, it's showing up in unit sales as well (Total Buy Woman Built Members, Unit Sales, NielsenIQ Scantrack, Total FMCG, we 17.05.25).

To date, *Buy Women Built*-affiliated brands have contributed an estimated £90 million in incremental growth. This is additional revenue entering the market because these brands were given the visibility they needed to reach more consumers.

Put simply: visibility converts into measurable commercial success.



# SPOTLIGHT ON...

## Ocado's designated Buy Women Built Aisle

The Buy Women Built aisle at Ocado provides a dedicated platform for female-founded brands, removing barriers to entry in major supermarkets and offering access to a national customer base. This initiative not only boosts brand credibility but also accelerates growth by featuring over 1,500 products from more than 130 women-led businesses.

Supported by promotions, editorial features, and storytelling across Ocado's channels, the aisle has driven an impressive average sales uplift of 20%, with some brands experiencing dramatic increases—Froot Pops (+140%), Bold Bean Co (+110%), and MOMO (+73%), among others.



## Buy Women Built Takeover at WholeFoods Market

In March 2024, WholeFoods Market was the first to highlight Buy Women Built brands across their windows, on promotional ends, in barkers at point of purchase and on their Deliveroo channel. The results were significant. Customers scooped up over 100,000 units of women-led products and the momentum was ignited across retailers. Year-on-year, Buy Women Built sales jumped 18.42%, and unit sales soared 35.23%. Month on month, the performance was equally positive; sales were up 11.29% and units sold increased by 20.14%.



*Beyond the major wins, the BWB community itself is invaluable. It's a powerful network that fosters collaboration and opens doors. Buy Woman Built doesn't just support women-built businesses; it actively accelerates their growth*

*Their International Women's Day campaign was a pivotal moment for us. We didn't just see a small uplift; we achieved record-breaking sales of our Peanut Butter Buttons. That success gave us the leverage to increase our presence and extend our product range in-store.*



*- Nirali Mankodi,  
Founder and Director at Superfoodio*





## Why These Brands Connect So Well With Consumers?

The distinct strength of women-built brands lies in their origin story. According to *Buy Women Built* internal research, 90% of female founders launch their businesses in response to a personal unmet need — they couldn't find the product they wanted, so they built it.

This means their products tend to be innately customer-centric. It's not just about promoting women for equity's sake. It's about showcasing products that were designed to meet real, often underserved, consumer needs. And when consumers are given the chance to learn about these stories — through packaging, branding, or retail campaigns — they respond.

It's customers, not investment, that fuels lasting growth.

## Conclusion: The Data Shows What's Possible

Here's what we know:

- 1) Consumers care:** 64% of consumers say they care about buying from companies that support social issues they connect with - rising to 66% among women.
- 2) Visibility drives sales:** When shoppers know a product is female-founded, 30% are more likely to buy, but with the *Buy Women Built* mark, intent increases to 62%. This isn't a women-for-women story. Visibility shifts behaviours across all shoppers - men and women alike.
- 3) Retail momentum is real:** *Buy Women Built* brands are growing 10x faster than total FMCG in the UK.
  - Buy Women Built: +30% growth year-on-year
  - FMCG total market: +3% growth year-on-year

This growth is not price-driven: unit sales are also up significantly, showing real consumer demand.

- 4) The Recognition gap = opportunity:** Only 30% of people say they'd be more likely to buy if they knew a brand was female-founded. But a further 53% are undecided, suggesting strong potential to shift behaviour with clearer messaging and visibility.
- 5) Incremental sales are meaningful:** In the last year alone, *Buy Women Built* brands delivered over £90 million in incremental growth.

The impact's loud and clear. *Buy Women Built* is changing how people shop, helping women-founded brands grow faster. There's still work to do but making these brands visible isn't just the right thing to do, it's a competitive advantage.