

# ACs to ice cream: E-tail booms in cruel summer

## Heat Waves Keep People From Stepping Out | Online Sales Jump Even As Store Footfall Dips

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**Mumbai:** From ACs to beauty products and even snacking items, consumers are increasingly going online to fill their shopping carts as heat waves nudge them to stay indoors, at least during the peak afternoon hours.

Online sales for Voltas through Amazon and Flipkart, for instance, have grown by 190% year-on-year between March-May 2024. The company's sales through its own website have grown by almost 60% YoY between April and May, a company spokesperson said.

The demand for ACs and coolers on Flipkart has almost doubled this May over the year-ago period. While the southern and eastern parts of the country dominated demand in April, the north (largely metros and tier-1 cities) — which has been reeling from a severe heat wave — joined its eastern counterparts to drive demand for cooling products for the platform in May. "Premium segments of 2 ton and higher have gained momentum... brands like Voltas, Godrej, Lloyd, Haier and Onida have gained share," said a company spokesperson.

On Amazon, orders for coolers surged from cities like Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Kolkata, Pune and Hyderabad. For Panasonic India, 5-star inverter ACs contribute to 55% of its online AC sales, which is higher than industry average, said Fumiyasu Fujimori, MD at Panasonic Marketing India.

E-commerce platforms — with their convenience of doorstep deliveries — continue to find traction among households, particularly

when making large purchases. Meanwhile, for daily essentials, small-ticket as well as impulse purchases, quick commerce has become the go-to avenue.

Parle's sales through quick commerce platforms like Blinkit, Swiggy Instamart and Zepto have shot up and this segment has seen a 10-15%

brand Baskin Robbins also opted for online channels, including quick commerce platforms, to satisfy their ice cream cravings. "After the heat wave intensified in north-west India, Baskin Robbins has seen online growth jump from 20-25% in April and first half of May this year to almost 40% and above for the

### Deploying More Delivery Staff A Challenge

➤ Shopping that happens roughly between **10am-7pm** has **moved online** due to the heat

➤ Demand for **ACs and coolers** by metros and tier-1 cities in the north almost doubled on Flipkart in May YoY

➤ Orders for **coolers** from cities like Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Kolkata, Pune, and Hyderabad surged on Amazon

➤ After the heat wave intensified in the north-west, ice cream brand **Baskin Robbins** saw a



spike in online sales

➤ For **Mother Dairy**, online sales grew at a faster pace than modern trade channels

➤ Beauty retailer **Colorbar** saw a 5-10% dip in offline store footfall

incremental growth due to the heat, said vice-president Mayank Shah.

"The shopping that happens between 10-11am during the day to 6-7pm in the evening has moved online. Consumers are refraining from stepping out. As a consequence, even the online players are having to deploy more manpower and that can be a challenge," Shah said.

Manish Bandlish, MD at Mother Dairy, said that demand for its ice creams, curd and dairy beverages across online channels has grown upwards of 60% in May, even higher than modern trade which has seen a growth of 40% during the period. For several others too, the trend has been similar.

Customers of American

second half of May," said Mohit Khattar, CEO at Graviss Foods which is the master franchisee of the brand in India. However, the share of online transactions has been higher among newer consumers, Khattar added.

Beauty retailer Colorbar has seen a 5-10% decrease in footfall at its offline stores even as online sales have surged. "As heat waves intensify with each passing summer, we have witnessed more consumers opting to stay indoors, favouring the convenience of shopping from home. Moreover, online platforms frequently have bolder promotions... this strategy resonates with the value-conscious consumer segment," said Samir Modi, managing director at Colorbar Cosmetics.