



Women in Convenience

2023 Key Insights

The 2023 Women in Convenience research, which ran between February and March, comprised of a steering group with nine female retailers and a quantitative survey. The objective was to gain a deeper understanding of the barriers that female retailers face, and how Women in Convenience can start to make meaningful progress in breaking these barriers down.



Women in Convenience 2023 Research

Key Insights

Summary

Women play a vital role in convenience stores across the country and are keen to find ways to develop their businesses and improve their bottom line. Despite this, they are subjected to unfair treatment from a wide spectrum of people that they deal with on a day-to-day basis, and often lack the confidence required to reach their full potential.

This is compounded by a lack of access to industry events and groups, which offer opportunities for

self-improvement and the building of relationships with like-minded retailers, as well as business advice and insights.

Over the coming months, we will be working with our Women in Convenience partners and retailer panel to tackle the issues highlighted in this research, and make strides to ensure that female retailers are represented, are included, and have access to the resources they need to help them run successful, thriving businesses.

2022 success stories

Since the launch of Women in Convenience in 2022, there have been several success stories that the retailers at the steering group shared, including:

- New products were stocked after meeting the relevant contact at the event.
- Collaboration with a male retailer who attended the event resulted in a new contact with a major supplier and involvement in their latest campaign.
- Noticeable improvement in the way that supplier reps from the companies who attended the event are approaching female retailers.
- One retailer had a follow-up session with Mikaela (founder of She Almighty and keynote speaker at Women in Convenience 2022), and as a result has found the confidence to run for local council.
- The WhatsApp group received positive feedback, with the retailers expressing that it is a really good mix of personal and business issues, and is one of the only groups where they feel that they can be open and honest.

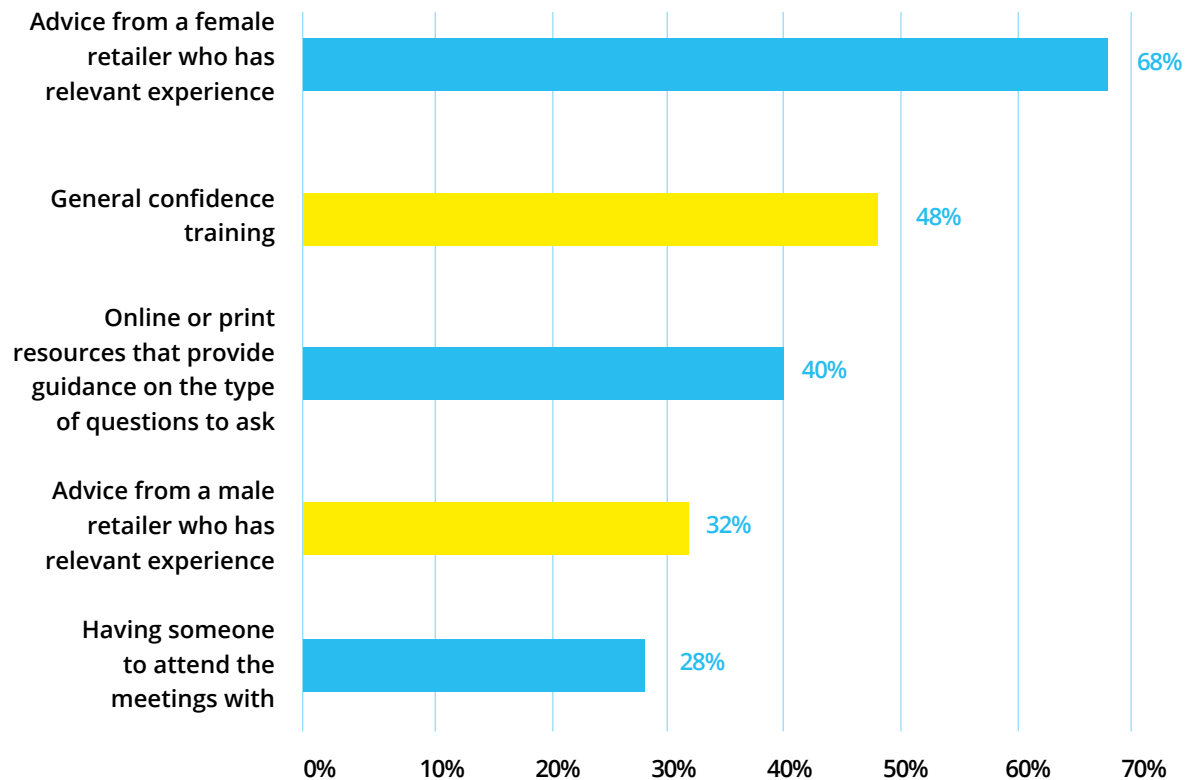


Leading their businesses

The majority (87.1%) of those surveyed feel that their opinions are considered when important decisions are made in their business, with 64.9% stating that they are either the sole decision maker or that their views are 'definitely' considered. This still leaves 12.9% feeling that their views aren't

considered, which is surprising given the seniority of respondents – 72.5% were at store manager level or above. We need to look into this issue further, to understand how we can ensure that all women working in our sector feel empowered and heard.

Which of the following do you believe would help you feel more confident?



Confidence issues

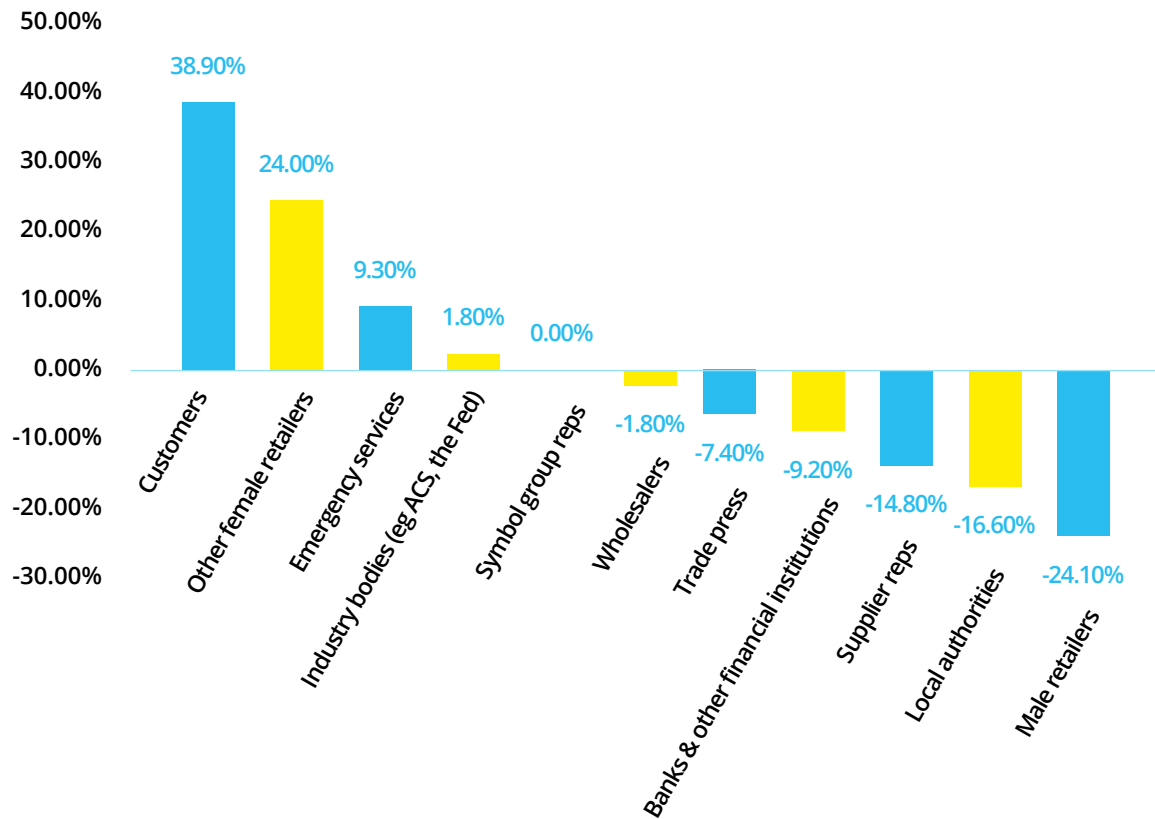
Despite their key role in their businesses, almost half (46.3%) of those surveyed stated that they didn't feel confident approaching outside organisations – for example, banks – for business support.

How can we help address this?

Having a business support network is vital, with 80% of respondents stating that advice from another retailer (male or female) would help them feel more confident. Further to this, 70% stated a preference for talking to a female retailer – highlighting the importance of connecting women working in convenience with each other.

General confidence training and the provision of relevant resources either digitally or in print were also highlighted as ways that would help female retailers feel more confident.

Equal treatment indicator



Highlighting where inequality exists

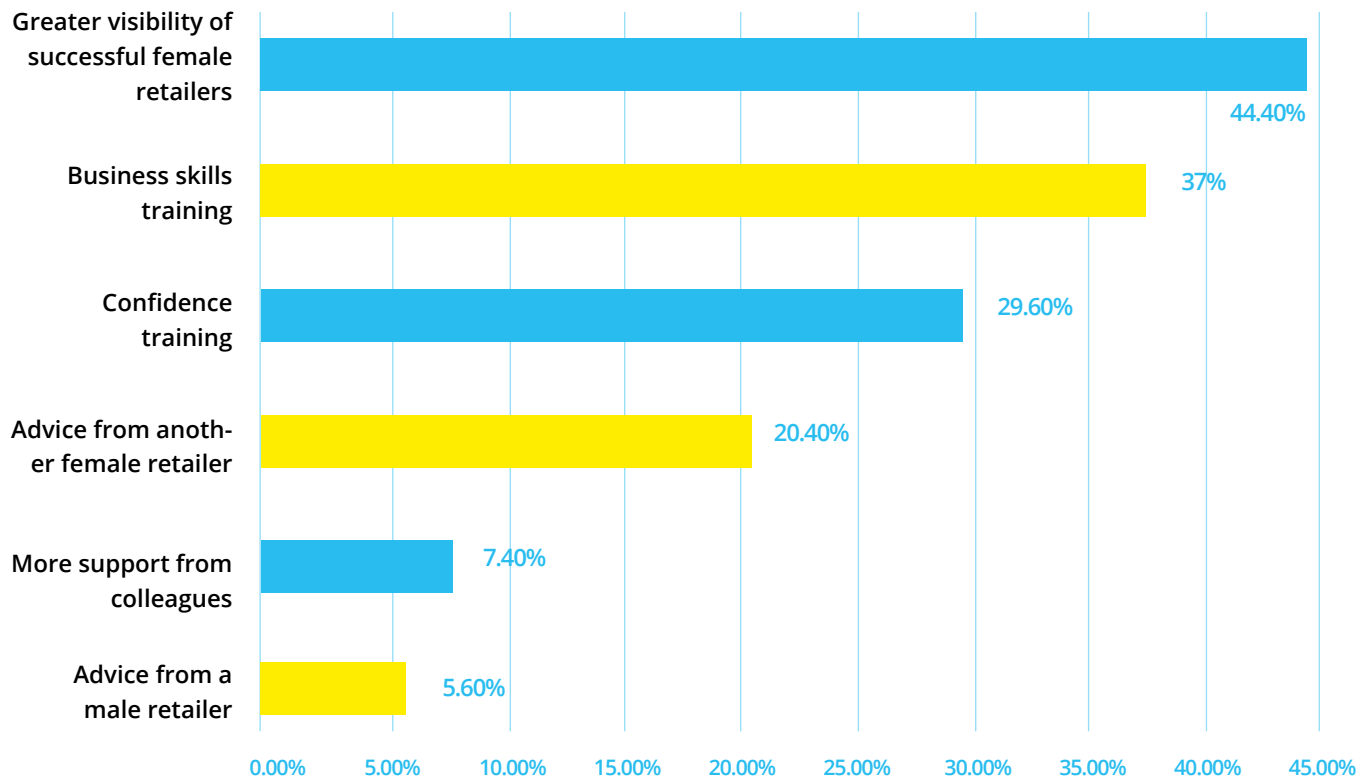
This graph shows from which groups respondents feel they receive the most and the least equal treatment.

Customers, other female retailers and the emergency services came out on top, while other male retailers, local authorities and supplier reps were highlighted as those treating female retailers least equally.

Further to this, 100% of those who are not taking any action to address unequal treatment either don't feel comfortable doing so or don't feel that they'll be able to change anything.

This demonstrates the need for more support so that women working in our sector have a network and resources that will help them address unequal and unfair treatment.

Which of the below do you think would help you in situations where you receive unequal or unfair treatment?



Addressing inequality

Raising awareness, campaigning and championing female retailers are just some of the ways that Women in Convenience can start to rebalance inequality in our industry.

In addition to this, respondents told us that increased visibility of successful female retailers, business and confidence training and advice from their peers will help them to deal with situations where they receive unequal or unfair treatment.

Working with male retailers

To address the gender divide, and encourage more male retailers to support Women in Convenience, we need to first understand how they view the initiative and the areas where there are gaps in their own knowledge that may prevent them from giving female staff members the support they need. We will put together a male-only survey in May, with a view to sharing the results at the 2023 Women in Convenience event.

Missing out on opportunities

Retailer panels

Only 20.4% of those surveyed are on retailer panels. Of these, 70% said the reason for this was that they had not been asked. This highlights the unequal gender representation on panels that are intended to reflect the convenience industry.

A further 13.3% were asked to join but declined, saying they were unsure they would be able to find the time. This highlights the importance of ensuring that retailer panel sessions are timed to fit in with store owners' work schedules, that the requirements of those on the panel are clearly explained at the start and that they deliver real value for those involved.

Some 70.4% of respondents would like to see more female retailers represented on these panels, which highlights that there is a definite desire among women working in the sector to have a seat at the table.

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of respondents would like to see more female retailers represented on these panels



Symbol group support

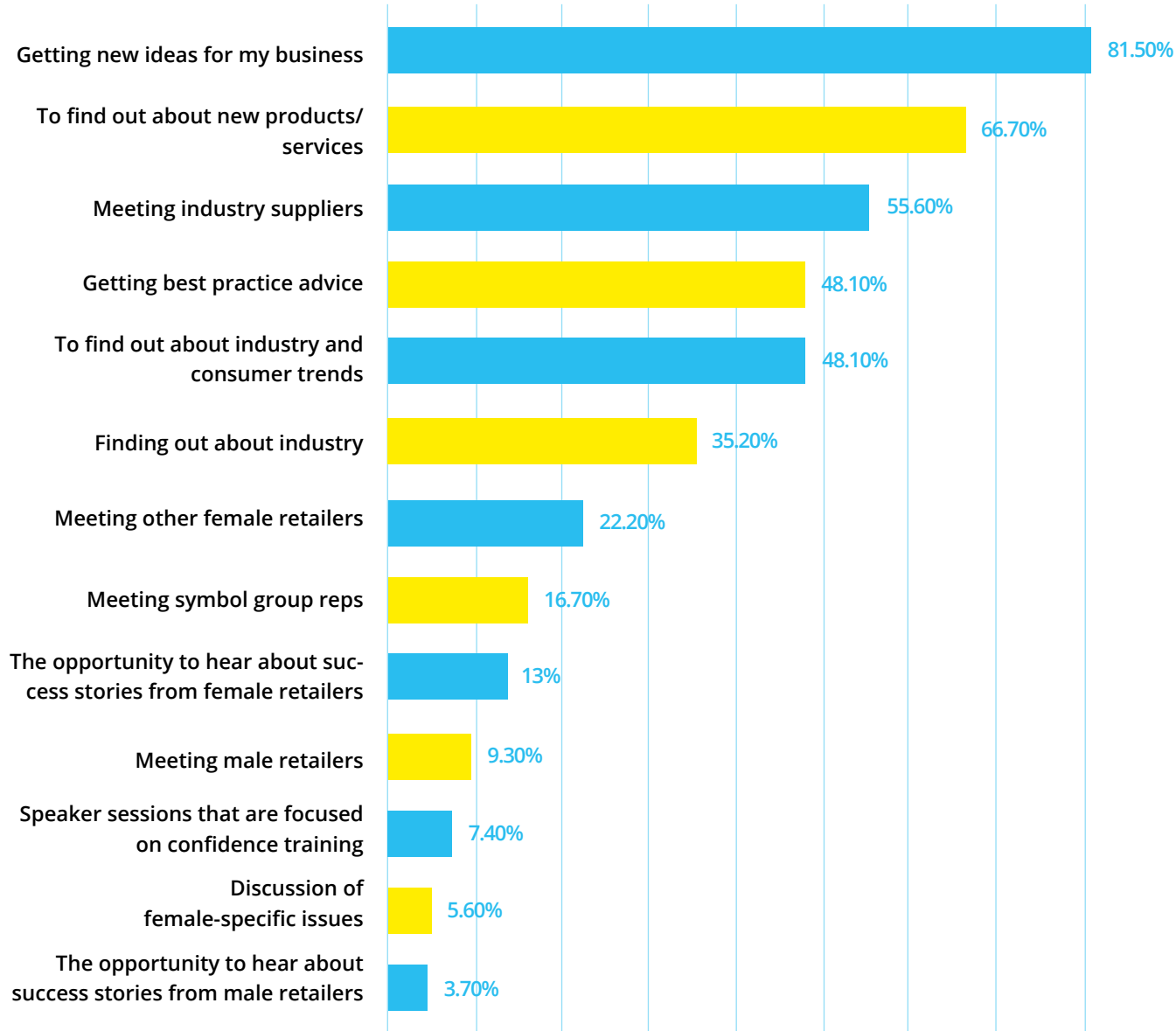
The steering group shared that there is a severe under-representation of women on symbol group retailer panels or development groups – which makes them feel like it is a box-ticking exercise. How can we encourage symbol groups to address this and attend the 2023 event to offer face-to-face interactions?

Industry events

29.6% of respondents stated that they will not be attending any industry events this year – with the key reasons for this being lack of time, not being invited and not feeling comfortable attending.

We need to work to improve access to retailer panels and industry events for women in the sector, making it easy for them to get involved.

What are your main reasons for attending industry events?



Looking for ways to improve their businesses

The primary driver for female retailers attending industry events is to find ways to grow their businesses – whether that's discovering new ideas, products or services, meeting suppliers, getting best practice advice or networking with each other.

2023 event ideas

The retailers at the steering group highlighted the following as areas of interest for the 2023 event:

- Media training or presentation skills
- Information on new products and regulatory updates
- Keynote address from a female within the industry (retailer, supplier or wholesaler) who has overcome the challenges they've faced
- Business ideas and take-aways for their business
- The opportunity to share their experiences with suppliers directly and open up the conversation
- Partnerships with other bodies like Women in Wholesale could be key in raising the profile of Women in Convenience and tackling the issues that female retailers face



Menopause resources

There isn't enough support for female retailers who are going through the menopause – either in terms of the support they can access or the support their colleagues and managers can access. We agreed to approach

NewstrAid and Grocery Aid to discuss whether they can add menopause support materials to their suite of well-being resources for retailers, and how Women in Convenience can help facilitate this.



To find out more about Women in Convenience, please contact Kate on kate.daw@newtrade.co.uk // 07886 784465



Headline partner



Supporting partners



Collaborator

