

DON'T PLAY IT AGAIN SAM

RETAIL WORKERS SHOP THE WORST IN-STORE ANTHEMS

Britney Spears tops the list of the most annoying musical artists played on the UK high street.

British retail workers are being driven to distraction by the songs that provide the soundtrack to their working lives, according to new research by leading retail recruitment website Retailchoice.com. **Three quarters** of shop staff admit to being irritated by in-store music.

A staggering **31 per cent** of shop workers have to endure the same album between six and 20 times a week, with **16 per cent** hearing the same record more than 20 times during the course of a week.

Those working in the fashion and footwear retail sectors suffer the most from “repetitive record syndrome.” The most overplayed records on the high street come courtesy of:

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|-----------------|------------------------|
| Britney Spears | 6. Akon |
| Usher | 7. Beyoncé |
| Kylie Minogue | 8. Blue |
| 50 Cent | = 9. Justin Timberlake |
| Robbie Williams | = 9. Michael Jackson |

And it's not just the staff whose nerves are being tested. **Forty percent** of shop workers receive complaints from customers about the maddening music played as they part with their hard earned cash.

Christmas is the most testing time for the ears of the nation's retail workers. 'Jingle Bells' tops the list of the most hated seasonal songs, with Slade's 'Merry Christmas Everyone' and 'White Christmas' by Bing Crosby also annoying retail staff.

And it seems Christmas is coming earlier every year, with **61 per cent** of employers recruiting their Christmas staff before the end of September.

Companies including Tiffany and WHSmith are already advertising their seasonal vacancies on the Christmas Zone at www.retailchoice.com.

Overall, pop music is still top of the shop's play list, with the majority of stores opting for this genre. **Forty two per cent** of those polled believe that pop music in shops actually encourages shoppers to buy more.

However when it comes to motivating shoppers to part with their cash, reggae music fares the worst. Just **five per cent** of shop staff notice an increase in spending when reggae is playing.

Greg Baines, marketing manager for retailchoice.com commented:

"Music is an essential part of the retail experience, and can help to make or break the ambiance for both staff and customers. In the words of Britney Spears, music can be *Toxic* to the shopping process if stores aren't careful.

We would recommend that retailers who overplay records from our shop flop list should think again and consult employees to achieve a varied play list that is well received by both shoppers and staff."

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Notes to editors

A questionnaire was placed on retailchoice.com in July 2005. The survey received 1,423 responses.

(www.retailchoice.com)

Retailchoice is the UK's market leading retail job board and has been since its launch in July 2004. It continues to be the fastest growing retail job board in the UK. The site carries over 8,000 vacancies from over 140 employers at any one time, attracting over 70,000 retail candidates each month.

Retailchoice.com is part of The Totaljobs Group Limited - the UK holding company for the premium brands in online recruitment: CWJobs.co.uk, CatererGlobal.com and Caterer.com and totaljobs.com.

The Totaljobs Group, between its sites, carries around 130,000 vacancies at any one time, and generates over ¾ million applications every month – that's around 17 every second of the day. It is the wholly owned subsidiary of the Reed Elsevier Group plc, a FTSE 100 company and one of the world's largest publishing and information companies.