

# Wowcher faces court threat over 'misleading' sales practices

Wowcher, the online retail and experiences platform, has been warned it could face court action unless it changes customer sales practices.

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) launched [a review of its operations](#) in March as part of a wider probe into pressure-selling tactics used by retailers online.

The investigation, the regulator said, had found several areas of concern including hidden charges and the use of a pre-ticked box to enrol consumers into VIP memberships on Wowcher's site.

The main gripe, however, seems to centre on its use of timers.

"Wowcher's website features extensive use of countdown clocks and marketing claims such as 'Running out!' or 'In high demand!' which create an impression of urgency and influence shoppers as they are making their purchasing decisions," a statement said.

"The CMA has found evidence that these claims risk giving the misleading impression that products will increase in price or will not be available, when this is often not the case.

"Such claims, especially when used with countdown clocks, can put pressure on shoppers to buy quickly for fear of missing out, leading to rushed purchases."

The watchdog said it had written to Wowcher to outline the ways in which it could formally address the findings.

"Wowcher now has the opportunity to respond and avoid court

action by signing undertakings to change its online sales practices,” the regulator added.

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The company responded: “Wowcher’s mission has always been to help save our customers money with the best, exclusive offers from thousands of our merchants across the UK.

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“This has never been more important than in this challenging economic environment.

“The aim of our marketing claims is always to provide accurate and useful information to our customers when they are browsing our website.

“We look forward to continuing to engage with the CMA on this

matter.”