



# Ring in a new reality this holiday season

Stop us if you've heard this before – this holiday season will be unlike any other.

As consumers decide which of their newfound shopping preferences will stick, the pressure remains on retailers to stay responsive and agile while keeping an eye on what's happening with consumer sentiment.

Here are just a few insights from our latest consumer research to help you plan, respond and execute like an ecommerce leader.



## Top strategies for a successful holiday season

Grow your sales by offering your customers the superior experience they deserve.



### Communicate clearly.

Canadians are more inclined to reward retailers if expectations are managed upfront and throughout their experience.



### Start early.

Strategically plan promotions early to spread out volumes. Consider extending returns to match early promotions and encourage early shopping.



### Manage expectations.

Be clear and transparent with shoppers throughout the holiday shopping season, from shipping costs and timelines to inventory status and returns policies.



### Maximize channels.

Use all your channels – website and marketing, physical locations, loyalty programs/campaigns, etc. – to create a seamless customer experience.



# 63%

of shoppers expect the same level of personal service across channels. However customers are shopping with you, ensure they receive a consistent experience

## Shipping policies are now table stakes

Unexpected shipping charges at checkout can be a deal breaker. Testing shipping strategies and offering options for delivery are critical to your holiday strategy.

# 92%

Optimizing the threshold for free shipping with a minimum purchase, or offering free shipping or special shipping during a promotion, will have a huge impact on driving customers through checkout.

of shoppers abandoned cart because the cost of shipping was too high

# You get one chance to impress

Holidays are a great time to attract new customers, as shoppers tend to go beyond their normal stores seeking gifts. Don't focus on that one-time holiday purchase; be in it for the long haul and get them to return. **Shoppers said these items drive their loyalty and get them to return:**



Convenient returns policy



Speedy delivery options



Item tracking



Flexible delivery and pickup options



Secure delivery



## Returns are more than a process – they're a strategy

Approach returns as an opportunity to further distinguish your business from the pack. Make your policy clear, easy to find and optimized for convenience. While a customer-friendly policy may not seem cost effective, think of returns as a long-term investment in satisfied, returning customers.

56%

of shoppers have abandoned carts due to lack of flexible returns options

## Ecommerce experience

With more businesses scaling up their online operations, you need to stand out to compete. Ensure your website is easy to browse and buy from. Providing shoppers with a positive experience will convert them into customers.

65%

of shoppers said they abandoned cart because web store was too difficult to navigate

## Generation expectations

Gen Z has far different expectations of you and your business than previous generations. Here are five areas to focus on when targeting the next generation of online shoppers:



An easy-to-use mobile app



"Back in stock" estimates for out-of-stock items



Ability to reserve online and pay/pick up in store



Recurring delivery for frequently purchased items



Inventory system that reflects availability across every store location



### Canada Post is here to support you

For more insights and resources to get you ready for the holiday season, visit [canadapost.ca/Holiday2021](https://canadapost.ca/Holiday2021).

