



— 2023 Holiday
**PREPAREDNESS
GUIDE**

With autumn in the air, it's time to take the pulse of the 2023 holiday shopper and make sure your brand is ready for the season ahead. Although inflation is cooling, customers remain acutely price conscious. According to our 2023 Consumer Behavior Survey, 46 percent of consumers reported that they always shop around to find the best price, a 10 percent jump over last year's findings. And consumers rated "brands with the lowest price" as the number one determining factor for their purchases this holiday season. Ensuring that the "price is right" and leveraging promotions to attract a growing number of bargain-hunters has never been more crucial for retail success.

Our holiday readiness tips will help your brand make the most of retail's most exciting, challenging, and profitable time of year.

— MK
Michael Kahn,
Global CEO, Astound Commerce



MAKE YOUR LOYALTY PROGRAMS COUNT

Customers want to feel valued when they shop, especially when they're looking to stretch every dollar. In our latest Customer Behavior Survey, shoppers cited being rewarded with discounts and points for purchases as one of the most important ways brands could earn their loyalty—second only to their personal history and familiarity with a brand.

Seize the moment to implement, improve, or promote your loyalty programs to capture more repeat customers as we head into the holiday season.

CUSTOMERS CITE

POINTS AND REWARDS

AS CRUCIAL IN SECURING THEIR LOYALTY



USE YOUR SOCIAL ACCOUNTS WISELY

Per the survey, shoppers are almost a third less likely to purchase from a brand's social media site than they were last holiday season.

Still, social media has its uses. From keeping up with the latest trends and discovering new brands to catching fashion live-streams and connecting with customer service, consumers report that social media, particularly Facebook and Instagram, remain an important part of their overall retail experience. And, keeping the holiday season in mind, social media is a favorite way to share gift ideas—32% of consumers say they use Facebook to send product links to family and friends.

CONSUMERS ARE

30%

LESS LIKELY TO PURCHASE VIA SOCIAL MEDIA
THAN LAST YEAR

IMPROVE YOUR ONLINE STOREFRONT

Customers are resoundingly closing the tab on sub-par online storefronts. According to the survey, almost 2 in 3 shoppers will abandon a site over slow page loads or general poor web performance, and 62% say they leave a storefront if they can't find a given product via search.

The time to improve the baseline functionality of your online storefront is now: ensure your load speed, overall performance, and search capabilities are up to the task before the holiday season hits. But don't worry if you haven't invested in an immersive site experience yet—this still ranks relatively low on consumers' lists of what they value in a brand or retailer.

65%

OF CONSUMERS WILL ABANDON YOUR SITE OVER
POOR WEB PERFORMANCE

UP YOUR MOBILE GAME

From product research and brand engagement to wish lists and gift registry, mobile sites and apps have outstripped desktop as the preferred method of shopping and browsing, according to our latest Consumer Behavior Survey.

The ability to browse, shop, and share on your mobile site or app allows you to meet consumers, particularly Gen Z and millennials, where they are. Make sure you're entering this holiday season with a mobile storefront with fast load times, easy-to-use search functionality, and a seamless path to checkout.

50%

OF CUSTOMERS PREFER MOBILE SITES OR
APPS FOR PRODUCT RESEARCH



SAVE MONEY ON RETURNS

In this year's survey, more than half of consumers say better product descriptions and images would mitigate the need for returns. And a growing number (36 percent) cite more relevant product videos as a way for brands to decrease the likelihood of returns.

Improving descriptions across your site and investing in high-quality videos for top-selling items can save you the cost and headache of processing unnecessary returns that cut into holiday earnings.

53%

OF SHOPPERS SAY BETTER PRODUCT DESCRIPTIONS WOULD CUT NEED FOR RETURNS



MAKE DELIVERY FAST, EASY & FREE

People expect fast delivery, free (or conditionally free) shipping, and free returns as a given when online shopping, according to our latest consumer survey. And the benefits for brands are clear: According to Shopify's 2023 Consumer Trends Report, buyers spend \$22 more per order with free shipping as compared to paid shipping.

A fast, seamless delivery and return experience is even more crucial when consumers are purchasing for friends and family and anxious that gifts arrive in time for the holidays. Double down on speedy shipping and make sure that your gift return policies are clear and simple.

3 in 4

CUSTOMERS RANK SPEED OF DELIVERY, FREE SHIPPING, AND FREE RETURNS AS IMPORTANT WHEN DECIDING

This holiday season offers unique opportunities for brands to engage customers before, at, and after the “buy” button, with strategies to optimize reach, revenue, and loyalty—even as customers remain anxious about the economy and eager for steep discounts.

Contact Astound today to see how we can help maximize your commerce revenue by setting your brand up for growth this holiday season and beyond.

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