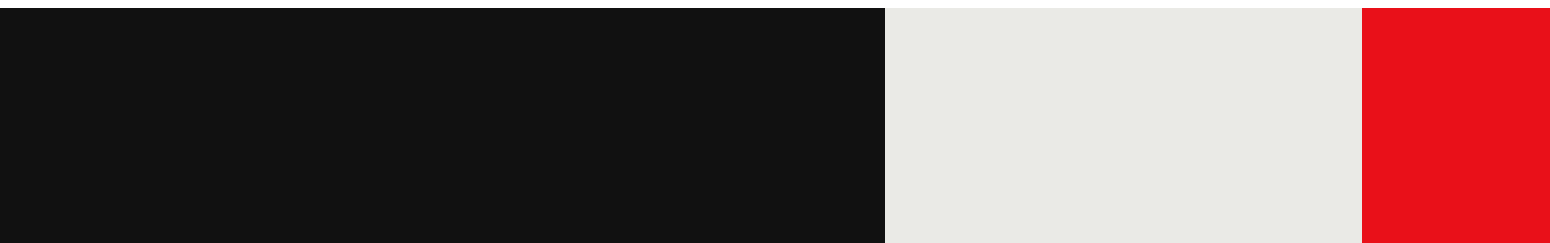



Paid membership is most in-demand feature for US apparel shoppers

Article



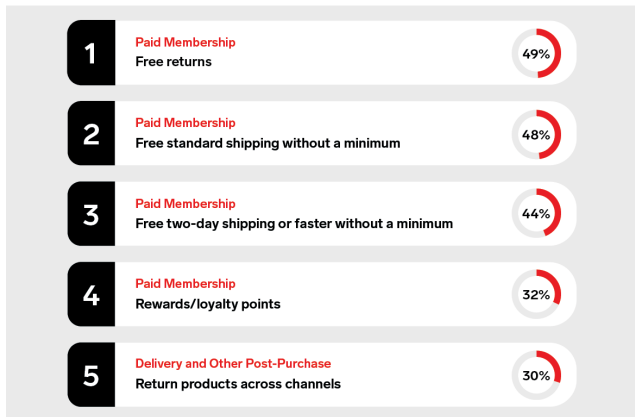
In our 2022 US Apparel Retail Features Benchmark report, we break down the online and in-store features apparel shoppers value the most, and how 10 leading retailers compare on those fronts.

Paid membership took the number one spot, in part because of high customer demand for free shipping and returns. Overall, **four of the top 10** most in-demand features fell under the

paid membership category.

Top 5 Most In-Demand US Apparel Retail Features, Dec 2021

% of respondents who called each feature “extremely valuable”



Methodology: Between December 14 and December 29, 2021, Insider Intelligence surveyed 1,711 US adults (ages 18 to 75) who had purchased apparel in the previous 12 months, to gauge the degree to which they value 47 apparel retail features. The margin of error was ±2.56 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. Respondents were selected from a panel to align with the US population on gender, age, household income, region, race, and ethnicity. The survey was fielded online by a third-party sample provider. Source: Insider Intelligence, “US Apparel Retail Features Benchmark 2022,” March 2022

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Free return shipping, free shipping, free expedited shipping, and rewards/loyalty points were the four most valued features in the study. The other features in this category—member-only access to product releases, sales, and events—were not as important to most apparel buyers.

Our survey presented these features as part of paid membership programs. But we assigned points to retailers that offered these features outside of paid memberships as well, either through free loyalty programs (as **Nike** did) or to the general public (as with **Nordstrom**). Features linked to usage of retailer credit cards were excluded.

Key Findings:

- **Free shipping with no minimum** (and two-day or faster shipping, if possible) should be the centerpiece of any paid membership strategy and is necessary to stay competitive.
- **Free return shipping is equally important for apparel consumers.** Fit and sizing are top concerns among online apparel shoppers, who will hesitate to make purchases they can’t send back for free.
- **Rewards/loyalty points were the most valued feature in this category that was not related to shipping or returns.** Retailers can drive repeat purchases from apparel consumers by including rewards as part of a paid or free program.

[Read the full report.](#)