

Some Holiday Gift Buyers Are Left Disappointed Post-Purchase

Last-mile delivery hiccups can spoil an otherwise good experience

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Buying holiday gifts digitally is supposed to be the hassle-free alternative to brick-and-mortar retail, but the majority of online shoppers say the experience has left them feeling disconcerted.

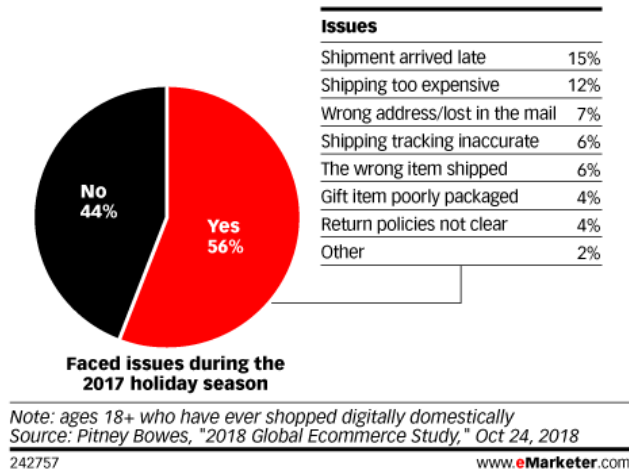
According to a recent [Pitney Bowes](#) survey of 3,002 US digital shoppers, 56% of respondents encountered an issue during the last holiday season as they shopped online for gifts. By comparison, 36% of respondents in 2017 said the places they shopped for gifts the prior year had "let [them] down during the holidays."

The root cause? Problems with post-purchase and delivery experiences.

Of the 56% who said they had a poor experience, some had the wrong item delivered (6%), while others said their package was lost in the mail and never arrived (7%). But it was more likely that the shipment arrived late (15%).

What Issues Did US Digital Shoppers Experience During the 2017 Holiday Season?

% of respondents



A lot can go wrong during the last mile of delivery—gift packages can be tossed carelessly onto porches, get damaged in transit or stolen. Still, 91% of US gift buyers were worried about late delivery—surpassing all other concerns, a 2018 **Dropoff** survey found.

And at a time of year when free shipping offers are expected, consumers had issues with a delivery fee being added to their order. Pitney Bowes' survey found that 12% of respondents felt the cost of shipping was too high, but didn't delve into whether or not the purchase was made based on those grounds.

However, having to pay for shipping isn't always a deal breaker according to "The eMarketer 2018 Holiday Survey," conducted by **Bizrate Insights** in September 2018. Nearly six in 10 US internet users (56%) said they prefer not to pay a shipping fee, but will make an exception for certain holiday purchases, such as large products or items from a specialty retailer.

Although buying holiday gifts online has its issues, a few bad experiences here and there aren't enough to deter consumers from shopping digitally this time of year. For the **2018 holiday season**, we expect US retail ecommerce sales to grow 16.2% to \$123.4 billion.

eMarketer recently released new forecasts for the 2018 holiday season, including total retail, retail ecommerce and mcommerce sales.

eMarketer PRO subscribers can access the forecast and [the full Holiday Shopping 2018 report now](#).

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