

# Many Retailers' Personalization Focus Is Blurry at Best

New study finds many marketers are hardly using the data they own

## ARTICLE |

**Krista Garcia**

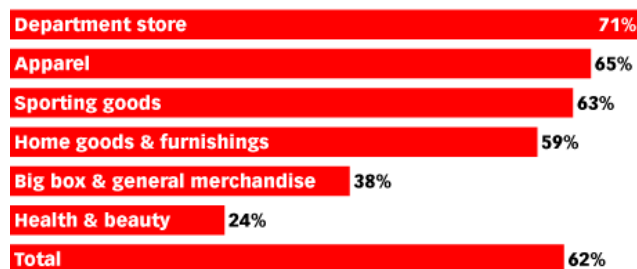
**I**n a new study, email marketing company [Coherent Path](#) evaluated the personalization practices of 100 top retailers and found sharp differences in email practices among different sectors.

One of the key factors considered by Coherent Path was whether a retailer sent the same emails to purchasers and nonpurchasers on the same day. Marketers in the health and beauty category scored considerably better than other verticals, with only 24% of purchaser emails matching nonpurchaser emails. The average across all sectors was 62%.

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**Share of Emails Sent by Retailers in North America  
Where Purchaser Emails Match a Nonpurchaser Email  
on the Same Day, by Industry, July-Dec 2017**

% of total



*Note: read as on average, retailers in North America sent the exact same email on the same day to the purchaser and nonpurchaser 62% of the time*  
Source: Coherent Path, "2018 Email Marketing Study: How 100 of the Top Retailers Engage Shoppers in the First 45 Days and Beyond," March 19, 2018

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Health and beauty retailers also scored far higher than average when it came to discounts, sending 53% less promotional emails to purchasers vs. nonpurchasers. On average, retailers overall only sent 19% fewer emails featuring discounts to purchasers vs. nonpurchasers.

"Our analysis indicates that despite having purchase data at their fingertips, retailers are essentially treating their new customers the same as their email subscribers who have not purchased," Coherent Path wrote.

For overall email marketing performance, online-only retailers scored higher than brick-and-mortar retailers, with online furniture store Wayfair ranking at the top. But two multichannel brands, Crate and Barrel and J.Crew, filled out the top three.

Coherent Path also singled out Levi's, noting that 75% of the company's emails sent to buyers were unique and that buyer emails had 75% fewer discounts than those targeted to nonbuyers. The Home Depot and Ralph Lauren also scored well in this regard.

The study is another indication that while personalization is a top priority among retailers, not all tactics have been adopted uniformly. An October 2017 [Monetate survey](#) found that although the vast majority of retail marketers send triggered emails based on criteria such as items

left in a digital shopping cart, less than half use an email experience engine to determine which consumers get which emails and when.