



2024 Holiday Shopping Trends

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INTRODUCTION

The holiday shopping season is traditionally seen as a make-or-break time for brands of all kinds.

It's also when advertisers do some of their most important work, with campaigns that can help fuel key sales and end the year on the right foot.

Looking for an edge with your Q4 campaigns? This in-depth research report, based on a survey of 2,000 US consumers age 16+ and conducted in partnership with GWI, provides valuable insights into the evolving landscape of holiday shopping, giving you a strategic advantage when planning and fine-tuning your advertising efforts for the 2024 holiday season.

Here's a look at the 11 trends that are set to shape holiday shopping in 2024.

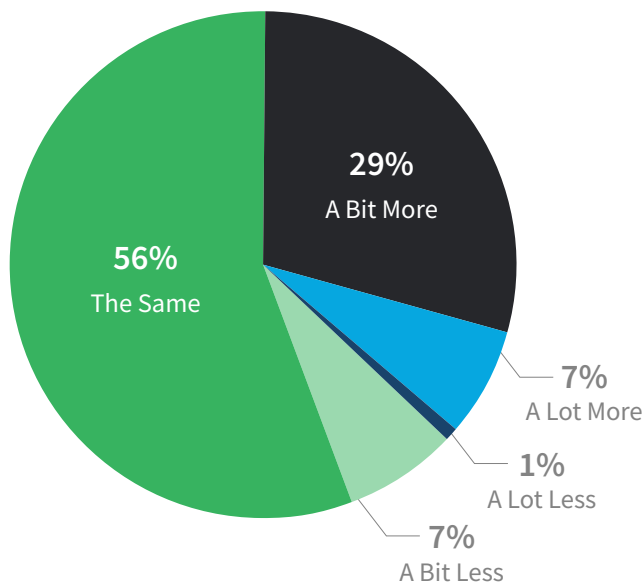
TREND #1

Stable spending and strict budgets

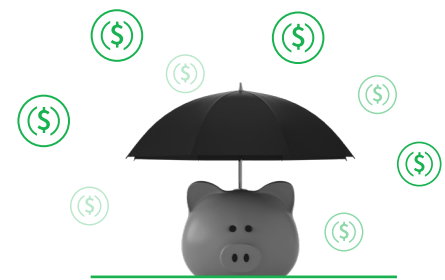
Most shoppers anticipate they'll be maintaining or slightly increasing their spending compared to 2023. Additionally, a majority of shoppers intend to set and adhere to a budget, reflecting a careful and planned approach to holiday expenditures.

Anticipated Holiday Shopping **Spending Change**, Among Shoppers, 2024

Compared to last year, I expect to spend...



Anticipated Holiday Shopping **Budget**, Among Shoppers, 2024



57%
plan to set a budget
and stick to it

B RECOMMENDS:

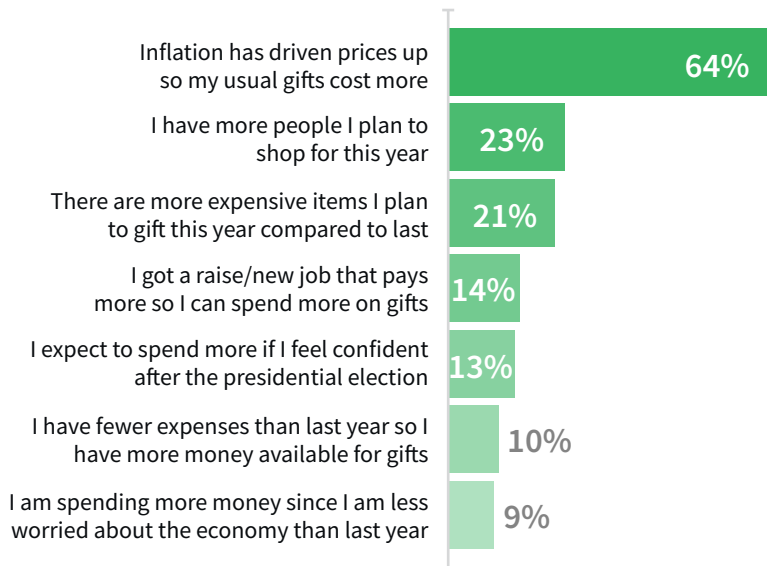
Brands should focus their marketing strategies on value and budget-friendly options, appealing to the majority of shoppers who plan to budget their spending this season. Emphasizing promotions, discounts, and budgeting tools can help attract these consumers, ensuring they feel confident in their holiday purchases while staying within their planned financial limits.

TREND #2

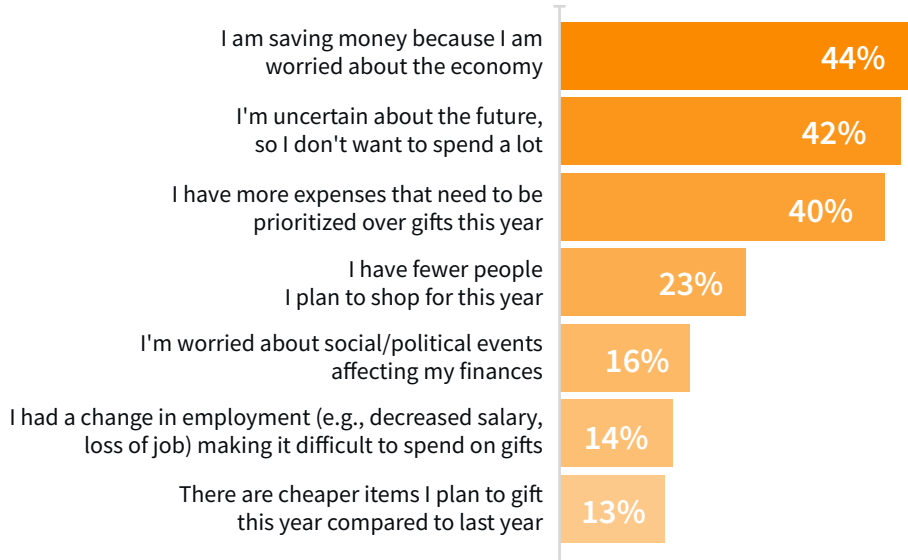
The economy and the election will shape holiday spending

Anticipated increases in holiday spending are largely due to inflation driving up prices. Conversely, those expecting to spend less cite concerns about the economy, uncertainty about the future and election results, and competing expenses.

Reasons for Anticipated **Increases** in Spending, 2024



Reasons for Anticipated **Decreases** in Spending, 2024



B RECOMMENDS:

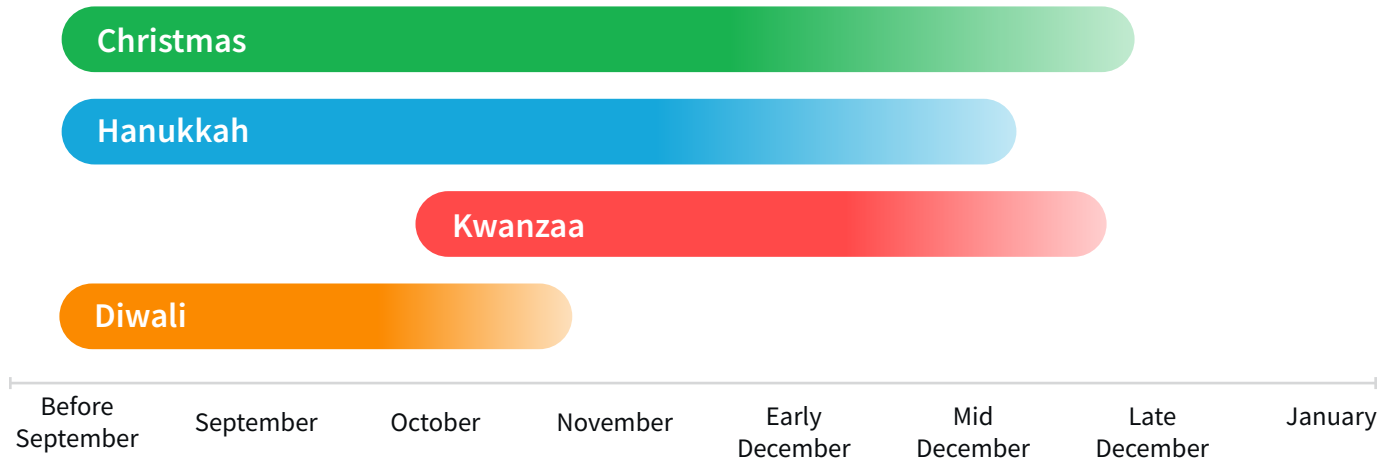
Brands must realize there are a multitude of reasons changing consumer spending. Strategies should focus on offering value, reassurance, and solutions to alleviate economic concerns, while highlighting the affordability and quality of their products amidst shifting consumer priorities.

TREND #3

Expect early shopping to avoid delays and secure deals

Holiday shoppers are increasingly planning ahead, with many starting their shopping early to avoid potential shipping delays and stock shortages. A significant portion are also spreading their purchases throughout the year to capitalize on deals and ensure a faster, more efficient shopping experience.

Anticipated Holiday Shopping Timeline, 2024



65%

say they will shop early to avoid shipping delays

62%

want to get all of their shopping done as fast as possible

58%

shop throughout the year to take advantage of deals

49%

say they will shop earlier to avoid out of stock items

RECOMMENDS:

Brands should launch their holiday campaigns early and emphasize themes of efficiency and preparedness to align with shoppers' desire to avoid delays and out-of-stock items. By highlighting early deals and the benefits of shopping ahead, brands can better capture the attention of proactive shoppers and drive early sales, ensuring a smoother holiday season for both consumers and retailers.

TREND #4

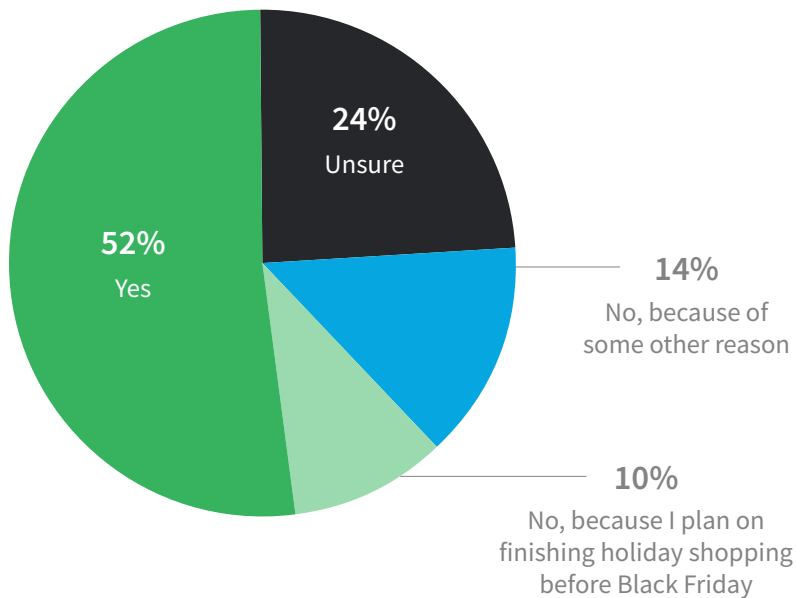
Black Friday and Cyber Monday are losing importance

Over half of holiday shoppers believe that Black Friday and Cyber Monday are not essential, as good deals are available throughout the season. Despite this, 52% still plan to shop on these days, while others either aim to complete their shopping earlier or remain undecided.

54%

say shopping on Black Friday/Cyber Monday is not critical since they can get good deals at any time during the winter holiday season

Black Friday & Cyber Monday Shopping Plans, 2024



B RECOMMENDS:

Brands should emphasize consistent promotions and discounts throughout the entire holiday season to attract shoppers who are not solely focused on Black Friday and Cyber Monday. Additionally, maintaining a strong presence leading up to and during these key shopping days is crucial to capture the interest of those who still plan to participate, while also encouraging early and sustained engagement with holiday deals.

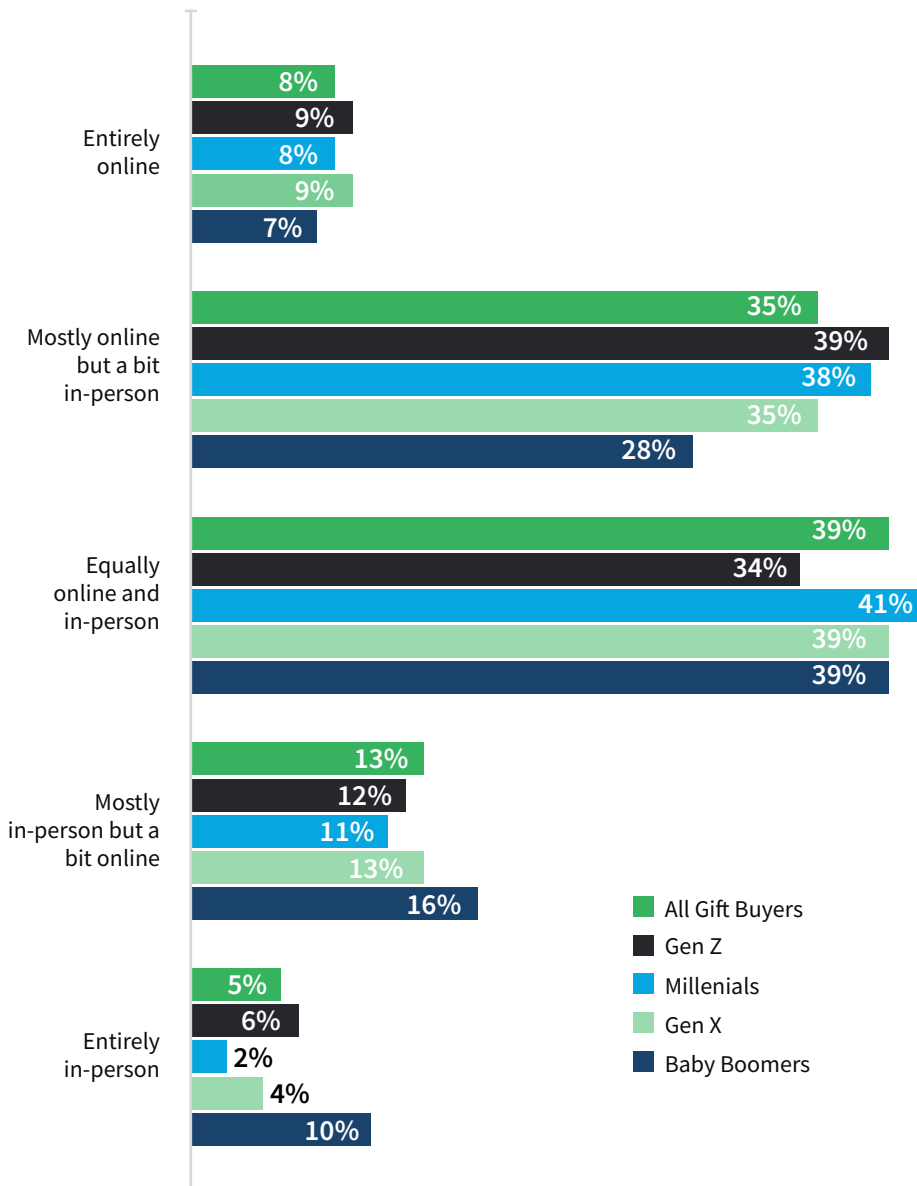
TREND #5

Nearly all holiday shoppers will incorporate online shopping, but many still prefer an omnichannel approach

Holiday shopping is increasingly being done online. While Gen Z and millennials lead the way in online shopping, Gen X and Baby Boomers still maintain prefer traditional in-person shopping experiences.

Planned Holiday Gift Shopping Methods, 2024

I expect to shop...



Among online gift shoppers in 2024:

- 72%** will make purchases through a laptop/computer
- 40%** will make a purchase through an app
- 34%** will make a purchase through a mobile browser
- 20%** will make a purchase through social media

B RECOMMENDS:

Brands need to maintain a strong online presence while also catering to the preferences of different generations. This includes optimizing websites for both computers and mobile devices and investing in user-friendly mobile apps to capture the attention of online shoppers. Additionally, brands should consider targeted marketing strategies to appeal to the specific shopping behaviors and preferences of each generation, ensuring a comprehensive approach to holiday advertising and brand engagement.

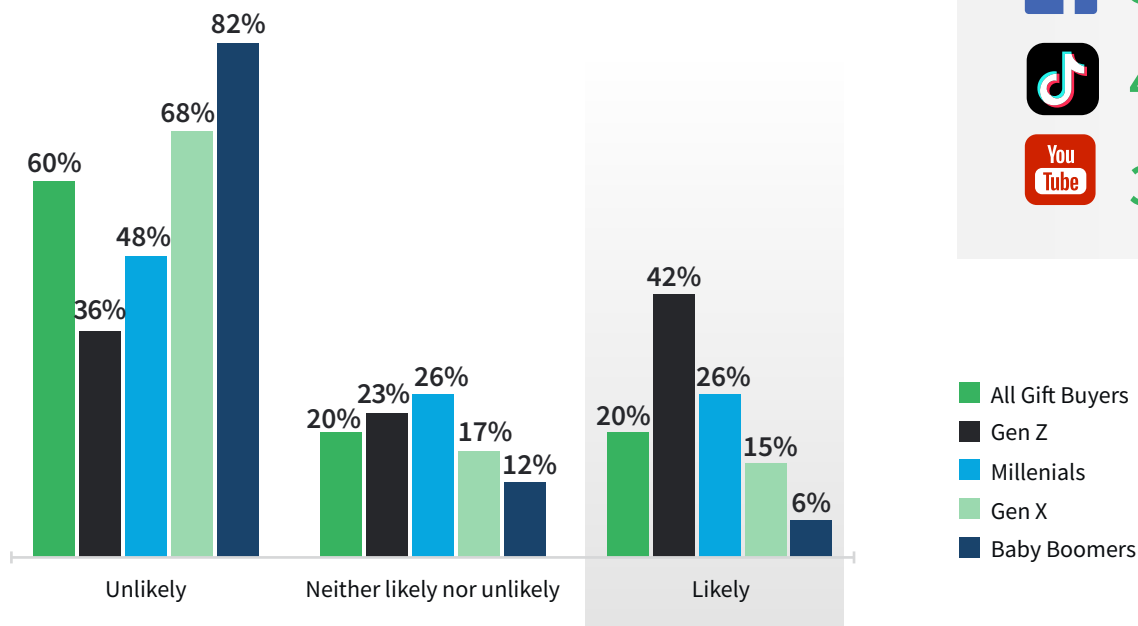
TREND #6

Interest in shopping through social media is growing, especially with younger generations

Although the majority of holiday shoppers are unlikely to purchase gifts directly through social media, there is a notable increase in interest—especially among Gen Z and millennials. Platforms like Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, and YouTube are gaining traction as viable channels for holiday shopping, indicating a shifting trend towards social commerce.

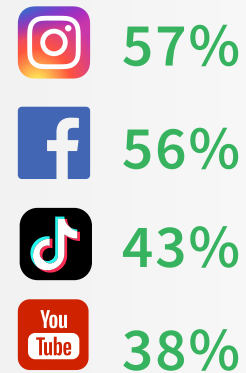
Shopping Directly Through Social Media Channels, 2024

I am ____ to purchase holiday gifts directly through social media this year



Among those buying gifts directly through social media:

Share purchasing through each platform:



B RECOMMENDS:

Brands should recognize the rising potential of social media as a shopping platform and invest in strategies to leverage this trend effectively. This includes optimizing product visibility and purchasing options on popular social media platforms, as well as implementing targeted advertising campaigns to engage with younger demographics who show a greater inclination towards social commerce. Additionally, brands should prioritize building trust and credibility on social media platforms to facilitate seamless transactions and foster positive shopping experiences for consumers.

TREND #7

Ads significantly influence holiday gift choices

Social media and online ads will play a crucial role in influencing holiday gift purchases, particularly for Gen Z and millennials. Traditional TV and CTV also have significant influence, especially for millennials and Gen X. While these ads have demonstrable influence, only 10% of shoppers plan to purchase gifts directly through ads.



Social Media
as an influence for gifts
(vs. average consumer)

Gen Z	56% more likely
Millennials	68% more likely
Gen X	57% less likely
Baby Boomers	78% less likely



Online Ads
as an influence for gifts
(vs. average consumer)

Gen Z	40% more likely
Millennials	36% more likely
Gen X	26% less likely
Baby Boomers	56% less likely



TV Ads*
as an influence for gifts
(vs. average consumer)

Gen Z	19% less likely
Millennials	12% more likely
Gen X	10% more likely
Baby Boomers	25% less likely

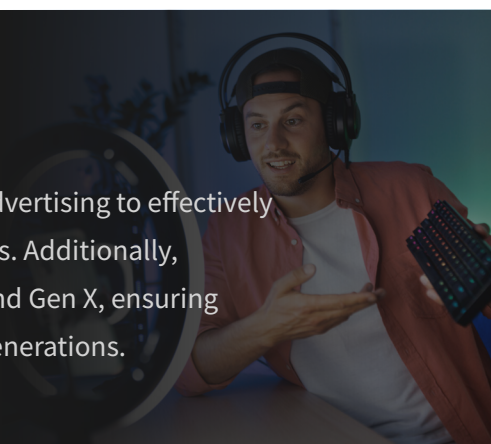
**Traditional & CTV*

10%

of consumers say they plan to purchase a gift directly through an advertisement this upcoming winter holiday season

B RECOMMENDS:

Brands should focus on social media, including influencer marketing, and online advertising to effectively reach Gen Z and millennials, leveraging their high engagement with these platforms. Additionally, incorporating traditional TV and CTV ads can capture the attention of millennials and Gen X, ensuring a comprehensive advertising strategy that addresses the preferences of different generations.



TREND #8

Holiday shoppers will seek tech-assisted retail guidance for their gift purchasing

Shoppers will increasingly rely on retailers for assistance, particularly through technology and AI. They will prioritize unique gift suggestions, appreciate recommendations for entertaining and decorating, and many will view online tools (including AI) as essential for organizing their holiday preparations.

53%

of 2024 holiday gift buyers prefer retailers that **help them find unique gifts**

48%

of 2024 holiday gift buyers like when retailers **provide suggestions for entertaining, decorating, or gifting**



44%

of 2024 holiday gift buyers **believe online tools, including AI, are essential** for helping them get organized for the winter holidays

46%

of 2024 holiday gift buyers **want personalized recommendations and sales offers** from brands and retailers

RECOMMENDS:

This overarching trend highlights the growing importance of technology in enhancing the shopping experience, and these findings prove the importance of brands integrating AI and technology seamlessly into their advertising, media, and overall brand strategy. This entails not only showcasing products but also providing tailored assistance, curated suggestions, and organizational tools to guide shoppers through the holiday frenzy. By prioritizing personalized recommendations and intuitive online experiences, retailers can foster deeper connections with customers, ultimately driving sales and loyalty.

TREND #9

Holiday shoppers will prioritize savings, deals, and loyalty programs amid rising prices

As consumers continue adjusting to higher prices, they will again prioritize savings, deals, and loyalty programs during the 2024 holiday season. Over half of shoppers will select their gift-shopping destinations based on free shipping offers, while nearly as many say they are heavily swayed by sales events and promotions. Additionally, a significant portion will opt for retailers or brands that offer compelling loyalty and rewards programs.

53%

will choose where to shop for gifts this year based on **free shipping** offers

51%

are heavily influenced by **sales events and promotions**

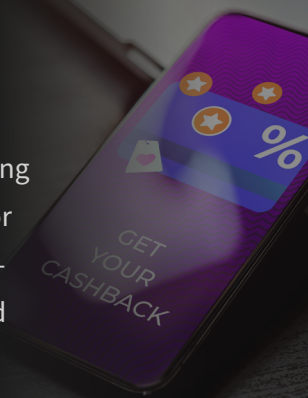
26%

will choose a retailer or brand based on the availability of a **loyalty and rewards program**



B RECOMMENDS:

Brands and retailers can capitalize on this by strategically emphasizing savings, deals, and loyalty programs in their advertising, media outreach, and brand strategies. Offering attractive free shipping offers, engaging sales events, and compelling loyalty programs can serve as powerful incentives for consumers, driving foot traffic, online engagement, and ultimately, sales. Moreover, fostering long-term customer loyalty through well-crafted rewards programs can help secure repeat business and establish a competitive edge in a challenging market landscape characterized by price sensitivity.

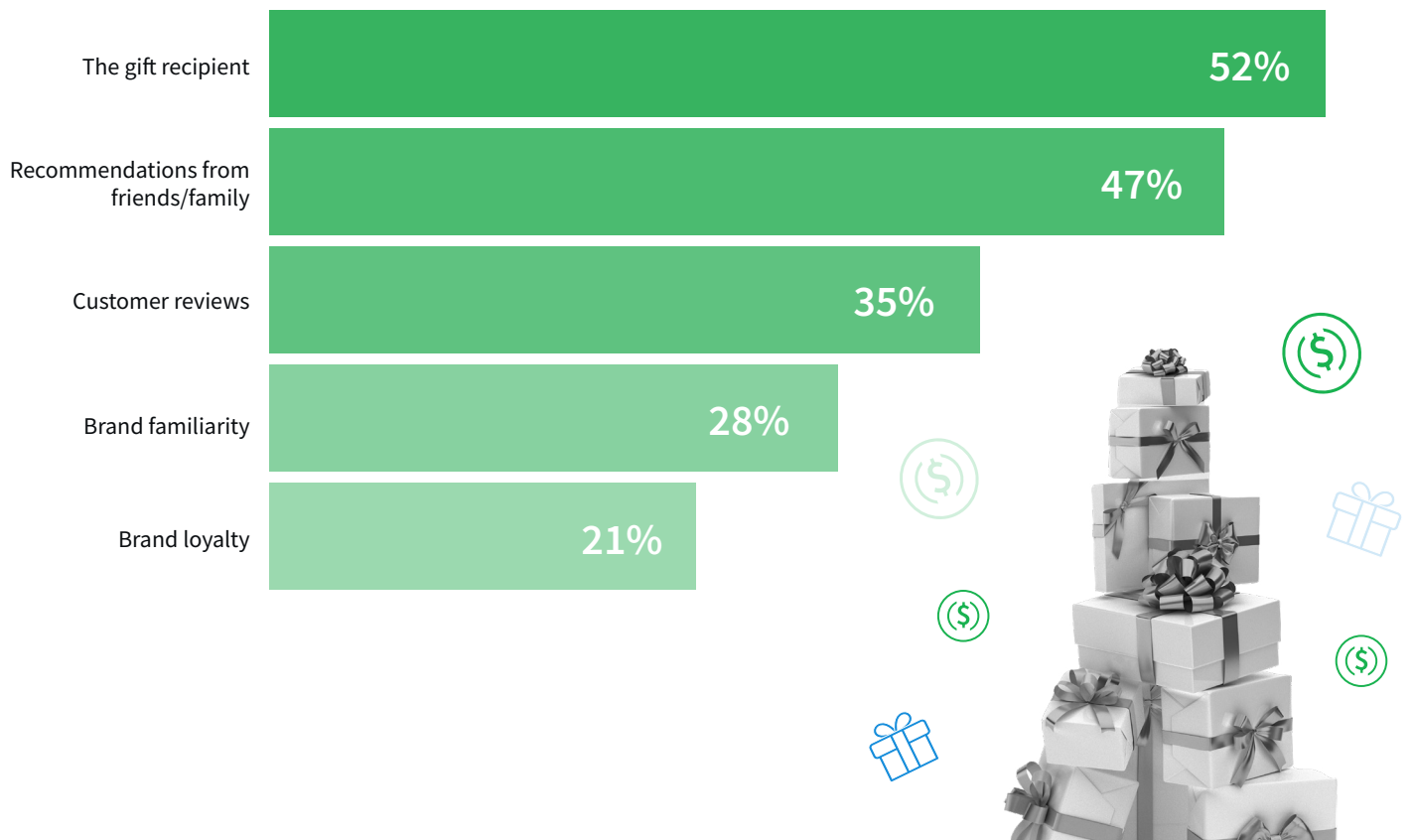


TREND #10

Personal influences will shape holiday purchase decisions

Personal influences significantly shapes consumer behavior. More than half of gift buyers will prioritize the preferences of the gift recipient, and nearly half will be guided by recommendations from friends and family. Customer reviews, brand familiarity, and loyalty also highlight the importance of trust and personal connections in holiday shopping choices.

Holiday Shopping Gift Personal Influences, 2024



B RECOMMENDS:

Brands should integrate these insights by focusing on personal connections and trust-building in their strategies. Encouraging satisfied customers to share their reviews and recommendations can boost word-of-mouth influence. Brands should also emphasize their familiarity and reliability, leveraging existing customer loyalty through personalized and trust-building marketing campaigns. Engaging directly with consumers through social media and community-driven initiatives can further solidify their position in a market where personal influences are key.

TREND #11

Ethical considerations will increasingly drive holiday shopping choices

Ethical factors will significantly influence where consumers choose to spend their money. A majority of shoppers will prefer supporting local or small businesses, valuing retailers that show genuine care for their employees.

61%

prefer to shop local or small businesses to support communities

56%

are more likely to buy from a retailer/brand that shows they care for their employees

Additionally, many shoppers will seek out brands with clearly stated values, sustainable practices, and charitable affiliations, and they are ready to shift their loyalty if a brand's values do not align with their own.

45%

believe brands and retailers should have clearly stated values

43%

will stop buying from a brand or retailer if they don't align with their personal values

43%

seek out sustainable brands and products

41%

like to buy from a brand/store that is affiliated with a charity

37%

like to buy from minority/women owned stores and brands

RECOMMENDS:

When applicable, brands should emphasize their ethical commitments and community support in their advertising. Highlighting efforts to support local communities, employee welfare, and sustainability can resonate deeply with consumers. Clear communication of brand values and affiliations with charitable causes can build trust and attract ethically-minded shoppers. Additionally, promoting minority and women-owned business status can further appeal to consumers prioritizing diversity and inclusivity in their purchasing decisions.

TAKEAWAYS

2024 will see diverse gifting habits influenced by cultural traditions, stable spending with early shopping strategies, a shift towards ongoing deals over traditional sales events, integration of online and omnichannel shopping, emerging interest in social media shopping, pronounced influence of advertisements and tech guidance, persistent prioritization of savings and loyalty programs, and a growing emphasis on ethical considerations.

Based on the 2024 holiday forecast, brands must begin their campaigns early and stay consistent on meeting consumer demands throughout the entire fall and holiday season.

POSITIVES

High participation rates

Strong focus on family and traditions

Resilient gift-giving trends

Early and efficient shopping

Technology & AI integration

Ethical consumerism

PAIN POINTS

Economic and political factors

Declining importance of traditional shopping days

Variability in spending habits

Less foot traffic in stores (especially among younger generations)

Complex ethical expectations



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