

Tap into the Gift of Pickup and Impulse Buying this Holiday Season

An Ipsos Point of View



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Retailers are heading into what is typically the most wonderful time of the year—the holiday season. But how will the pandemic shape holiday shopping habits? For the holiday season, Ipsos data shows that while 57% of Americans plan on doing holiday shopping between Thanksgiving and Christmas, nearly half say they are not likely to shop in a mall in the near future. That builds on a pandemic shift toward online retail sales that have jumped 44%, according to U.S. Department of Commerce. Since consumers are looking for an easy way to shop while protecting their health, the perfect marriage for retailers and shoppers can be found in the Buy Online Pick Up in Store (BOPIS)/Curbside Pickup service.

And while capitalizing on the desire for pickup services, retailers should not overlook an old standard—the impulse purchase. There are excellent sales opportunities to be had by tying your brand's BOPIS/Pickup Services to thoughtful impulse purchase products while shopper's checkout online. [Ipsos' E-commerce Experience Report](#) shows that focusing on BOPIS/Curbside while not forgetting the role the e-commerce site itself plays in that experience can drive sales. Here's how.

Make pick-up stand out

Since the coronavirus outbreak, the Ipsos E-commerce Experience Report found a 78% increase in the usage of BOPIS and curbside pickup. And, new Ipsos data reveals, in the past 90 days, 37% of all shoppers have used either BOPIS or Curbside Pickup services. Of those shoppers using pickup services, they did so the most at big box stores followed by grocery stores. Although many brands were quick to rollout these services when the lockdown began, are they successfully giving shoppers what they want and expect? Ipsos' study prioritized the 35 features driving consumers to use pickup or delivery services. A brand can stand out from competitors this holiday season by exceeding customer expectations in three ways:

1. **Speed:** Being timely allows a brand to earn customer trust by delivering on your promise of having their order ready when promised.
2. **Communication:** Simple and effective communication allows your shopper to have a good customer journey. Easy-to-follow signage directing customers to pickup spots and offering contactless pickup allows brands to differentiate themselves from their competition.
3. **Accuracy:** Finally, ensuring every customer receives exactly what they ordered will help brand a retailer as a consumer favorite.

2020 has been a trying year, and shoppers are understandably looking for ease and efficiency in their shopping experience. Since relying on mail delivery can be tricky due to backlog and high volumes, providing a reliable BOPIS or curbside experience allows shoppers to increase their efficiency as they prepare for the busiest time of the year.

Impulse can be more impulsive online

With brick and mortar traffic expected to be down substantially, retailers will need to find other ways to take advantage of impulse buying. The Ipsos E-commerce Experience Report found 43% of BOPIS/Curbside shoppers make unplanned purchases. Retailers can easily add popup recommendations of perfect last-minute items most people need during the holiday season. These can be as simple as snacks, greeting cards or batteries which are always needed for kids' gifts. More expensive items can be shown in more tailored popups, for instance in 'Gifts for that Special Person in Your Life.'

But it doesn't have to be only online. Impulse shopping can also happen as shoppers arrive for their pickup order. Businesses should utilize this opportunity by having well-marked displays of last-minute gifts or items that can quickly be tacked onto their order. As is the case with all impulse purchases, the buying

process must be simple since new Ipsos data finds 67% plan on making a spur-of-the-moment purchase while shopping this holiday season. It is important to make this process as easy and efficient as possible for shoppers.

The coronavirus has created a sense of unease and anxiety due to the unknown nature of the pandemic. This holiday season, shoppers are looking for an experience that is safe, easy, efficient and dependable. From shopping online, to checking out and picking up in-store or curbside, retailers should offer services that easily transition from one to the other, ensuring shoppers have an excellent customer experience. With 220 million Americans expected to make an online purchase in 2020, according to eMarketer, offering an outstanding omnichannel experience is not just good business for the holiday season, but every season.

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