

WHAT RETAILERS CAN LEARN FROM ONLINE CHRISTMAS GIFTING SEARCHES IN 2026

Insights from Google, Amazon,
TikTok and Pinterest searches

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Ipsos Synthesio

What retailers can learn from online searches in the lead up to Christmas 2026

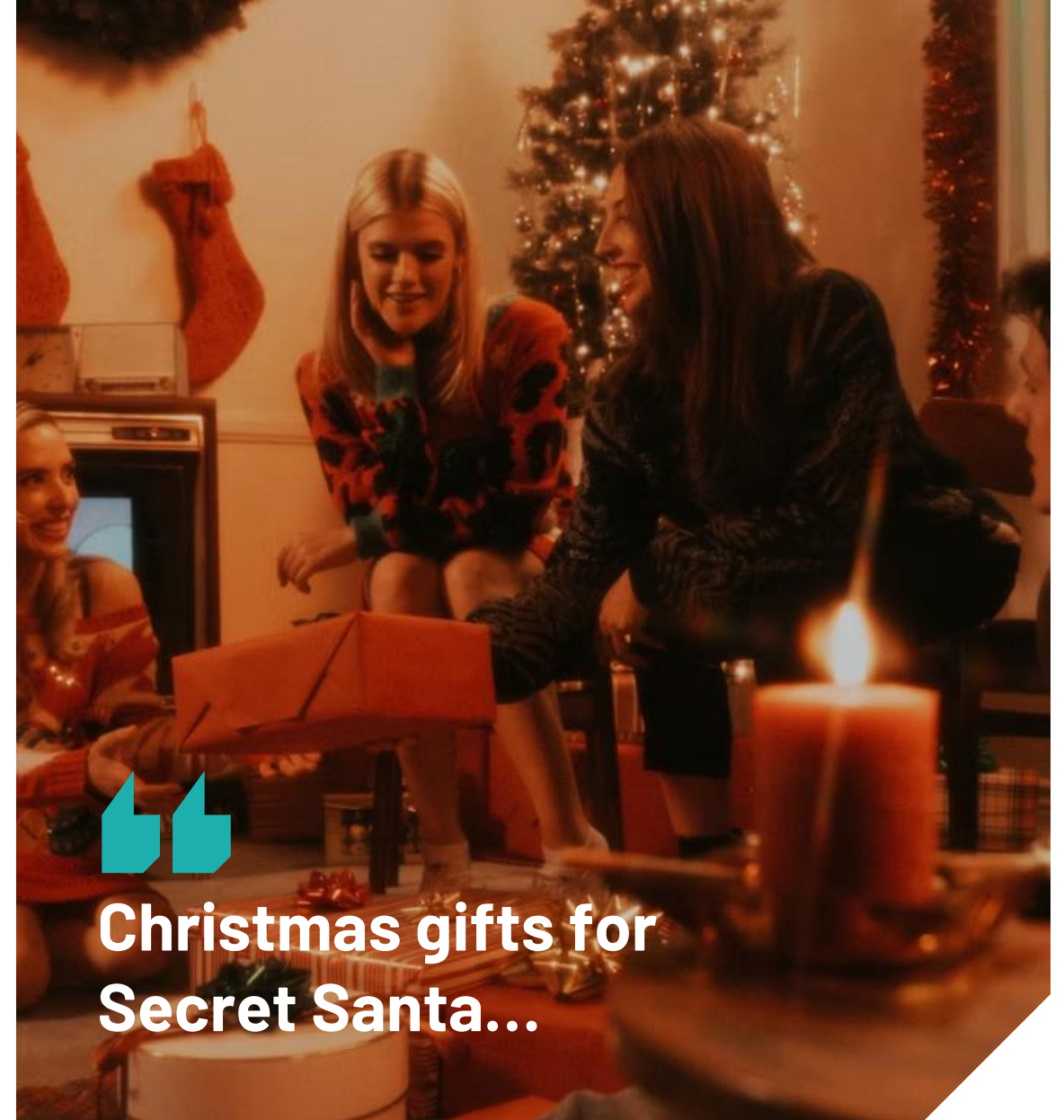
Retailers often structure Christmas campaigns around products, price points and promotions.

Analysis of 8.6M monthly searches, using Ipsos Synthesio, related to "Christmas presents for..." or "Christmas gifts for..." across **Google, Amazon, Pinterest** and **TikTok** showcases another valuable organising principle: the person receiving the gift.

In this article we explore the variation in consumer need, by platform, in the US and UK, and highlight the things retailers and marketers may want to consider in the lead up to Christmas.

With 95% of ChatGPT users still using Google and other platforms as a key search channel¹, the opportunity for retailers is not to offer more choice, but to make the choice feel manageable.

[Source \(1\): Similarweb, August 2026](#)



Christmas gifts for Secret Santa...

The 15 recipients generating the most demand

Broad gender-based searches dominate, but relationships quickly become important. The top 15 recipient groups searched for across UK and US are shown in the chart.

Beyond these 15, searches act as a reminder that **Christmas extends far beyond the household.**

Colleague gifting generates over 98k monthly searches, nearly 92k for newborns, over 90k searches for friends, and over 85k 'tween' searches.

Recipient

Women / ladies / her

Men / guys / him

Mother / mum / mom

Father / dad

Wife

Girlfriend

Secret Santa recipient

Husband

Boyfriend

Teacher / educator

Couple / couples

Grandmother / grandma

Family / relatives

Parents / mum and dad

Dog / puppy

Recipient category

Broad recipient

Broad recipient

Immediate family

Immediate family

Partner and romantic

Partner and romantic

Friends and social

Partner and romantic

Partner and romantic

Work, education and community

Partner and romantic

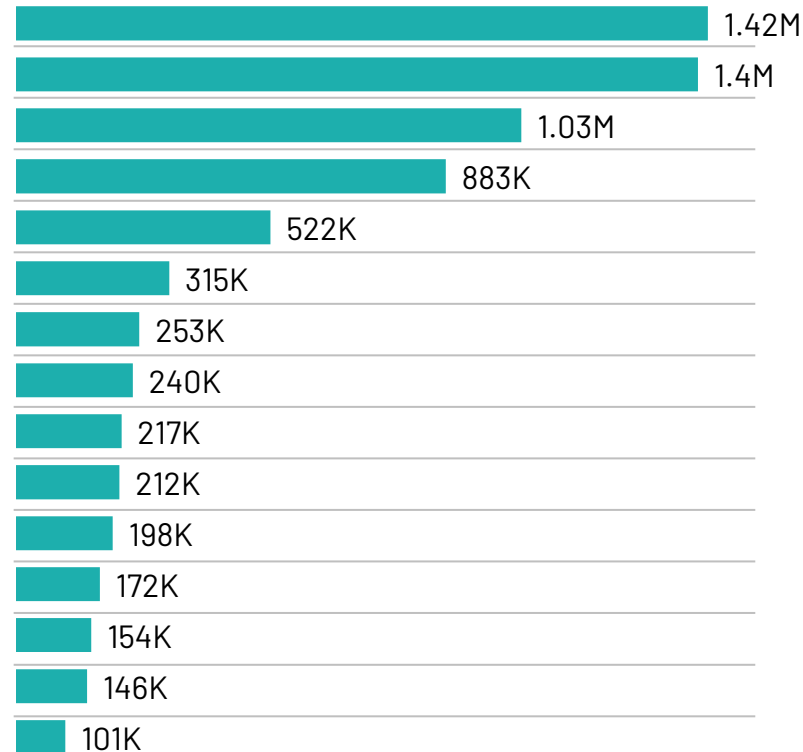
Extended family

Immediate family

Immediate family

Pets and animals

Monthly UK+US search volumes



Searches show some differences between UK and US gifting intent

UK	Monthly search volumes
Women	577k
Men	410k
Fathers	343k
Mothers	308k
Secret Santa	148k
Girlfriends	100k
Couples	98k
Wives	90k
Boyfriends	73k
Dogs	67k

US	Monthly search volumes
Men	990k
Women	844k
Mothers	737k
Fathers	539k
Wives	432k
Girlfriends	215k
Husbands	180k
Teachers	146k
Boyfriends	144k
Family	117k

Four key market variations between US and UK:

- **Fathers rank above mothers** in the UK, but in the US mothers lead.
- **Secret Santa** is a heavily UK-skewed gifting audience, ranking 5th in UK searches.
- **Romantic-relation gifting is higher in the US.** Wives, girlfriends and husbands collectively rank higher in the US than the UK.
- A stronger **pet focus in the UK** with Christmas gifting for 'dogs' ranking 10th of all recipient groups in the UK, but not appearing in the US top 10 recipients.



Whilst similar, different platforms are targeted for different recipients

The top four recipient categories vary by platform.

Amazon and Pinterest have a stronger emphasis on **family recipients**, whereas Google and TikTok cater to **broader recipient** types and **romantic interests**.

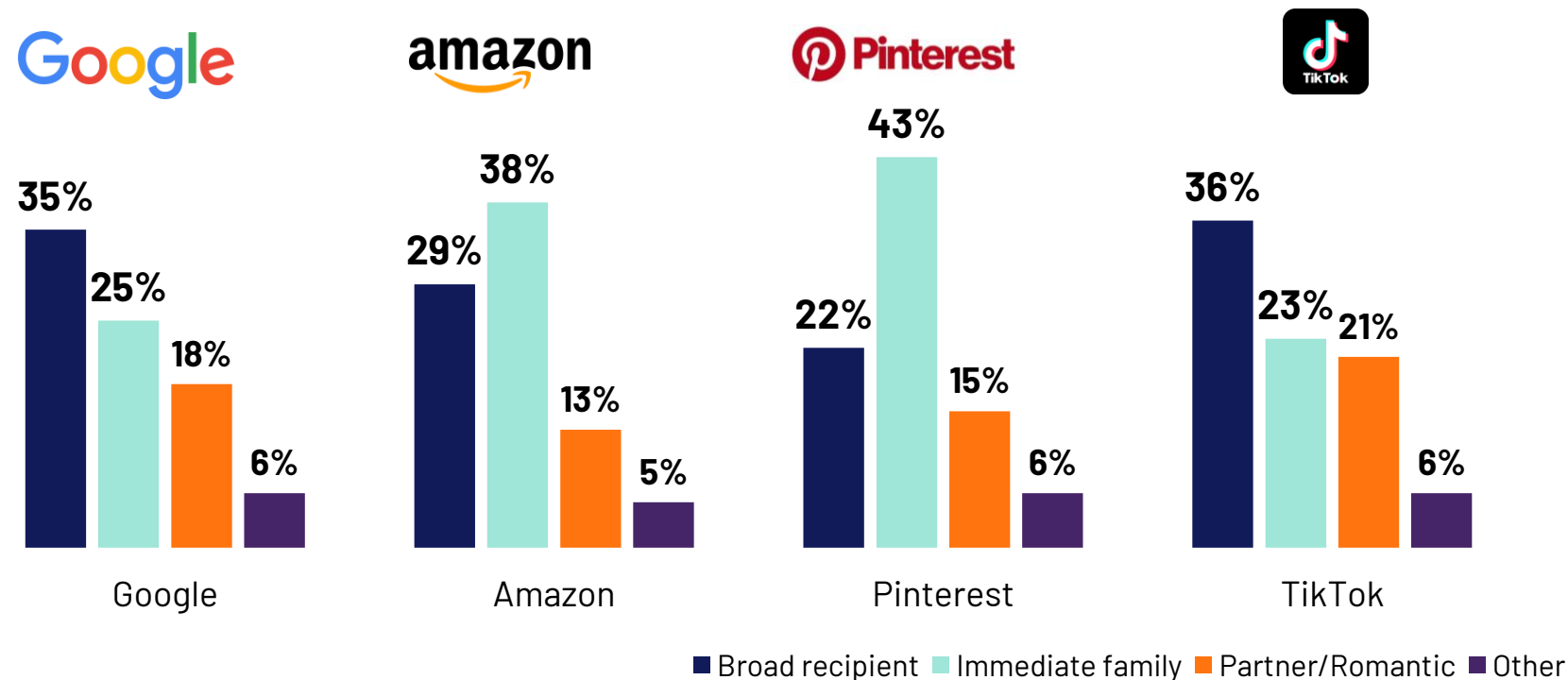
"Other" recipients:

Google - Friends

Amazon - Extended family

Pinterest - Work, education

TikTok - Work, education



Beyond recipient, gift-givers have additional classifications in their minds when searching.

Proportionally, Hampers, gift baskets and bundles, Experiences & Activities, Gift cards & Subscriptions and Sustainable gifts are searched for more often in the UK than US.

Stocking fillers, decorative gifts and luxury or practical gift searches are proportionally higher in the US.

Monthly Christmas gifting searches across Google, Amazon, Pinterest and TikTok



Top non-recipient searches reveal unique personalities of each platform.

Amazon’s top search criteria are common to the other platforms; however, people also use it to search for **decorative gifts and displays**.

TikTok’s top Christmas-gift search criteria is **experiences and activities**, reflecting the video-based nature of the platform.

Pinterest has the most unique set of searches, with users searching for **food and drink, DIY, craft** and **trending** gifts.

			
1	Unique and unusual gifts	Experiences and activities	Food and drink gifts
2	Entertainment, characters and cultural references	Budget, price and value	Budget, price and value
3	Budget, price and value	Entertainment, characters and cultural references	Handmade, DIY and craft gifts
4	Gift wrapping and packaging	Gift wrapping and packaging	Best, popular, cool and trending gifts
5	Decorative gift objects and displays	Unique and unusual gifts	Gift wrapping and packaging

Retailers need to cater to six distinct gifting needs this Christmas

Gift presentation and packaging



How do I make the present look complete and considered?

Retail opportunity: Add-on merchandising, wrapping services, coordinated packaging ranges and “complete the gift” recommendations.

Gift bags, gift boxes, wrapping, ribbons and bows, labels stickers, tags, under-tree ideas,

Gift format and delivery



What format is the most convenient or appropriate?

Retail opportunity: Clearly distinguish physical and digital gift cards, offer scheduled delivery and enable gift messages, multi-address fulfilment and gift-ready bundles.

Gift cards, gift cards by post, gift boxes, hampers or baskets, bundled or shared presents, delivered or posted gifts.

Budget and value



How can I give something without over-spending?

Retail opportunity: Prominent price filters, under-£10, under-£25 and under-£50 collections, multipacks and value-led creator content.

Cheap or budget Christmas gifts, small Christmas gifts, gifts under a specified price, low-cost presents

Each need presents a clear retailer opportunity

Personalisation and distinctiveness



How can I show thoughtfulness without designing the gift from scratch?

Retail opportunity: Personalisation previews, clear order deadlines, monogramming and photo-upload services, plus curated “personal but easy” collections.

Personalised Christmas gifts, custom gifts, unique gifts, unusual presents, photo gifts, homemade gifts.

Making and crafting



Can I create something meaningful myself?

Retail opportunity: Project kits, creator tutorials, downloadable guides and shoppable materials lists. Pinterest is likely to be especially relevant for presenting these visually.

DIY Christmas gifts, homemade presents, handmade gifts, Christmas gift craft ideas, quilts and quilt patterns, resin Christmas presents

Seasonal exchange occasions



What is appropriate within the rules and social expectations of this exchange?

Retail opportunity: Collections filtered by price ceiling, humour level and workplace appropriateness.

Cheap or budget Christmas gifts, small Christmas gifts, gifts under a specified price, low-cost presents



Strategic implications for retailers this Christmas

The wider implication

The original recipient analysis captures **who** the shopper is buying for. These additional gifting 'need' categories capture **how the shopper wants to buy, make, present, exchange or deliver the gift.**

For Christmas 2026, the strongest digital architecture would therefore combine three dimensions:

Recipient: wife, teacher, dog, colleague or parent

Need or use: personalised, shared, practical, funny or appropriate

Constraint: price, delivery timing, format or ease of purchase

That creates more useful propositions such as **"personalised gifts for couples under £50," "work-appropriate Secret Santa gifts under £15,"** or **"newborn gifts delivered directly to the parents,"** rather than relying on generic "Christmas gifts" pages.

Search behaviour suggests that the retailer's role is not simply to offer more choice. It is to reduce the social and emotional risk of choosing badly, while making a large catalogue feel personal, appropriate and easy to navigate.

Shoppers start broad, but want personalisation

Whilst gender-based searches generate the highest targeted searches, demand rapidly fragments into wives, husbands, teachers, newborns, tweens, colleagues and pets.

Retailers should use broad campaigns to attract shoppers, then help them narrow choices through recipient quizzes, filters and progressively more specific recommendations.

Closest relationships create the greatest uncertainty

For romantic recipients, the challenge is not necessarily remembering to buy, but finding something sufficiently thoughtful.

Retailers can reduce this pressure with creator recommendations, "personal but not predictable" collections and decision aids based on personality, relationship stage and budget.

Christmas obligation extends beyond the family

Christmas obligation extends well beyond family including teachers, colleagues, employees, teams and neighbours.

These are often socially sensitive purchases where shoppers need an appropriate gift without overspending.

Clear price bands, "safe but thoughtful" edits, multipacks and workplace gifting bundles can solve that uncertainty.

Small audiences signal disproportionately valuable gifting occasions

The gifting searches include dogs, puppies, tweens, newborns, new parents, new homeowners, in-laws, healthcare professionals and "hard to buy for" recipients.

These searches may be smaller than the common "gifts for him" category, but they express a clearer problem and can support more relevant landing pages, retail-media keywords, creator briefs and curated bundles.

THANK YOU

Ipsos Synthesio

**To understand more about Ipsos Synthesio's
search intelligence capabilities:**

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