



Price and range of products among main benefits of Christmas shopping online: report

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Christmas shopping can be a painful experience, particularly when you find yourself in a busy shopping centre on a Saturday afternoon facing huge crowds and massive queues.

So it probably comes as no surprise to hear that levels of satisfaction with online shopping improve slightly during the festive season, while the opposite is true for the in-store experience.

A survey by eDigitalResearch found that a quarter (25%) of shoppers feel that online shopping experiences improve at Christmas, while 42% of respondents stated that their overall in-store experience deteriorated at this time of year.

Improved satisfaction is mainly down to the lack of queues (53%), but price (51%) and the range of products available online (51%) are also seen as key benefits of ecommerce.

Furthermore, flexible delivery slots (33%) and clear messages about last ordering dates are often appreciated to better plan what and when to buy (24%).

Shipping and returns are integral to the online customer experience, so in truth ecommerce sites should be well prepared for the Christmas rush to ensure that everything runs smoothly.

In a previous post looking at [how retailers should prepare for the festive season](#), several experts told us that businesses should consider extending their returns policy and should also make it very obvious to shoppers.

People will worry about returning gifts, so make sure you offer a returns policy that covers until at least mid-January. Promote this site-wide, and especially in the basket to remove any concerns. A survey conducted in 2012 by comScore found that after making a purchase online [just under half \(45%\) of respondents wanted email or text notifications with a tracking number](#), while 31% wanted to be able to track the shipment directly on the retailer's website.

Similarly almost two-thirds (63%) of respondents said they look for the returns policy prior to making a purchase and 48% said they would be likely to shop more often with a retailer or recommend a retailer to a friend if the retailer had a lenient and easy-to-understand returns policy.

Finally a separate survey by eDigitalResearch and IMRG found that 77% of online shoppers have abandoned their basket in the past year, with [53% citing unacceptably high delivery costs as the main reason for bailing out](#).

Therefore with the potential rewards that are on offer for ecommerce sites during Christmas, online retailers should really be set up to offer free shipping and returns if only for the duration of the festive season.



The eDigitalResearch report is based on a nationally representative survey of 2,000 consumers.

Link:

<http://econsultancy.com/us/blog/63971-price-and-range-of-products-among-main-benefits-of-christmas-shopping-online-report>