

Parcel Insights to Optimize your Parcel Program During the Seasonal Rush



ONLINE SALES



expected online sales by 2023, compared to \$504B in 2018.

SHOPPERS



consider free shipping promotions as a top factor when choosing a retailer.

DEALS



of consumers plan to take advantage of holiday deals to make non-gift purchases.

ARE YOU READY?



Besides the hiring of seasonal personnel, here are some other suggestions to help you avoid shipping snafus that could damage customer loyalty for future seasons.

Parcel Shipping Checklist to Align with Growing Sales



Hone Your Delivery Strategy

Having a comprehensive delivery strategy is a best-practice for top retailers. Make sure you understand all of your carriers' calendars and guarantees. Continually ask yourself what you can do to help your carrier(s) operate more efficiently. For example, can you operate over the weekends during the holidays so that you don't bombard them with packages on Monday?

Know When to Offer Free Shipping

Can you afford to change your standard free or subsidized shipping policy during the holiday season? A detailed analysis of your program will help determine what you can do to be more competitive.

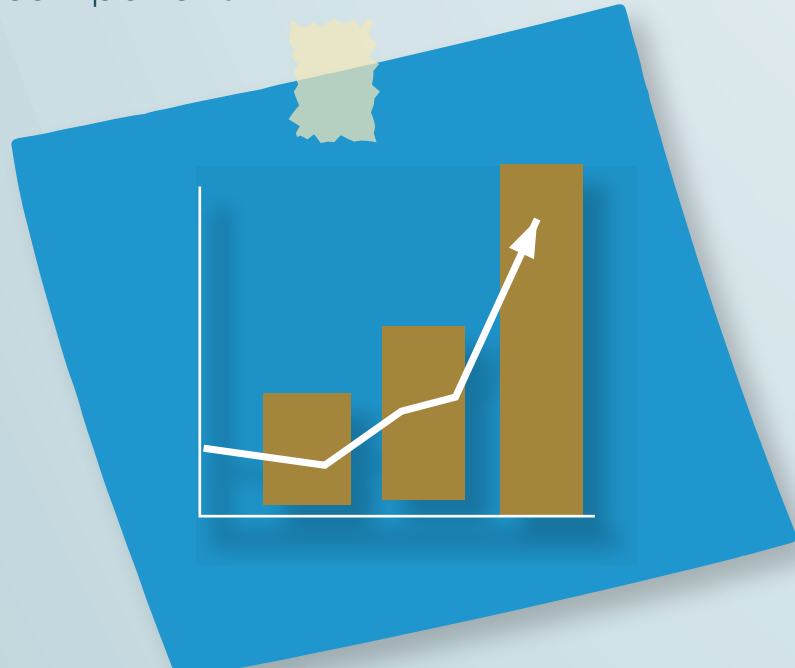


Prepare For Calls

Recent research by the CFI Group shows that 83% of customers are willing to first use a self-service option before contacting customer service directly. Provide self-service tracking information to encourage this trend. To ensure a positive customer experience, prepare for the most anxious shoppers by ramping your call center and live/chat email, the preferred communication method for 37% of consumers.

Plan a Post-Holiday Audit

The busiest buying season warrants close inspection. Start planning now for a post-holiday audit to measure the performance of every supply chain component.



1 Communicate Transparently with Your Service Providers

Proactively communicate early and often with your service providers, maintaining as much transparency about sales projections as possible. Based on your projections, they can help determine if there's a need for new inbound or outbound operations plans.



of consumers finish shopping within the last couple of weeks in the holiday season.

2 Synchronize Marketing and Operations

The best, most creative promotions fall flat if operations can't deliver on the promises made. Double-check the communication between marketing and operations to ensure that your order flow projections are distributed and doable.

3 Talk to Your Customers

Join your carrier(s) in encouraging customers to buy now and ship as early as possible during the holidays. Analyze your subsidized shipping program year-over-year to determine problematic dates. Is there a more effective timeline that can be implemented to help you avoid snags? Advise your e-commerce team with messaging to help set customer expectations.

4 Map Out a Returns Process

Returning a product doesn't have to be a negative customer experience. Work with your in-store operations team and carrier(s) to map out a seamless, easy (and free!) returns process that will keep your customers coming back. Omni-channel retailers can benefit from accepting in-store returns, in addition to taking advantage of your carriers' services and technology, to make returns by mail a painless process.



5 Use a 3PL to Help with Some or All of Your Fulfillment Needs

No matter how well-oiled your operations run, if the rest of your organization is doing its job, your sales will climb and you may need help. An Enterprise Logistics Partner specializing in e-commerce solutions can help you get your packages out the door while you manage other day-to-day business that does not stop during the peak shipping season.

Learn more at: www2.transportationinsight.com/seasonalrush