

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Voxware Survey Finds COVID-19's Impact on Consumer Holiday Shopping Behaviors Will Strain Distribution Operations

Holiday 2020 consumers plan to shop earlier, send more packages directly to recipients and buy more online, including the last-minute stocking stuffers traditionally purchased in stores

Hamilton, NJ – June 25, 2020 – [Voxware](#) – a leading provider of cloud-based voice and analytic supply chain solutions – surveyed 500 U.S. consumers in early June to gauge how holiday shopping behaviors may be altered due to COVID-19 concerns. The survey results indicate significant changes in consumer intentions – such as plans to purchase small, difficult to pick and pack stocking stuffer items online – which will challenge supply chain operations. As a result, ill-prepared distribution centers will struggle to meet consumer expectations in what is expected to be a make-or-break buying season.

Key survey findings include:

- 51 percent of respondents expect to begin holiday shopping earlier than normal this year
- 57 percent of respondents plan to have more gifts shipped directly to recipients than last year
- 76 percent of respondents intend to purchase more than half of their gifts online
- 62 percent of respondents plan to purchase more stocking stuffers and last-minute gifts online

These reactions are indicative of consumers' desire to reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19 by limiting time spent in physical retail locations and highlight the increased role that eCommerce will play in 2020. Safety concerns are undoubtedly compounded by the challenges consumers faced trying to obtain scarce products or delays in receiving products that were in stock but deprioritized for distribution at the height of the COVID crisis.

New expectations present serious challenges for promoting products, inventory stocking and cost-effectively selecting and fulfilling orders.

Distribution centers accustomed to sending one shipment per order will increasingly be expected to ship items within a single order to multiple addresses. They must also strategize the most efficient way to pick and pack small items at the apex of the holiday season. COVID-driven behaviors require rethinking how to optimize item selection, order sorting, label printing, packing order confirmation forms and boxing – not to mention how to handle gift wrapping services.

“Those who oversee distribution operations are going to have to think differently this year to meet consumer expectations,” said Keith Phillips, President and CEO of Voxware. “Automation will be critical and companies that have not taken the initiative to optimize their distribution centers will struggle to deliver a flawless customer experience.”

Retailers rely on [Voxware VMS](#) to improve speed, accuracy and efficiency in the distribution center. Using Voxware VMS, customers realize immediate improvements in accuracy, double-digit productivity gains, reduced labor and operating expenses and gain complete visibility into distribution operations. Voxware enables its customers to choose the right solution for each job, whether that be voice, scanning or vision through augmented reality.

“While the holiday season is always an important time of year for every retailer, this year the magnitude is more critical than ever. For many retailers, survival will rely on a successful 2020 holiday season due to the tremendous slowdown retailers faced during the pandemic,” reminds Phillips. “In Voxware’s previous holiday survey, 31 percent of respondents said they would avoid shopping with a retailer ever again if any aspect of their holiday order was botched. No retailer can afford that type of mistake this year.”

Retailers who have yet to automate their distribution center still have time to prepare. Voxware is guaranteeing distribution teams that sign on by July 31 can have Voxware’s Cloud-based VMS solution implemented by September to meet the holiday surge.

This survey was executed June 4-9, 2020 using SurveyPlanet and incorporated responses from U.S. residents 18 years and older. Voxware also conducts a biennial holiday shopping, shipping and returns survey, which will be available later this year.

About Voxware

Voxware offers technology solutions that deliver essential supply chain information exactly when and where it’s needed, optimizing the speed, accuracy and efficiency of distribution operations. Its product suite includes both warehouse automation and analytics solutions uniquely focused on distribution functions. With these solutions, companies reach an unprecedented understanding of how best to manage their operations, improving profitability by reducing costs and exceeding customer expectations. For more information, please visit www.voxware.com.

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Media Contact

Kevin Jurrens (For Voxware)

kjurrens@broadpathpr.com

215.644.6504