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Voxware Returns Survey: Retailer Mistakes Lead to Costly Returns

More than forty percent of consumers report returning an item due to retailer error

Hamilton, NJ –December 21, 2020 – [Voxware](#), a leading provider of cloud-based voice and analytics solutions for the supply chain, has released findings from its fifth biennial consumer survey addressing consumer reaction to incorrect and late deliveries. Findings from the survey conducted this fall indicate that retailers relying on outdated procedures deliver substandard customer experiences and make mistakes that damage both the brand and the bottom line.

Key survey findings include:

- **Incorrect orders persist:** 41 percent of respondents returned an item due to retailer error (incorrect size, color or wrong item altogether), up from 30 percent in 2018.
- **Less patience for late deliveries:** Even if the item is correct, 26 percent of consumers returned items because they were delivered later than promised at the time of purchase, up from only 10 percent reporting returning late items in 2018.
- **Wrong again:** Incredibly, 51 percent of respondents said they returned an incorrect item only to have a wrong item sent the second time around.
- **Mailing it in:** 56 percent of consumers prefer the option to return items via pre-paid postage, up from 47 percent in 2018. In-store returns saw a decrease in preference, dropping from 41 percent in 2018 to 34 percent this year. This may indicate increasing comfort with returning via mail and is also attributable to avoiding in-store returns this year due to COVID-19.

97 percent of consumers agree or strongly agree that the way retailers handle returns influences whether they will purchase from that retailer in the future. This figure has continuously increased over the 10 years that Voxware has conducted this survey. Now, if a mistake is made, nearly 40 percent of consumers expect to receive the correct item within 1-2 days of informing the retailer of the mistake.

“We expect that holiday returns will be a significant story heading into 2021, given the explosive increase of ecommerce this year and the challenges that presented to distribution centers,” said Keith Phillips, President and CEO of Voxware. “The number of mistakes ecommerce retailers are making is not abating, but can be avoided. To protect their brand, retailers must automate distribution center processes to reduce mistakes particularly in the face of new demand. This will ensure an exceptional customer experience every time.”

Delivering the right product on-time is critical and even more so during the holiday season when consumer expectations are at an annual high. [Last month](#), Voxware reported that 30 percent of consumers are much less likely to purchase from an online retailer who has failed to deliver an item on-time in the past. More than 43 percent of consumers surveyed in 2020 report being very likely to share their negative experiences online (up from 33 percent in 2018 and 23 percent in 2016). Given the year many retailers experienced, this is not the time for delivering mistakes.

For those retailers struggling with order fulfillment, there are options. Many retailers rely on Voxware [Voice Management Suite](#) (VMS) to improve speed, accuracy and efficiency across all functions in the distribution center. Using Voxware VMS, warehouse operations realize immediate improvements in

accuracy, double-digit productivity gains, reduced operating expenses and complete visibility across the entire distribution operation.

This survey was executed October 5-7, 2020 using Qualtrics and incorporated responses from U.S. residents 18 years and older.

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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