Voxware Survey Finds Retailers Won or Lost Customers Based on Holiday Fulfillment

Post-purchase experience for many online shoppers reveals eCommerce fulfillment has significant room for improvement

Hamilton, NJ – January 6, 2021 – In a new survey by Voxware, a leading provider of cloud-based voice and analytics solutions for the supply chain, 73 percent of consumers reported that retailers that met or exceeded their expectations will get more business from them in the future. Retailers that were unprepared will lose out, as 53 percent of respondents reported they will never place another order with certain retailers that mishandled their order fulfillment.

The Voxware holiday 2020 reaction survey examined post-purchase execution and how well brands did with on-time and accurate delivery that met their customers' expectations. There were several categories where consumers expressed concern.

Delayed Deliveries
While many retailers promoted an earlier start of the holiday shopping season to meet unprecedented levels of online shopping due to the COVID-19 pandemic, late deliveries were still rampant.

56 percent of respondents report that gifts they purchased online arrived later than the date that was promised at the time of purchase. Of those who report getting gifts later than they were promised, the problem was not isolated to a single order. Half of those who received gifts late report that more than 25 percent of their gifts were delayed.

Communication Is Key
Consumers want more transparency from the brands with whom they shop, specifically those who are unable to meet promised delivery dates. 54 percent of those who had gift delivery delays say it was extremely important that retailers continuously communicate the status of their delayed orders. Another 42 percent report it was important.

Survey respondents indicated dissatisfaction with various communications issues they faced after executing an online purchase:
- 42 percent report retailers did not provide enough information about delayed items.
- 41 percent report that customer service was unavailable or unable to address questions or concerns.
- 37 percent report that packages delivered did not include information for making a return. Voxware's biennial holiday returns survey revealed that 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.
- 45 percent report that information for tracking packages was unclear or not provided.

Increased Holiday Performance Pressures
Consumer expectation at the holidays for on-time and accurate delivery is more important (say 47 percent of respondents) than any other time of the year, as reported in Voxware's biennial holiday

[shopping and shipping survey](). However, respondents to this survey identified other holiday gift-specific issues they incurred.

- 41 percent of respondents report they were unable to ship items from a single order to multiple locations. In Voxware's 2020 shopping and shipping survey, 77 percent of respondents planned to have more gifts shipped directly to recipients than the prior year.
- 39 percent of respondents found the lack of gifting options (gift wrap, gift receipts) was an issue when completing online holiday shopping this year.

Product Availability is Crucial

Supply chain woes have impacted almost every industry in 2020. Retailers were not alone in that regard, however during the holiday shopping season, it was paramount to have inventory under control. Unfortunately, 56 percent of respondents report being unable to purchase gifts they were considering because they were not available or would not arrive in time for the holidays.

"Heading into the holiday shopping season, we knew it was vital that distribution centers perform to meet both demand and rising consumer expectations," said Keith Phillips, President & CEO of Voxware. "These numbers indicate a mixed performance from retailers and should serve as a wake-up call to the industry to advance their distribution systems to ensure a flawless customer experience. We now know that 53 percent of consumers will not purchase from an online retailer who failed to meet their expectation this holiday shopping season. With eCommerce continuing to grow, brands cannot afford any mistakes, or the consumer will take their business elsewhere."

For those retailers who struggled in 2020 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 December 28-30, 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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