



 InMoment

CX TRENDS HOLIDAY EDITION:

# What Retailers Can Expect from Customers in the 2020 Holiday Season

THE ANSWERS TO BRANDS' TOP QUESTIONS,  
DIRECT FROM THEIR CUSTOMERS

# Introduction

As back-to-school winds down, that typically means one thing for retailers: the holiday season is coming! But as we all know, 2020 is anything but typical. Any other year, brands would know exactly how to approach their customers and design customer journeys, but now they are left with unanswered questions.

***How many customers will want to do their holiday shopping in store? How can we maintain social distancing and keep them safe in the busiest time of the year? Will Black Friday still see the same traffic?***

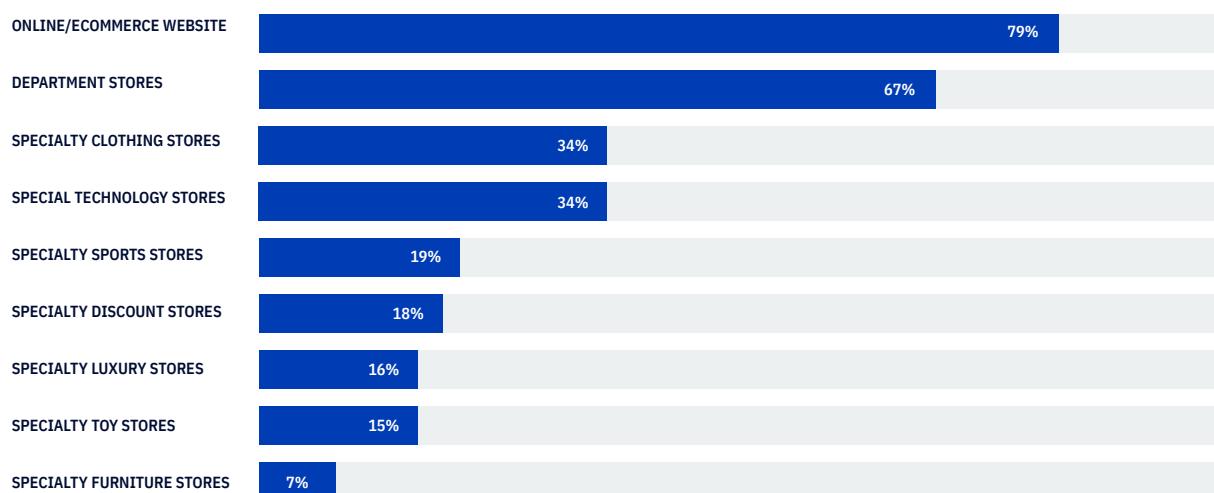
Well, it may not be the holiday season yet, but our Strategic Insights Team is here with their own kind of holiday cheer! They have recently completed a market study in which they surveyed over 5,000 consumers to get their perspectives on the upcoming holiday season. Here are the answers to retailers' most asked questions for the 2020 holiday shopping season, directly from customers.

## Where Will Customers Shop from September-December of 2020?

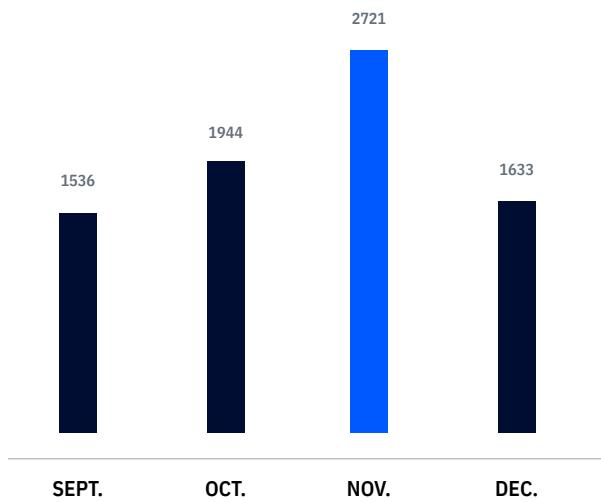
One of the most important questions experience-minded professionals ask themselves when designing holiday customer journeys is, "where are my customers?" This year, that question is a little more difficult to answer. With COVID-19 keeping much of the public in their homes, retailers aren't sure if they can expect customers to turn up for holiday events in person.

In their study, our Strategic Insights Team asked where customers would do their shopping in the last four months of 2020. The results were particularly interesting; **the most popular locations were online/ecommerce with 79% and department stores with 67%**, meaning that there are a significant number of customers who are still intending to shop both online and in store!

### Where Will Customers Shop from September-December of 2020?



# When Will Customers Do Their Holiday Shopping?



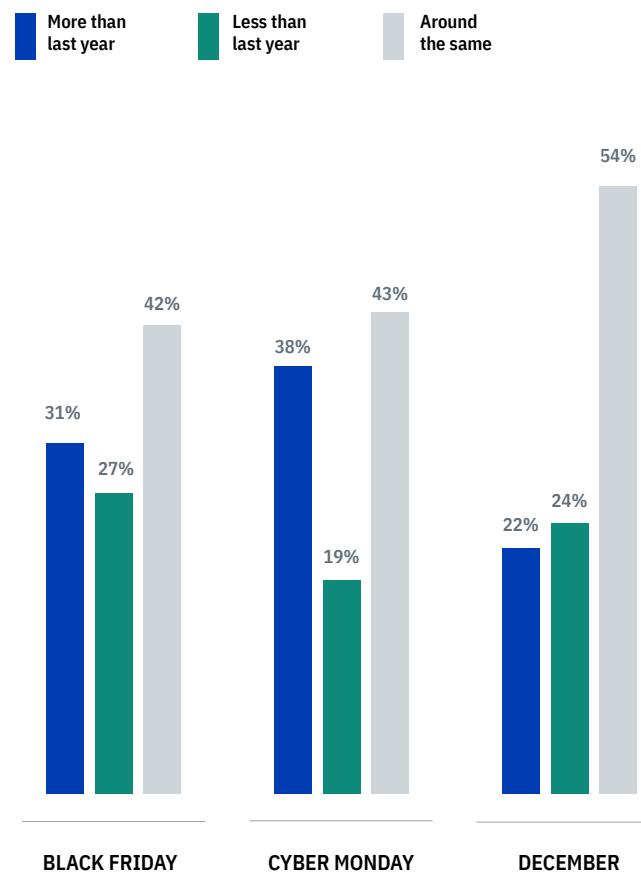
After asking customers where they will be shopping, our team asked when! More specifically, in which month did customers expect to begin their holiday shopping? More than half (54%) responded that they would start shopping in November. Here are some other important results to note:

- 42% of respondents are planning to make purchases on Black Friday (in store)
- 39% plan to purchase on Cyber Monday (online)
- 19% plan to make purchases before Black Friday and Cyber Monday

## And How Does That Compare to Years Before?

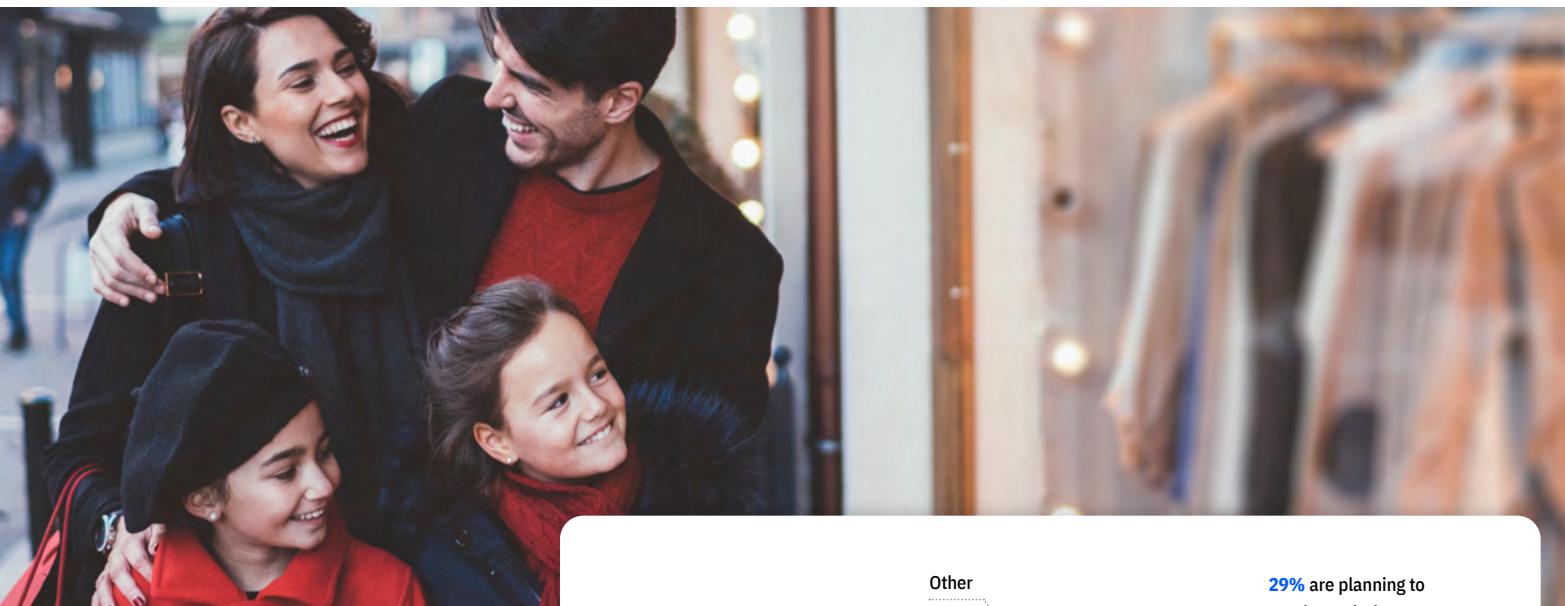
Because 2020 is a year unlike any other, our experts wanted to know if customers would shop more, less, or about the same this year.

## Customer Distributions in Comparison to 2019

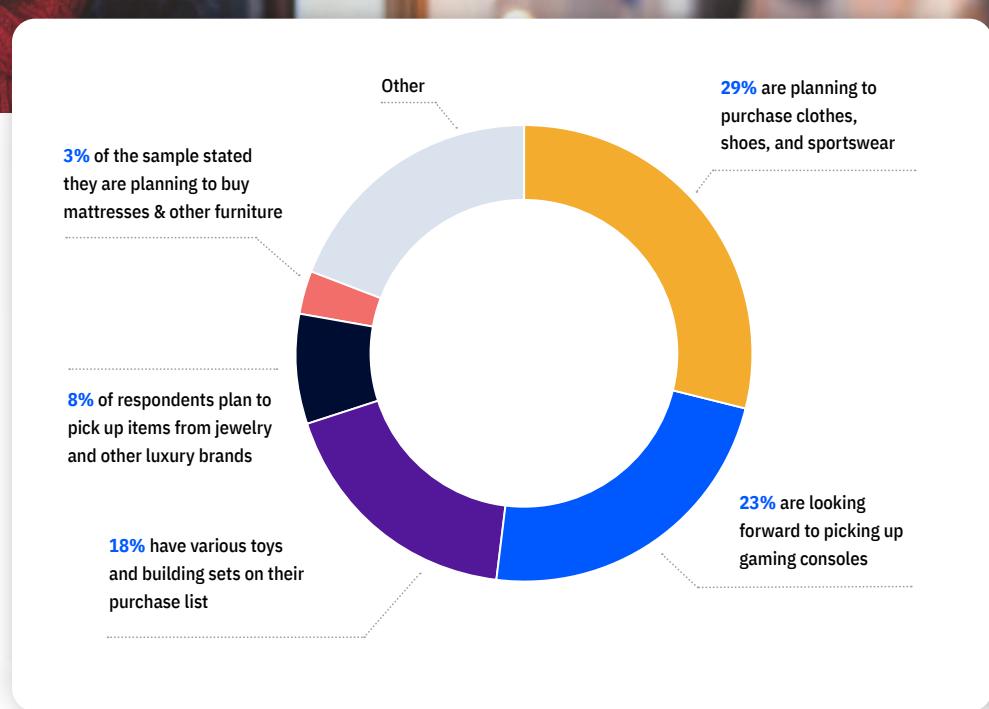


In a somewhat surprising twist, respondents noted that they were even more likely to shop on both Black Friday and Cyber Monday in comparison to last year. They are also more likely to save shopping until December.

# What Are Customers Looking to Purchase This Year?



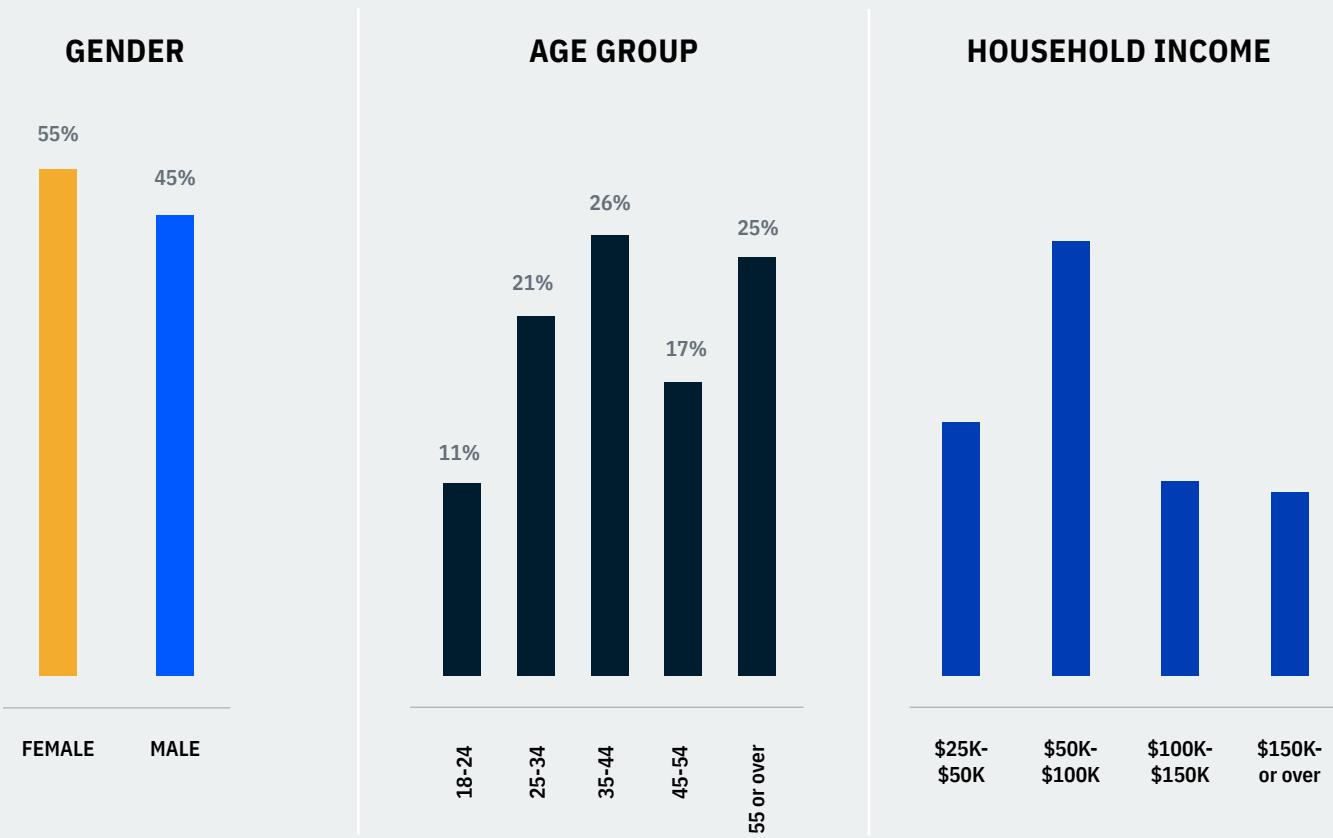
Every holiday season, there are specific items that are more in demand than others. This year is no different! Here are some notable items that are on shoppers' minds going into the holiday season:



# Who is Most Likely to Make Purchases in the 2020 Holiday Season?

Now that we've answered the where, the when, and the what, it's time to look at who will be doing some holiday shopping in 2020. Our Strategic Insights Team wanted to get as specific as

possible to give retailers all the information they need to know about their customers, including gender, age group, and income. Here's an overview of those details:



What stood out to our team in this data is that Gen Z males are likely to be the top buyers in the coming shopping season. Additionally, more males are planning to shop on Black Friday than females, but Gen Z males and females are more likely to

flock to Black Friday sales than other age groups. When it comes to income, households with annual income under \$50,000 dollars are more likely to shop Black Friday than other demographics.

# What Are Customers Expecting from Their Experience This Year?

The next question is arguably the most important for experience-minded individuals in 2020. With all the changes that have already been made to the in-store shopping experience, such as provided hand sanitizer and other safety measures, it is absolutely vital to know which elements are most important in the minds of customers. That's why we asked respondents to identify their top four holiday must-haves for both in-store and online shopping.



Not surprisingly, the special promotions and discounts are most important for shoppers, but neck and neck with that 73 percent is the amount of people that also specified COVID-19 prevention measures as a must have (63% to be exact). This shows that retailers need to balance classic holiday expectations with the safety measures that have been so important in 2020.

Another element that is important to draw attention to is staff support. About half of respondents included staff in their top four, and because at InMoment we believe in the importance of unstructured data, we grabbed some comments to give you more context on what customers mean when they think of staff helpfulness:

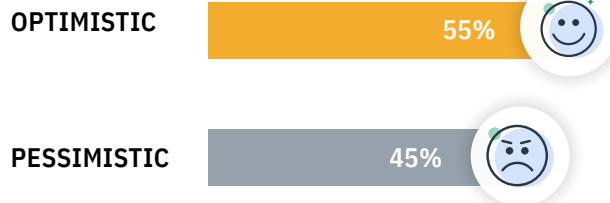
- *"I wouldn't purchase [jewelry] without personal guidance from a staff member..."*
- *"I tend to visit [apparel and clothing stores] because of the relationships I have with their staff..."*
- *"I'm likely going to visit a [sportswear] store to get some information from their staff."*
- *"We tend to always buy [furniture/mattresses] with support from their staff and employees."*



# How Are Customers Feeling About the Special Circumstances for This Holiday Season?

If there's one lesson we've learned so far this year, it's that we need to expect the unexpected. When many of us started working from home at InMoment in March, we never imagined that we wouldn't be able to work in the office for months. Customers know this, but they are still feeling optimistic that circumstances will improve in the next few months according to our research.

## Are You Feeling Optimistic That Things Will Improve in the Coming Months?

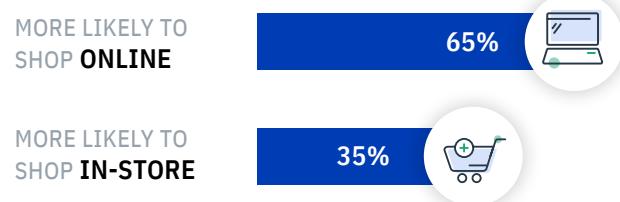


In the unstructured data accompanying these questions, customers went into their feelings in more detail:

- *"I don't think it will get better until 2021...but that will not stop my [upcoming holiday shopping]."*
- *"I think things will remain the same for a while...we just have to get used to this [new normal]."*

Though we all hope that we will see improvement in the next few months, we have to face the reality that there is a possibility COVID-19 will be with us through the new year. With that in mind, we asked how this possibility would affect customers' likelihood to switch from in-store shopping to online.

## If the Situation Does Not Improve, How Likely Are You to Shop Online or In Store?



In this case, customers were especially wary of risks to their personal safety and health if the pandemic is still among us during the holidays, with the majority (65%) stating they are more likely to shop online. Still, 35% said they would still shop in stores; these customers said:

- *"I think [brands] are doing enough right now to make sure I'm safe when in their stores."*
- *"As long as the [COVID measures] are still in place, I will be going to the stores."*

It should definitely give retail brands a boost to know that they are making their customers feel safe and that the in-store experience is so important in the eyes of their customers.

# So, What Now?

Now that you know what your customers are expecting going into the holiday season, it's time to start preparing to deliver on those expectations.

One of our core philosophies at InMoment is focusing on improving experiences with a proven process we like to call the Continuous Improvement Framework, which has five steps:



With the intelligence in this report, you've already accomplished the listening and understanding phases. Now it's time to Transform by creating an action plan that will prepare your processes, employees, and organization as a whole to realize the best possible business impact this holiday season!

*Want to read more about the Continuous Improvement Framework, how to design a modern listening plan, and more? Check out the InMoment Resources page for cutting-edge best practices and thought leadership!*

*Here are a few pieces to get you started:*

- [Achieving Continuous Improvement: A Framework for Success](#)
- [InMoment CX Trends Report: Your Post-Pandemic Playbook](#)
- [Your Digital Transformation Roadmap](#)

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## About InMoment

Improving experiences is why InMoment exists. Our mission is to help our clients improve experiences at the intersection of value—where customer, employee, and business needs come together. The heart of what we do is connect our clients with what matters most through a unique combination of data, technology, and human expertise. With our hyper-modern technology platform, decades of domain authority, and global teams of experts, we uniquely deliver a focus on Experience Improvement (XI) to help our clients own the moments that matter. Take a moment and learn more at [inmoment.com](http://inmoment.com)



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