

Holiday shoppers are begging brands for help. Are you listening?

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Today, 73% of Canadian holiday shoppers over 18 use three or more channels.¹ That's a huge number of people searching on their smartphones, visiting retailer sites, or going into a store to uncover new brands and products or rediscover old favourites.

But with so much choice at their fingertips, folks are finding holiday shopping overwhelming. To cut through the clutter and feel confident in their choices, these shoppers are begging for help.



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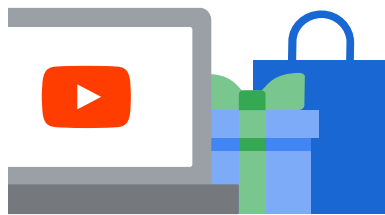
We've taken a look at recent shopping behaviour trends to see how brands can better assist shoppers with navigating this bustling shopping period. So, grab an eggnog and read on to learn how people want help this holiday season.

Think with **Google**

“Help me find you – wherever I am, whenever I want”

Research shows that 57% of Canadian shoppers said they were considering multiple retailers for their holiday purchases last season.² This year, we’re seeing that people are more open to discovering and trying new brands than ever before. With so many customers undecided, the discovery phase in the path to purchase is critical. Assist potential customers when they need you, and focus on mobile.

Shoppers are turning to their smartphones for shopping help with even greater frequency. In fact, 48% of Canadian shoppers used a shopping app last holiday season.¹



Nearly two-thirds of Canadian shoppers say video has given them ideas and inspiration for their purchases, and **more than 90% of those** say that they’ve discovered products and brands via YouTube.

It’s also worth noting that video has become a favourite research tool for holiday shoppers. Nearly two-thirds of Canadian shoppers say online video has given them ideas and inspiration for their purchases.³ More than 90% of these folks say that they’ve discovered new products and brands via YouTube.⁴

We’re also seeing that shopping is not centralized to the typical promotion days like Black Friday or Cyber Monday. People are always shopping – before, during, and after the holidays. In fact, [only 13% of holiday shoppers consolidate their shopping to the Black Friday to Cyber Monday period](#),⁵ and by that period, shoppers had completed 42% of their holiday shopping.⁶ An always-on strategy is critical to reach people whenever they need you – not just when it suits your campaign calendar.

“Please make it personal”

When it comes to finding what they want, people expect brands to return just the right results, tailored to them. They wanted things such as relevant deals from sites they regularly shop or a reminder of where they left off last time they visited a site. Nearly four in ten Canadian holiday shoppers are looking for retailers to remember personal details, like past sizes and items they've purchased.⁷

Even when searching for gifts for others, shoppers want results that are more specific and personalized to their immediate needs. For instance, Canadian searches for “gift + ____ year old” have seen a two-year growth of over 100%, while searches for “gifts for dad” have grown over 50% during that same period.⁸

Brands wanting to win over this year's holiday shoppers must take note: one-size-fits-all is no longer acceptable. Listen to your customers. Anticipate what they want. And deliver it to them in a personalized and seamless way.

“Please be efficient”

With more to do and less time to do it, people want their shopping experiences to be frictionless and efficient, especially over the holidays when there are so many other things taking priority (that pumpkin pie isn't going to eat itself). To help get things done, these shoppers rely heavily on technology.

Last holiday season, Canadian shoppers said 38% of their online purchases were made on their smartphones.⁹ And Canadian last-minute shoppers seem to be less loyal to their favorite stores, with 31% saying they choose where to buy their gifts based on how soon they can get them.¹⁰



43%

of Canadian shoppers wish retailers would do a better job of sharing inventory information.

For those shoppers who still prefer to buy offline, mobile helps them get there. Searches for “near me” in Canada have grown over 700% in the past two years,¹¹ and 43% of Canadian holiday shoppers wish retailers would do a better job of sharing inventory information.¹

Help your customers to help yourself

Don't let the holidays be a headache for your customers. If you provide relevant, personalized, and efficient assistance, you'll stand out from the crowd. Start by asking yourself: Will I be giving my customers the help they need this holiday season? Doing so could be a big step toward reaping long-term customer loyalty and business growth.

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