

Ordered Online, Delivered Sustainably: **The Future Of Green Shopping**

Research on the expectations
of British consumers regarding
sustainable online shopping and
the importance of sustainable
delivery options

 **Manhattan**[®]



Introduction

At first glance, the online shopping trend is difficult to reconcile with our society's current eco-friendly efforts to "go green." Transporting goods, delivering parcels and returning products – the entire process generates an impact that we should not underestimate. Nevertheless, the road to a sustainable future for e-commerce lies wide open today.

Customers expect companies to manage sustainable operations and are willing to make some concessions for a greener future, but low costs for consumers is still a critical concern. This viewpoint is evident from results in a survey conducted by YouGov on behalf of Manhattan Associates, with over 2,000 British consumers of various age groups participating in the survey.



Consumers prefer sustainable retailers

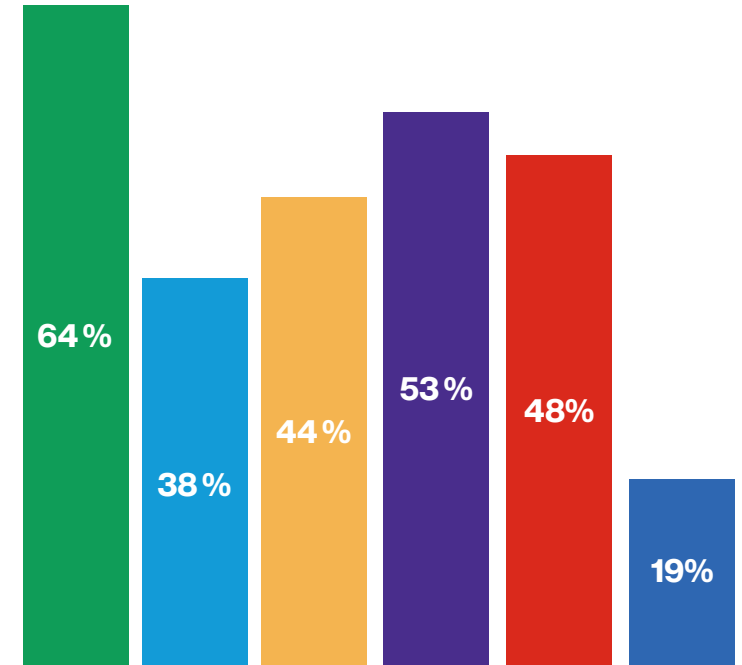
In Manhattan's survey of British consumers, almost two-thirds (**64%**) claim it's important for businesses to offer sustainable packaging, with over half expecting a sustainable product lifecycle. Only **16%** don't seem to be losing sleep over sustainability issues.

Respondents also say they feel it's important for retailers to communicate about sustainability. According to the survey, **45%** of consumers want to see more brands actively showing more detailed product information about the product's entire lifecycle, to help them act more sustainably when shopping online. Almost one-third (**29%**) of the survey's respondents claim they are purposefully boycotting brands that contribute to fast-fashion waste.

So, how else can companies make their operations more sustainable? Consumers would like retailers to focus on fair-trade products (**48%**). In addition, they also attach importance to the option of choosing repair instead of replacing a defective product (**44%**), along with carbon neutral delivery and return options (**38%**).

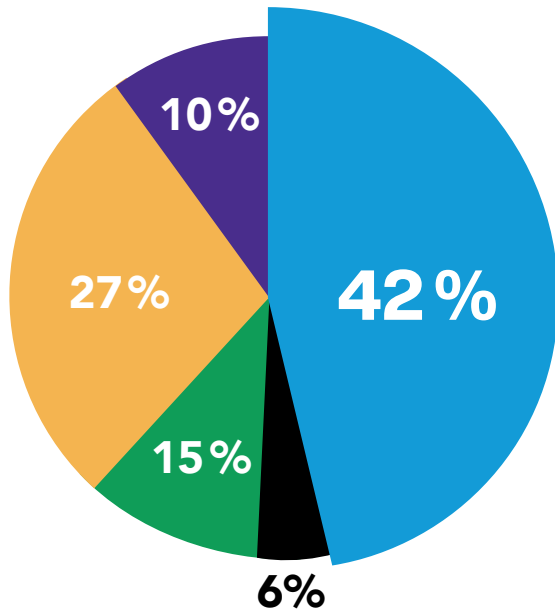
Advice for Retailers

Although we often hear that it is primarily the younger generations with a green mindset who consider the sustainability of products and brands, it is worth noting that consumers of all age groups attach importance to the sustainable activities of the companies from which they make purchases. Sustainability should be a priority for retailers more than ever. In addition, be sure to effectively communicate your sustainability efforts to the consumers.



When thinking about sustainability...In general, which, if any, of the following do you think is important for businesses to offer?

- The use of sustainable packaging materials
- Carbon neutral delivery and return options
- Repairs instead of replacements
- A sustainable product lifecycle (i.e., returned items are fully recycled)
- Fairtrade products
- Other/Don't know



In general, would you say you are willing to wait longer for products you ordered online if they were delivered in a more sustainable way? (Ex. delivered in one package instead of several separate packages with a different shipping time)

- No, I want to receive products as soon as possible, regardless of shipping and delivery times
- Yes, I would be willing to wait between one to three days
- Yes, I would be willing to wait between three to seven days
- Yes, I would be willing to wait seven days or longer
- Don't know

Consumers are willing to wait for more sustainable delivery options

Ordered today, delivered tomorrow? Consumers are used to fast service. However, this does not have to be a must, especially if a slightly longer delivery time reduces the impact on the environment. According to our survey, over two-fifths of British consumers are willing to wait at least three days for an order. For over a quarter of respondents, it's not a problem if the delivery takes three to seven days.

Well over half of our survey's respondents are willing to wait to receive multiple parcels in one delivery.

Advice for Retailers

Many companies like to offer "instant" service, but that is often not the most sustainable choice. Therefore, make sure customers have other delivery options to choose from in addition to fast delivery. Explain why one option is more sustainable than the other and encourage the consolidation of purchases consisting of multiple items for shipping, whenever possible.



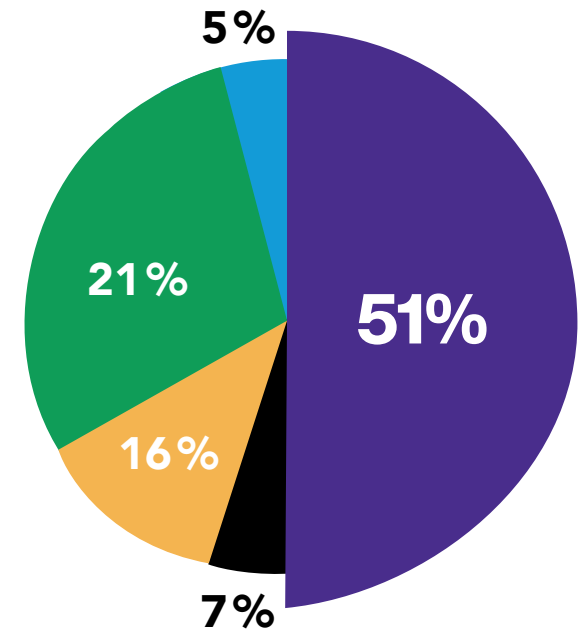
Consumers are willing to travel to pick up and return in-store

Depending on the distance, consumers are happy to travel to a shop or collection point. Over half of our survey's respondents have no problem with travelling under 5 kilometres. About 1 in 5 consumers would be willing to travel 15 kilometres. Only **16%** are not prepared to travel at all.

Advice for Retailers

Working with pickup points is an excellent solution to reduce the environmental footprint of transport. Just ensure that people don't have to travel too long of a distance. The option of in-store transactions after online orders could also make returns run more smoothly.

If consumers return products directly to a shop or pickup point, it's possible the store in question can immediately resell the item, which can save the retailer both time and money.



When thinking about travelling to a shop or collection point to pick up or return a product you've ordered online...How far, if at all, are you willing to travel?

- I am not willing to travel at all
- Under 3 miles/5 kilometres
- 3 to 9 miles/5 to 15 kilometres
- More than 9 miles/15 kilometres
- Don't know



In the current economic climate, cost is still key

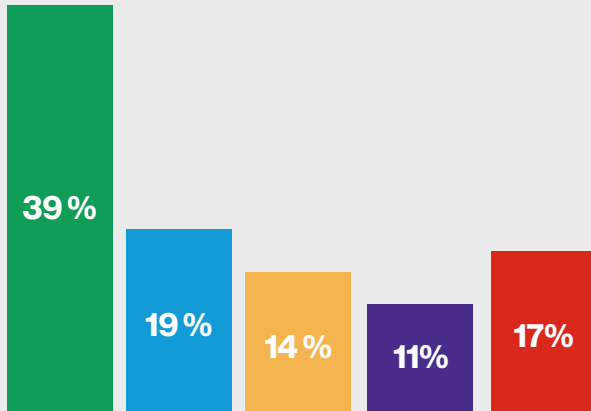
While some British consumers will, to an extent, sacrifice convenience in favour of being sustainable, our survey showed convenience is still the top priority for the majority, particularly at Christmas time.

The low cost of a product is still the most important factor for consumers (**39%**) compared to only one-tenth of consumers (**11%**) who seek environmentally friendly products and companies.

The fact that **32%** of British consumers are not actively looking for sustainable products or brands when shopping online demonstrates how they are prioritising costs over sustainability.

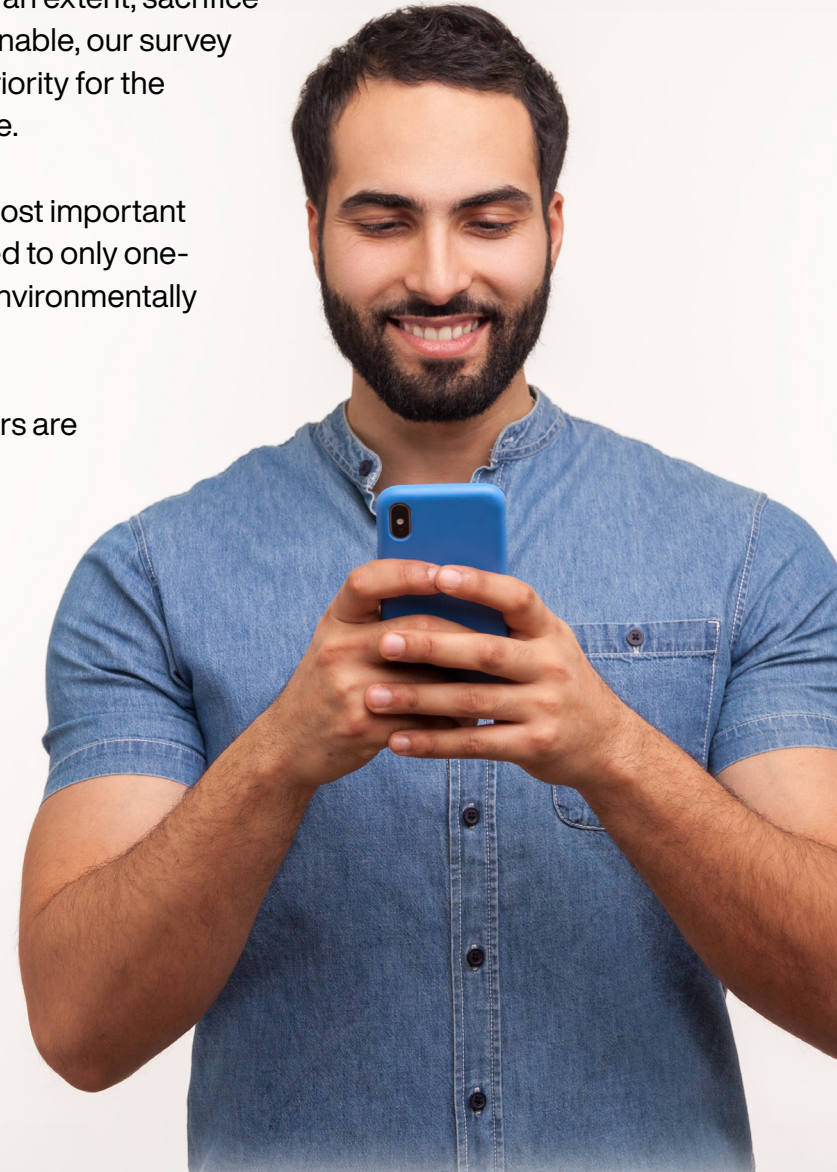
Advice for Retailers

With the power of sustainability remaining in the hands of brands, it is now up to retailers to make sure that greener options are made available to consumers.



When thinking about making a purchase over the Christmas holiday/festive season... Which of the following is the most important to you?

- Low cost of the product
- Speedy deliveries
- Easy returns process
- That the product/company is environmentally friendly
- Other/Don't know



A greener future for online shopping

In a world that increasingly values sustainable solutions, online retail cannot lag behind. Consumers not only expect companies to reduce the impact of their activities on the planet but are willing to make concessions themselves. The condition to their concession, however, is that the customer remains in control. For retailers, it is essential to have a good overview of the inventory and location of their products, enabling them to optimally inform consumers about the most sustainable delivery or return options.

Manhattan Active® solutions provide retailers with the foundation to address the demands of providing sustainable options. Our solutions enable the optimisation of the most complex operations, allowing businesses to sustainably streamline their activities in an efficient, effective and consumer-friendly manner while, at the same time, providing a green future for online shopping.

For more information, visit manh.co.uk

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