

BLACK FRIDAY

RESEARCH REPORT

Australia & New Zealand
October 2021

BLACK FRIDAY
BOOT CAMP



Introduction

The pandemic accelerated the shift to digital and drove more consumers to shop online. With this abrupt transition, many retailers (especially smaller shops) were not prepared to sell their products and services online.

Black Friday 2020 was a digital first, with online sales increasing 42% compared to the previous year. ([techradar.com](https://www.techradar.com)) As some parts of the Australian East Coast remain under the grip of the pandemic, this trend isn't expected to change.

No matter what happens during Black Friday 2021, retailers must not forget about the loyal customers who purchase products from them throughout the year. It's a great time leading up to Black Friday to form relationships with these customers to keep them coming back, well after Black Friday is over.

In this research report, you will discover what to expect during ANZ Black Friday 2021, based on the questions we asked from over 1,500 shoppers in Australia and New Zealand.

After reviewing this report, you can find additional resources to improve customer growth, stand out from the competition, and increase sales in our [Black Friday Boot Camp](#).

Demographics of Interviewees

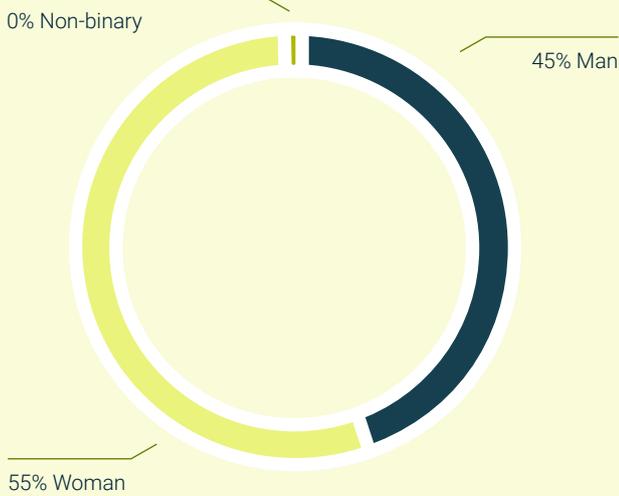
Below you'll find the age range and genders of those who participated in this in-depth Black Friday research.

Response Counts



Totals: 1,541

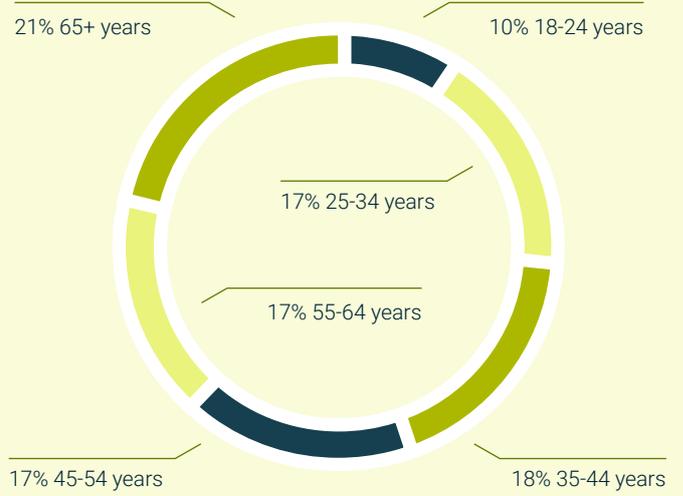
Gender



Value	Percent	Responses
Man	45.2%	696
Woman	54.8%	844
Non-binary	0.1%	1

Totals: 1,541

Age



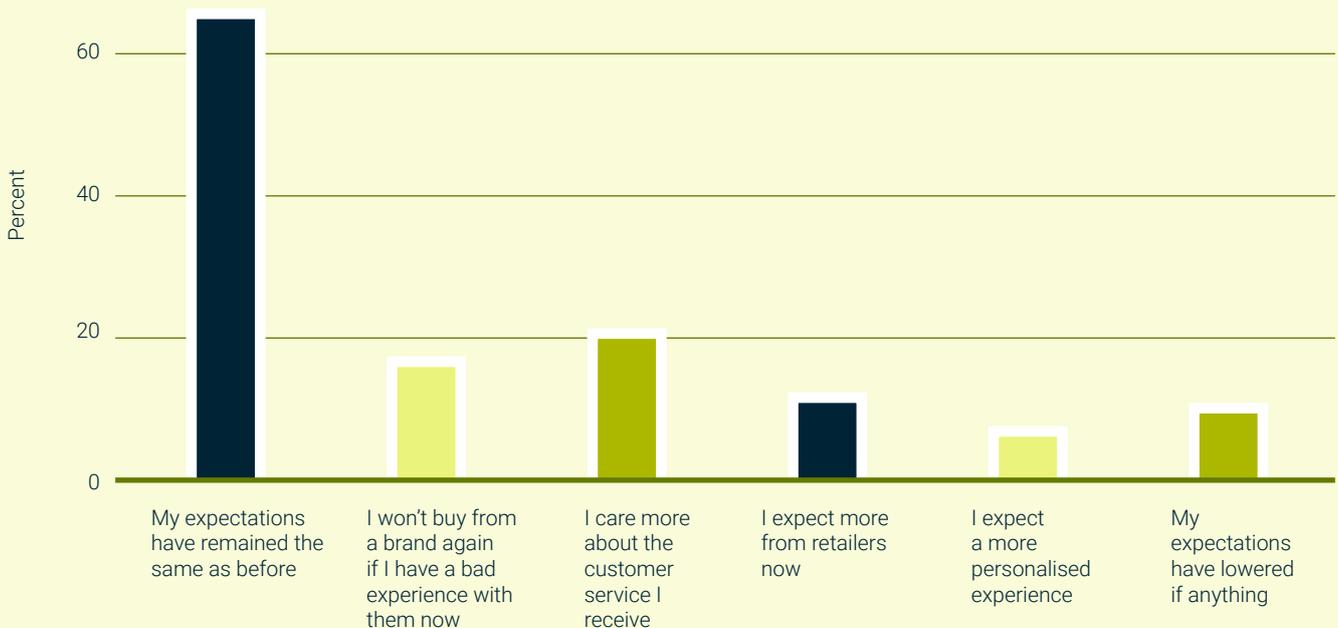
Value	Percent	Responses
18-24 years	5%	147
25-34 years	17.3%	267
35-44 years	18.4%	284
45-54 years	17.2%	265
55-64 years	16.5%	255
65+ years	21.0%	323

Totals: 1,541

1. Since the pandemic and lockdown, how have your expectations shifted when it comes to retailers you buy from?

Customers prefer brands that provide personalized services, offers, and suggestions based on their behaviors. One of the best ways to make this happen is through a Customer Engagement Platform (CEP).

The CEP will continue serving online customers over their lifetime, unlike a retail associate who may move on to another company and take that customer relationship with them.

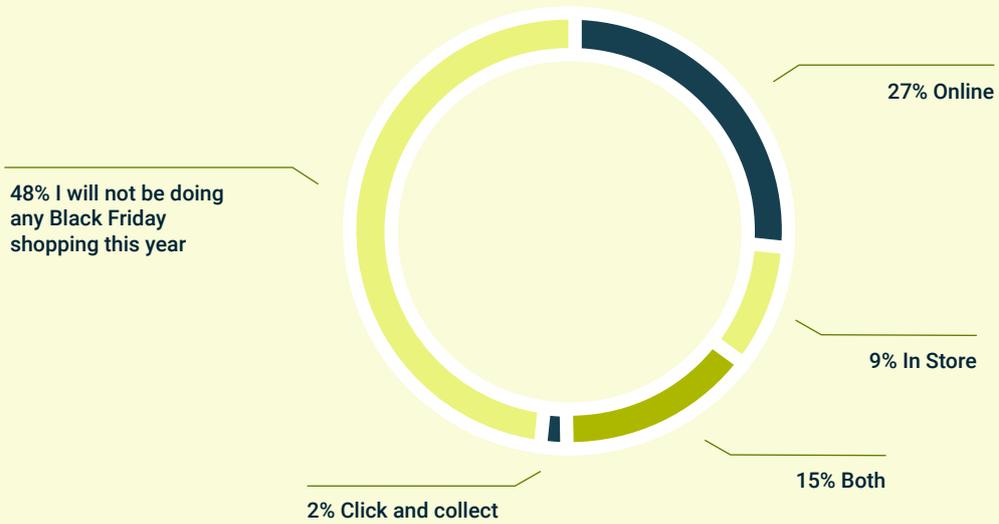


Value	Percent	Responses
My expectations have remained the same as before	 65.3%	1,007
I won't buy from a brand again if I have a bad experience with them now	 15.9%	245
I care more about the customer service I receive	 19.9%	306
I expect more from retailers now	 10.8%	166
I expect a more personalised experience	 6.0%	92
My expectations have lowered if anything	 9.3%	143

2. Where will you be doing your Black Friday shopping this year?

Black Friday 2020 brought a dramatic increase in online purchases, with the ABS reporting a 42% increase over the previous year. ([techradar.com](https://www.techradar.com))

According to the ABS, the number of local retailers had a 13.2% higher turnover in November 2020 vs. the same period in 2019. ([techradar.com](https://www.techradar.com))



Value	Percent	Responses
Online	26.7%	411
In Store	8.6%	132
Both	14.6%	225
Click and collect	1.9%	29
I will not be doing any Black Friday shopping this year	48.3%	744

Totals: 1,541

3. Which, if any, of the following statements do you agree with?

Black Friday is all about finding the best deal. Customers want those deals, but retailers must be able to lead shoppers on a unique journey that provides ways they can continue buying throughout the year. This is a big opportunity many retailers miss.

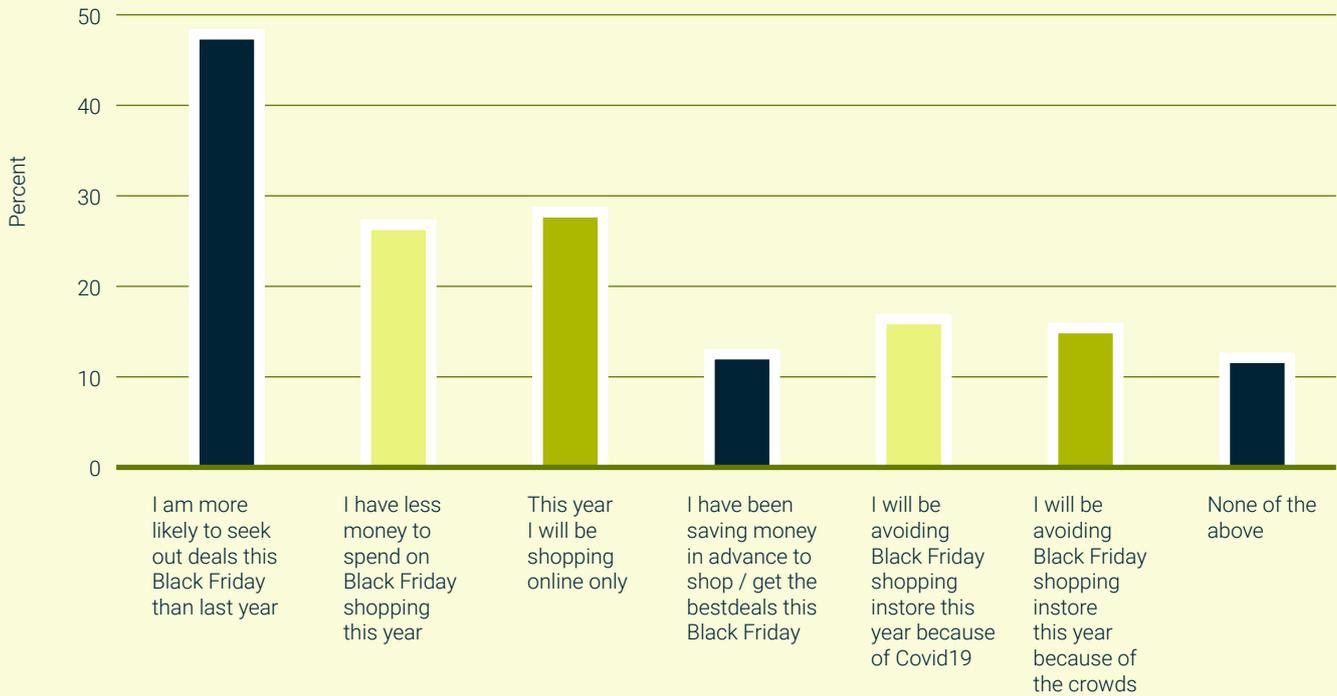


Natalie Peat

Finance and
E-Commerce Manager



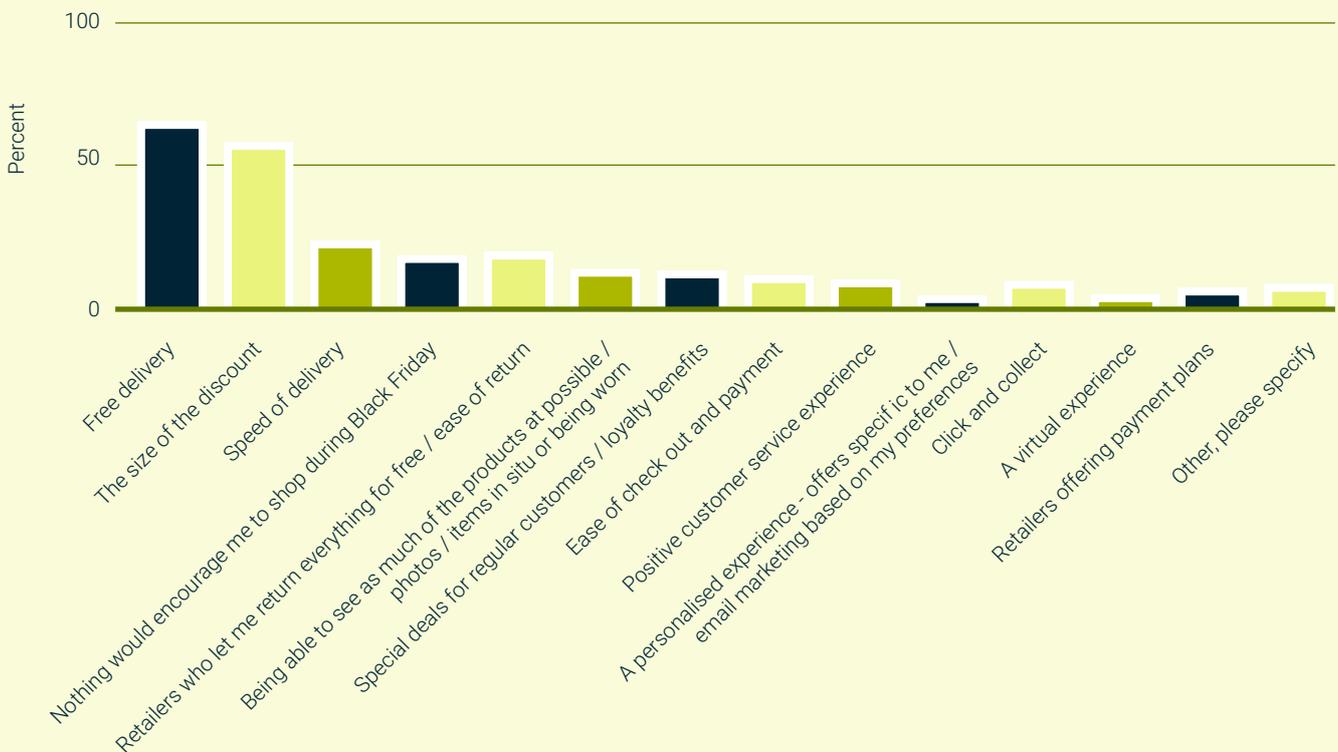
“We sat down and we studied that customer journey. We learned everything there was to learn about our customer journey, how they were experiencing every touchpoint. We streamlined our brand messaging and personality. We used an automated platform to execute everything we needed along the customer journey, and then we needed to deliver on that promise to prioritize the customer along this journey as well.”



Value	Percent	Responses
I am more likely to seek out deals this Black Friday than last year	47.8%	381
I have less money to spend on Black Friday shopping this year	26.6%	212
This year I will be shopping online only	28.0%	223
I have been saving money in advance to shop / get the best deals this Black Friday	12.2%	97
I will be avoiding Black Friday shopping instore this year because of Covid19	16.1%	128
I will be avoiding Black Friday shopping instore this year because of the crowds	15.1%	120
None of the above	11.8%	94

4. What would encourage you the most to shop online during Black Friday retail events?

It's not just about discounts on Black Friday. Adding free delivery and free shipping can entice people. Even though the fees are minimal compared to the actual cost of the product, psychologically the customer believes they're getting something for free.



Value	Percent	Responses
Free delivery	 63.6%	980
The size of the discount	 56.1%	865
Speed of delivery	 21.0%	323
Nothing would encourage me to shop during Black Friday	 15.8%	244
Retailers who let me return everything for free / ease of return	 17.0%	262
Being able to see as much of the products at possible / photos / items in situ or being worn	 10.9%	168
Special deals for regular customers / loyalty benefits	 10.3%	158
Ease of check out and payment	 8.6%	133
Positive customer service experience	 7.1%	110
A personalised experience - offers specific to me / email marketing based on my preferences	 1.5%	23
Click and collect	 6.6%	102
A virtual experience	 1.8%	27
Retailers offering payment plans	 4.2%	65
Other, please specify	 5.5%	84

5. Do you think that retail stores should open on Black Friday?

With Victoria released from lockdown in November 2020, and consumers taking advantage of Black Friday sales, Australian household spending surged during last year's Black Friday.

([bloomberg](#))

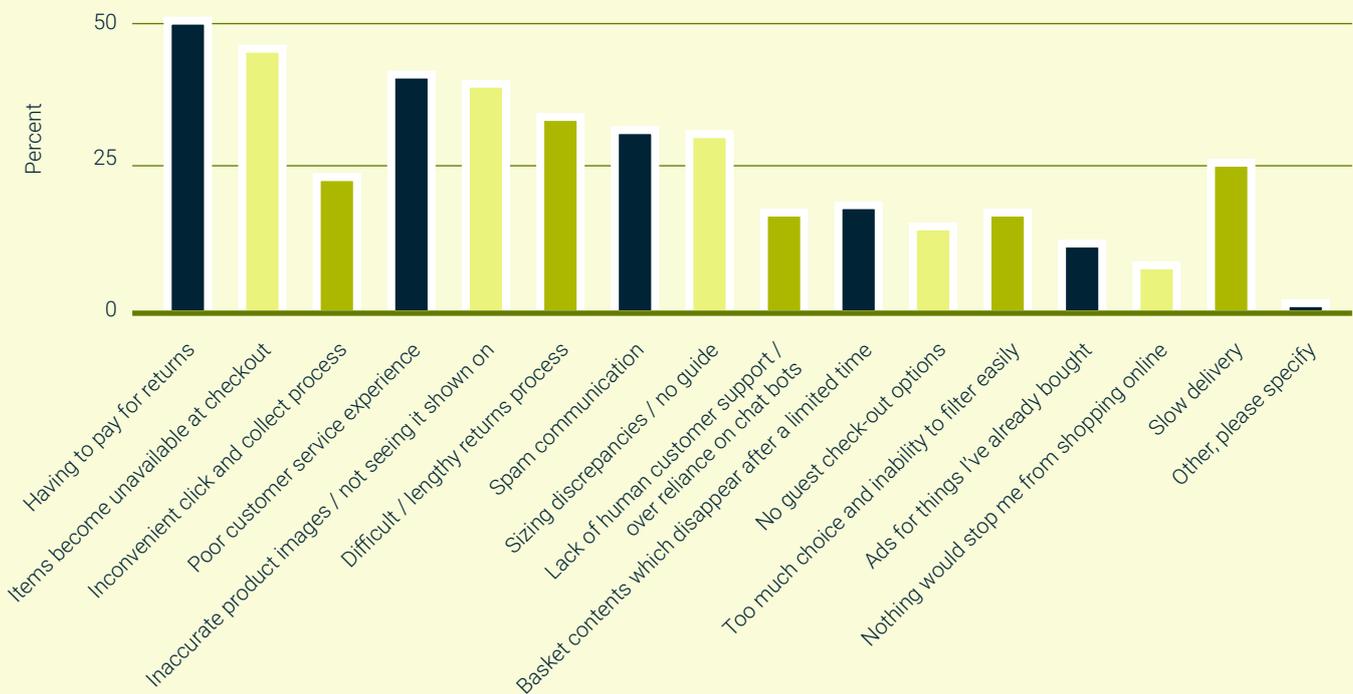


Value	Percent	Responses
Yes	46.8%	721
Don't know	37.5%	578
No	15.7%	242

Totals: 1,541

6. Which, if any, of the following would stop you from shopping with a retailer online?

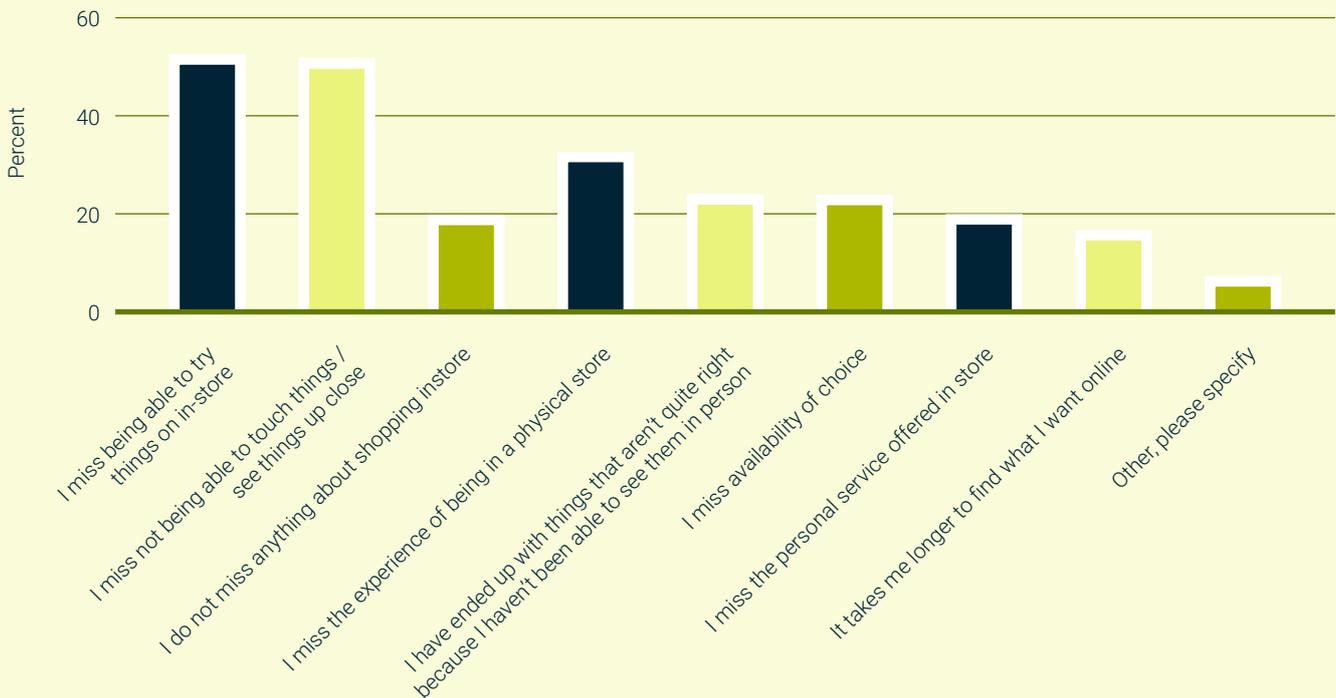
Returning items purchased through digital channels, especially for clothing, is one of the most difficult aspects of shopping online. Retailers may see increased sales as a result of offering free returns for online sales.



Value	Percent	Responses
Having to pay for returns	49.9%	332
Items become unavailable at checkout	45.0%	299
Inconvenient click and collect process	22.6%	150
Poor customer service experience	40.5%	269
Inaccurate product images / not seeing it shown on	38.9%	259
Difficult / lengthy returns process	33.1%	220
Spam communication	30.8%	205
Sizing discrepancies / no guide	30.1%	200
Lack of human customer support / over reliance on chat bots	16.4%	109
Basket contents which disappear after a limited time	17.7%	118
No guest check-out options	14.0%	93
Too much choice and inability to filter easily	16.4%	109
Ads for things I've already bought	11.0%	73
Nothing would stop me from shopping online	7.2%	48
Slow delivery	25.1%	167
Other, please specify	0.6%	4

7. What, if anything, do you miss about shopping in-store?

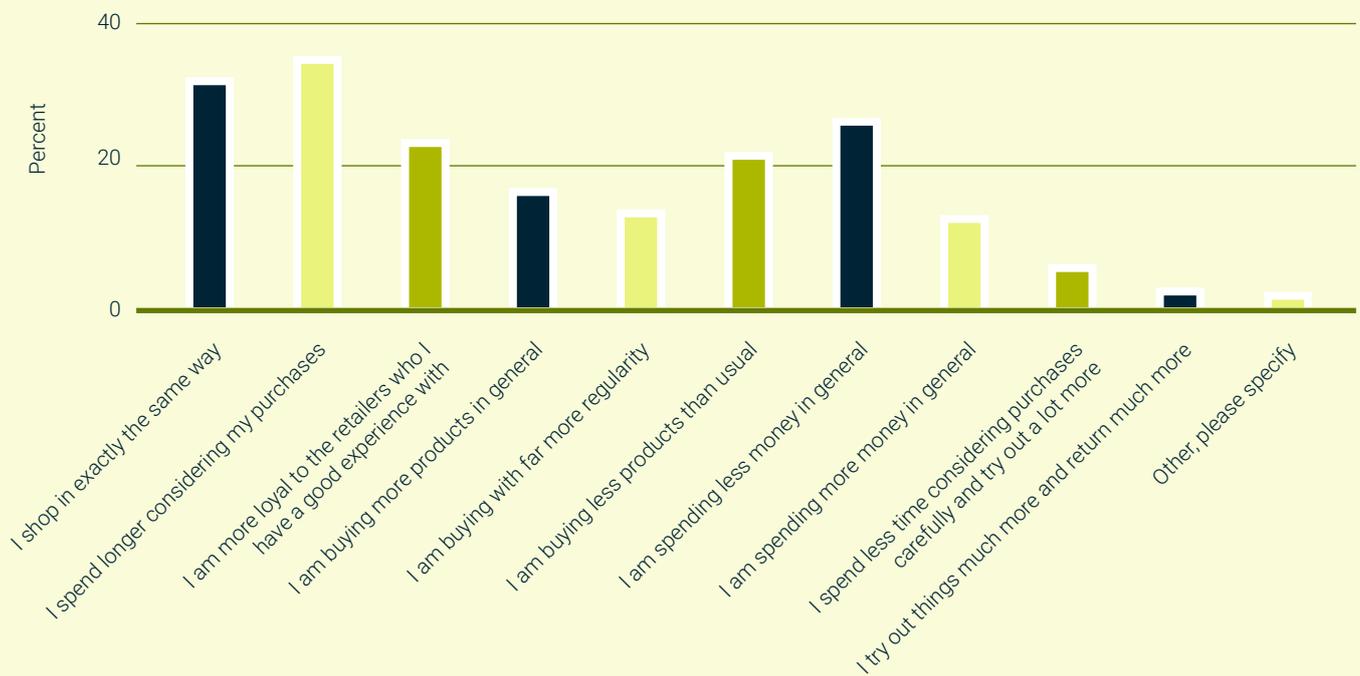
Trying things on is top of the list as to why customers miss shopping in-store. This is why retailers should do their very best to adopt a free online return policy, just in case something doesn't fit as expected.



Value	Percent	Responses
I miss being able to try things on in-store	 49.3%	760
I miss not being able to touch things / see things up close	 48.5%	747
I do not miss anything about shopping instore	 17.2%	265
I miss the experience of being in a physical store	 29.8%	459
I have ended up with things that aren't quite right because I haven't been able to see them in person	 21.3%	328
I miss availability of choice	 21.2%	327
I miss the personal service offered in store	 17.3%	266
It takes me longer to find what I want online	 14.1%	218
Other, please specify	 4.9%	76

8. Has shopping online since the start of lockdown changed your purchasing habits at all?

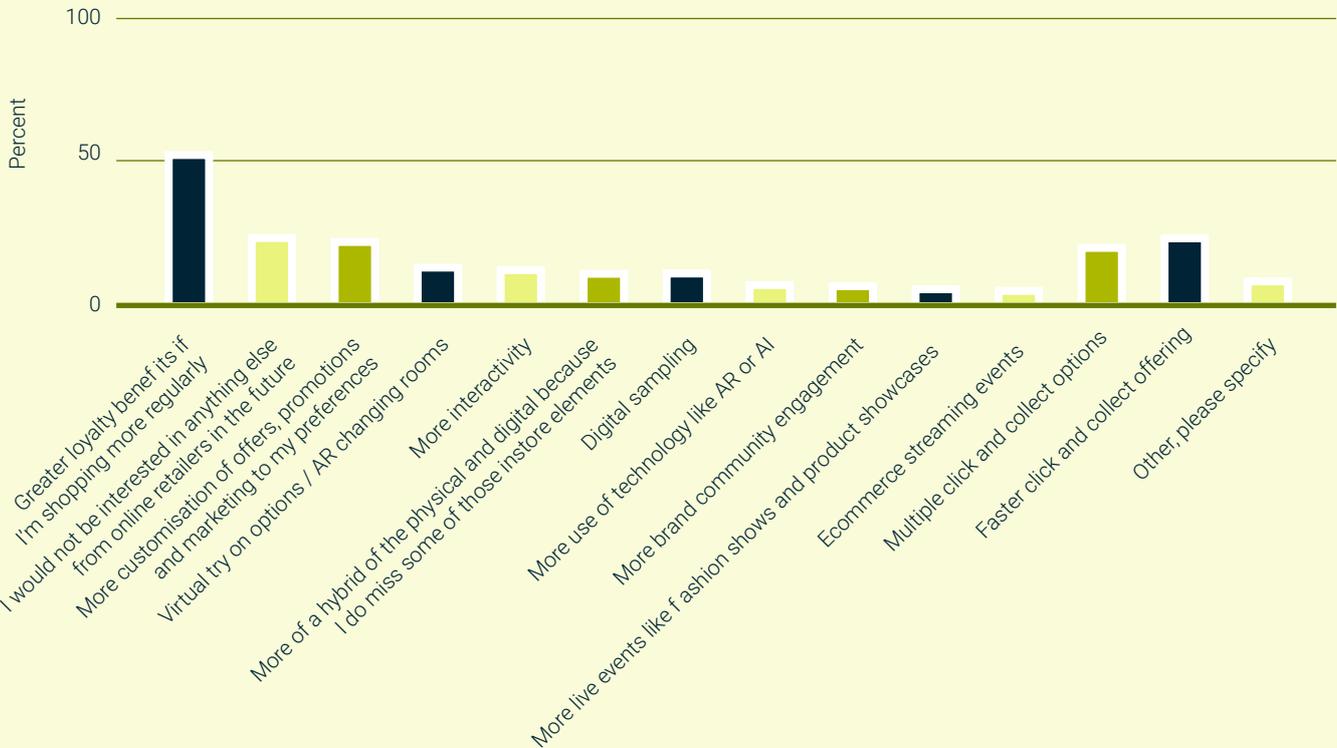
During Black Friday last year, retailers focused their digital campaigns on being more agile and personalized. Real-time event triggers sent through the Emarsys CEP during Black Friday 2020 rocketed by 177%, and segment executions went up by 29%.



Value	Percent	Responses
I shop in exactly the same way	31.4%	209
I spend longer considering my purchases	34.4%	229
I am more loyal to the retailers who I have a good experience with	22.7%	151
I am buying more products in general	15.8%	105
I am buying with far more regularity	12.8%	85
I am buying less products than usual	20.9%	139
I am spending less money in general	25.7%	171
I am spending more money in general	12.0%	80
I spend less time considering purchases carefully and try out a lot more	5.1%	34
I try out things much more and return much more	1.8%	12
Other (please specify)	1.2%	8

9. What, if anything, would you be interested in from online retailers in the future?

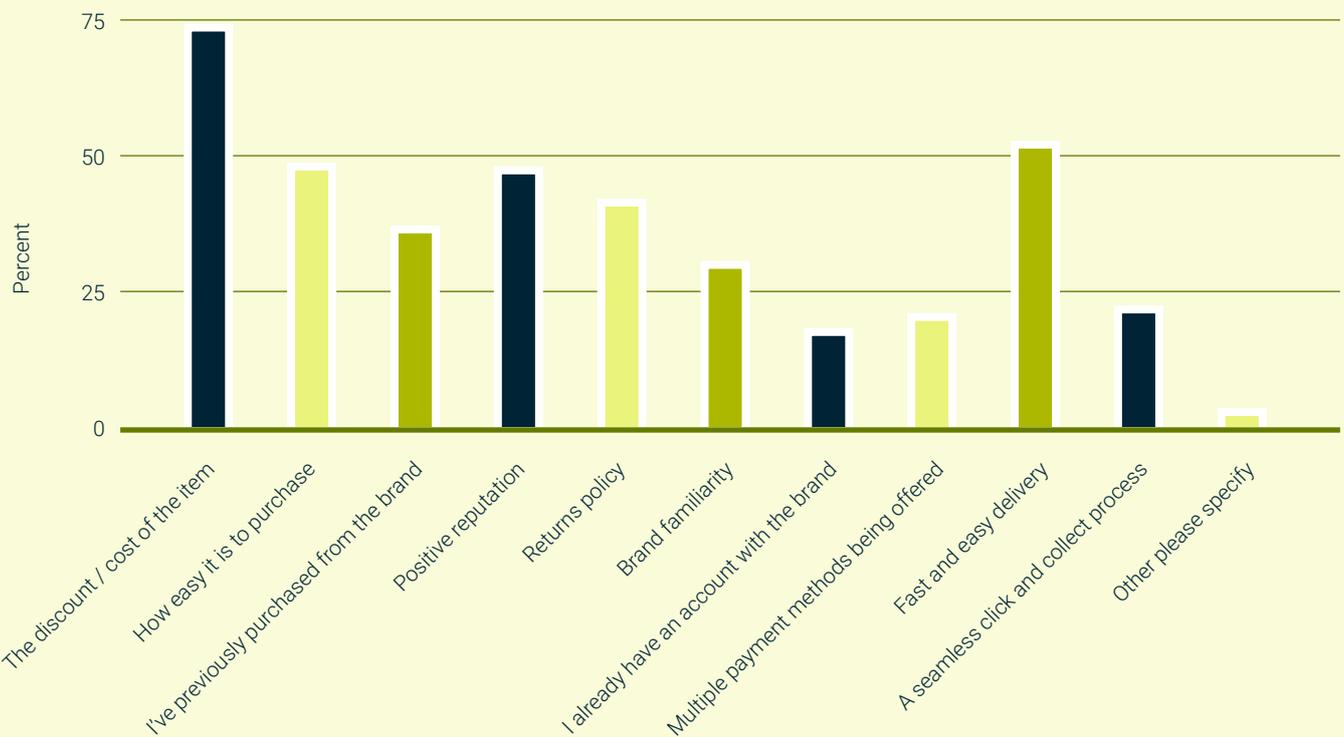
It doesn't matter whether a customer is in-store, online, on the phone, or using a mobile app—he or she wants a seamless experience. Personalization is key to creating loyal customers.



Value	Percent	Responses
Greater loyalty benefits if I'm shopping more regularly	 51.1%	788
I would not be interested in anything else from online retailers in the future	 21.6%	333
More customisation of offers, promotions and marketing to my preferences	 20.2%	312
Virtual try on options / AR changing rooms	 11.1%	171
More interactivity	 10.2%	157
More of a hybrid of the physical and digital because I do miss some of those instore elements	 8.9%	137
Digital sampling	 9.0%	138
More use of technology like AR or AI	 4.9%	75
More brand community engagement	 4.5%	70
More live events like fashion shows and product showcases	 3.4%	53
Ecommerce streaming events	 2.8%	43
Multiple click and collect options	 18.1%	279
Faster click and collect offering	 21.5%	332
Other, please specify	 6.2%	95

10. When thinking about online shopping at the moment, what, if anything, impacts your decision to choose a retailer over another?

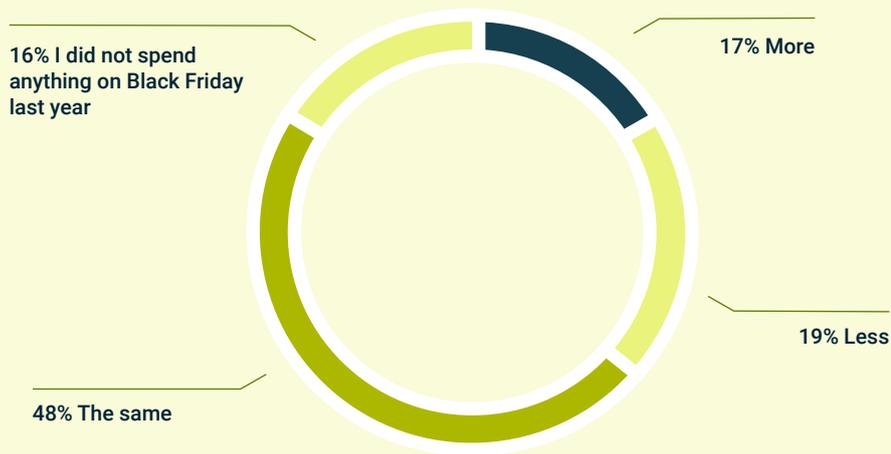
In a global survey of Black Friday forecasts for 2020, 44% of Australian respondents expected a discount level between 10% – 25%. ([statista.com](https://www.statista.com))



Value	Percent	Responses
The discount / cost of the item	73.7%	490
How easy it is to purchase	47.8%	318
I've previously purchased from the brand	36.1%	240
Positive reputation	47.1%	313
Returns policy	41.1%	273
Brand familiarity	29.5%	196
I already have an account with the brand	17.0%	113
Multiple payment methods being offered	19.8%	132
Fast and easy delivery	51.9%	345
A seamless click and collect process	21.2%	141
Other please specify	2.1%	14

11. Do you anticipate spending more, less, or the same on Black Friday deals this year, compared to previous years?

A personalized experience will encourage customers to spend more. What’s even better is that a majority of online shoppers are willing to share their personal information if it leads to a better shopping experience.



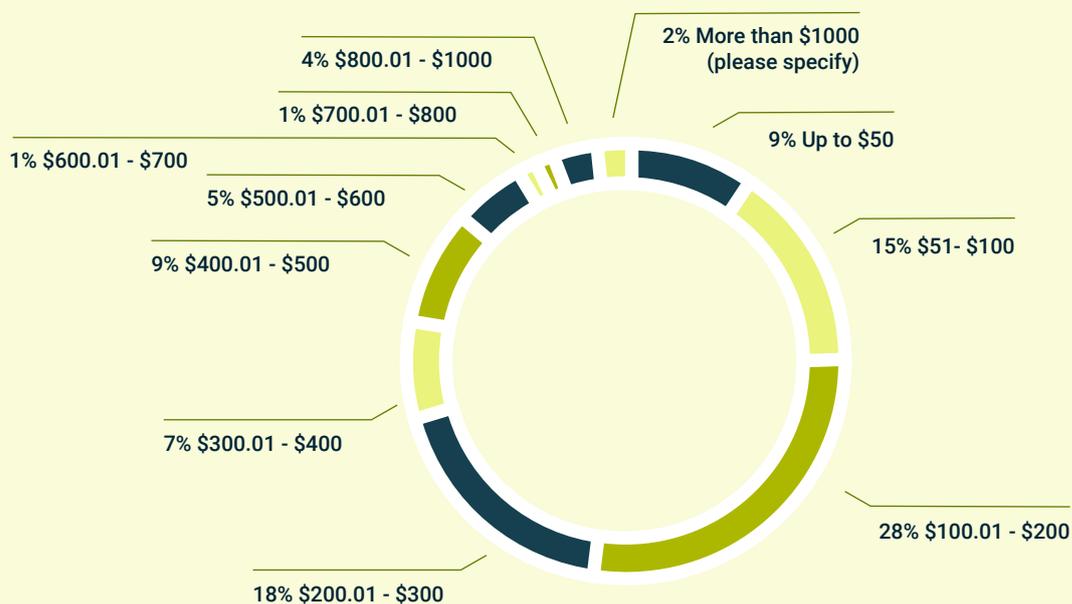
Value	Percent	Responses
More	16.7%	133
Less	19.4%	155
The same	47.6%	379
I did not spend anything on Black Friday last year	16.3%	130

Totals: 797

12. How much do you anticipate spending on Black Friday this year?

The amount spent on clothing and electronics online between Black Friday and Cyber Monday 2020 increased by more than 100% compared to the same data a few weeks earlier.

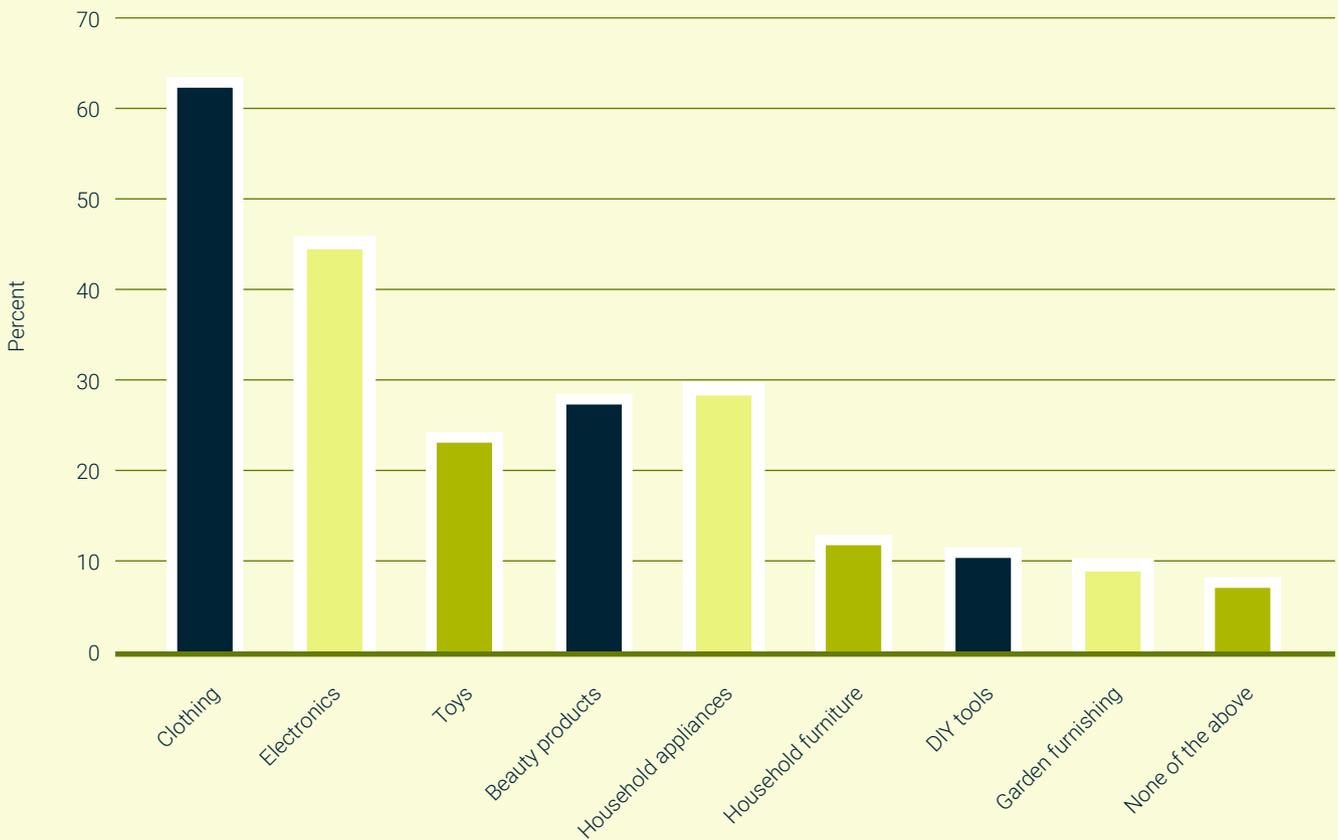
commbank.com.au



Value	Percent	Responses
Up to \$50	9.4%	75
\$51- \$100	15.2%	121
\$100.01 - \$200	27.6%	220
\$200.01 - \$300	18.2%	145
\$300.01 - \$400	7.4%	59
\$400.01 - \$500	8.5%	68
\$500.01 - \$600	5.4%	43
\$600.01 - \$700	1.3%	10
\$700.01 - \$800	1.3%	10
\$800.01 - \$1000	4.3%	34
More than \$1000 (please specify)	1.5%	12

13. Which of the following do you anticipate purchasing online on Black Friday this year?

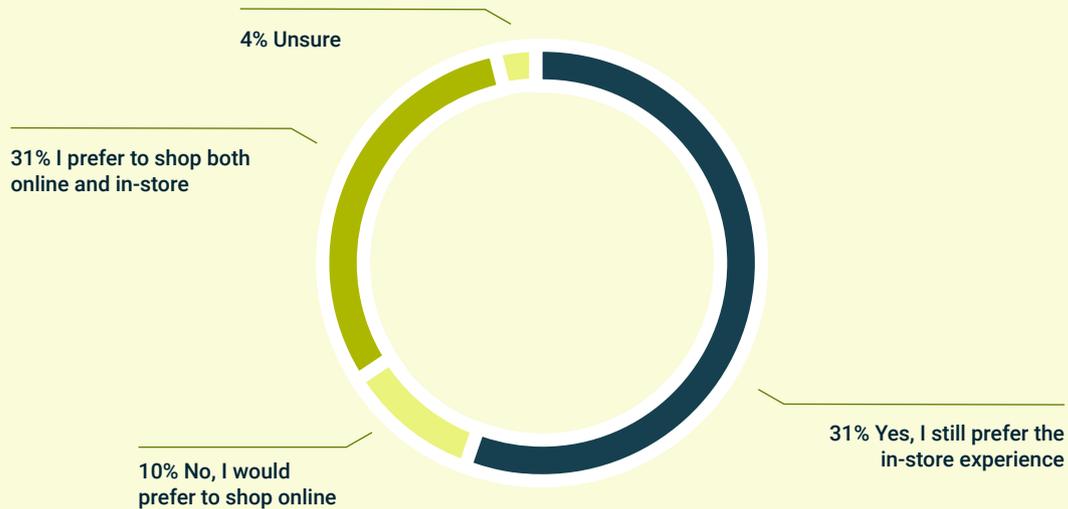
Despite the association with massive discounts and price cuts, Black Friday generally provides consumers with a number of opportunities beyond savings alone. Businesses can maximize sales by engaging inactive leads, winning back defectors, and retaining active customers.



Value	Percent	Responses
Clothing	 62.1%	495
Electronics	 44.3%	353
Toys	 23.0%	183
Beauty products	 27.2%	217
Household appliances	 28.0%	223
Household furniture	 11.7%	93
DIY tools	 10.3%	82
It takes me longer to find what I want online	 8.8%	70
None of the above	 7.0%	56

14. Looking ahead into the future, would you still prefer to shop in-store if there was no COVID?

Retailers can provide exactly what customers want online and offer that personal touch, much like they would get in-store, by leveraging first-party data. As a result of lessons learned from last year, many retailers are focusing on automating their marketing campaigns.



Value	Percent	Responses
Yes, I still prefer the in-store experience	55.4%	853
No, I would prefer to shop online	10.3%	159
I prefer to shop both online and in-store	30.6%	472
Unsure	3.7%	57

Totals: 797

Conclusion

Businesses looking to make the most of Black Friday 2021 should be focusing on automating campaigns, personalizing their approach, and making sure they have a strong first-party data strategy in place.

For new customers acquired over Black Friday, a brand should help these buyers to remain loyal by engaging them where and how they choose with relevant information and personalized experiences.



Emarsys is the only omnichannel customer engagement platform built to accelerate business outcomes. In every aspect of the customer lifecycle, the Emarsys platform is built to drive loyalty, retention, and to connect with customers across any channel.



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