International Post Corporation

Takeback Thursday: Returns expected to increase by 72 per cent on first working day of the year

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On Thursday 2 January 2020 â€“ Takeback Thursday â€“ returns of online purchases are predicted to increase by 72 per cent compared to the average number of return parcels per day in December, according to Royal Mail. Takeback Thursday is the day that most Brits will return their unwanted and ill-fitting Christmas presents. With global reach and the leading enabler of ecommerce in the UK, Royal Mail is well placed to observe trends across the industry.

According to a study commissioned by Royal Mail, the average online shopper in the UK sends back an online purchase every month*. Three in five online shoppers would be unlikely to use a retailer again if they have a difficult returns experience. For that reason, it is very important to get the returns experience right first time.

Speed of refund is the most important element of the returns process for online shoppers (76 per cent). Clearly signposted returns information on the retailer's website is also key (73 per cent) and shoppers want clear guidance about which returns labels to use (72 per cent).

Try before you buy

Almost six in ten (58 per cent) shoppers are more likely to use a retailer if they offer a 'try before you buy' service so it's an important avenue to explore when adapting to customer needs. Over a third (35 per cent) of shoppers would purchase more items if a 'try before you buy' option was available from a retailer. Those aged 18-34 (47 per cent) are more likely to purchase more items if a service like this is available than those aged over 55 years old (just 22 per cent). One in two people that have not used such a service are open to trying it at some point.

Shoppers wary of items not looking and fitting how they appear online are naturally attracted to this service. Clothing (60 per cent) and footwear (42 per cent) are the categories people are most likely to use this service for, followed by electrical computing goods (37 per cent). Usage of 'try before you buy' has increased significantly for clothing since last year (52 per cent in 2018).

A spokesperson from Royal Mail said "With the festive season now over, January is the busiest time of the year for returns. Having a clear, user-friendly returns policy has never

been more important. It is a vital part of the online shopping experience. For retailers, ensuring their returns experience is in line with consumers' expectations is key. Over a third of shoppers would purchase more items if a 'try before you buy' option was available from a retailer, so it's important to consider putting such a service at the heart of your returns offering."

Source: Royal Mail Group

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