

DHL unveils first global e-commerce business report: AI, social commerce & sustainability lead 2025 trends

07-10-2025

The report offers an exclusive look at how companies are selling, scaling, and succeeding in today's rapidly evolving digital landscape, driven by omnichannel strategies, AI-powered personalization, cross-border expansion, and a growing emphasis on sustainability and logistics excellence.

DHL eCommerce launched the first "Business Edition" in its series of 2025 E-Commerce Trends Reports - a landmark study capturing the voices of 4,050 e-commerce businesses across Europe, the Americas, and Asia Pacific. The report offers an exclusive look at how companies are selling, scaling, and succeeding in today's rapidly evolving digital landscape, driven by omnichannel strategies, AI-powered personalization, cross-border expansion, and a growing emphasis on sustainability and logistics excellence.

"This report offers a powerful snapshot of how e-commerce is evolving - from AI-driven personalization and social commerce to the rise of B2B and borderless trade. It's not just about trends; it's about transformation and the heartbeat of local and global e-commerce", Pablo Ciano, CEO of DHL eCommerce, said. "Businesses are scaling faster, selling smarter, and prioritizing sustainability like never before. At DHL, we're proud to support this momentum, helping retailers deliver with

speed, trust, and responsibility in every market they serve."

With Black Friday around the corner and global e-commerce growth accelerating, DHL's new report offers insights into how businesses are preparing for peak season and beyond. Whether B2B or B2C, businesses are investing in speed, trust, and personalization to win in a crowded marketplace. The Business Report covers a range of different topics that provide actionable insights to e-commerce businesses of all sizes.

Further key findings:

Logistics is the hidden hero of the checkout - 96% of retailers say their logistics offering is key to securing sales, and 86% say free delivery and returns improve sales. B2B retailers and the rules of online selling - With 78% of B2B retailers expecting website sales to grow and 61% already using AI across their platforms, the B2B e-commerce landscape is rapidly evolving to mirror the

speed, personalization and innovation of consumer shopping.

In 2025, e-commerce success means selling everywhere - because with 63% of retailers selling on three or more platforms, 68% on Amazon, and 87% active on social media, if online businesses are not where their customers are, they're nowhere.

Borderless commerce is booming - 64% of e-commerce retailers now sell internationally - rising to 88% for large businesses and 85% of medium-sized ones and they're streamlining cross-border trade by registering for IOSS (Import One-Stop Shop) and securing EORI (Economic Operators Registration and Identification) numbers - while over half opt for DDP (Delivered Duty Paid) incoterms to simplify delivery and duty handling.

Generational shifts - Gen Z and Millennials dominate weekly online purchases, while

Gen Alpha is emerging as a new influence on household buying.

Subscriptions reshape loyalty - 52% of businesses offer product subscriptions, and 14% offer delivery and returns subscriptions. Black Friday remains critical - 84% of retailers will participate in 2025, with 60% reporting increased sales year-over-year. However, it's micro businesses and sole traders revealing more modest results with only 48% seeing increased sales.

Out-of-home delivery locations essential for big business & practical for smaller players - 96% of large and medium e-commerce retailers say they're key to driving sales and repeat business, while 53% of sole traders rely on them the most for sending parcels. To explore all the key findings, visit:

www.dhl.com/reports

Source: DHL Group