

2026 Delivery Experience Study: Flexible, Reliable Delivery Drives Loyalty

New data from 1,000+ consumers reveals how delivery experiences shape loyalty—and which factors now outweigh free shipping as the biggest retention drivers.

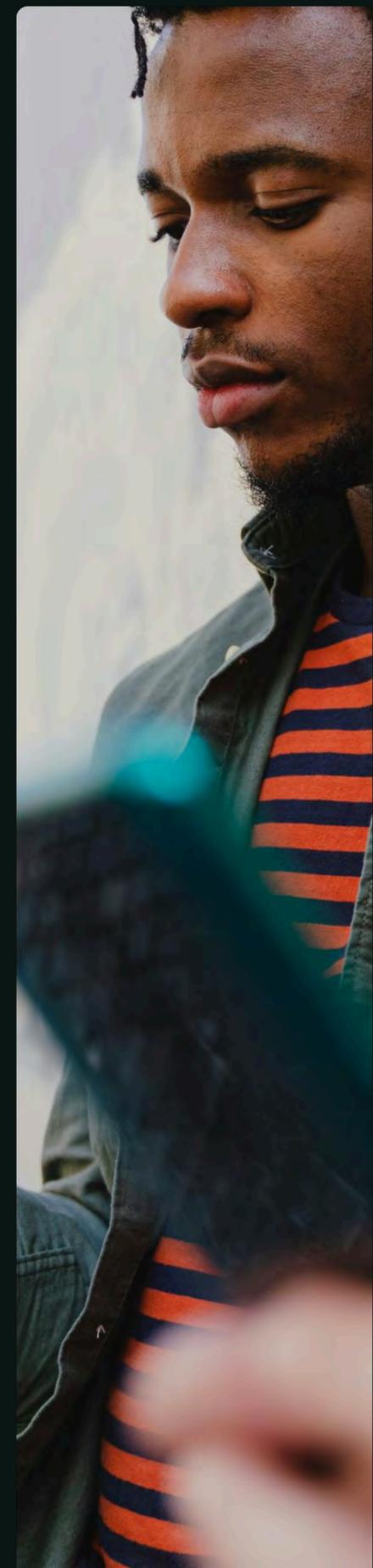


Table of contents

Executive summary 02

Key insights from the 2026 Bringg Delivery Experience Study

The modern online shopper 03

How today's consumers shop and where the delivery experience fits in

The new eCommerce battleground: reliability and flexibility 06

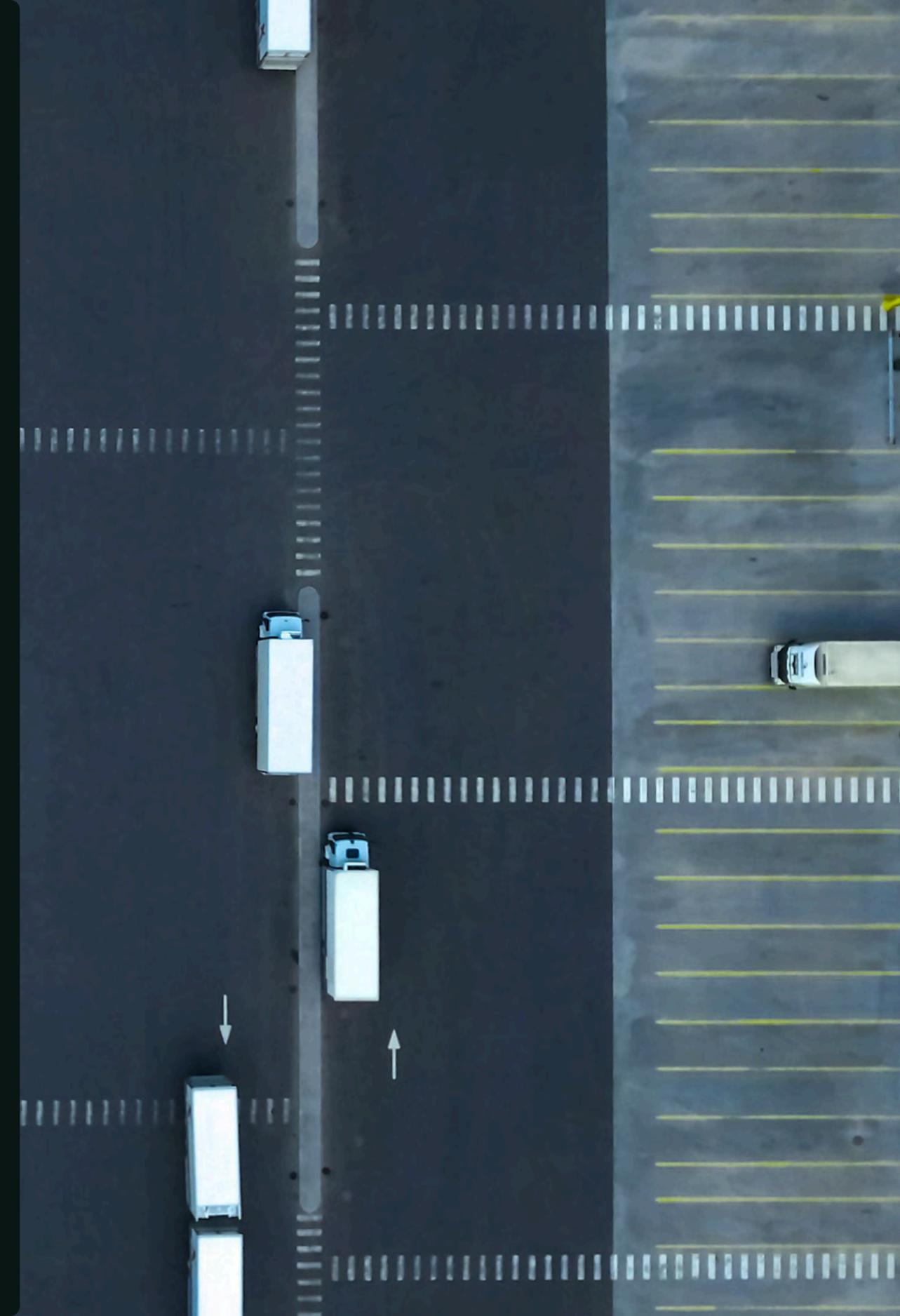
What constitutes a great vs negative delivery experience for today's shopper

The loyalty equation: reliability + flexibility = retention 13

Building reliability and flexibility into the delivery experience

Conclusion 16

Methodology and demographics 17



Executive summary

Global eCommerce sales are expected to grow from \$6.42 trillion in 2025 to \$7.89 trillion in 2028¹, and will account for 22.5% of all retail sales—up 2% points from 2025's projected EOY figures (~20.5%).

Free shipping was the ultimate delivery promise, but it's now table stakes. Bringg's new 2026 Delivery Experience Study shows that **consumers value reliability and flexibility more than cost**, and they reward retailers that deliver both.

Reliable delivery factors like on-time arrival, order tracking, and responsive customer service, along with flexible delivery speed and scheduling options may seem basic. But combined, they create **reliable, flexible delivery experiences that turn casual browsers into long-term buyers**.

Key data insights

➤ **Delivery influences buying behavior**

71% of respondents think about delivery before they get to checkout and 51% will abandon a purchase if a retailer can't provide on-time delivery estimates.

➤ **Shoppers value reliable, flexible delivery experiences**

72% say on-time delivery (a pillar of reliability) defines a great experience and 61% abandon carts when delivery isn't flexible.

➤ **Late deliveries are the #1 cause of negative delivery experiences**

On-time delivery has a bigger impact on delivery experience than a package arriving damaged.

➤ **Negative delivery experiences drive customers away, for good**

55% of shoppers will abandon a brand because of a negative delivery experience.

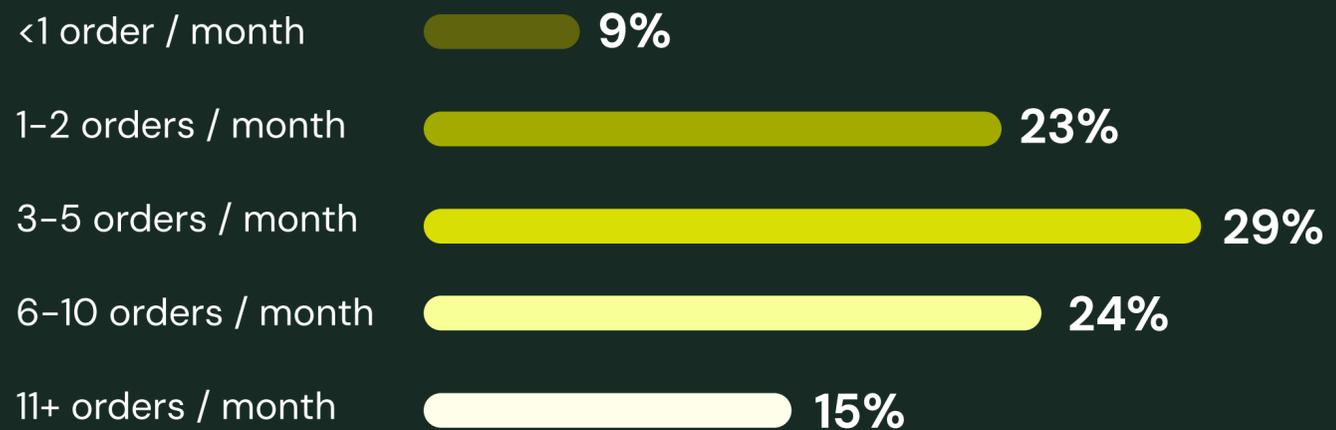
➤ **Great experiences build loyalty, even at a premium**

65% of shoppers say great delivery experiences are enough to make them buy from a retailer again, even if the price is higher than competitors.

The modern online shopper

Today's consumers shop often and have high expectations. Online shopping is now routine: 68% of shoppers order online about once a week. With the continuous growth of eCommerce, comes the continuous evolution of delivery promises and the need to keep pace with consumer demands.

eCommerce shopping frequency: average orders per month



Survey question: On average, how often do you shop online each month?

68%

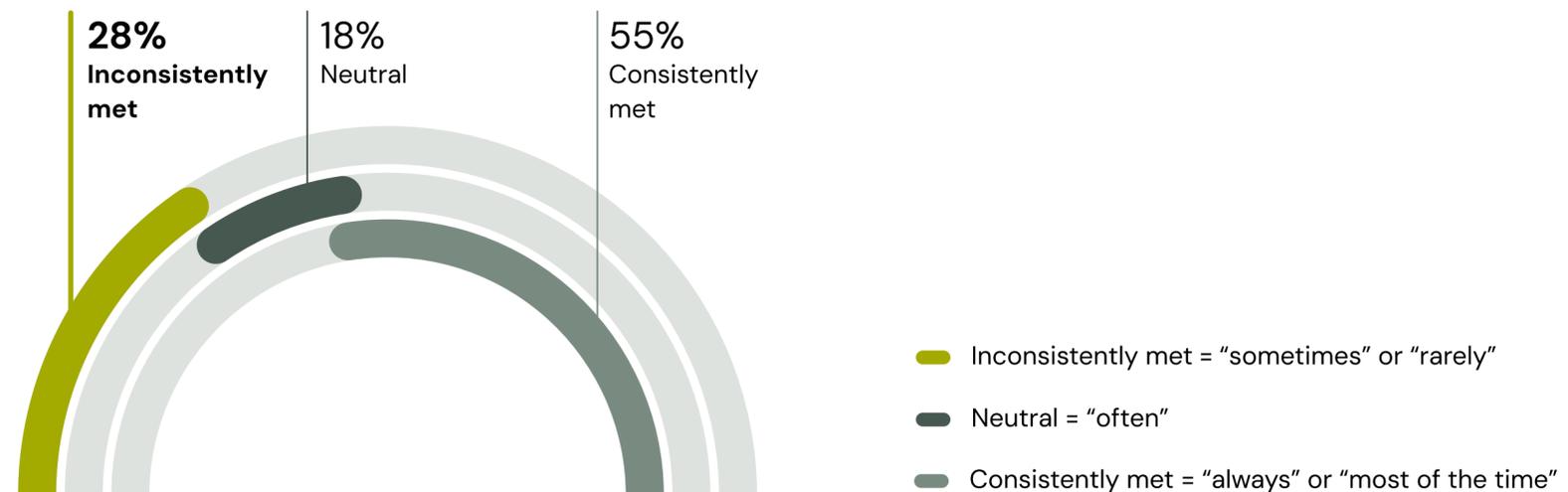
of consumers order online three or more times each month



Amazon, Walmart and Costco defined delivery

The “big three” spent years creating creating consistently fast, affordable, and reliable delivery experiences. They set the bar high, and respondents indicate **other retailers fall short by comparison: nearly a third (28%) say delivery experiences are inconsistent**—only “sometimes” or “rarely” meeting expectations.

Outside of Amazon, Walmart, and Costco, how well retailers meet delivery expectations



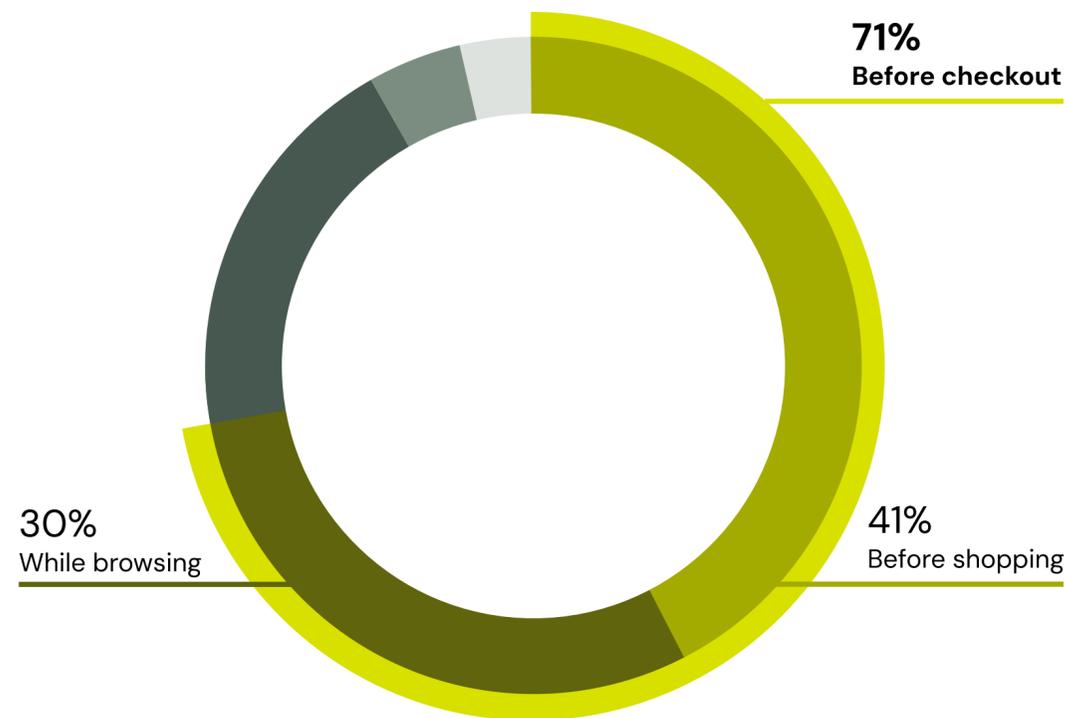
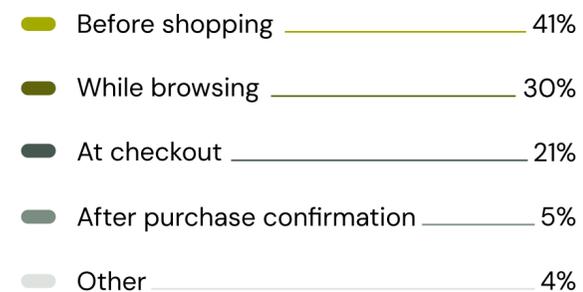
Survey question: Outside of Amazon, Walmart, and Costco, how frequently do retailers meet your delivery expectations?

Delivery is a key buying consideration

Shoppers no longer separate product and delivery decisions. Pre-purchase delivery promises often shape a shopper's perception of a retailer's brand and reliability: 71% shoppers consider delivery options long before they get to checkout.

- 41% consider delivery promises across retailers before shopping, highlighting that **delivery influences brand choice**
- 30% evaluate delivery options while they shop, demonstrating that **hidden delivery promises can lead to cart abandonment**

When shoppers start thinking about delivery during the shopping experience



Key takeaways

- **eCommerce isn't slowing down** and major retailers like Amazon, Walmart, and Costco set the standard with fast, affordable delivery and easy returns. **Retailers today can't compete on fast, free delivery** alone—nor should they.
- **Delivery promises influence brand choice**, and ultimately purchase, while inconvenient, **hidden delivery promises lead to missed sales.**
- Retailers have an **opportunity to capture market share through clear, consistent delivery communications** early in the buying journey.

The new eCommerce battleground: reliability and flexibility

When it comes to the delivery experience, it's easy to focus on factors like free shipping, package condition, and easy returns. But the data shows these are now table stakes: important, yet expected, and no longer differentiators.

Today, **customer satisfaction and loyalty hinge on reliable and flexible delivery**. That's what truly sets retailers apart and what modern consumers reward.

What constitutes reliable, flexible delivery experiences?

Reliability: on time, as promised

- On-time arrival within a clear window
- Live tracking and proactive communication
- Supportive customer service

Flexibility: on their terms

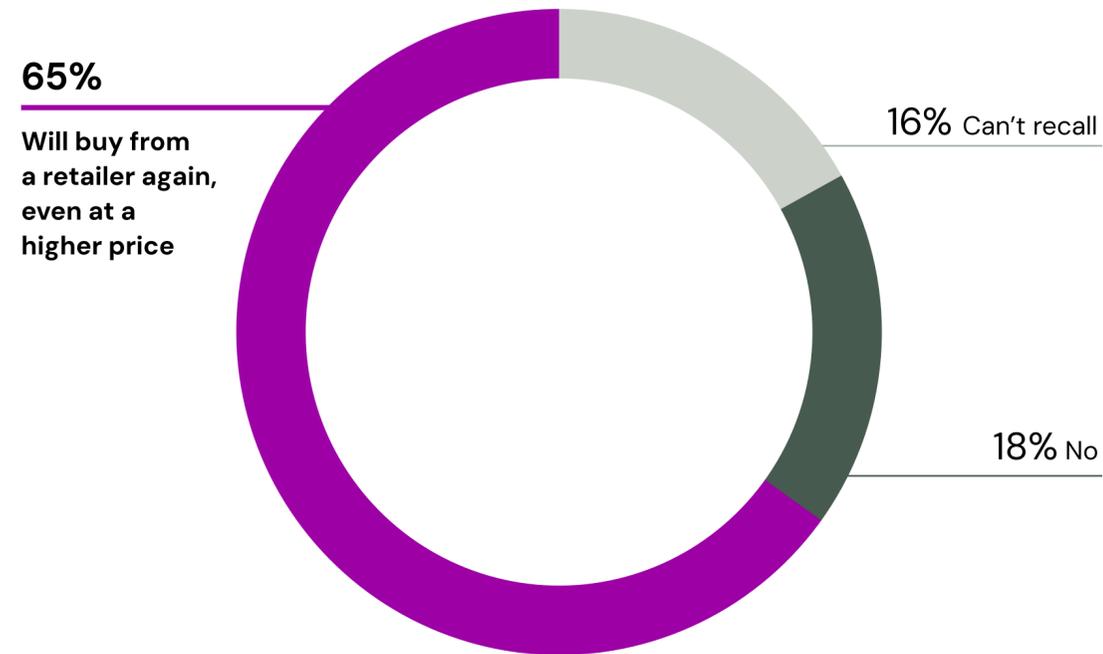
- Delivery window selection
- Easy re-scheduling
- Same-day or next-day delivery



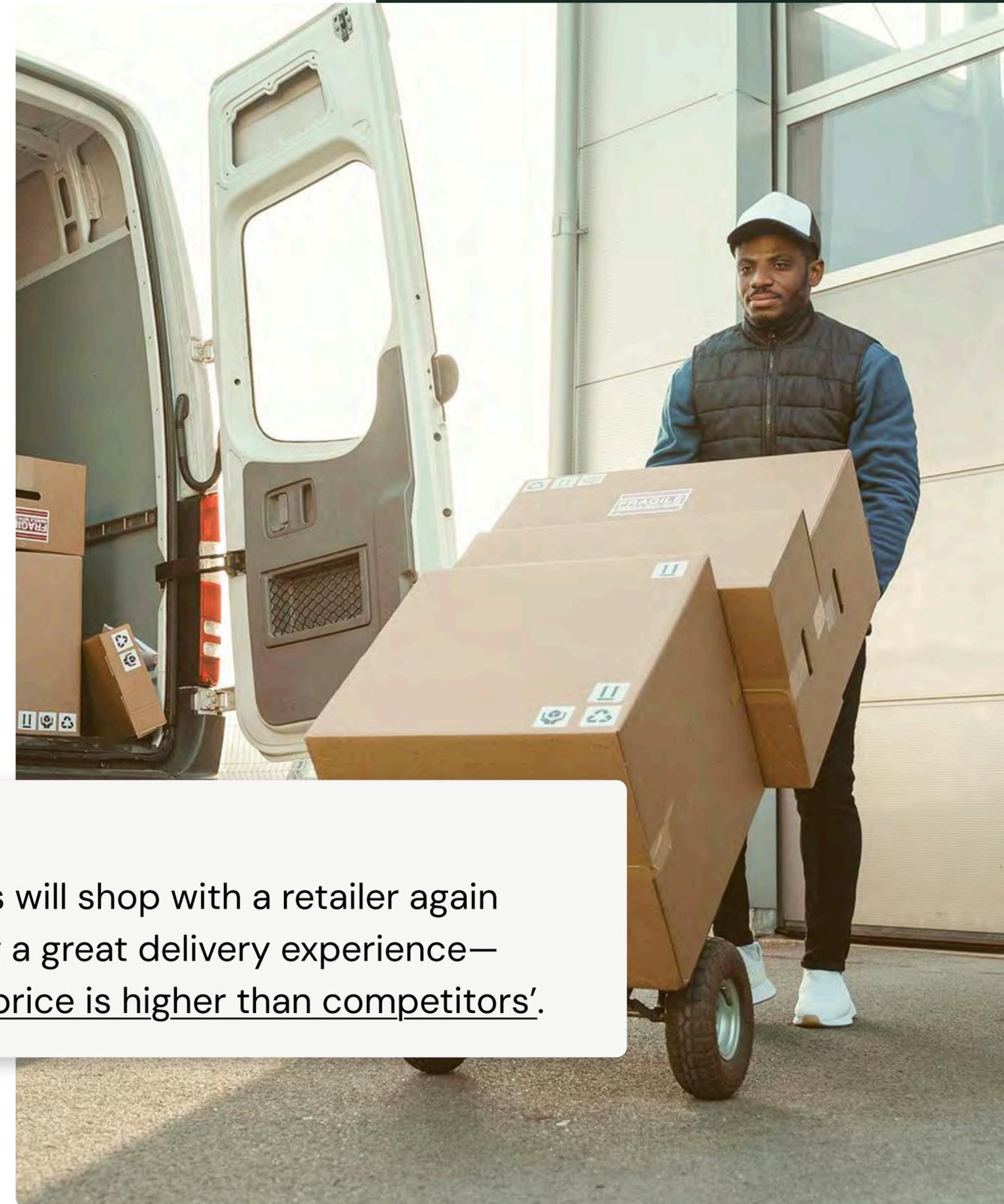
Great delivery experiences lead to loyalty and higher LTV

The majority (65%) of shoppers say positive delivery experiences are enough to make them buy from a retailer again, even if the price is higher than a competitor's. That means **great delivery can lead to lower customer acquisition costs (CAC) and higher lifetime value (LTV)**. Great delivery experiences aren't just CSAT, they're margin.

How delivery experience impacts future loyalty



Survey question: Has a good delivery experience ever convinced you to buy from a retailer again, even if the price was higher than competitors?



65% of shoppers will shop with a retailer again after having a great delivery experience—even if the price is higher than competitors'.

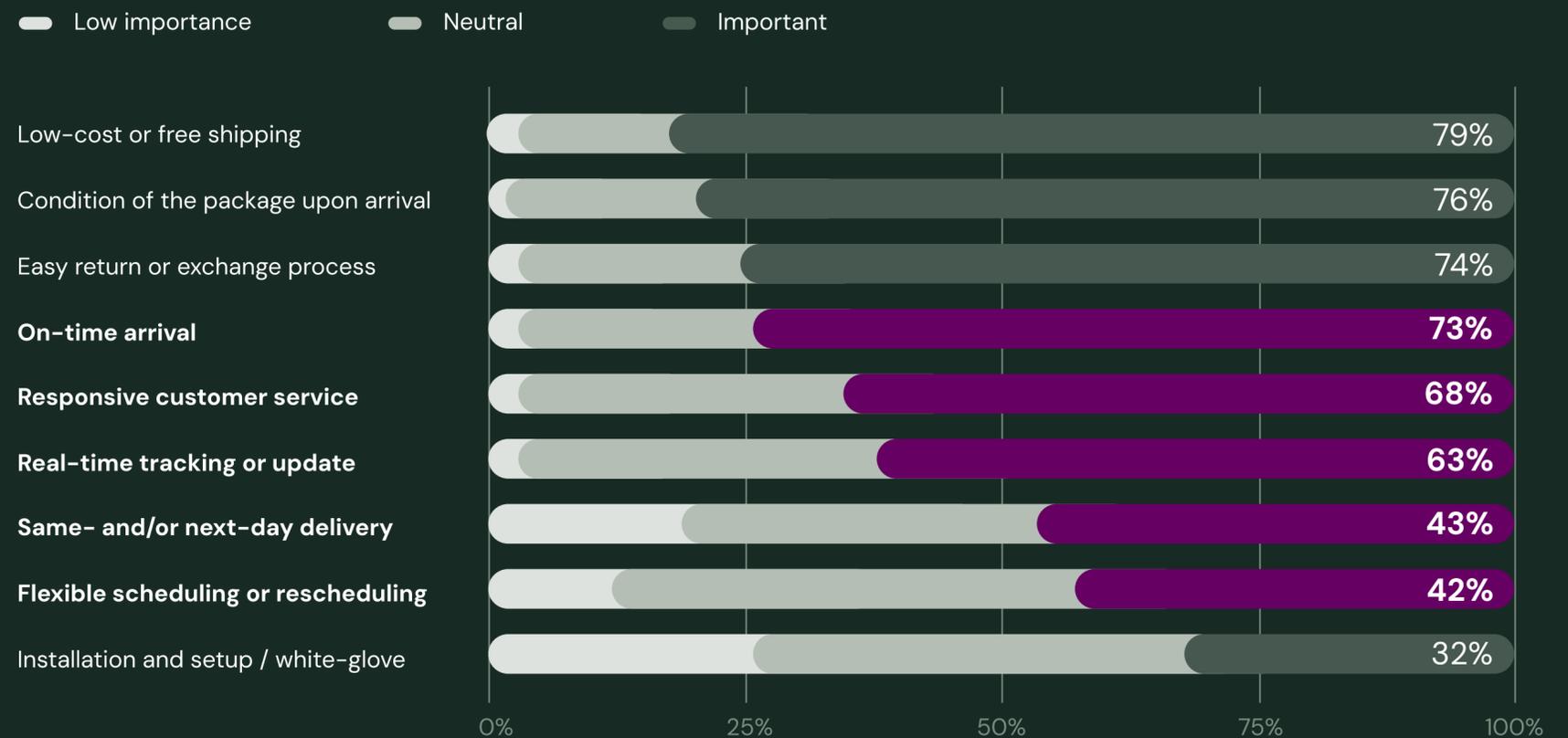
What makes a delivery experience great?

Low cost, package condition, and easy returns are important, but baseline expectations. On-time arrival ranks almost as high, and responsive customer service and real-time tracking are close behind. These three elements—**on-time delivery, responsive customer service, and real-time tracking**—are the foundation of reliability and stand out as the biggest differentiators for retailers to tap into.

Same-day/next-day delivery and rescheduling—all flexibility factors—are valued similarly. Customers highly value control, which presents another point of distinction for retailers.

- 73% of shoppers say on-time arrival is core to great delivery experiences
- 63% value real-time tracking and updates
- At least 40% value same-day or next-day options and the control of flexible scheduling

How consumers value common delivery factors



Survey question: When thinking about a delivery experience outside of Amazon, Walmart, and Costco, how important are the following delivery factors?



1 in 2 shoppers
will abandon a retailer after a bad
delivery experience

Negative delivery experiences drive customers away

Half of shoppers have abandoned a retailer after a bad delivery experience. Consumers today have little patience and myriad eCommerce options. If a retailer doesn't get the delivery right, **the competition is just a click away.**

Shoppers that abandoned a retailer after a bad experience



Survey question: Have you ever stopped buying from a brand solely because of the delivery experience?

What makes a delivery experience negative?

Late delivery is the number one driver of a negative delivery experience. Shoppers have a lower tolerance for missed delivery windows than they do for baseline mishaps like poor package condition, difficult return policies, and orders left in the wrong spot.

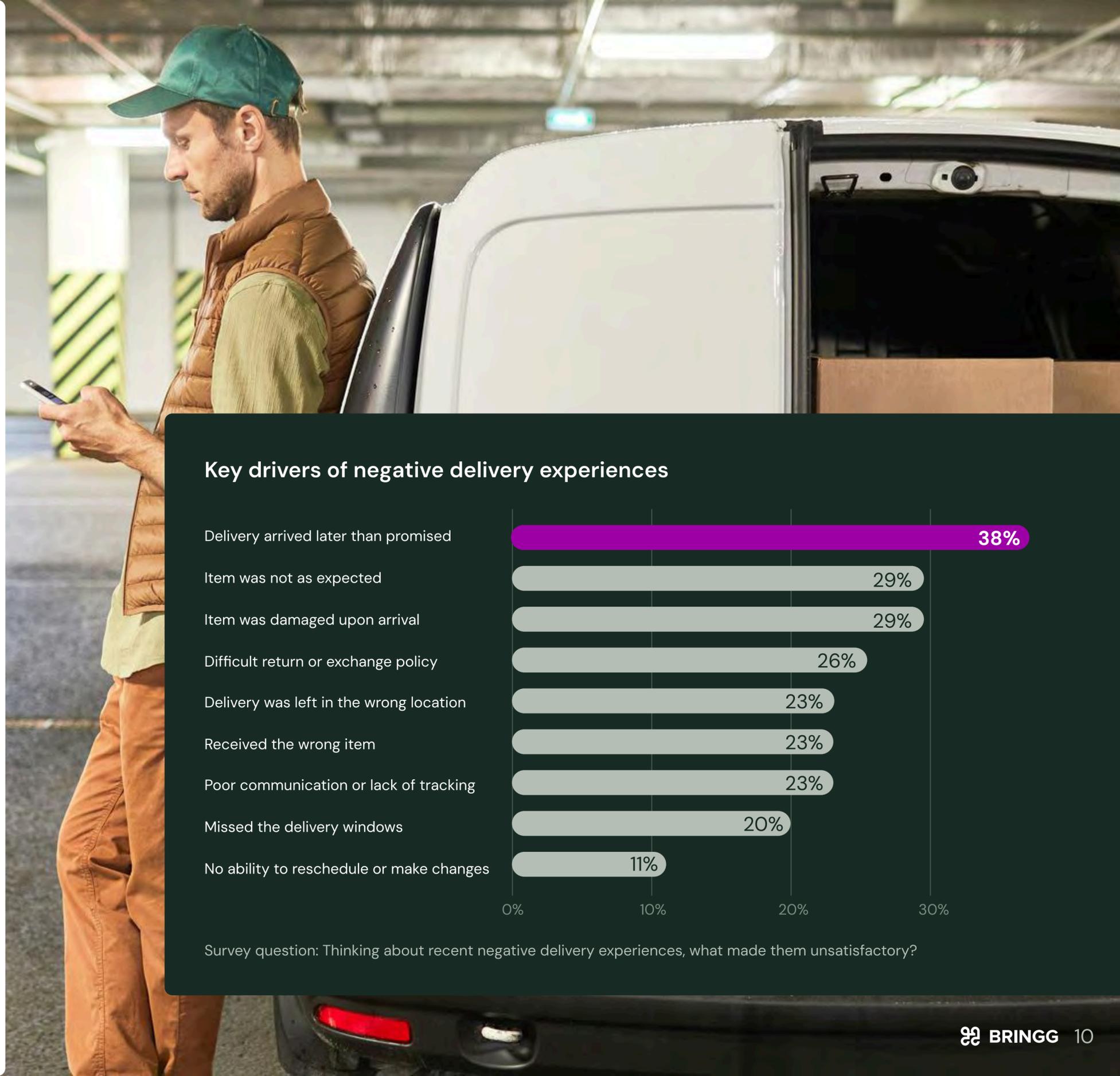
What's at stake? Late deliveries disproportionately impact a retailer's reputation; with 62% of shoppers holding the retailer solely or jointly responsible for failures:

- 47% of shoppers blame retailers and carriers equally
- 15% blame the retailer entirely

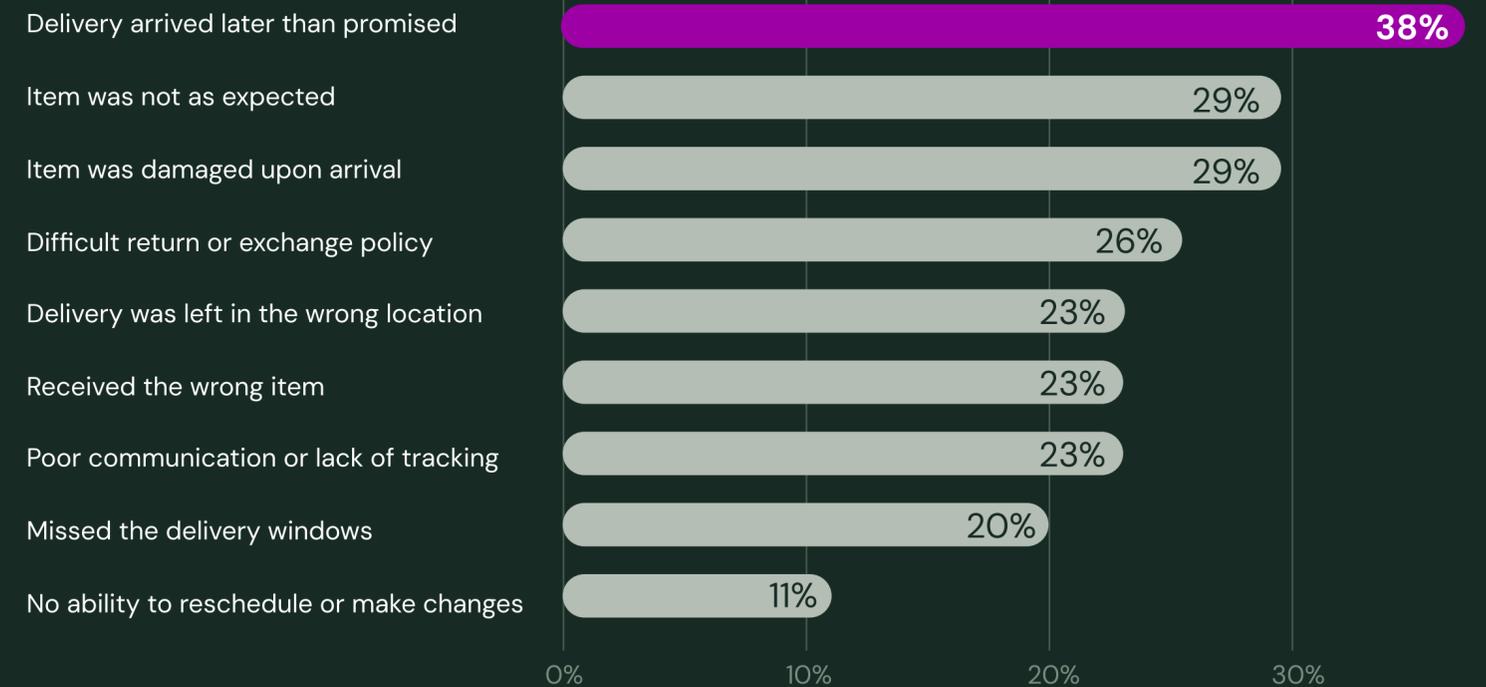
When a delivery is late, who is responsible?



Survey question: When a delivery is late, damaged, or missing, who do you feel is responsible?



Key drivers of negative delivery experiences



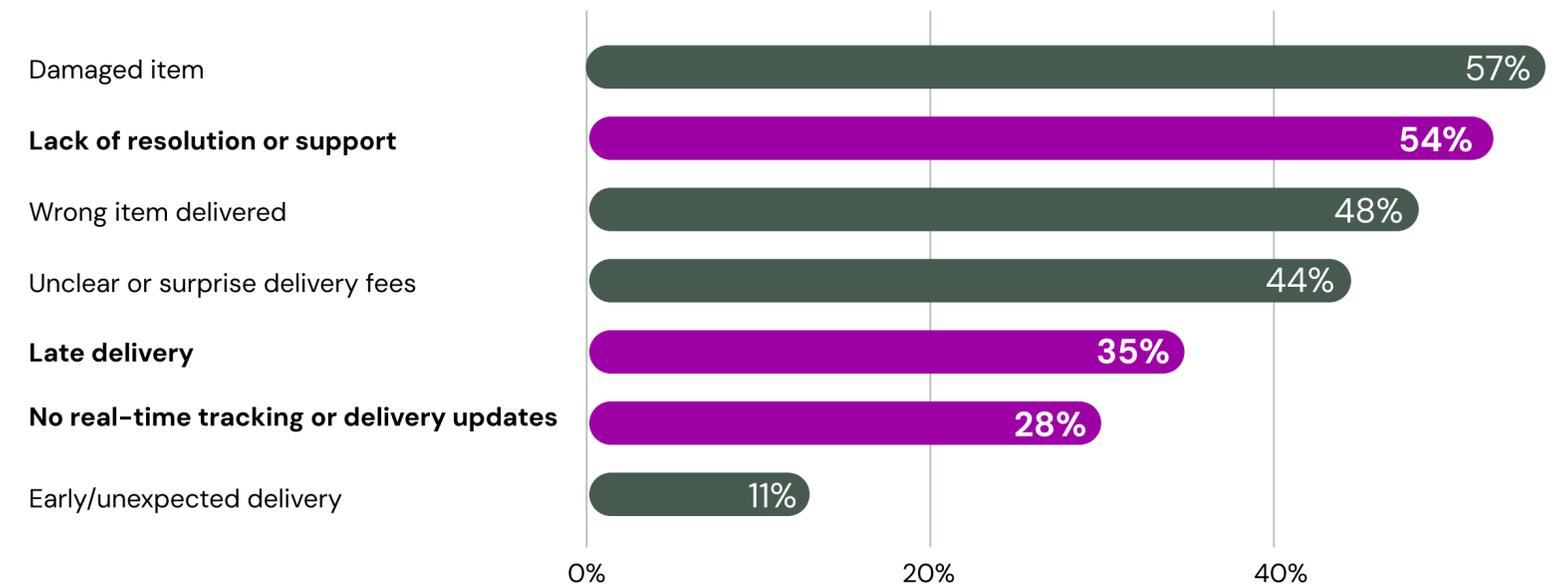
Survey question: Thinking about recent negative delivery experiences, what made them unsatisfactory?



Delivery failures jeopardize loyalty

35% of shoppers will abandon a retailer permanently after a late delivery. Notably, 29% will churn if there's no real-time tracking, and understandably, 54% will leave when customer service doesn't effectively resolve their order issue. Shoppers not only want their orders on time, **they want assurances that they can track orders and get help when when they need it, otherwise they leave for good.**

Delivery failures most likely to turn shoppers away permanently



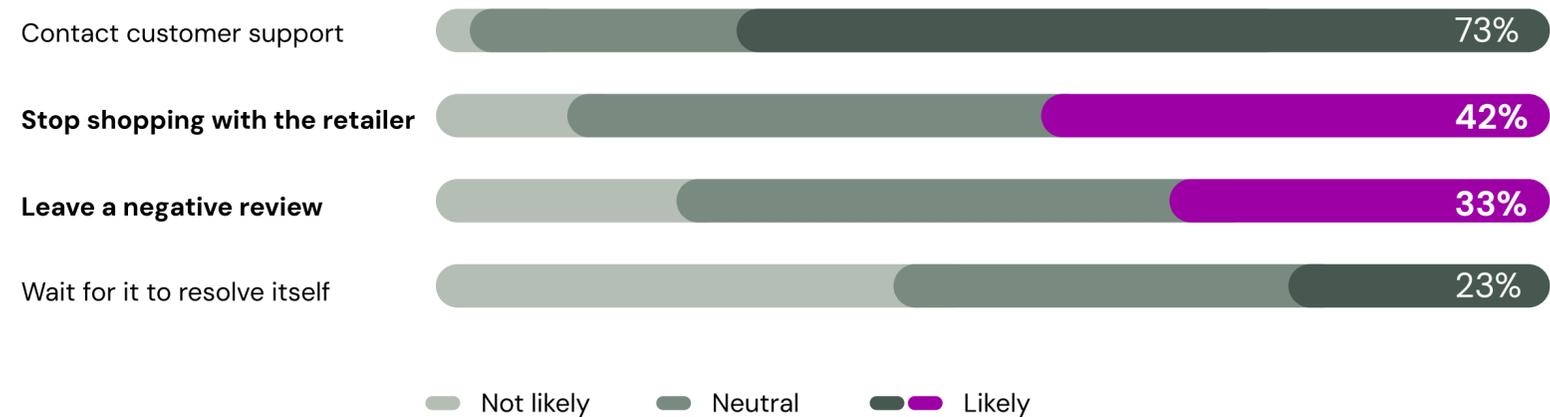
Survey question: What kind of delivery failure is most likely to make you abandon a retailer permanently?

How shoppers respond to a missed or failed delivery

Shoppers are more likely to abandon a retailer than write a negative review after a bad delivery. **Poor customer support, late delivery, and no visibility are hidden drivers of long-term revenue loss, not simply the causes of bad reviews.**

If customers don't complain, retailers can't rely on reviews or tickets to spot delivery issues. Only performance data reveals the gaps, often after churn has already begun.

Actions shoppers take after a missed or failed delivery



Survey question: How likely are you to do the following after a missed or failed delivery?

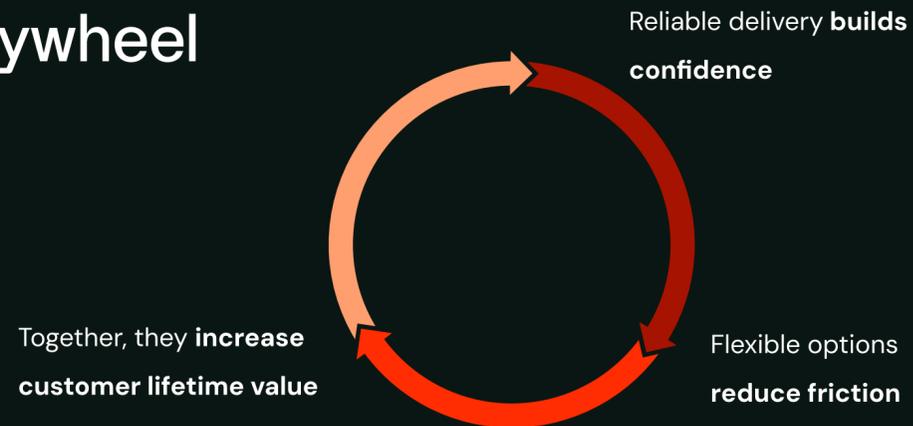
Key takeaways

- Delivery experiences make or break customer loyalty.
- Consumers will spend more with a retailer after having a great experience, but are quick to leave for the competition after a negative one. This makes delivery promises a key contributor to lower CAC and higher LTV.
- On-time arrival and customer service are the primary drivers of reliable delivery promises that lead to long-term loyalty.
- Retailers have an opportunity to stand out with reliable, flexible experiences that focus on timeliness, transparency, communication, and support.

The loyalty equation: reliability + flexibility = retention

Good delivery experiences across numerous areas of the last mile, not simply price or speed, drive conversion and retention. When retailers consistently meet their promises (reliability) and give customers the power to choose (flexibility), they create a self-reinforcing loyalty loop.

The loyalty flywheel



Reliability: on time and informed

Shoppers value reliability: a brand's ability to follow through on its promise to deliver the right item, in the right place, at the right time. Reliability also means keeping customers informed: order-status updates, live tracking, and open communication with the retailer or carrier when needed.

When delivery promises are upheld and shoppers are kept in the loop, customer satisfaction extends beyond a single transaction into brand trust.

Proof

71%

of shoppers think about delivery before they get to checkout

#1

Late delivery is the #1 cause of negative delivery experiences

54%

of consumers would abandon a retailer after unresolved delivery issues or poor support

59%

cite responsive post-purchase service as key to satisfaction

Actions to consider

Set clear delivery expectations on product detail pages, at checkout, and post-purchase

Expand customer communication beyond phone and email: include chat, social, and self-service return portals

Integrate customer service workflows into the delivery ecosystem

Integrate real-time tracking (order confirmation, in-transit alerts, delay notifications) and communication into the reliability model

Flexibility: adaptable for consumer needs

Flexibility is about giving customers more control over their delivery experience:

the ability to choose specific delivery windows, select delivery speeds based on their needs, and the option to reschedule deliveries if circumstances change.

Delivery flexibility shifts eCommerce fulfillment from a rigid process to a customer-first experience.

Proof

61%

of shoppers will abandon their carts when they can't choose or adjust their delivery options



Shoppers who value flexible delivery options are about 20 percentage points more likely to buy again, even if paying more



Same- and next-day delivery scored the same as flexible scheduling and rescheduling delivery

Actions to consider

Offer different delivery speeds, delivery windows, time-slot visibility, and rescheduling options directly within the checkout experience

Provide customers with real-time options to confirm or adjust their delivery slots

Offer same-day as one option within a flexible delivery model paired with selectable windows, and clear cut-off times

Flexibility shifts eCommerce fulfillment from a rigid process to a customer-first experience that drives loyalty

Key takeaways

- **Reliability and flexibility together form the new loyalty equation.** Reliability earns trust by delivering the right item, on time, in full, and with complete transparency. Flexibility gives shoppers control over how those promises are kept—from choosing delivery windows to resolving issues on their terms.
- **Retailers that operationalize both delivery pillars will see measurable gains:** higher conversion from clear expectations, lower churn through proactive communication, and greater profitability as **loyal customers prove more willing to repurchase, even at a premium.**
- **A kept promise builds customer confidence, and loyalty.**

Conclusion

Winning loyalty no longer means being faster, cheaper, or merely meeting shoppers' baseline expectations. It's about building loyalty through consistently reliable and flexible delivery promises. Retailers that execute both create profitable growth.

The 2026 Delivery Experience Study shows one thing clearly: **flexible delivery promises build brand trust and reliable experiences establish brand loyalty.** Together, they define what great delivery looks like in the next era of retail.

Methodology and demographics

Bringg-commissioned, nationwide survey of 1,040 U.S. online consumers, conducted in September 2025. Figures are rounded to the nearest number and may not equal 100%.

Gender

47% Male

53% Female

Age

12% 18-29

37% 30-44

26% 45-60

25% >60

Household income

6% <\$9,999

9% \$10,000-24,999

17% \$25,000-\$49,000

16% \$50,000-\$74,999

13% \$75,000-\$99,999

10% \$100,000-\$124,999

6% \$125,000-\$149,999

8% \$150,000-\$174,999

5% \$175,000-\$199,999

4% >\$200,000

6% Prefer not to say





About Bringg

Global retailers and logistics providers reduce costs and deliver differentiated customer experiences with Bringg Last-Mile Solutions. Through Bringg's modular technology platform, integrated fleet network, and services suite, business leaders automate processes, optimize order delivery, and invent new business models. Unlock flexibility at scale.

www.bringg.com

Any order. Any fleet. Delivered.

Citation: 1. 2025, EMARKETER. "Worldwide Retail Ecommerce Forecast 2025: Growth Will Muddle Along Despite Significant Challenges in Several Major Markets".