



CUSTOMER NEEDS IN E-COMMERCE:

From online order to parcel receipt

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A CLOSER LOOK AT ONLINE SHOPPERS: FROM THE ONLINE ORDER TO PARCEL RECEIPT

A major factor for sustainable success in the e-commerce sector is the customer's satisfaction with the parcel dispatch.

DHL commissioned two surveys on this topic in order to obtain reliable information about online shoppers' experiences, preferences and criticisms concerning parcel dispatch: the Customer Journey¹ of Online Shoppers and User behavior in e-commerce².

These surveys examined every phase of parcel shipment – beginning with the ordering process to the parcel delivery and the parcel receipt. The way services are actually used along the logistics chain was considered, as were the particular customer wishes.

In this article, we have summed up the most important results of these surveys, in particular the findings concerning customer preferences. This will give you a firm foundation on which to organize the logistics of your online shop tailored to the needs of your customers – for greater success in e-commerce.

¹ DHL Customer Journey Study „Von der Online-Bestellung bis zum Paketempfang“ ('From online order to parcel receipt'), February 2016

² DHL Studie zum Nutzungsverhalten im E-Commerce ('DHL Study on User Behaviour in E-Commerce'), November 2015

1 MULTIPLE OPTIONS IN THE CHECKOUT PROCESS

1.1 FLEXIBLE OPTIONS FOR THE PARCEL RECEIPT SHOULD BE AVAILABLE DURING CHECKOUT IN THE ONLINE SHOP

The product range, the value for money, the design and functionality of your website – these are all important factors for a thriving online retail. But the following figures show just how relevant the modalities of parcel dispatch are for people's purchasing decision.

Over **59%** of the respondents check shipping options carefully before placing an order in an online shop. They especially look at shipping costs and the parcel provider. Services for the parcel receipt and the expected delivery time also play an important role. For instance, **78%** of customers want to be able to choose delivery options when placing the order, especially the delivery date (**68%**).

78% want to select delivery options when ordering.

68% want to select the delivery date when ordering.


FLEXIBLE SHIPPING OPTIONS ARE VERY WELL RECEIVED

In this context, new shipping options that offer recipients greater flexibility and more certainty for planning purposes are proving extraordinarily popular.

The majority of the respondents would like to be able to choose the date, time and place of delivery. Many customers also consider it beneficial to be able to change the delivery date during the shipping process, and change the delivery time window. Next on the list were selecting a substitute addressee, a delivery to a Packstation, post office or Parcelshop and choosing a deposit location.

POSSIBILITY TO CHANGE DELIVERY TIME IS ESPECIALLY POPULAR

The study revealed that many more respondents prefer changing the delivery time over the place of delivery. **78%** of the customers would indicate the delivery time if they were able to do so. Over a third of those willing to indicate their preferred time for the delivery (**38%**) would choose evening delivery between 6 and 8 p.m. or between 7 and 9 p.m.

 **78%** would like to indicate a time for the delivery.

TIP:

By telling customers which parcel provider you use, you can already inform them during the ordering process about the delivery options available.

1 MULTIPLE OPTIONS IN THE CHECKOUT PROCESS

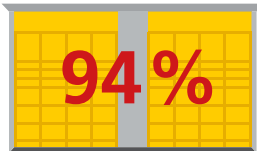
1.2 STRONG INTEREST IN ALTERNATIVE DELIVERY ADDRESSES

The familiar, friendly deliverer and the Packstation – tradition and modernity, so to speak – figure right at the top of the wish list of the respondents. The popularity of Packstations shows that people's interest in alternative delivery addresses is growing alongside the wish for a delivery in flexible time windows.

For instance, **53%** of the customers are satisfied with Packstation, while no less than **14%** even prefer them as their primary reception channel. **94%** of the respondents say they are very happy if they can specify a Packstation as an alternative delivery address.

BENEFITS OF PACKSTATIONS – EASILY ACCESSIBLE 24 HOURS A DAY

Users are especially satisfied with the good accessibility, user-friendliness and not having to worry about opening hours. A total of **89%** are either extremely or very satisfied with Packstations.



With **94%** the highest satisfaction was measured among customers that were given the possibility to choose a Packstation as an alternative delivery address.

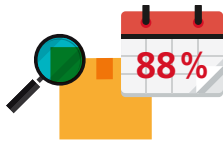
TIP:

Integrate the location finder into your system to make it easier to have parcels delivered to Packstations, Parcelshops and post offices.

2 TOUCHPOINTS WITHIN THE DELIVERY PROCESS

2.1 CUSTOMERS DEMAND ACCURATE INFORMATION ABOUT THE DELIVERY

Precise, comprehensive information about the delivery process play a big role in customer satisfaction: **88%** of customers want to receive a shipping confirmation that contains a direct link to shipment tracking, and **88%** want to receive a shipping confirmation with a probable delivery date. It should also contain the name of the parcel provider (**84%**), the parcel number (**78%**) and the probable delivery time (**69%**).



88% of people want a shipment tracking option and a notification about the date of delivery.



84% want to know the name of the parcel provider.

SHIPPING CONFIRMATIONS INCREASE SATISFACTION

78% of the respondents are very or extremely satisfied with email notifications sent by online shops. Almost everyone confirmed that they are easy to understand and contain all the relevant information.

Email is by far the most important channel for shipping confirmations, and in **80%** of the cases it is the only channel used by online shops.

MOBILE APPS FOR STATUS UPDATES

Of the users who responded, **96%** consider a parcel provider's app to be an important channel for tracking shipments. A total of **92%** of app users consider it to offer all the relevant information. The majority of people also consider the apps to be user-friendly, well designed and easy to handle.



96% consider apps an important channel for shipment tracking.

TIP:

Provide your customers with detailed information in your shipping confirmations. They should contain a link to shipment tracking, the delivery date and time, the parcel number and the name of the parcel provider.

2.2 THE IMPORTANCE OF PARCEL NOTIFICATIONS

The parcel notification is a very important way of making customers feel well informed. Of those asked, **87%** consider the probable delivery date to be essential information, **85%** a direct link to shipment tracking and **81%** the delivery time with time window. This is followed by the parcel number, delivery address, contact information of the parcel provider and options for changing recipient preferences.

PARCEL NOTIFICATION: INFORMATION QUALITY COUNTS

78% of the respondents are very or extremely satisfied with parcel notifications, especially with the information provided about the delivery time. Besides, the customers also highlighted that notifications contain all the relevant information, and are well structured.

EMAIL NOTIFICATIONS: THE MAIN SOURCE OF INFORMATION

A total of **99%** of customers who feel well informed about the status of their shipment received the information by email, but only **43%** said that they have actually received this information. Another **43%** say they did not receive any email, and **10%** cannot remember.



99% of customers who feel fully informed received shipping information by email.

TIP:

Provide complete transparency about the delivery status with parcel notifications.

3 DELIVERY AND ITS OPTIONS

3.1 PREFERRED LOCATIONS FOR DELIVERY AND ALTERNATIVES

The classic is still popular: home delivery. The majority of respondents still prefer a delivery to their homes. Many of them say that there is often somebody available there, meaning the parcel can be delivered at the first attempt.



prefer to receive their parcels at home.



prefer delivery to a neighbor if they are absent.

Generally speaking parcel receipt at home is the first choice for **77%**, followed by Packstations. The latter is a genuinely attractive option, especially for people who are working, as it is permanently available. This is followed by a delivery to an alternative address, and lastly to a post office or Parcelshop.

DELIVERY WHEN ABSENT – NEIGHBORS REMAIN THE FIRST CHOICE

For most people, a trusted neighbor remains the preferred delivery option when they themselves are not at home, followed by specifying a deposit location on their own property, and then a private parcelbox.

TIP:

Offer your customers the possibility to change the date, time and place of delivery to increase your customers' satisfaction.

3 DELIVERY AND ITS OPTIONS

3.2 MAJOR FACTORS IN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION FOR THE PARCEL RECEIPT

For most customers the satisfaction with the parcel receipt plays an important role. **85%** of the customers want delivery to be reliable, and **66%** of them want it to be quick.

Besides a quick receipt of intact goods, a friendly and familiar deliverer helps to produce a positive customer experience.



TIP:

Fast and reliable delivery of goods will help you create a positive customer experience.

CUSTOMERS' EXPECTATIONS FOR THE PARCEL RECEIPT:

COMPREHENSIVE INFORMATION, PLANNING CERTAINTY AND FLEXIBILITY

The majority of respondents want to obtain comprehensive information about the shipping process while ordering and welcome the idea of more flexible parcel receipt, with selectable options directly embeded in the checkout process of the online shop. When it comes to more flexibility and certainty for planning, customers are especially interested in influencing the delivery time (date and time window), followed by the place of delivery.

The option of seamless shipment tracking is also very well received. Parcel and shipment notifications – usually by email – are lauded for the information they provide.

The majority of respondents prefer to receive their parcels at home, followed by Packstations, which are increasingly popular on account of their good accessibility and constant availability. Delivery to alternative addresses, such as post offices and Parcelshops, is also popular. In case they are not at home, for half of the respondents, the delivery to a preferred neighbor becomes their first choice.

All respondents said they are very satisfied if the delivery was punctual, reliable and the goods were delivered undamaged, as well as if the parcel is handed over by a friendly deliverer.

SURVEY 1

DHL Customer Journey Survey: *Von der Online-Bestellung bis zum Paketempfang* ('From online order to parcel receipt')

Market research institution: HEUTE UND MORGEN (Cologne)

Aims of survey

The aim of the survey was to better understand the customer journey from online order to parcel receipt, so that it can be improved accordingly. Customer needs at different touchpoints were a special point of interest.

Survey period

15 to 30 October 2015

Method and sampling

Quantitative survey

A quantitative online survey was performed among 1,008 Internet customers who were representative of the population, all of whom had placed at least 12 online orders that year.

Qualitative survey

An online community consisting of 19 subjects between the ages of 20 and 50 who often shop online and show a preference for DHL were asked about their particular experiences.

SURVEY 2

DHL Studie zum Nutzungsverhalten in E-Commerce ('DHL Study on User Behaviour in E-Commerce')

Market research institution: Fittkau & Maaß (Hamburg)

Aims of survey

The aim of this study was to gather knowledge on how customers behave and of trends and future scenarios in e-commerce.

Survey period

23 October to 2 November 2015

Method and sampling

An online survey was performed among 1,000 Internet users aged between 18 and 69 who have purchased goods online during the past 12 months.

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Published in July 2016

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