



Key Lessons On Sustainable Packaging From Online Shoppers

The rise of e-commerce and growing demand for sustainability have helped define the evolving world of retail in recent years. Mondi's annual survey of online shoppers sheds light on how these trends come together in an opportunity for brand owners.

The fifth edition of the e-commerce report offers insights into the sentiment of 6,000 consumers across the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Poland, Sweden and Turkey. From minimising waste to incentivising more environmentally-friendly consumer behaviour, their responses indicate that sustainability is at the heart of good eCommerce experience.

Here's some of the key lessons we can take from their answers:

- Sustainable packaging can help differentiate your brand;
- We know that packaging and brand go hand-in-hand when your customers get their products in the post. They want their purchases to arrive safely in convenient packaging that doesn't cost the planet;

- In fact, sustainable packaging is important or very important for 74% of online shoppers. A similar proportion feel it's important for packaging to be paper based, recyclable and easy to reuse;
- Looking forward, 58% expect that almost all parcels will be delivered in recyclable or compostable packaging within the next five years.

This paints a clear picture of the value customers see in circular solutions. Investing the time and effort to transition towards more sustainable packaging is an opportunity to enhance the unboxing experience for your customers while associating your brand with the things they find important.

Failing to meet customer expectations around sustainability isn't just a missed opportunity – it's a reputational risk. A bad packaging experience is enough to turn customers away in the future.

A photograph showing a person from an overhead perspective, packing a cardboard box with purple flowers. The box is open, and the person is carefully placing the flowers into a smaller container inside. The floor is made of light-colored wooden planks.

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Each of the top three grievances held by respondents to this international survey have a clear sustainability angle and echo the objectives of the EU's upcoming Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR):

- 47% say that oversized packaging could discourage them from buying again;
- 45% identify hard-to-recycle packaging as a negative;
- 45% are put off by excess internal packaging material.

When the final version of PPWR is voted on by the EU Parliament in a few months' time, it will contain provisions which aim to tackle each of these problems. Now is the time to prepare for its implementation by reducing waste and delivering sustainability benefits through a frustration-free experience.

79% of our respondents claim to regularly recycle their packaging. This is a high figure, but it leaves more than a fifth of e-commerce customers who do not recycle often. Many of these are held back by a lack of collection or recycling infrastructure in their areas, but a significant proportion told us they're uncertain on what can be recycled, where, and how.

To drive behaviour change, 35% of online shoppers told us that packaging could come with clear instructions on how to recycle. This extends the concept of convenience beyond frustration-free unboxing and easy returns, through to supporting customers on the environmentally conscious decisions they are increasingly eager to take. It is an opportunity for brand leadership through small but meaningful action.