



2025 Holiday Insights Report

Part III – The Spending Paradox

Economic Anxiety Meets Resilient
Consumer Spending



The Spending Paradox

The Spending Paradox Amid Tariff Concerns

Bottom Line: Despite widespread economic anxiety, consumer spending intentions remain resilient, with strategic adaptations varying significantly by generation.



The Concern Landscape



While **76%** worry about tariffs and inflation affecting holiday prices, consumer spending intentions tell a different story, with **85%** planning to spend the same or more than last year.

31%
are very concerned
and already changing
how they shop

22%
are not concerned

45%
are somewhat
concerned about
price impacts

3%
are unsure



The Spending Paradox

- 51%** expect to spend about the same as last year
- 34%** expect to spend more
- 11%** expect to spend less
- 4%** don't plan to shop for gifts

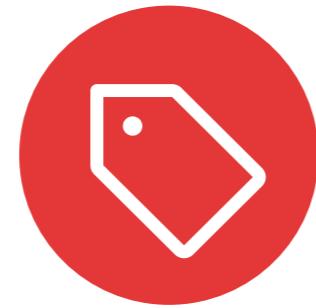
Generational Responses to Economic Pressure

While spending plans remain steady, younger generations are much more likely to change their shopping strategies in response to price concerns.



Gen Z: Active Adaptation

- 42%** waiting for big discounts
- 35%** starting shopping earlier
- 34%** hopping online to compare prices
- 29%** buying fewer items



Millennials: Strategic Shoppers

- 43%** waiting for big discounts
- 35%** shopping online to compare prices
- 30%** starting shopping earlier
- 29%** buying fewer items



Gen X: Price-Conscious Comparers

- 42%** shopping online to compare prices
- 25%** waiting for big discounts
- 34%** buying fewer items
- 34%** choosing practical gifts

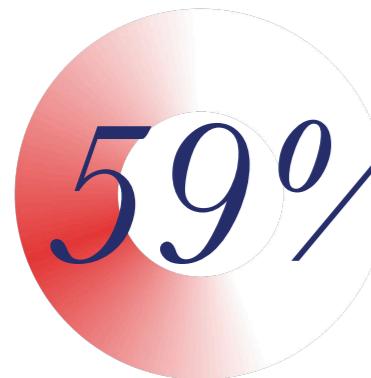


Baby Boomers: Steady Shoppers

- 45%** making no changes
- 30%** waiting for big discounts
- 20%** shopping online to compare prices
- 19%** buying fewer items

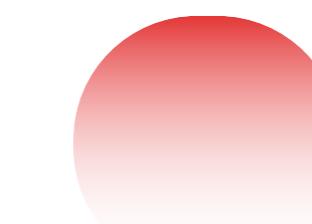
The Early Shopping Timeline Revolution

The data reveals a fundamental shift in when consumers begin their holiday shopping journey.



of shoppers plan to start before November, compared to **53%** in 2024 and just **41%** in 2023, with 26% specifically starting earlier due to price concerns.

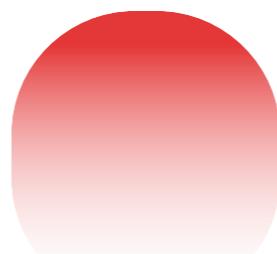
22% **23%** **25%**



have already started shopping over the summer



plan to start in October alone



still wait for Black Friday weekend to begin shopping

59%



of consumers now start before November

Most Influential Promotions

- 29%** Discounts or percent-off deals
- 26%** Free shipping
- 14%** Free gift or gift card with purchase
- 13%** Buy-one-get-one or bundle deals



Shopping Method Evolution

Physical-store-only shopping declined sharply in 2025, dropping from **14% to 8%** as consumers increasingly embrace digital-physical combinations.



2025

The Hybrid Takeover

- 59%** plan to use a mix of online and in-store shopping
- 27%** will shop mostly online (**21% for delivery, 6% for pickup**)
- 8%** plan to shop mostly in physical stores - down from 14% in 2024

2024

The Previous Landscape

- 51%** plan to use a mix of online and in-store shopping
- 35%** will shop mostly online (**30% for delivery, 5% for pickup**)
- 14%** plan to shop mostly in physical stores

Contact

Want to know more?

Contact us at sales@smartcommerce.com.



Methodology: SmartCommerce conducted a quantitative survey July 31, 2025 with a national sample and collected 600 responses (n=600). Respondents were required to be between the ages of 18-99. The respondents identified as 300 women and 300 men. This data is compared with our August 2024 survey using the same methodology.