



THE STATE OF DELIVERY 2026

The New Standard is Personalized

What Consumers Reveal About Speed, Choice,
& The Delivery Experiences That Earn Their Loyalty

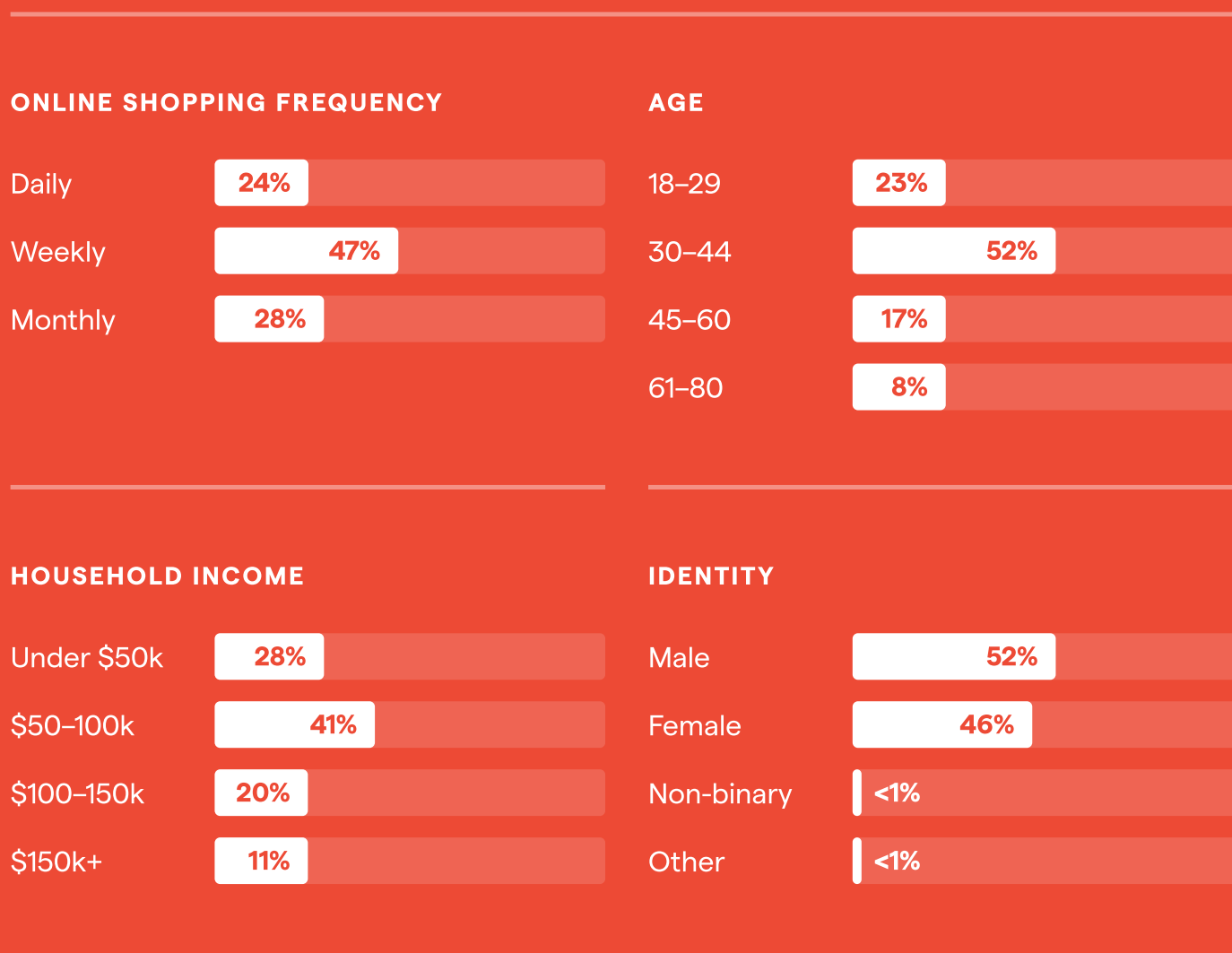
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Who We Heard From

To better understand the expectations of today's e-commerce consumers, Veho surveyed **1,954** active online shoppers across the United States. Respondents ranged in age from 18 to 80 and all make online purchases at least once per month, ensuring the findings reflect consumers who regularly experience e-commerce deliveries.



The Delivery Promise Has Outgrown Speed

For much of e-commerce history, delivery was measured by one simple question: *how fast can it get there?*



That question shaped the industry. Retailers invested millions in fulfillment networks, transportation infrastructure, and last-mile operations to compress delivery windows and meet expectations that once seemed impossible. Two-day delivery became the standard; next-day delivery became familiar; same-day delivery became imaginable.

The race for speed succeeded. Retailers compressed delivery windows, and consumers came to expect fast shipping, making speed the baseline rather than the advantage.

Veho's **The State of Delivery 2026** research shows that consumers still care deeply about fast delivery. But they are no longer evaluating delivery through speed alone. They want consistency, control, accurate delivery promises, proactive communication, and options that reflect what they are buying and why they are buying it.

A birthday gift needed by the weekend and a high-value purchase waiting on the doorstep carry different stakes. One tests whether a retailer can meet a moment. The other tests whether it can deliver confidence.

The next era will be defined by this shift:
from speed as the default promise to delivery experiences that match the customer, the purchase, and the moment.

Delivery Is The Brand Experience

A consumer can spend days considering a purchase. They compare products, read reviews, scroll through images, and eventually decide that a brand is worthy of their money and trust.

Then the package leaves the retailer's hands.

What happens next may feel operational from inside the business. To the customer, it is still the brand.

Delivery is where the promises made across the rest of the customer journey become tangible. It is where confidence is either delivered or destroyed, where anticipation becomes satisfaction or frustration, and where a retailer proves whether it can follow through.

That makes delivery one of the most consequential moments for e-commerce brands.

75% of shoppers say a positive delivery experience makes them more likely to shop with a retailer again

56% have actively prioritized certain retailers because of a good delivery experience in the past

How much of your satisfaction is set by delivery vs. the product?

Share of overall satisfaction with an online purchase

47% Equally both
26% Mostly the delivery experience
19% Mostly the product itself
9% Entirely the product

Positive delivery experiences can be equally memorable

How an early package feels

33% say it feels like receiving a surprise gift

32% say it feels like finding money in an old coat pocket

But when delivery breaks the promise, it also breaks the customer relationship with it.

After a package from an online retailer never arrived, 40% of shoppers say they stopped purchasing from that brand. Another 33% stopped shopping with a retailer because a package arrived later than promised, while 30% cite a lack of proactive communication or visibility into the delivery process as the reason they never returned.

The impact extends far beyond the transaction. A poor delivery experience has ruined a vacation, special event, or holiday for 45% of

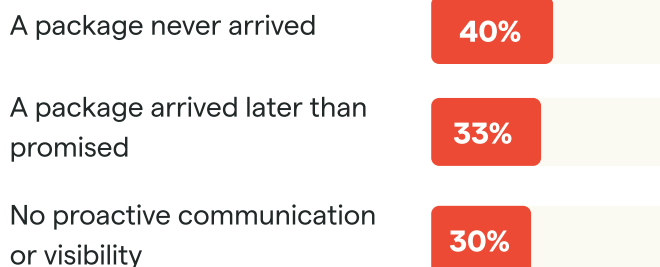
shoppers. Delayed deliveries have caused 22% to lose sleep and 20% to cry.

Positive delivery experiences can be equally memorable: 32% of consumers say receiving a package earlier than expected feels like finding money in an old coat pocket, while 33% compare it to receiving a surprise gift.

Speed still matters, but it no longer defines the experience on its own. Consumers are also looking for consistency, confidence, and choice — the question is no longer only how fast a package arrives, but whether the experience fits the order.

Why shoppers stopped buying from a brand

Reasons cited by shoppers who left



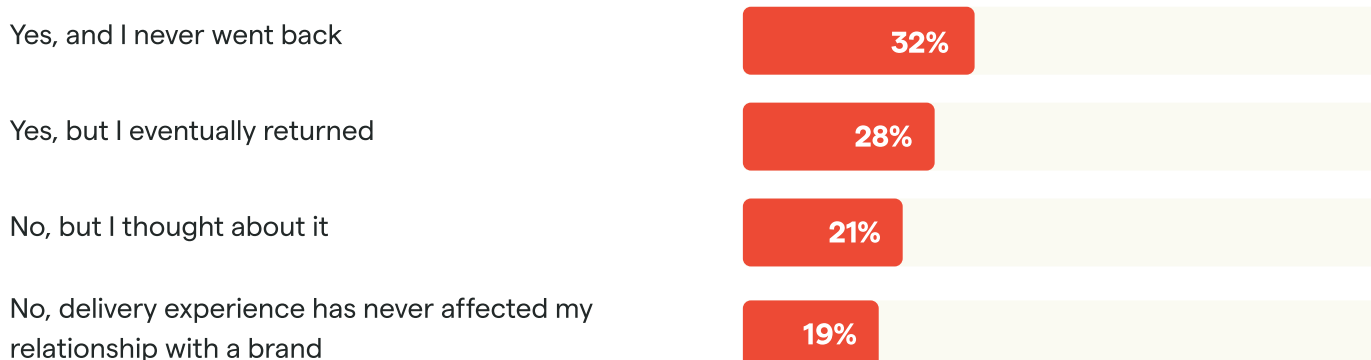
The human cost

A bad delivery doesn't stay at the doorstep



Have you ever switched to a competitor after a poor delivery experience?

The relationship rarely recovers on its own



Speed Set the Standard. Consumers Raised the Bar.

Modern delivery expectations can be traced to a defining moment in e-commerce: the launch of Amazon Prime in 2005.

By introducing free two-day shipping at scale, Amazon changed what consumers believed delivery could be. Five to seven business days began to feel slow, and retailers responded by investing heavily in fulfillment networks, inventory placement, transportation infrastructure, and last-mile operations.

That investment reshaped consumer behavior: 89% say they have ordered from Amazon or Walmart because of the delivery experience even when they would have preferred to purchase from another retailer. And 51% say they do so frequently.

The industry's focus on speed was not misplaced. Today, 95% of shoppers say delivery speed is important when deciding whether to purchase from a retailer.

But consumers are also making clear that speed alone is no longer enough.

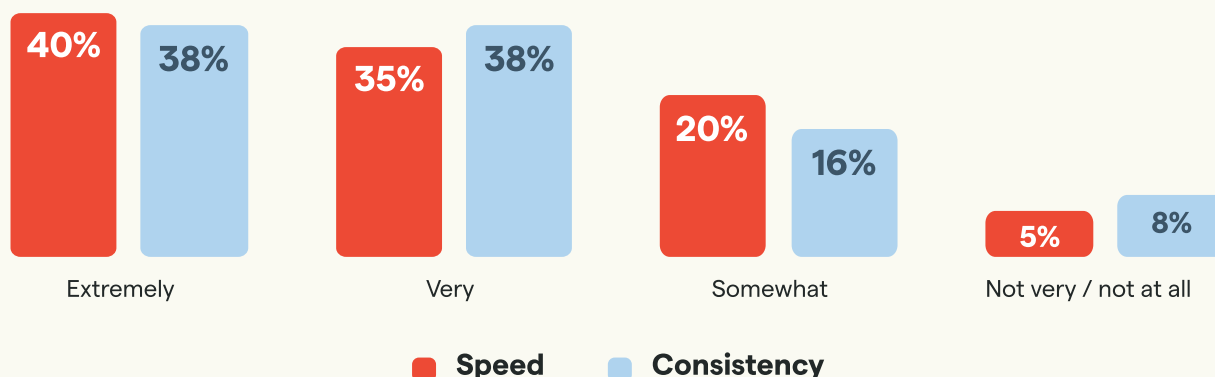
A consistent delivery experience is important to 92% of consumers, nearly matching the share who prioritize speed. And 42% say they expect more from their e-commerce deliveries today than they did in the past.

Those findings challenge one of the industry's longest-standing assumptions: that faster is always better.

42% of shoppers say they expect *more* from their e-commerce deliveries than they used to

Speed vs. Consistency

How important is each when deciding to purchase from a retailer?



The Case for Personalized Delivery

If the last two decades of e-commerce were defined by a race for faster delivery, they were also shaped by a simplifying assumption: that every customer wants the same experience from every order.

The data tells a different story.

For groceries and gifts, speed is the top concern. For high-value purchases, delivery accuracy matters most. For mail-order prescriptions, apparel, and subscription items, cost often takes greater priority.

There is no single definition of what makes a great delivery experience. What matters most changes with the consumer.

When ordering a gift, 59% say controlling when a package arrives is important, while 56% say timing matters when purchasing a time-sensitive item, such as an outfit for an event or a travel essential.

For an impulse purchase, that priority falls sharply. Only 19% say controlling the arrival time is important.

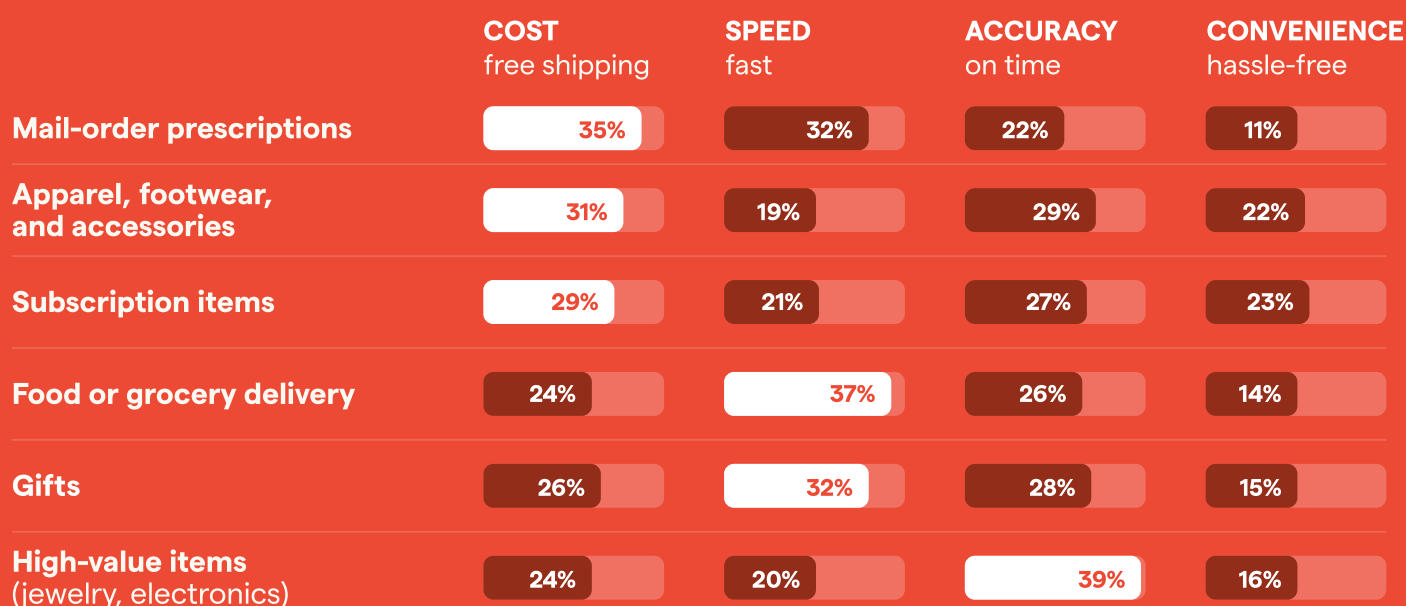
The findings challenge the assumption that every order should be optimized for maximum speed.

For retailers, the next opportunity is to offer the right combination of speed, cost, accuracy, and control for each order.

The Most Important Factor of the Delivery Depends

% selecting each factor as most important

■ Most important factor per category



When Delivery Options Determine the Sale

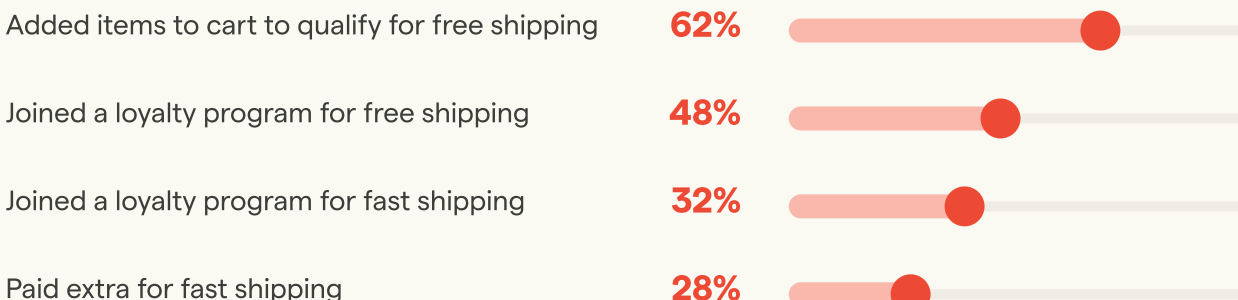
56% of consumers say they have abandoned an online purchase because the delivery options offered didn't meet their needs.

Among those shoppers, 55% said the available delivery date was too far out. Another 38% left because there was no free shipping option, while 33% abandoned the purchase because they could not select a specific delivery window.

The findings place delivery squarely inside conversion conversations and strategy. The product may win the shopper's attention. The delivery options can still determine whether the retailer wins the sale.

The question for retailers is no longer whether delivery matters, but how to deliver the right experience for each order.

Delivery is a powerful lever for loyalty and conversion. *Have you ever...?*



WHY THE SALE SLIPPED AWAY

55%

said the available delivery date was too far out

38%

left because there was no free shipping option

33%

couldn't select a specific delivery window

What Personalized Delivery Looks Like

What consumers want depends on the purchase, the occasion, and what matters most to them at that moment. Across the research, three priorities consistently emerged — together they draw a clearer picture of personalized delivery: confidence in when and where an order will arrive, meaningful choices throughout the journey, and communication that shows the retailer is paying attention.

Certainty

Consumers want confidence that their package will arrive when promised, reach the right place, and work with their schedule. When that certainty disappears, trust begins to erode.

72% of shoppers have missed a delivery because they were not home, while another 14% have worried about missing one. Among shoppers who have missed a delivery, 32% say the experience made them less likely to order from that retailer again.

The research shows that consumer certainty comes down to two questions: when will my package arrive, and where will it be delivered?

When

For many shoppers, certainty starts with timing: 45% say the "perfect" delivery experience is one that arrives exactly when they need it — even if it takes a little longer.

Retailers that provide that level of reliability stand to earn more than satisfaction. If a retailer consistently delivered packages exactly when needed, 41% of consumers say they would become loyal, repeat customers, while 22% say they would spend more per order.

Without that certainty, consumers often rearrange their lives around a delivery. For example, 60% have canceled plans or changed their schedules to be home for a package. That includes 51% who have stayed home from work, school, or another obligation, and 57% who have canceled plans with family or friends.

Where

It's in the details: 56% have specific preferences for where or how packages should be left, whether behind a planter, inside a gated building, in a secure location, or elsewhere.

Following those instructions is an important part of creating confidence that the delivery will be completed safely and successfully.

Have you ever cancelled plans or rearranged your schedule to be home for a delivery?

Yes

60%

No

40%

Have you ever missed a delivery because you weren't home?

Yes

72%

No, but I've worried about it

14%

No, never

14%

Control

Modern shoppers want the ability to choose among delivery options and make changes when their schedules, plans, or needs change.

Notably, 54% say they have purchased from a brand for the first time specifically because of its delivery options. Another 44% say they would try a new brand if it offered greater control over

when and how their package arrived.

For some, that control can determine which retailer wins the purchase. If two retailers offered the same product at the same price, 29% of shoppers say they would choose the one that gave them more control over the delivery.

CHOICE OF SPEED

67%

want to choose their delivery speed, whether that means getting an order sooner or selecting a slower option that better fits their schedule, budget, or urgency.

What matters is having the ability to decide when speed is worth prioritizing.

CHOICE OF COST

48%

want delivery options at different price points.

That choice allows customers to weigh cost against convenience for each purchase, rather than forcing every order into the same service level.

CHOICE OF LOGISTICS PARTNER

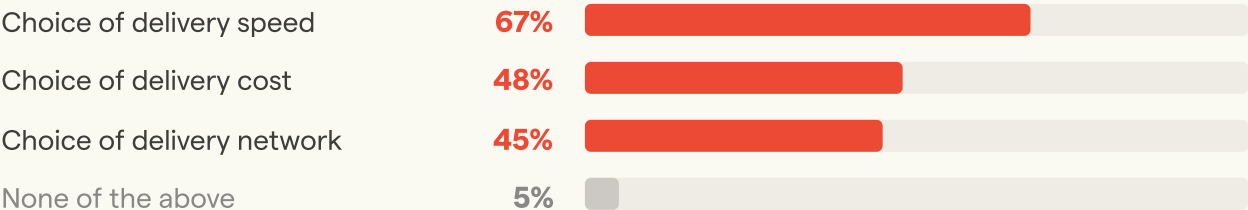
45%

say they want the ability to choose who delivers their package, allowing them to select a provider they trust or one that better reflects their preferences.

Consumers increasingly recognize that the quality of delivery can vary by provider.

Together, these findings show that control is not a single feature. It is the ability to make meaningful choices about the experience.

What delivery options at checkout would you like to see?



Respondents selected all that applied

Care

Consumers understand that delays and disruptions happen. What matters is whether the retailer acknowledges the issue, communicates clearly, and helps move the delivery toward a resolution.

In other words, consumers do not judge the experience only by whether something goes wrong. They also judge how the brand responds.

When retailers proactively communicate about a delay, 82% of shoppers say it increases their trust in the brand and 47% say it would increase their trust significantly.

If a retailer proactively communicated a delay before you even knew there was a problem, how would that affect your trust in them?

- 47%** It would significantly increase my trust
- 35%** It would somewhat increase my trust
- 11%** It wouldn't change my trust either way
- 6%** I'd still be frustrated regardless

82%

of shoppers say proactive communication about a delay increases their trust in the brand

Live Delivery Tracking

Real-time visibility is the delivery feature consumers most frequently say they wish more retailers offered. For example, 40% want the ability to see exactly where their package is, while 46% say their ideal delivery experience is one they can track in real time and redirect when needed.

Tracking provides more than information. It gives consumers confidence that the delivery is moving forward and the ability to act when plans change.

Two-Way Communication

Consumers want a simple way to provide instructions, resolve issues, and coordinate the delivery as circumstances change. In fact, 77% say they would use the ability to communicate with their delivery driver by text message.

Meaningful Communication

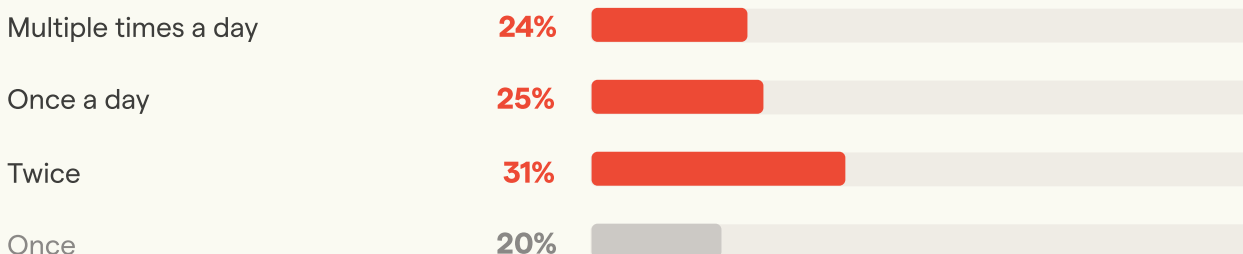
Once an order is placed, 49% of consumers check its delivery status at least once a day.

That attention makes delivery communications important brand touchpoints. Retailers can use them to share useful information, reinforce

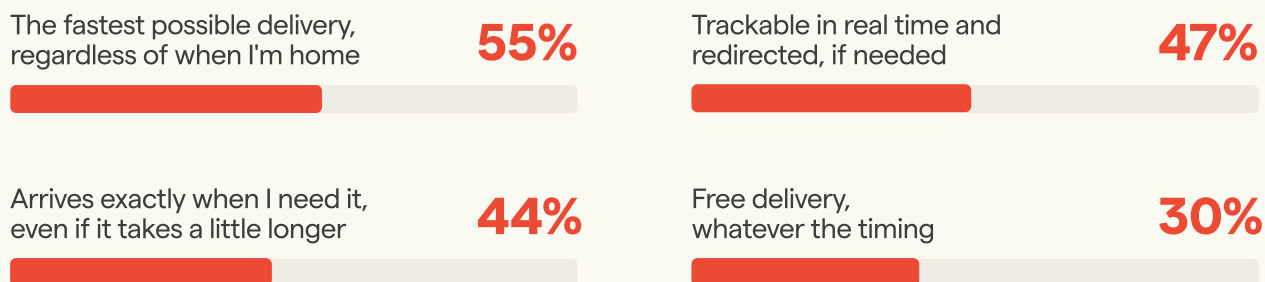
loyalty, and show that the experience is being actively managed.

The opportunity is not to turn every tracking update into a marketing message. It is to make every communication useful, timely, and worthy of the customer's attention.

How often do you check your package status to see where your package is?



When you think about the “perfect” delivery experience, which best describes it?



None of the above 4% | Other <1%. Respondents selected all that apply.

The New Standard is Personalized

Fast delivery has changed what consumers expect. Personalized delivery is changing what they value.

Veho's research **The State of Delivery 2026** shows there is no single experience that works for every customer and order. A gift needed by Friday, a high-value purchase left at the door, and an everyday replenishment order each carry different priorities. Sometimes consumers want speed. Other times, they want a lower cost, a specific arrival window, greater visibility, or confidence that the package will reach the right place.

What they are asking for is not more speed at any cost. It is greater certainty, control, and care.

That shift has real consequences for retailers. Delivery options influence whether consumers complete a purchase. The experience shapes whether they return, switch brands, or spend more over time.

The next standard will be defined by how well the delivery experience reflects what the customer needs from that order.

The retailers that recognize that distinction will do more than meet expectations.

They will earn the next purchase.



ABOUT VEHO

Veho partners with the world's leading brands to transform delivery from a cost center into a driver of customer trust, loyalty, and growth. Purpose-built for e-commerce delivery, Veho serves brands like Macy's, Sephora, Lululemon, Stitch Fix, and HelloFresh with a 99% on-time delivery rate and a 4.9/5 customer satisfaction score.

Named to Fast Company's list of the World's Most Innovative Companies in 2026, Veho is proving that delivery is the brand experience.