

8 Mistakes Retailers Make In their Returns Process

Address the following faults in your returns to make the process easier for both you and your consumers.



1

Failure to Offer Free At-Home Pick-up

In light of COVID-19, people don't want to leave their house. Currently, 77% of consumers prefer home pick-up.¹ Future proof your returns by offering contactless at-home pick-up with the USPS — it's no touch and free.

Assuming Everyone Has a Printer

A not-so-big secret is that people don't own printers anymore; 62% of people to be exact.² Don't let this roadblock create a poor consumer experience. Instead, embrace your consumers' lifestyle. Include pre-printed return labels in the box. This enables faster processing and earns their loyalty.



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Not Factoring in "Trunk Time"

When asked to drop off, it takes consumers an average of 4 days to get around to it — a period coined "trunk time."³ More critically, it adds 4 days to the perceived time of a refund. Speed returns into your warehouse and refunds to your consumers by using USPS and their scheduling page for free pick-ups during existing mail carrier routes. Also offer additional return options such as drop off at one of the 200+ USPS postal locations and kiosks.

Not Having a Fast Credit Strategy

When are you giving your consumers back their refund? If your answer isn't "the sooner, the better," then it's time to rethink. With the right technology and verification process, you can issue refunds with confidence as early as the first scan touchpoint.



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1. COVID-19 Survey Results, Pitney Bowes and Morning Consult, 2020.

2. "Returns Happen: A Growing Opportunity for Retailers," Magento, June 2019.

3. Annual Online Shopping Study 2019, Pitney Bowes, 2019.



5 Inspecting Every Box

Opening every box is labor-intensive and time-consuming. It also delays the purchase cycle when consumers could be getting their money back. Make the returns process easier on yourself, while also speeding up returns, by only opening parcels for specific categories based on weight verification or other factors such as loyalty status.

Treating All Returns Equally

Who wants the bronze when you can go for the gold? Think like this when processing your returns by prioritizing the big-ticket items. Process jewelry faster than socks. If high priced items sit around, your opportunity to make money becomes less and less.



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7 Subpar Tracking Visibility

Do you like getting romantic texts and emails like, "Your order has shipped?" So do consumers. But if your returns tracking visibility is lagging, consumers who check their orders daily are going to hound your call centers looking for their refund. Increase tracking visibility to reduce your time and labor.

Missing Branded Communications

We've got spirit. Yes, we do! We've got spirit. How about you? Don't let a 3PL provider steal the shine of branded opportunities. Reinforce your brand whenever you can. This includes branding your tracking portal and boxes to provide a seamless and memorable consumer experience.



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Pitney Bowes has nearly 20 years of experience managing returns. Combined with our industry-first label technology, **we give you a smarter returns strategy with less effort.**

For more information, visit us online: pitneybowes.com