An on-time delivery performance analysis and forecast report for UPS and FedEx based on factual observations made in the e-commerce parcel shipping space in the U.S. with actionable strategies to optimize post-purchase operations during the 2022 Holiday Season and beyond.
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The “2022 State of Holiday Shipping in the U.S.” report focuses on understanding the impact of the surge in order volumes and supply chain disruptions on the on-time delivery performance of UPS & FedEx in the United States during the peak season.

DATA REPORTING AND ANALYSIS

In order to extract meaningful insights which can be used to better understand and forecast the on-time delivery performance of UPS and FedEx during the upcoming 2022 Holiday season, we analyzed shipment data during the following periods:

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<tr>
<th>Holiday Period 2021</th>
<th>Regular Operating Period 2022</th>
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This report emerges from a trend analysis done on statistically relevant and verifiable shipment data collected from millions of e-commerce packages tracked and monitored by LateShipment.com during the above mentioned period.

WHO CAN USE THIS REPORT

This report is an attempt to bring more transparency to the workings of the autonomous small parcel shipping industry.

Retail Analysts | Media Personnel | Retail & E-commerce Leaders | E-commerce Logistics & Supply Chain Leaders

Insights in this report enables retail leaders, publications and analysts focusing on Holiday sales and e-commerce logistics with carrier performance metrics for package delays across key states and cities, carrier service types, and retail categories. Retail merchants can leverage this report to make data-backed decisions to optimize their supply chain during the critical Holiday season and beyond.
E-commerce will continue to grow during the 2022 Holiday Season — with an average 8% YoY growth projected by leading retail analysts despite inflationary challenges. While predictions this year reflect that consumer optimism is holding strong, it is expected that peak sales will happen only later in the holiday season this year with shoppers hoping to take advantage of discounts. However, supply chain, inventory, and fulfillment issues will be in the spotlight during the 2022 Holiday Season too.

Similar to the last couple of years, some shoppers are starting their holiday shopping earlier in 2022 to get their products on-time with guaranteed prices. To go with that, major retailers are pushing early sales with lucrative deals. Amazon launched a second Prime Day, and stores like Target and Walmart followed suit with early fall holiday deals.

### 2022 HOLIDAY SALES HIGHLIGHTS

- **National Retail Federation** forecasts that 2022 holiday retail sales during November and December will grow between 6% and 8% over 2021 to between **$942.6 billion** and **$960.4 billion**.
- **IBM’s Institute for Business Value** found that 2022 shopping budgets are up 8% over 2021 — in line with **Bain’s** forecast.
- **Adobe** expects US online holiday shopping sales to hit **$209.7 billion** from November 1 to December 31, a **2.5% increase year-over-year**.
- **Deloitte** estimates a stronger e-commerce growth of between **12.8% and 14.3%**, which it attributed to budget-focused consumers going online to find deals and compare prices.

Undoubtedly, one of the main spurs behind this rise in e-Commerce sales is the widespread adoption of online shopping in the post-pandemic world coupled with the willingness of people to spend and celebrate this holiday season after two pale years.
FedEx and UPS are grappling with lower volumes this year as the pandemic-induced e-commerce boom slows down and their customers navigate high inflation. However, supply chain disruptions combined with record high shipping costs, shipping network congestion and labor shortage will negatively impact the 2022 Holiday Season. The operational efficiency of shipping carriers will remain a major concern for both, FedEx and UPS. While FedEx has skipped its traditional hiring announcement, UPS is hiring more than 100,000 seasonal workers (in line with the last 2 years).

**KEY UPDATES FROM UPS AND FEDEX FOR THE 2022 HOLIDAY SEASON**

- UPS expects package volumes to peak later in the month of December compared to 2021. UPS is also flexing up its capacity through efforts like hiring 100,000 seasonal employees.
- FedEx Corp. is preparing for a moderate peak season in terms of demand. While FedEx hired 90,000 temporary workers in 2021, this year it has skipped its traditional hiring announcement.

This year, retailers will be taking extraordinary measures to tackle stockpiling, maximising discounts in the month of December which will result in Holiday sales to peak a little bit later. This means offering fast delivery times for last-minute gifts will be of heightened importance.

All major carriers in the US, FedEx, UPS and the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) are equipped to handle about 110 million packages per day, and that could outpace peak season handling capacity by about 18 million packages per day. While carriers will respond with more fulfillment and distribution capacity besides some hiring temporary workforce, the on-time delivery performance is projected to significantly stay impacted.
The following section is the result of a trend analysis conducted on packages shipped between the **2021 Holiday season (Nov 26 - Dec 31)** and **2022 Regular Operating Period (Jan 1 - Oct 31)**. You will find a detailed breakdown of package delays by **UPS and FedEx** across key States, Cities, Service-types, and Retail Categories in the United States.
KEY HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ANALYSIS

Despite efforts taken by UPS and FedEx to handle the surge in packages during the 2021 Holiday season, on avg. 12.55% of parcels shipped through these carriers faced delays. During 2022, prior to the Holiday season kick off, 12.95% of parcels shipped through FedEx and UPS faced delays.

For packages shipped during the Regular Operating Period (Jan 1 - Oct 31, 2022), UPS performed better, with a package delay rate of 10.56% when compared to FedEx which witnessed a delay rate of 14.03%.

For UPS, amid the Holiday season rush during 2021, the package delay rate in Texas was the highest with 10.68%. Furthermore, during the months January to October, 2022, packages shipped to Texas faced most delays with 10.3% of packages delivered late.

For FedEx, during the 2021 Holiday season, California recorded the highest number of package delays with 17.94% of orders delivered later than expected. During the regular operating period in 2022, packages shipped to Illinois faced the most delays with 15.33% packages delayed.

Among key cities which witnessed package delays during the 2021 Holiday season, parcels shipped with UPS to Chicago faced the most delays at 12.47%.

For FedEx, among key cities in the U.S which witnessed package delays during the 2021 Holiday season, Miami faced the most delays at 20.5%. During the regular operating period in 2022, packages shipped to Miami faced the highest delay rate at 16.7%.

For UPS, among states on the West Coast which witnessed Holiday package delays during 2021, State of Washington faced the most delays at 12.11%. During the regular operating period in 2022, packages shipped through UPS to Oregon faced the most delays at 15.33%.

In the Central Region, during the 2021 Holidays, packages shipped to Louisiana through UPS faced the most delays at 14.81%. During the regular operating period in 2022, packages shipped to Arkansas and Louisiana recorded high package delay rates at 15.77% and 15.45% respectively.
For UPS, among the states on the East Coast in the U.S, two states witnessed the most package delays during the 2021 Holidays, and they are **Georgia** and **South Carolina** at 13.62% and 10.53% respectively.

Amid states on the West Coast which witnessed Holiday package delays during 2021 when shipped with FedEx, **Oregon** faced the most delays at 36.26%, followed closely by **Washington** at 35.1% and **California** at 18%.

In the Central Region, Holiday packages shipped with FedEx to **Louisiana** through FedEx faced the most delays during 2021 at 25.45%.

On the East Coast, states in the U.S which witnessed the most package delays when shipped with FedEx during the 2021 Holidays, are **Georgia** and **North Carolina** at 27.39% and 18.08% respectively.

During the 2022 Holiday Season UPS Ground shipments had a package delay rate of 12.41%. During the regular operating period in 2022, UPS packages shipped through their Ground services recorded a delay rate of 15.19%.

Packages shipped through FedEx Ground service, recorded a delay rate of 27.31% during the 2021 Holidays. During the regular operating period in 2022, FedEx Ground services faced a package delay rate of 16.37%.

During the 2021 Holiday season, **UPS Next Day Air**, a popular express shipping service observed the highest delay rate at 15.62%. And during the regular operating period in 2022, a record 9.89% of packages shipped through **UPS Next Day Air service** were delayed.

During the 2021 Holidays, **FedEx Overnight** service recorded a delay rate of 13.1%, and during the regular operating period in 2022 a delay rate of 11.48% . **FedEx 2 Day** service recorded a package delay rate of 12.12% during the 2021 Holiday season and during the regular operating period in 2022, 11.57%.

During the 2021 Holiday season, packages shipped with UPS for **Sports** retailers observed the most package delays at 25.47%. And during the regular operating period in 2022, again, **Sports** category saw a delay rate of 22.63%.

During the 2021 Holiday season, **Apparel** retailers shipping with FedEx observed the most package delays at 28.41% while the Sports category saw a delay rate of 24.33%. And during the regular operating period in 2022, the **Apparel** retailers observed a delay rate of 20.98% while **Sports** retailers witnessed package delay rates of 18.31%. 
Delivery Delays Across Key U.S. States

UPS PACKAGE DELAYS IN TOP STATES

Amid the Holiday season rush during 2021, the package delay rate in Texas was the highest with 10.68%. Furthermore, during the months January to October, 2022, packages shipped to Texas faced most delays with 10.3% of packages delivered late.

California witnessed the lowest package delay rate at 4.69% during 2021 Holidays, while only 7.54% of packages shipped to California during the 2022 regular operating period were delayed.
During the 2021 Holiday season, California recorded the highest number of package delays with 17.94% of Holiday orders delivered later than expected. During the regular operating period in 2022, packages shipped to Illinois faced the most delays with 15.33% packages delayed.

And during the 2021 Holidays, 9.41% of packages shipped to New York faced the least delays, whereas during the regular operating period of 2022, packages shipped through FedEx to most key states faced delay rates that were similar to delays seen during the 2021 Holiday season.
Delivery Delays Across Key U.S. Cities

UPS PACKAGE DELAYS IN TOP CITIES

Amid key cities in the U.S which witnessed package delays during the 2021 Holiday season, Chicago faced the most delays at 12.47%.

During the regular operating period in 2022, packages shipped through UPS to Houston faced the most delays at 14.16%, followed by Chicago at 10.53%.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>5.15%</td>
<td>6.27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles</td>
<td>4.02%</td>
<td>6.97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miami</td>
<td>10.18%</td>
<td>9.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>12.47%</td>
<td>10.53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Houston</td>
<td>10.04%</td>
<td>14.16%</td>
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Among key cities in the U.S which witnessed package delays during the 2021 Holiday season, Miami faced the most delays at 20.5%. During the regular operating period in 2022, packages shipped to Miami faced the highest delay rate at 16.7%.
Among states on the West Coast which witnessed Holiday package delays during 2021, **State of Washington** faced the most delays at **12.11%**. During the regular operating period in 2022, packages shipped through UPS to **Oregon** faced the most delays at **15.33%**.
In the Central Region, during the 2021 Holidays, packages shipped to Louisiana through UPS faced the most delays at 14.81%. During the regular operating period in 2022, packages shipped to Arkansas and Louisiana through UPS recorded high package delay rates at 15.77% and 15.45% respectively.

UPS PACKAGE DELAYS IN THE CENTRAL REGION
Among the states on the East Coast in the U.S, two states witnessed the most package delays during the 2021 Holidays, and they are Georgia and South Carolina at 13.62% and 10.53% respectively.

During the regular operating period in 2022, packages shipped to Georgia through UPS faced the most package delays, recording a delay rate of 12.76%.
Amid states on the West Coast which witnessed Holiday package delays during 2021, Oregon faced the most delays at 36.26%, followed closely by Washington at 35.1% and California at 18%.

During the regular operating period in 2022, packages shipped through FedEx to Washington faced the most delays at 19% followed closely by Oregon at 15.4%.
FEDEX PACKAGE DELAYS IN THE CENTRAL REGION

In the Central Region, Holiday packages shipped to Louisiana through FedEx faced the most delays during 2021 at 25.45%.

During the regular operating period in 2022, packages shipped to Nebraska and Arkansas through FedEx faced high delay rates of 24.7% and 16% respectively.
On the East Coast, states in the U.S which witnessed the most package delays during the 2021 Holidays, are Georgia and North Carolina at 27.39% and 18.08% respectively.

During the regular operating period in 2022, packages shipped to Georgia through FedEx faced the most package delays, recording a delay rate of 19.55% followed closely by North Carolina at 16.74%.
Delivery Delays Across Key Carrier Service Types

**UPS GROUND SERVICE PACKAGE DELAYS**

Surge in Holiday shipments during 2021, and straining UPS Ground networks resulted in a package delay rate of **12.41%**. During the **regular operating period in 2022**, UPS packages shipped through their Ground services recorded a delay rate of **15.19%**.

**FEDEX GROUND SERVICE PACKAGE DELAYS**

Packages shipped through FedEx Ground service, the most popular e-commerce shipping service, recorded a delay rate of **27.31%** during the 2021 Holidays. During the **regular operating period in 2022**, FedEx Ground services faced a package delay rate of **16.37%**.
During the 2021 Holiday season, **UPS Next Day Air**, a popular express shipping service observed the highest delay rate at **15.62%**. And during the regular operating period in 2022, with **UPS** due to unexpected demand and congestion, a record **9.89%** of packages shipped through **UPS Next Day Air service** were delayed.

### UPS EXPRESS SERVICE PACKAGE DELAYS

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UPS Next Day Air</td>
<td>15.62%</td>
<td>9.89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPS 2 Day Air</td>
<td>6.36%</td>
<td>5.48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPS 3 Day Select</td>
<td>7.00%</td>
<td>4.85%</td>
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During the 2021 Holidays, **FedEx Overnight** service recorded a delay rate of **13.10%**, while the same service recorded a package delay rate of **11.48%** during the regular operating period in 2022. **FedEx 2 Day** service recorded a package delay rate of **12.12%** during the 2021 Holiday season and during the regular operating period in 2022, **11.57%** of packages delivered through the same service type were delayed.

### FEDEX EXPRESS SERVICE PACKAGE DELAYS

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overnight</td>
<td>13.10%</td>
<td>11.48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FedEx 2 day</td>
<td>12.12%</td>
<td>11.57%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
During the 2021 Holiday season, both Sports and Electronics retailers observed the most package delays at 25.47% and 14.57% respectively. And during the regular operating period in 2022, Sports and Food & Beverages category saw a delay rate of 22.63% and 11.98% respectively.

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**Holiday Period 2021**
(Nov 26 – Dec 31, 2021)

**Regular Operating Period 2022**
(Jan 1 – Oct 31, 2022)
FEDEX PACKAGE DELAYS ACROSS RETAIL CATEGORIES

With FedEx struggling to cope with the surge in online shopping, combined with disruptions in shipping networks, a broad range of products in various categories shipped through FedEx faced delays.

During the 2021 Holiday season, retailers dealing with Apparel observed the most package delays at 28.41% while the Sports category saw a delay rate of 24.33%.

And during the regular operating period in 2022, the Apparel retailers observed a delay rate of 20.98% while Sports retailers witnessed package delay rates of 18.31%.
This holiday season will be a combination conservative consumer spending due to inflationary challenges and heavy discounts to appeal to budget-conscious shoppers amidst excessive stockpiling by merchants. The National Retail Federation (NRF) has stated that holiday spending is expected to be healthy even in this mixed economic climate, and it forecasts that holiday retail sales during November and December will grow between 6 percent and 8 percent over 2021 to between $942.6 billion and $960.4 billion.

Clearly, the traditional peak season challenges compounded with increased order volumes and supply chain constraints will result in an unprecedented spike in delivery disruptions. The Supply chain will remain top of mind for retailers in order to ensure timely dispatch and delivery of Holiday orders. Additionally peak season surcharges will escalate shipping costs to fulfill Holiday orders. Undoubtedly, shipping carriers like UPS and FedEx will be stretched to the limits in order to meet on-time delivery promises this Holiday season.
Holiday Shipping 2022
Predictions, Trends & Insights

A broader trend of increase in conservative consumer spending has been playing out over the course of the year. As the pandemic-induced online sales slowed down, consumer behavior has been gradually normalizing, with many going back to physical stores. This has resulted in e-commerce inventory levels to be at an all-time high. Sales will peak later during the Holiday season, when merchants resort to heavy discounting due to excessive inventory for inflation-wary shoppers to shop during this period.

- **Inventory:** Online retailers have inventory levels at an all-time high as a consequence of two things:
  - Shift away from pandemic-induced online buying patterns.
  - Stockpiling due to supply chain constraints during the pandemic.

- **Holiday Season Discounts:** Due to high inventory levels and lower sales, holiday season discounting is expected to be at an all-time high, with peak sales happening later during the Holiday Season.

- **Shipping Costs:** Merchants are showing signs of favoring less expensive shipping types and carriers, in an attempt to lower fulfillment costs.

- **On-time Delivery:** UPS is expected to outperform FedEx across all shipping types during the 2022 Holiday Season, going by performance indicators from the past 12-24 months.

- **Shipping Speed:** Popular e-commerce service types, Ground and Express services offered by both UPS and FedEx will remain affected, resulting in delivery delays during the 2022 Holiday Season.

- **Seasonal Hires:** While UPS is hiring 100,000 seasonal employees, FedEx has skipped its traditional hiring this year. This is likely to impact the operational efficiency of FedEx resulting in package delays during the Holiday Season.

- **Returns:** Returns are expected to trend higher than 2021.

The overall number of holiday packages that will be sent out will exceed the handling capacity of shipping carriers, thereby missing promised delivery windows. In the run up to the holidays, the supply chain will take center stage and the winners are going to be those retailers who will take measures to mitigate the impact of delivery delays on customer experience and loyalty.
E-commerce post-purchase issues are nothing out of the ordinary, even during times like the Holiday Season. The impact they have are catastrophic — wrecking customer experience, straining customer support teams, and ultimately threatening the profit margins.

The friction points that hurt customer experience and loyalty occur mostly after orders have been shipped. Knowing what’s coming and staying ahead of delivery and return-related issues is key to perfecting post-purchase. Regardless of who the shipping partner is, a leading carrier or a 3PL, some hard truths that you deal with are:

- Up to 20% of shipments face ISSUES such as late delivery, attempted-failed delivery, lost or damaged in transit.
- Up to 40% of customer inquiries are WISMO (Where Is My Order), Lost/Damaged shipment or Return related.
- Up to 35% of all products purchased online are RETURNED.

In this section we’ll cover everything you need to know about creating an e-commerce post-purchase strategy that will **improve customer experience, boost customer retention, and reduce shipping cost** this Holiday Season and beyond.
The Big Post-purchase Customer Experience Gap

In today’s retail market, there are hundreds of shipping carriers worldwide that specialize in e-commerce deliveries.

However, regardless of who your shipping partner is, the truth is that:

- **~10%** of all parcels shipped are either delayed, lost or damaged
- Customers blame and penalize the brand they shop from and **NOT** the shipping carriers for delivery failures
- **1-in-3** consumers will switch to a competitor after just **ONE** bad post-purchase experience with a brand

All of these lead to a **big post-purchase CX gap** that has a negative impact on customer satisfaction and ultimately affects your profits.

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**THE BIG POST-PURCHASE CX GAP IN ONLINE RETAIL**

- **You don’t track parcels in real time, foresee delays and proactively resolve delivery-related issues**
- **You don’t regularly and proactively update customers about their order delivery status**
- **You don’t offer self-serve, branded order tracking experiences to your customers**
- **Your returns process is vague and complex, often discouraging shoppers to buy from you**
7 Strategies To Ensure Post-purchase CX Success

Taking measures to close the post-purchase CX gap and provide customers with a frictionless delivery experience can cement you as their preferred brand to shop from. Adopting the following ways to improve your post-purchase CX will ensure a positive impact on both your customers’ lifetime value and the retention rate of your business.

**PROACTIVELY IDENTIFY AND RESOLVE DELIVERY RELATED ISSUES**

Third-party shipping services are highly error prone. Monitoring your in-transit parcels in real-time and being in the know about parcels facing delivery issues will ensure proactive and faster resolution of delivery-related customer issues.

**REDUCE CUSTOMER ANXIETY WITH AUTOMATED SHIPPING NOTIFICATIONS**

Effectively engaging with your customers throughout the order delivery lifecycle will strengthen customer relationships and foster brand loyalty. With timely email and SMS alerts, keep customers informed about their order delivery status, including critical delivery issues.

**OFFER CUSTOM-BUILT BRANDED TRACKING EXPERIENCES ON YOUR ONLINE STORE**

To ensure seamless brand experiences, every customer interaction should be owned by the brand. Default order tracking pages provided by shipping carriers are dull and off-brand. Providing brand consistent order tracking pages on your store drives customer delight and increases brand loyalty.
MAKE ORDER TRACKING SELF-SERVICE TO REDUCE DELIVERY RELATED SUPPORT TICKETS

Over 30% of customer support tickets created are shipping related, with most tickets being WISMO (Where Is My Order) enquiries. Addressing such tickets can be both time consuming and expensive. Enable your customers to track their orders from within your website or app to significantly reduce customer support enquiries.

LEVERAGE ORDER TRACKING MOMENTS TO INCREASE SALES AND REDUCE RETURNS

On average, customers track their orders 6 to 8 times before order delivery, that’s 6-8 additional marketing touchpoints with customers post-checkout. Boost repeat sales with product recommendations on order tracking pages, besides providing relevant product usage information to reduce returns.

GET CUSTOMER FEEDBACK AROUND ORDER DELIVERY EXPERIENCES

Capture customer feedback around their delivery experiences after every order delivery to understand the detractors of a great post-purchase experience and make necessary changes to improve.

OPTIMIZE YOUR RETURNS PROCESS TO MAKE IT HASSLE-FREE WHILE MAINTAINING PROFITABILITY

Be transparent and establish trust with a clear returns policy. Make product returns effortless for your customers, while providing return methods that encourage exchanges and store credit options to ensure revenue retention.
Did you know your business might be overpaying shipping bills by up to 20% by not claiming refunds from shipping carriers for service failures and billing errors?

Parcel Audit and Shipping Refunds for Shipping Cost Savings

How can your business save up to 20% on shipping costs?

Audit invoice for 50+ service failures & billing errors

Recover refunds and save up to 20% on shipping costs

Get better service-quality from shipping carriers

The Money Back Guarantee policy of shipping carriers promises 100% refunds on shipping charges if a parcel is delayed even by 60 seconds. You can claim refunds for 50+ service failures and billing errors that include late deliveries, incorrect surcharges, lost or damaged packages and more.

However, claiming refunds from carriers can be both exhaustive and expensive, making it extremely challenging to recover refunds for valid claims before their eligibility window expires. Auditing your shipping invoice regularly can help you receive better service quality, and save you up to 20% on shipping expenses.
At LateShipment.com, we are driven by an overarching mission to bring more transparency to the world of shipping. Our retail logistics solutions include cloud tools for small parcel shippers with a focus on post-purchase delivery experience and shipping cost optimization.

Trusted by thousands of companies worldwide, at LateShipment.com we have tracked over 150 million packages shipped through 80+ shipping carriers globally. With our unique industry position, we’re able to leverage our global shipping data and expertise in fulfillment logistics to publish unbiased carrier performance reports aimed at empowering readers with insights about the workings of the parcel shipping industry.

**OUR SOLUTIONS**

LateShipment.com is the world’s only cloud-based Post-purchase Success platform built to enable retail parcel shippers of all sizes to provide memorable order delivery and returns experiences — besides reducing shipping costs by up to 20%.

Our feature-packed Delivery Experience Management platform helps improve shipment visibility and drive customer delight post purchase. Our customer-first Returns Management platform makes returns effortless and efficient — all while retaining revenue. Our Automated Shipping Refunds solution brings better performance accountability to shipping carrier services by recovering millions of dollars in refund claims.

LateShipment.com seamlessly integrates with over 600 shipping carriers and business tools that include E-commerce platforms, Order Management Systems, CRM and Marketing Automation tools to help you craft delightful post-purchase experiences, at scale.

Visit [www.lateshipment.com](http://www.lateshipment.com) to find out more.
Disclaimer

The data and information in this report has been solely drawn from shipments tracked by LateShipment.com, on behalf of its customers. While particular care has been taken to ensure that all data sets analyzed are accurate and statistically relevant across the small parcel shipping industry, LateShipment.com is not responsible for any errors or omissions whatsoever.

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