

Holiday Shopping's New Playbook:

AI Discovery, Self-Gifting, and Omnichannel Purchasing

Here’s what industry experts are saying:

As consumers prepare for the holiday season, tech shopping is becoming increasingly personal.

NielsenIQ research shows that shoppers are not only purchasing technology gifts for family and friends, but also for themselves, with self-gifting emerging as a major driver of demand.

What is on the gifting list?

Headphones, smartphones, and laptops top wish lists, while trusted brands continue to play a critical role in purchase decisions. At the same time, younger consumers are embracing AI, social influence, and digital discovery tools to research and evaluate options before they buy.

For Brands and Retailers

For tech brands and retailers, winning this holiday season will require a seamless blend of trust, innovation, and personalized experiences that meet shoppers wherever they discover and purchase.



Nim Sharon
Vice President, Technology
NielsenIQ
Nim.Sharon@NielsenIQ.com



Tiffany Riccio
Director, Technology
NielsenIQ
Tiffany.Riccio@NielsenIQ.com

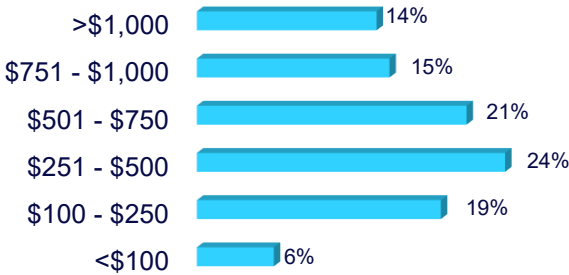
NielsenIQ

powered by GfK intelligence

\$534

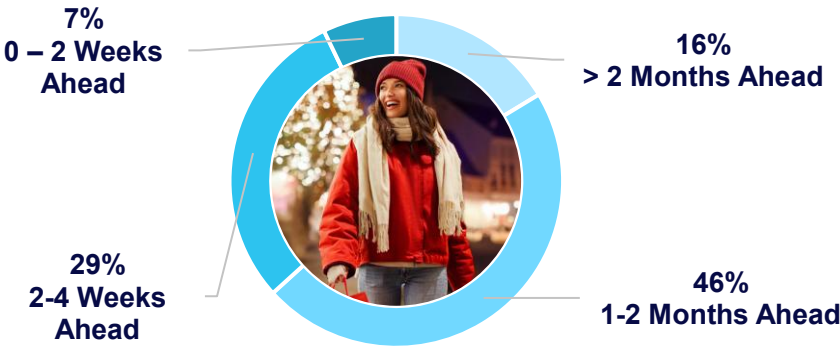
The average spend for 2026 Holiday Gift Shoppers.

Expected Holiday Gifting Spend



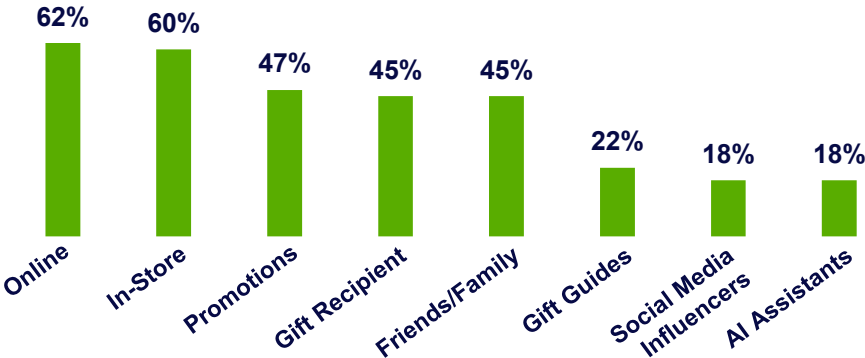
Holiday Shopping Timing

More than 80% of Holiday Shoppers expect to shop within the two months leading up to the holidays, while Millennials and Gen Z expect to make broader use of promotional events such as Black Friday or Cyber Monday.



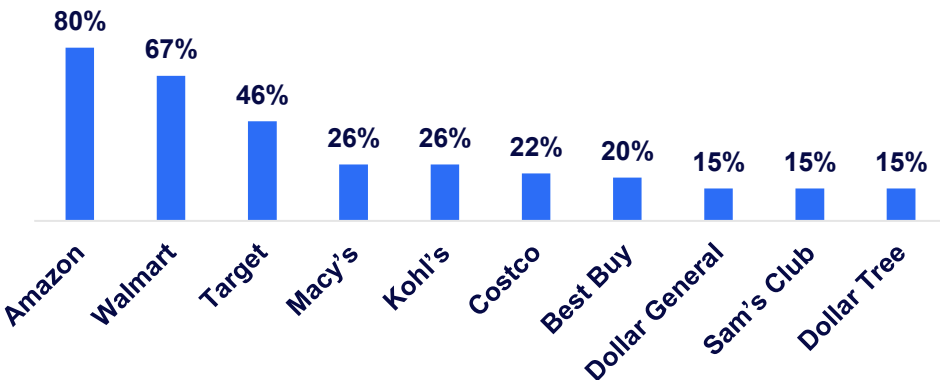
How Purchase Decisions Are Made

Holiday Shoppers expect to browse both online (62%) and in-store (60%), to decide what items to buy when holiday gift shopping this year.



Shopping Location

Mass online and in-store retailers drive expected shopping location while discount and value retailers see strong engagement.

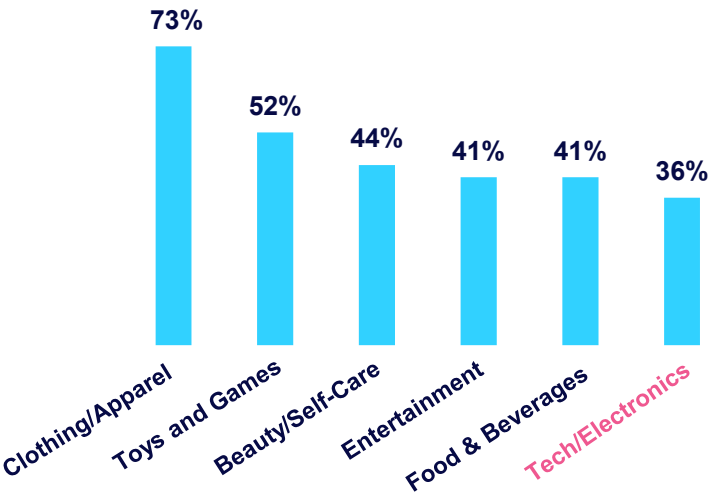


Tech Standouts

From Gaming to Wearables, Which Products Are Lighting Up Holiday Carts?



Which Items are on your shopping/gifting list?

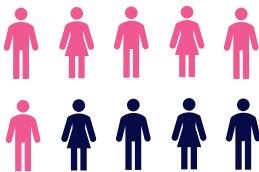


Festive purchase trends by Holiday Gift Shoppers

57% Gen Z shoppers that have Tech/Electronics and Entertainment on their list.

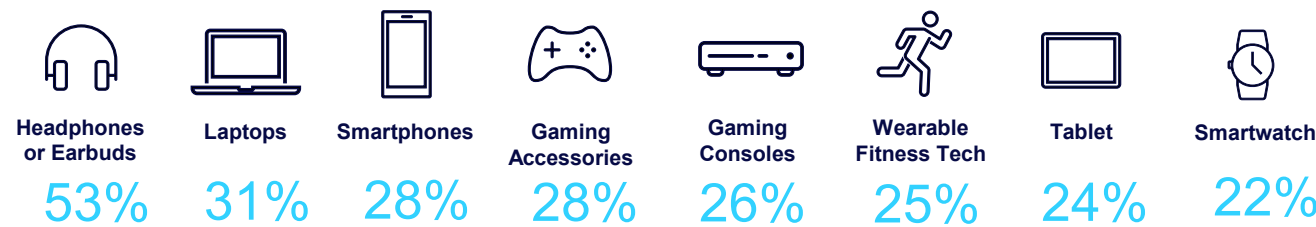
Tech Holiday Shoppers that are 'Buying for Myself'.

55%



More than 6-in-10 of tech holiday shoppers plan to purchase a brand they 'have experience with'.

Which Tech items are on your gifting list?



Which Tech brands are on your gifting list?

67% of tech holiday shoppers plan to select brands based on quality while 56% seek a well-known brand followed by pricing (at 53%).

