

RETAIL

Global online holiday retail spending reaches record high of \$1.2T

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The data is drawn from an analysis of 1.5 billion shoppers and 1.6 trillion page views across the company's proprietary platform. Image credit: Salesforce

By ZACH JAMES FOR LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

Surges in consumer spending, as well as mobile and social commerce, led to record digital sales this past holiday season, according to cloud-based software company Salesforce.

Between Nov. 1 and Dec. 31, 2024, shoppers across the globe spent \$1.4 trillion online, up 3 percent year-over-year and reaching an all-time mark, beating industry analysts expectations. Despite this, experts say product returns valued at \$122 billion could hinder profit margins.

"Retailers had a robust holiday season, but a 28 percent rise in the rate of returns compared to last year is a cause for some concern," said Caila Schwartz, director of consumer insights at [Salesforce](#), in a statement.

"Retailers who have embraced AI and agents are already seeing the benefits, but these tools will be even more critical in the new year as retailers aim to minimize revenue losses on returns and reengage with shoppers."

Generating growth

Artificial intelligence is said to have played a huge role in consumers' holiday purchasing habits.

During the two-month span, 19 percent of online orders, or \$229 billion, were influenced by AI-generated product recommendations and personalized chats, Salesforce shares. These figures represent a 6 percent jump compared to the same period in 2023.



In the United States, consumers spent \$282 billion online during the holiday season. Image credit: LVMH

Social shopping options, such as Instagram and TikTok Shop, proved lucrative for brands present on the platforms, representing a fifth of sales for participating labels. This trend falls in line with increasing sales generated by mobile users, reaching 70 percent of all orders.

In major markets, such as the U.S. and Europe, holiday spending saw low-single-digit sales boosts, in line with Black Friday and Cyber Monday figures ([see story](#)), which provided a solid start to a holiday season that came in above expectations.

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