

Omicron Impact: Consumers Experiencing a Shortage of Retail Workers and Increased Wait Times at Checkout

Shopkick survey finds 73 percent of consumers are vaccinated but still expect retailers to enforce safety precautions as Omicron cases continue to rise

SAN MATEO, Calif. -- January 19, 2022 -- Although it is officially 2022, it may feel like years past as the Omicron variant continues to sweep the nation, forcing Americans to face another year of the pandemic. The impact is real, as the majority of consumers (73 percent) say they have noticed a shortage of retail workers while shopping in-person, as well as an increase in wait times while checking out (71 percent) and less available essential items (52 percent).

[Shopkick](#), a leading shopping rewards app, surveyed nearly 8,500 consumers across the country to gain an understanding of how the Omicron variant is impacting their shopping habits and behavior. The online survey was conducted between January 6 - 13, 2022.

Key Insights Include:

- **Consumers and Vaccines:** It has been a year since vaccinations rolled out across the United States and the majority of consumers (73 percent) have chosen to get fully vaccinated, with 47 percent having also been boosted. When asked why they decided to get vaccinated, the majority said to protect themselves (85 percent) and protect others around them (81 percent). Comparatively, 20 percent say they are not vaccinated and do not plan to be.
- **Omicron Fallout:** Due to COVID-19 cases rising, the majority of consumers have noticed a shortage of retail workers while shopping in-person and an increase in wait times while checking out (73 percent and 71 percent respectively). Additionally, nearly half of consumers (47 percent) have experienced a shortage of at-home COVID test kits at their local pharmacy and grocery stores.
- **Still In-Store and Gathering Indoors:** Despite the spike in Omicron cases, the majority of shoppers (59 percent) are taking the same number of trips to the store as they were a month ago and over half (53 percent) are still comfortable participating in public indoor activities.
- **Shopper Safety Precautions:** Consumers are still taking trips to the store, but 73 percent are taking additional precautions while shopping due to the rise of Omicron. Precautions include masking up (90 percent), using disinfectants on hands and carts (79 percent), shopping at less busy times (69 percent), using self-checkout (63 percent), using touchless or contactless payments to avoid exchanging cash (31 percent), and frequenting cashier-less stores (7 percent).
- **Retailer Safety Precautions:** Consumers also want retailers to take steps to protect shoppers, as the majority (71 percent) expect in-store safety precautions such as disinfecting carts (84 percent), enforcing social distancing (65 percent), mandating masks (72 percent), limiting store capacity (40 percent), and putting a cap on the number of essential products each shopper can purchase (37 percent).

- **Gen Z Stocks Up:** While the majority of consumers (66 percent) are *not* stocking up on essential items in preparation for another lockdown, Gen Zers are most likely to stock up (41 percent), compared to Baby boomers (35 percent), Millennials (35 percent), Gen X (34 percent), and the Silent generation (34 percent).

“As consumers continue to shop in-store, it is essential that retailers prioritize safety and implement the necessary precautions to keep shoppers’ minds at ease,” said Brittany Billings, EVP, strategic markets & marketing at Shopkick. “The COVID-19 pandemic has been continuously forcing the world to adapt and the Omicron variant has presented new challenges for consumers and retailers alike. These survey findings further reveal the need for retailers to adopt seamless, omnichannel shopping channels that can help address the pressing issues of supply shortages and a reduced retail workforce.”

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About Shopkick, Inc.

Shopkick, a Trax company, is a leading shopping rewards app, bringing moments of joy to everyday shopping - both on- and off-line. For brands and retailers, Shopkick provides high consumer engagement along the entire path to purchase. The company’s unique pay-for-performance model has been proven to deliver high ROI while driving incremental traffic, product engagement, and sales. Some of its leading brand and retail partners include Kraft-Heinz, Barilla, GE, Kellogg’s, TJ Maxx, and Unilever, among others.

Shopkick is available for free on iPhone from the App Store and for Android from Google Play. For more information, please visit www.shopkick.com.

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