

# What's Causing Cart Abandonment?

Discounts and email nudges are the first line of defense, but retailers have more options for saving a sale

## ARTICLE |

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Cart abandonment has been an issue since the advent of online shopping. Consumers get cold feet for a number of reasons, but for many, *it's just a part of the way they shop*.

Abandonment rates worldwide have held steady, hovering around 75% since 2015, according to [SaleCycle](#).

A recent [SAP](#) study shows roughly one-third (34%) of US digital shoppers regularly abandon carts. Only 22% claim to always follow through with their purchases.

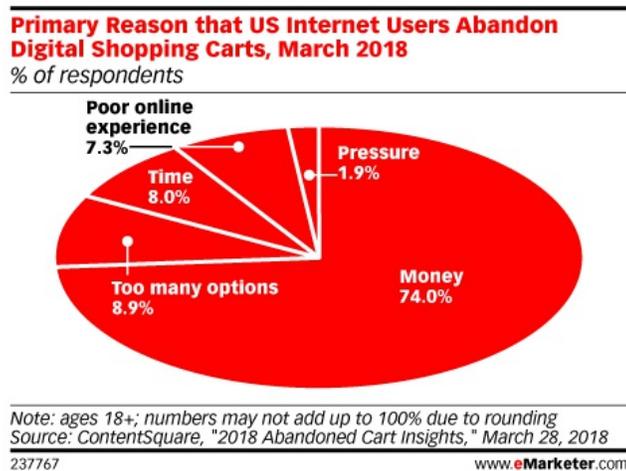
Among online shoppers who decide to pull the trigger, 73% make their purchase within a day, and more than half (53%) buy within the hour. For those who let items sit in a cart for a day or more (27%), 7% wait a week and 10% wait a week or more to convert.

Not all product categories are equally vulnerable to abandonment, though. Groceries and consumer goods (78%), plus experiential purchases like concert tickets (85%) and airfare or hotels (78%) are items with high follow-through. Most buy those within a day, while fashion (25%), financial products (21%) and furniture (20%) get left behind half or all the time.

Many ecommerce sites selling event tickets have a countdown clock

that only allows browsers a small window of time to buy, and travel sites create urgency by listing the number of seats left or serving pop-ups displaying the number of searchers looking at a hotel for the same dates. By contrast, shopping for an insurance policy or loan is serious business that could require more research, and **buying a sofa online** might rack up unanticipated shipping and handling fees.

The No. 1 one reason for abandoning a cart, according to SAP, is higher-than-expected shipping costs (58%). Multiple studies have found that **high shipping costs are typically the biggest deal-breaker**. Money issues caused close to three-fourths of US internet users to jump ship, per **ContentSquare**.



But less obvious factors also cause pause. In a **Namogoo** survey conducted last year, user experience issues were also hindrances; 60.9% of US digital shoppers abandoned a cart because the site had errors or crashed and nearly the same number (60.3%) bailed because the website required them to create an account.

The shoppers in this survey came back mostly through their own volition. The vast majority (81.1%) said they still wanted the items, and 44.9% bought after doing a price comparison on other sites. Fewer were prompted by an email reminder or promotion.

However, discounts—retailers' first line of defense—did get 58% of shoppers in the SAP study to convert. But for marketers who don't want to rely solely on offers, around one-fifth (21%) were driven by

receiving quick response to queries.

Price may matter most to digital shoppers, but the whole customer experience package also influences purchase decisions and can give one retailer an edge over another.