

greetabl

Holiday Gifts in a Post-Pandemic World

2021 Holiday Trend Report

2021 Holiday Gifting Trends

We're driven by the belief relationships are the most important thing in life. After all, if the pandemic taught us one thing, it's that investing in your business's relationships with employees, clients, and other stakeholders is critical to weathering difficult seasons. The 2021 holiday season is the perfect time to put that insight into action.

You may not have had the holiday season you were hoping for in 2020, but that just means we have some celebrating to make up for. This holiday season is all about joy, togetherness, and making up for lost time. As soon as the clock strikes midnight on December first, we'll be putting on our Santa hats and partying till the reindeer come home.

Use this holiday season to remind your team and your clients what your brand stands for. At Greetabl, we've taken a deep look at our data to identify key trends for the 2021 holiday season that can inform your gift giving strategy.

Trend 1: Look Outside of the Christmas Season.

- 7% of holiday gifts are sent for Thanksgiving
- 3% of holiday gifts are sent for New Years
- The remaining 90% of holiday gifts are sent for the key winter holiday gift giving season

Companies have continued to send more gifts in the first half of 2021 than in pre-pandemic years. The pandemic accelerated a shift in marketing and sales budgets toward gifts and other experiential marketing tactics, and that shift will continue into the 2021 holiday season.

With WFH trends sticking around longer than expected and a greater emphasis on customer retention, expect to have larger lists for holiday gifting this year and plan your budget accordingly.

Trend 2: Plan to Send More Gifts.

- Gifting was up 180% YoY in 2020
- The average corporate gifting order was 40% larger in 2020 than in 2019

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Trend 3: Send a Sweet Treat.

- The three most popular holiday gifts in 2020 were all sweet food items
- In 2021, candy has been the top gifting category

Even as allergies and dietary restrictions have become more common in society, sweets and other food items have remained a popular corporate gifting option. In fact, according to Greetabl's first-party data, the most common gifting category so far in 2021 has been candy.

As consumers become more eco-conscious, there has been a shift toward consumable gifts that don't impact landfills. On top of that, the holiday season is a time when people enjoy celebratory food and consume more sweets than other times of year.

To make it easier for you to take advantage of this trend, Greetabl has several sweet treat options that work for almost any diet. Our Caramel Popcorn is dairy-free, non-GMO, and kosher. Another option to send sweets to your clients or employees without risking sending someone something they can't eat is to ask your recipients to fill out a survey with their food preferences and dietary restrictions. This will allow you to personalize your gifts for each person.

Trend 4: Personalization is King.

- Growing interest in personalizing messages for corporate gifts
- Increasing demand for photo-personalized options

In 2020, many businesses realized a higher return on investment by sending gifts to individuals rather than addressed to an entire office. To maximize your budget, personalize your gifts so that they stand out from the crowd of bland holiday cards and stale breakroom cake.

This report will take a closer look at key holiday trends for 2021, and provide critical tips and tricks to make the holiday season a success.

Shipping Delays:

Even as carriers have undergone massive hiring efforts, demand for shipping services has continued to outpace supply. Add to this the unprecedented labor shortage, and you have a recipe for delays.

This presents a challenge for holiday gift givers. Follow these guidelines to avoid shipping delay headaches for your holiday gifts:

- **Send your gifts for Thanksgiving delivery:** sending gifts earlier in the season will give you a better chance for on time arrival, as the carriers should be less constrained with Black Friday and Cyber Monday deliveries.
- **Send your gifts late:** another option is to send New Years gifts to clients and employees in early January, after the major holiday rush. Pro tip: make sure you lock in your inventory early! If you wait to shop until after the holiday rush, inventory availability could be challenging.
- **Plan for extended shipping windows:** want to get your gifts there as close to the holidays as possible? Aim to have your gifts out the door the first week in December. Some will arrive early, but gifts that do get delayed will still have plenty of time to make it to their final destination on time. Greetabl can even add a sticker to the side of the box letting your recipients know they should wait until Christmas to open the gift!

Inventory & Supply Chain Challenges:

Businesses who wait until late in the season to secure their holiday gifts may be unable to get the products they want.

From microchips to lumber to glass containers, shortages and supply chain issues have become commonplace in the post-pandemic economy. The great increase in demand for certain products in 2020 combined with shutdowns of fabrication plants and other critical industries created lasting impacts on our global supply chain.

With no end in sight, it is important to take these inventory and supply chain challenges into account when planning your holiday gifting campaign.

It will be critical to reserve your holiday gifts early to avoid shortages that will leave your employees, clients, and other stakeholders disappointed.

Four Ways to Avoid Being Caught Without Holiday Gifts in 2021:

1. **Order early:** Place your holiday order as early as possible to secure your holiday inventory. A safe bet is to place your order by early-October. This will give you the most flexibility on gift options, and gives you the best chance to lock in discounts and avoid rush fees later in the season.
2. **Send a mix of products:** By sending different gifts to different segments of your list, you'll have a better chance of being able to meet your quantity requirements if you choose to order later in the season. This also allows you to select products that might feel more personal and meaningful to your recipients.
3. **Focus on the message:** With the job market hotter than ever and intense competition to capture the post-pandemic consumer demand, a personal message goes a long way this year. If inventory availability (or budget constraints) limits your ability to send as substantial of a gift as you typically would, send something smaller with greater personalization; your customers and employees are likely to appreciate it even more than a larger gift. You can take it one step further by including photos in the gift.
4. **Opt for gift cards:** One way to get around product availability is to send gift cards. These won't be limited by supply chain disruptions and, if you combine them with personalized messages and photos, can still have a big impact on your recipients.

Labor Shortage:

The data is clear: employers are desperate for workers in the US this year. By the end of April 2021, job openings rose to an unprecedented 9.3 million, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Workers want higher wages and better working conditions, and our economy is struggling to keep up. What this means for many businesses in America is that retaining your employees is getting harder, as there is increased competition and many other companies are offering signing bonuses and unprecedented salaries.

Even your most content employees could be a flight-risk if you don't prioritize employee appreciation and engagement efforts this year.

This presents a huge opportunity for holiday gift givers. Follow these guidelines to wow your employees this holiday season:

- **Personalize your gifts:** whether you are sending to 20 employees or 2,000, it's important to make sure each person feels like they received something personal. Companies that personalize the message to their gifts see higher returns and more social shares.
- **Don't send swag:** there's a time and a place for swag, but your holiday gifting program isn't it. If you want to reward your employees and truly motivate them, you need to give them something that feels like it's for them - not just for the company.
- **Send a gift to their home:** your employees spend a lot of time at work. One way to increase the impact of your employee engagement campaign is to send a surprise to them at home. It helps the employee feel a sense of pride in their work in front of their family and it feels a little more personal than receiving something at their desk.

Why the 2021 Holiday Season Matters:

Revenge-buying, the labor shortage, hybrid workforces—there's no doubt that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a lasting impact on our economy. Your clients and employees will be looking to you to see how your business navigates these changing waters.

Because of this, you've got a low hanging fruit opportunity to deliver an exceptional experience and make your clients obsessed, raving fans, and to remind your employees why they love working on your team.

Four Ways to Make an Impact with Holiday Gifts in 2020:

1. **Make them personal:** send gifts with a personalized message and photos. Greetabl makes this easy with a simple spreadsheet template. You can use an easy mail merge to create dynamic messages for each person on your list, and we'll take care of the rest!
2. **Send smaller gifts to a larger list:** people will be excited to celebrate with you this year! Take advantage of the festive atmosphere by sending gifts to a larger list. If you usually send an expensive gift basket to an entire office, opt for smaller gifts to each person instead. This will also be easier logistically with so many companies transitioning to a hybrid workforce.

3. Choose something unique: to stand out from the crowd, send gifts that are more unique than what your competitors are sending. Greetabl gifts offer a fun unboxing experience that will definitely stand out in a sea of greeting cards.

4. Send gifts outside of the Christmas season: to make a bigger splash, send gifts for Thanksgiving or New Years instead of the peak holiday season. This will make your gift a little more surprising and you'll have less competition for the attention of your recipients.

The key takeaway: don't send the same boring gift baskets you always do. You have an opportunity to make a big investment in your professional relationships this year; don't waste it by sending something that will get stuck in a pile in the breakroom and tossed in the trash on January third.

Who is Greetabl?

Greetabl is the best way to send personalized gifts that work for everyone, every time.

We offer gift boxes you can customize with your own message and images and fill with our selection of thoughtful gifts and gift cards for any occasion. Your recipient gets a beautiful, personalized gift box that's fun to open and reveals an exciting surprise inside—while you as the sender get a simple, affordable, and seamless way to make giving a gift card or small gift feel thoughtful and personal.

If you want to keep in touch, you can reach us at @greetabl. Sign up for our email list for more ideas, and if you're interested in sending out unique gifts your clients, employees, and partners will love, Greetabl is here for you.

Holiday Ordering:

In the post-pandemic world, it's more important than ever to prioritize your business relationships and make investments in retaining your employees and delighting your clients.

Holiday inventory is selling fast; [schedule a consultation](#) today to lock in your gifts and make sure your team is ready to rock this holiday season.

Questions? Contact us.

Email hello@greetabl.com and our team of Customer
Happiness experts will help.