

12 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT CHRISTMAS IN 2026

AGENDA

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CHRISTMAS COUNTDOWN

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Introduction

Christmas behaviours have shifted more in the last 10 years than in the previous century, both in what the day itself means and in how people plan and prepare for it.

Ensuring your brands remain front of mind in an elongated Christmas period is hard!

Don't worry though, we are here to help! Our Christmas Countdown research aims to…

1. Get you up to speed on everything you need to know about Christmas in 2026.
2. Gift you actionable insights pertaining to key Christmas planning dates.
3. Inspire you to create cracking cross-media Christmas campaigns.

Let the Christmas Countdown begin…



METHODOLOGY

TREND ANALYSIS

TRAJECTORY

Our partnership with Trajectory enabled us to appraise which of their prevailing consumer trends were most likely to impact on consumer behaviours at Christmas in 2026.

NAT REP SURVEY

STRAT 7

We fielded a quantitative study to 1,900 participants in July 2026. The survey explored how respondents celebrated Christmas last year before asking them to look ahead to Christmas in 2026.

Results compared to previous years where relevant

COUNTDOWN TO CHRISTMAS

Mail Metro Media

Using a combination of the trend analysis from Trajectory and the results from the nationally representative survey, we identified 12 themes that we think will be key for retail in the countdown to Christmas in 2026.

Christmas 2026 in context

Christmas 2025 Snapshot: Activities

FAMILY, FOOD, RELAXING AND BEING AWAY FROM WORK WERE AMONGST THE MOST POPULAR HIGHLIGHTS OF CHRISTMAS.
A NET +9% SPENT MORE THAN THEY HAD BUDGETTED FOR IN 2025, PROVING HOW SPENDING CAN BE DIFFICULT TO CONTROL.

Top Activities

1. GAVE A CHRISTMAS GIFT: 96%
2. RECEIVED CHRISTMAS GIFTS: 94%
3. ATE A CHRISTMAS MEAL: 92%
4. SENT CHRISTMAS CARDS/ LETTERS: 83%
5. ATTENDED GATHERINGS WITH FAMILY/FRIENDS: 79%
6. WATCHED CHRISTMAS MOVIES: 67%
7. BAKED CHRISTMAS RELATED FOOD: 59%
8. HOSTED CHRISTMAS MEAL: 55%
9. PLAYED BOARD/PARTY/ PARLOUR GAMES: 47%
10. ATTENDED A CHRISTMAS PARTY: 37%

Favourite Activities

1. SPENDING TIME WITH FAMILY: 81%
2. EATING AND DRINKING: 75%
3. RELAXING: 73%
4. GIVING GIFTS: 71%
5. SPENDING TIME WITH FRIENDS: 45%
6. CHRISTMAS TV/MOVIES: 43%
7. RECEIVING GIFTS: 41%
8. BEING AWAY FROM WORK: 30%
9. GOING TO PUB/RESTAURANTS: 27%
10. BEING AWAY FROM HOME: 9%

Spending

+9%

spent more on Christmas in 2025 than they had budgeted for

£142

ave. spend on main Christmas meal

£320

ave. spend on Christmas gifts for others

Sources: Mail Metro Media Christmas Survey January 2026

Trends shaping the Christmas retail landscape in 2026

P — Political

INTERNATIONAL UNCERTAINTY:
Traditional geopolitical blocs are under more pressure than they were in 2025 from Trump and European right – continued instability in Ukraine and existing and new wars in the Middle East.

PUBLIC SERVICES IN CRISIS:
The social care sector faces uncertainty about its long-term sustainability, special educational needs are straining already limited resources and the NHS and schools remain under pressure.

E — Economic

HIGH COST OF LIVING:
Half of UK adults have less disposable income than they did last year and the OBR is estimating that real incomes will grow just 0.25% in 2026-2027. Many continue to cut non-essential spend to counter fuel and food costs.

ECONOMIC POLARISATION:
The consumer outlook across the UK has never been more polarised. Men and higher income households remain the most optimistic about the future, whilst women and lower income households are the least optimistic.

S — Social

MILLENNIAL NATION:
Millennials are now the biggest generation in the UK. Millennial concerns, around housing, family life and sustainability/ethics will become more prominent every year.

INCREASING ATOMISATION:
We're spending more time alone – with wide-ranging impacts on how we behave as consumers and how we experience our lives. More people are spending time away from social engagements, while more time is being spent alone with media.

T — Technological

THE A.I CITIZEN:
AI is the defining technology of our time, and over the last 12 months, has had a significant impact on our work and home lives as well as our media consumption. Recent AI developments causing tensions.

AGE OF DISTRACTION:
There's more around to distract us than ever – and average attention spans are declining alongside this more distracting world. It's harder to draw out attention – at least in a real and prolonged way.

L — Leisure

THE IMPORTANCE OF EXPERIENCE:
Status, success and social capital are increasingly acquired by collecting experiences rather than material possessions. Makers of branded goods are responding by wrapping experiences around their products.

PLAY SOCIETY STRUGGLES:
The onus placed on the importance of leisure has weakened as the prolonged economic impacts of the cost-of-living crisis continued. An improvement in economic situation will reverse this trend.

E — Environmental

CLIMATE CONTESTS:
At the moment, the vast majority of people are concerned about climate change, and most are supportive of Net Zero. But Net Zero's association with 'wokeness' may cause some difficult decisions from brands.

SHADES OF GREEN:
Sustainable consumerism isn't new and isn't going anywhere. The proportion of truly 'green' consumers sits at 4-7%, but for a significant proportion of us, our ethical behaviours vary by category.

Sources: TRAJECTORY TRENDS 2026

CHRISTMAS IN 2026: A CONSUMER SNAPSHOT

BRITS ARE PLANNING TO CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS WITH THE SAME AMOUNT OF ENTHUSIASM AS LAST YEAR BUT THEY ARE MORE WORRIED ABOUT BEING ABLE TO AFFORD CHRISTMAS. OPENNESS TO ADVERTISING REMAINS STABLE, AS DO CONTENT DEMANDS.

GENERAL ATTITUDES

61%

are already looking forward to Christmas in 2026 (Vs. 60% In 2025)

+6%

say they will make more of an effort for Christmas in 2026 then they did in 2025

69%

Christmas has become too commercialised (vs. 70% in 2025)

CHRISTMAS SPENDING

34%

I am worried about not being able to afford Christmas this year (vs. 27% In 2025)

-4%

net intend to spend less on Christmas in 2026 compared to 2025

-5%

less reliant on credit cards in 2026 compared to 2025

CHRISTMAS ADVERTISING

58% I enjoy seeing Christmas advertising campaigns (vs. 58% in 2025)

CHRISTMAS CONTENT MOST INTERESTED IN

1. CHRISTMAS FOOD & DRINK OFFERS: 49%
2. CHRISTMAS RECIPES: 44%
3. CHRISTMAS EVENTS & ATTRACTIONS: 37%
4. CHRISTMAS GIFT GUIDES: 34%
5. CHRISTMAS BAKING IDEAS: 31%
6. DECORATION INSPIRATION: 27%
7. ACTIVITIES TO DO AT HOME: 26%

Sources: Mail Metro Media Retail at Christmas 2026



12 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT CHRISTMAS IN 2026

Consumer finances & Spending plans

Bruised, but not broken

The last 12 months have been difficult for a significant proportion of UK households. New and existing global conflicts have resulted in increased uncertainty; putting more pressure on household finances through higher fuel (+7pp) and grocery (+3pp) costs year-on-year.

However, many consumer confidence indicators are showing reasons to be merrier (if not quite merry!) as we head towards 2026 festive season.

A DIFFICULT YEAR

62%

described their finances as Healthy or Okay (vs. 67% in 2025)

REASONS TO BE MERRY?

Net +7%

of Brits think their financial situation will get better by Christmas



Sources: Mail Metro Media *Christmas Countdown 2025-2026 & GFK UK Consumer Sentiment 2025-2026

SPENDING, BUT MORE STRATEGICALLY

Cost-of-living pressures don't automatically translate into consumers spending less at Christmas, it often just means they will be spending "smarter".

A net +29% of Brits claim they will rely on deals and offers more in 2026 than in 2025 and a further net +29% claim they will start planning earlier this year.

Our data consistently shows that there is an advantage to be gained by capturing the early Christmas birds; they spend an average of £150 more on Christmas (+18%)!

CLAIMED BEHAVIOUR CHANGES IN 2026 VS 2025

+29%

net more reliant on deals and discounts

+29%

net intend to plan Christmas shopping earlier



Sources: Mail Metro Media *Christmas Countdown 2025-2026

Loyal, when it pays to be

The proliferation of loyalty card schemes may mean that Brits are increasingly loyal to the best value or benefit – rather than one retailer. However, at Christmas, the value of effective loyalty offerings cannot be underestimated.

Exclusive loyalty discounts are the #1 factor that would encourage shoppers to choose one retailer over another.

And this year, with the ongoing financial uncertainty, they will be more valued by Brits; with 46% agreeing they will be more reliant on them in 2026.

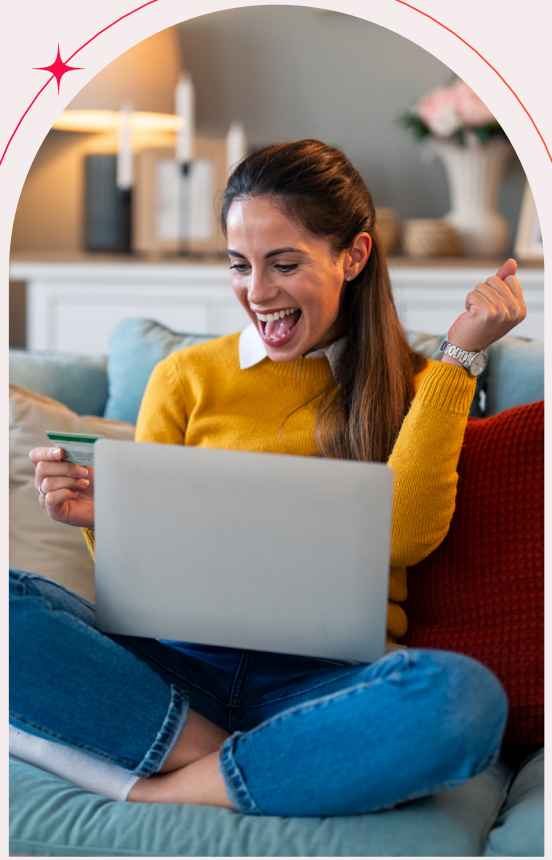
MINTEL

Top 3 factors that would encourage shoppers to choose one retailer over another for Christmas gifts*

1. **Exclusive loyalty discounts:** 37%
2. **Exclusive products:** 26%
3. **Extended return period:** 24%

46%

agree they will be more reliant on retailer loyalty schemes in 2026



Sources: Mail Metro Media *Christmas Countdown 2025-2026 & Mintel Christmas 2026

Super (Black) Friday!

As shoppers seek smarter ways to manage festive budgets, Black Friday is becoming an increasingly influential part of the Christmas shopping journey.

More Brits (63%) plan to pay closer attention to Black Friday offers this year and more (58% vs 52%) plan to buy Christmas gifts during the event.

With 1 in 2 viewing Black Friday as a way to access products they might not otherwise afford, unlocking the potential of Black Friday is becoming increasingly important to retailers.

62%

will pay close attention to Black Friday offers this year (vs 49% LY)

58%

plan to purchase Christmas gifts in the Black Friday promotions (vs 52% LY)



Sources: Mail Metro Media *Christmas Countdown 2025-2026

BLACK FRIDAY IN 2026: A CONSUMER SNAPSHOT

BLACK FRIDAY IS BECOMING AN INCREASINGLY ESSENTIAL PART OF THE CHRISTMAS PLANNING CALENDAR AND THE BLACK FRIDAY WINDOW ITSELF IS EXTENDING! TRUST, RELEVANCY AND PERKS ARE ALL KEY MOTIVATIONS, BEYOND LARGE DISCOUNTS OF COURSE!

NOVEMBER

BLACK FRIDAY MONTH

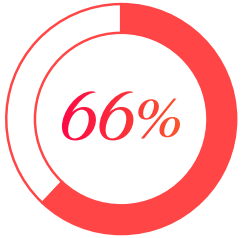
NOVEMBER

13TH

on average, readers start actively looking for Black Friday deals 14 days before Black Friday!
(28% plan a month before)

FEMALE FRIDAY?

WOMEN BUY MORE FOR OTHERS



of female Black Friday shoppers are considering buying gifts for others during the sales event
(vs 49% for men)

BEYOND OFFERS

MOTIVATIONS FOR BUYING

- THE PRODUCT IS SOMETHING I ALREADY WANTED (50%)
- THE RETAILER OR BRAND IS TRUSTWORTHY (41%)
- FREE DELIVERY WITH NO MINIMUM SPEND (36%)

beyond large discounts (60%); retailer trust, existing desire and delivery/return policies motivate readers

Sources: Mail Metro Media Black Friday 2026

IMPLICATIONS: FINANCE AND SPENDING PLANS

INSIGHTS INTO ACTION

IDEA ONE

FIRST ON THE CHRISTMAS LIST

Consumers aren't necessarily planning to spend less; they're planning to spend smarter and sooner. There's still time to influence the list whilst it's still being written, not compete when it's already been decided!

+29%

net intend to plan Christmas shopping earlier

IMPLICATIONS FOR RETAILERS

Give shoppers reasons to start building their Christmas basket early: gift finders, wish lists, early-access ranges, price guarantees, Christmas food inspiration and staged purchasing. Make Black Friday part of, not the start of the journey.

OCT 27TH

59

DAYS TO CHRISTMAS

Average day when people start planning gift shopping

IDEA TWO

GIFTS THAT KEEP ON GIVING

This Christmas, make value go far beyond the price tag. With exclusive loyalty discounts the #1 factor (37%) that could persuade consumers to choose one retailer over another, added value can actively influence where Christmas spend lands.

46%

will be more reliant on loyalty schemes this year

IMPLICATIONS FOR RETAILERS

Give shoppers more back from every Christmas pound. Combine compelling prices with loyalty rewards, member-only offers, free delivery, bundles, early access or added extras that make choosing your brand feel more rewarding — without relying on blanket discounting.

NOV 29TH

26

DAYS TO CHRISTMAS

Average day when people start planning food shop

Christmas Gifting & Leisure

Affordable Luxuries

Despite ongoing financial pressures, Christmas is still seen by many as the best time of year to indulge. And rightly so!

This year, our data suggests that food, drink and family gifts are the most likely spending categories to be prioritised at the expense of self-gifting, decorations and takeaways.

Whichever the category, there are opportunities for brands to encourage and reward indulgence through promoting ‘affordable’ luxuries this year.

We deserve it!

1 IN 2

it’s important to indulge yourself at Christmas

MOST PROTECTED SPEND IN 2026

- Christmas meal food
- Food for the Christmas period
- Gifts for others

1 IN 3

will be trading up on food/ drink options this year

LEAST PROTECTED SPEND IN 2026

- Gifts for yourself
- Takeaways
- Decorations

Sources: Mail Metro Media *Christmas Countdown 2025-2026

EXPERIENCE ENHANCING GIFTS

Gift buyers often make trade-offs like reducing gift spend to prioritise special meals, hosting or socialising. This is driven by both cost-saving and consumers increasingly valuing experiences over possessions.

Gifts that help elevate these important Christmas shared moments are seen as a must have for Christmas 2026 ranges and Christmas content.

A winner for the host and the guest!

MINTEL

1 IN 4

agree they usually spend less on gifts when they host on Christmas Day

60%

I like to provide my guests with a unique experience when hosting (75% for Millennials)



Sources: Mail Metro Media "Connected Moments" 2026 & Mintel Christmas 2026

6

Personalised Presents

In a world of endless gifting choice, shoppers are looking for presents that feel more personal and less predictable.

Unique, handmade and personalised gifts offer a way to demonstrate greater thought and create something that feels truly individual to the recipient.

Products (or packaging) that can be customised, curated or made unique are set to add a more personal touch to Christmas 2026 gifting.

1 IN 2

agree they like to receive personalised gifts at Christmas*

MINTEL

1 IN 3

agree they want more unique gifts not available elsewhere

37%

agree they like to make presents to give to others



Sources: Mail Metro Media "Connected Moments" 2026 & Mintel Christmas 2026

IMPLICATIONS: CHRISTMAS GIFTING

INSIGHTS INTO ACTION

A LITTLE SOMETHING FOR ME

IDEA ONE

1 in 2 say it's important to indulge yourself at Christmas, yet gifts for yourself are among the least protected areas of spend. Everyone deserves a little Christmas treat (at least you know you will like it!).

1 IN 2

say it's important to indulge themselves at Christmas

IMPLICATIONS FOR RETAILERS

Create "little Christmas luxuries" around attainable treats; premium chocolates, beauty minis, candles, fragrances etc. Order by accessible price points. Encourage "One for them, one for me" mentality with small treats offerings in addition to larger purchases.

NOV 27TH

28

DAYS TO CHRISTMAS

Black Friday: A key Christmas/self-gifting date

BRING MORE TO THE TABLE

IDEA TWO

Most hosts (60%) want to give guests a unique experience when hosting but many end up spending less on gifts. Rather than competing with hosting spend, retailers can make the gift part of the occasion.

1 IN 4

agree they usually spend less on gifts when they host on Christmas Day

IMPLICATIONS FOR RETAILERS

Reframe the host gift from "something to hand over at the door" to "something everyone gets to enjoy." Create a Bring More to the Table collection: after-dinner games, cocktail kits, sharing desserts, cheese experiences, tablescaping wine tasting, karaoke, photo moments, craft kits for children.

DEC 26TH-29TH

1-4

DAYS AFTER CHRISTMAS

Most popular days for additional Christmas meals!

ESPECIALLY FOR YOU

IDEA THREE

Unique and personalised gifts are in demand this Christmas with 1 in 2 claiming they like receiving personalised gifts. At a time when 7 in 10 think Christmas has become too commercialised, personalisation is evidence of effort!

1 IN 3

agree they want more unique gifts not available elsewhere

IMPLICATIONS FOR RETAILERS

For brands that sell customisable products; create a personalisation station (physical or digital) that enable ordinary products to become personal gifts through bespoke labels, packaging, engraving etc. For brands that don't; let shoppers create a recipient specific gift bundle based on "who they are".

DEC 5TH

20

DAYS TO CHRISTMAS

Small Business Saturday

5

Wishing You a Merry Twixmas!

Part One: Reducing Stress

After the effort of Christmas Day, Twixmas, the period between Boxing Day and New Year, is a chance to slow down and simplify. Consumers seek easier meals, relaxed entertainment and low-effort ways to enjoy time together.

This opens opportunities across food, delivery, leisure and home comforts.

SUSTAINED CELEBRATION

85%

have an additional Christmas meal beyond their main dinner

CONVENIENCE PIVOT

1 IN 2

would consider ordering groceries / takeaways over the festive period

KITCHEN BURNOUT

3 IN 5

agree they find making Christmas dinner stressful



Sources: Mail Metro Media *Christmas Countdown 2025-2026

FOOD DELIVERY SERVICES: A CONSUMER SNAPSHOT

AS CHRISTMAS APPROACHES, SHOPPERS INCREASINGLY TURN TO DELIVERY SERVICES TO EASE THE PRESSURE OF FESTIVE PREPARATION, CREATING AN OPPORTUNITY FOR CONVENIENCE-LED BRANDS.

CHRISTMAS CRUNCH & TWIXMAS TREAT

DECEMBER	DECEMBER
22ND - 24TH	26TH - 31ST

As festive demands build, the days before Christmas emerge as a key delivery window for 63%. There is also a Twixmas surge (55%).

REASONS FOR USING

PERSONAL CONVENIENCE (62%)
(E.G. SHORT ON TIME, OUT OF KEY ITEMS, DON'T FEEL LIKE COOKING)

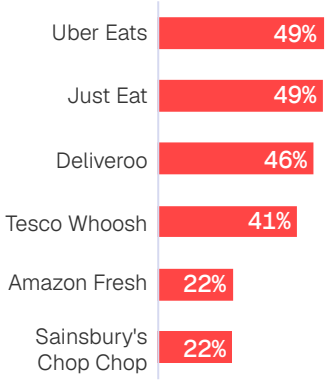
EASY ENTERTAINING (60%)
(E.G. GUESTS STAYING OVER, DON'T WANT TO COOK FOR OTHERS)

FESTIVE FOOD PREP (52%)
(E.G. FOR THE CHRISTMAS MEAL, FESTIVE SNACKS OR WEEKLY SHOP)

SOCIAL CELEBRATIONS(52%)
(E.G. PREPARING FOR CELEBRATIONS, PARTIES AND PLANNED GATHERINGS)

Personal convenience is the key driver, helping shoppers manage the time and effort associated with Christmas.

WHO SHOPPERS TURN TO



Uber Eats and Just Eat are the most considered platforms as shoppers seek fast and reliable convenience.

Sources: Mail Metro Media "Christmas Countdown 2026

5

Wishing You a Merry Twixmas!

Part Two: Starting Afresh

As New Year approaches, attention turns from indulgence to renewal. Twixmas becomes a moment to reset, with opportunities across health, wellbeing, beauty, fitness and home as consumers prepare to start January feeling refreshed.

SUSTAINED CELEBRATION

Happy, Content & Calm

the three most dominant emotions experienced post Christmas

POST-CHRISTMAS SLUMP

2 in 5

say they feel the unhealthiest over Christmas period

NEW YEAR

1 in 4

bought food or drink specifically to celebrate the New Year



Sources: Mail Metro Media *Christmas Countdown 2025-2026 & IPA Christmas survey 2024

TWIXMAS: A CONSUMER SNAPSHOT

AS CHRISTMAS DRAWS TO A CLOSE, SHOPPERS SHIFT THEIR FOCUS FROM GIFTING TO SELF-IMPROVEMENT, CREATING A KEY OPPORTUNITY FOR BRANDS TO SUPPORT NEW YEAR AMBITIONS AND INSPIRE ACTION.

DECEMBER

THE MOMENT AMBITIONS BEGIN

DECEMBER

28TH

Searches for New Year's resolutions peak on 28th December as consumers start planning how they'll improve their lives in the year ahead.

WHAT SHOPPERS WANT TO ACHIEVE

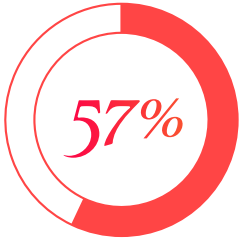
FRESH STARTS TAKE SHAPE

1. Do more exercise: 43%
2. Quality time with family & friends: 37%
3. Travel more: 35%
4. Save money: 34%
5. Improve my diet: 33%

Exercise, quality time, travel and healthier habits top the list of goals as consumers look to start the new year on the right foot.

FROM AMBITION TO ACTION

NEW YEAR GOALS DRIVE SPENDING



More than half of resolution-makers have purchased products or services to help achieve their goals.

Sources: Matters Community Survey December 2025 & January 2026, Google trends

Implications: Christmas Leisure

INSIGHTS INTO ACTION

A tale of two Christmas deliveries

With 3 in 5 finding hosting Christmas dinner stressful, consumers are looking for ways to save time and effort without compromising on their festive plans. Delivery services have an important role to play throughout the Christmas period, with two key peaks in demand.

Implications for retailers

From last-minute essentials and unexpected guests to effortless entertaining and post-Christmas relaxation, retailers and delivery services can position themselves as the solution to festive stress. Rather than simply promoting delivery, create offers and services around the specific moments when consumers need a helping hand.

IDEA ONE

1 IN 2

would consider ordering groceries/ takeaways over the festive period

DEC 22ND-24TH

1-3

DAYS TO CHRISTMAS

The Christmas rescue: 63% would consider

DEC 26TH-31ST

1-6

AFTER CHRISTMAS

The Kitchen is closed: 55% would consider

Old year, new you!

Don't wait until January to start talking about New Year goals. Many consumers begin thinking about the changes they want to make well before Twixmas and the New Year, creating an opportunity for retailers to turn good intentions into action.

Implications for retailers

Make 28th December a shopping and inspiration moment, with curated products, content and offers to help shoppers get a head start on their resolutions. Food retailers can offer healthy meal bundles, fresh and convenient nutritious options for shoppers looking to improve their diets after Christmas. Wellbeing retailers can create accessible starter kits, introductory offers and short challenges to give consumers a headstart on their resolutions.

IDEA TWO

2 IN 5

said they would be trying to have a healthier Christmas in 2025

DEC 28TH

3

DAYS AFTER CHRISTMAS

Google searches for gym membership peak

CHRISTMAS ADVERTISING & MEDIA

4

Social is Rising, and "Dropping"

Social is now the #1 source shoppers turn to for leisure and for gift ideas (and #2 for food). The proportion of Brits using social for gift inspiration has risen +10pp between 2024 and 2026!

Livestream shopping and social commerce are accelerating this trend and offer powerful ways to turn Christmas inspiration into purchases, with examples from brands such as Marks & Spencer creating urgency and exclusivity through "drop culture".

TikTok Shop is also intensifying competition and spotlighting unique small-business options.

2026

40%

increase in Social Media Use for Gift Inspiration

+10PP

increase since 2024



Sources: Mail Metro Media *Christmas Countdown 2024-2026

3

AI IS ASSISTING!

AI is starting to become a bigger part of the Christmas shopping journey, especially for younger generations.

AI is mainly used at the inspiration stage but recent developments point towards it impacting throughout the funnel in 2026.

Although AI search volumes are still relatively low, referrals were up +693% YoY during the 2025 festive period. And a significant proportion of those coming through LLM referrals (86%) demonstrated a high-intent action.

For brands, this creates a new discovery opportunity — being visible and useful wherever AI is helping consumers decide what to buy.

27% 2026

would consider using AI for personalised gift recommendations (all adults)

23% 2025

CONSIDERATION BY GENERATION

42% GEN Z

41% MILLENNIALS

17% GEN X

8% BABY BOOMERS

Sources: Mail Metro Media *Christmas Countdown 2025-2026

2

Bricks and More Woah!

Although social, commerce and AI are growing in popularity, the importance of the instore experience cannot be downplayed. 1 in 2 found gift inspiration by browsing in-store in 2025 and in-store displays/ads are the #2 source for food and drink inspiration.

Retailers are innovating by leveraging existing brand partnerships and creating curated, story-led in-store gifting destinations. For example, Selfridges partnered with Disney in 2026 to create a Disney castle installation, themed pop-ups and over 60 exclusive brand collaborations.

MINTEL

1 IN 2

found gift inspiration by browsing in stores in 2025

78%

believe that being physically present creates memories that digital experiences cannot



Sources: Mail Metro Media *Christmas Countdown 2024-2026

IMPLICATIONS: CHRISTMAS ADVERTISING AND MEDIA

INSIGHTS INTO ACTION

IDEA ONE

STOP SCROLLING, START SHOPPING

Social media is now one of the leading sources of inspiration for Christmas gifts, leisure and food. Retailers need to give shoppers a reason to stop scrolling and start shopping. Rather than simply using social to advertise existing Christmas ranges, brands can create exclusive shopping moments that make discovery feel exciting and reward consumers for engaging.

IMPLICATIONS FOR RETAILERS

From exclusive launches of festive gifts or products, curated shoppable social gift guides to interactive livestream shopping events with demonstrations and exclusive bundles. There are more ways than ever for brands to connect to current, and new, consumers through social.

#1

social is number 1 source for gift inspiration

OCT 27TH

59

DAYS TO CHRISTMAS

Average day when people **start planning** gift shopping

IDEA TWO

STEP INTO CHRISTMAS

As Christmas shopping becomes increasingly digital, physical stores still have an important role in helping consumers discover products and experience festive magic. The opportunity is to make stores more than places to complete a transaction. Give consumers something worth visiting, experiencing and sharing.

IMPLICATIONS FOR RETAILERS

Partner with innovative media owners to help create buzz and drive footfall to your in-store Christmas experiences. Use editorial and social content to build anticipation, creators to bring the experience to life, and even experiential activations to encourage visits and generate shareable moments.

78%

believe being physically present creates memories that digital experiences cannot

NOV 1ST

54

DAYS TO CHRISTMAS

The average day that Brits **start** their Christmas gift shopping

1

Partner with us to create Christmas magic!

As a broadcast publisher, we offer brands an exciting opportunity to engage your potential consumers across print, digital, social, audio as well as experiential, outdoor and even Christmas events!

Partnering with us gives you access to our exciting creators, our trusted content and our premium formats; allowing you to create some Christmas magic with any audience!

REACH

39M

British adults reached every month (72% of GB pop)

£5BN

spent on Christmas gifts every year (that's 76p in every £1 spent on christmas gifts)

TRUST

+68%

increase in brand trust in campaigns that use newsbrands

DATA

hone in on your target audience with unique and effective data products

29M

Christmas gift buyers reached every month (74% Of all buyers)

EFFECTIVENESS

+59%

average increase in consideration of our partnerships

AGILE

+74%

increase in attentive seconds on advertising when messaging contextually relevant

PREMIUM

stand out from the Christmas crowd with deepdive, storyflow and our new premium formats

CHRISTMAS COUNTDOWN

Mail Metro Media

KEY DATES

OCT 27TH

59 DAYS TO CHRISTMAS

The average day that Brits start their Christmas gift planning

Women are +19pp more likely than men to have started Christmas planning before November

NOV 1ST

54 DAYS TO CHRISTMAS

The average day that Brits start their Christmas gift shopping

Mail Metro Media readers accounted for 76p in every £1 spent on Christmas gifts in 2025

NOV 3RD

52 DAYS TO CHRISTMAS

Searches for "luxury advent calendars" begin to increase

1 in 5 plan to self-gift this Christmas but self-gifting spend is being deprioritised

NOV 5TH

50 DAYS TO CHRISTMAS

Christmas markets begin to open

3 in 10 had a Christmas day out over the festive period in 2025

NOV 11TH

44 DAYS TO CHRISTMAS

Singles Day

2 in 5 would be interested in buying Christmas gifts on Single's Day

NOV 13TH

42 DAYS TO CHRISTMAS

The average date shoppers start to actively look for Black Friday deals

Retailer-specific deals (40%) and price history explainers (38%) are the most in-demand Black Friday content

NOV 20TH

35 DAYS TO CHRISTMAS

One week before Black Friday

58% are considering purchasing Christmas gifts in the Black Friday promotions this year (vs. 49% LY)

NOV 21ST

34 DAYS TO CHRISTMAS

Start of Black Friday week (most major offers are appearing)

Clothing (54%), Personal Tech (39%), and Mobile phones (37%) top the Black Friday lists of our readers this year

NOV 24TH

31 DAYS TO CHRISTMAS

Three days to Black Friday

Did you know: Traffic to our commerce channel increased by +70% during Black Friday week and our content generated 7,000 orders over the Black Friday period

NOV 26TH

29 DAYS TO CHRISTMAS

THANKS-GIVING

45% are interested in stories of gratitude and giving back.

NOV 27TH

28 DAYS TO CHRISTMAS

BLACK FRIDAY

Mail Metro Media readers account for 74p in every £1 spent on Black Friday

NOV 29TH

26 DAYS TO CHRISTMAS

The average day that Brits start planning their Christmas Food shopping

Food and Drink offers (50%) and Christmas recipe content (45%) are the most in demand Christmas content

NOV 30TH

25 DAYS TO CHRISTMAS

CYBER MONDAY

Women are +35% more likely than men to be considering buying gifts for others during the Black Friday sales

THE COUNTDOWN CONTINUES....

Sources: Mail Metro Media: Retail at Christmas 2024| Mail Metro Media: Christmas Countdown 2026| Google Trends 2025| Mail Metro Media: Moments that Matter: Single's Day| Mail Metro Media: Moments that Matter: Black Friday| Mail Metro Media: Moments that Matter: Thanksgiving| TGI GB April 2026| Mintel: Christmas Gift Buying 2026| www.savethechildren.co.uk| Mail Metro Media: Christmas Pulse Poll 2025| Mail Metro Media: Moments that Matter: New Years Resolutions

DEC 1ST

23 DAYS TO CHRISTMAS

Most popular day to put up Christmas decorations (17%)

3 in 10 readers are interested in Christmas decoration inspiration content - rising to 47% for women

DEC 3RD

22 DAYS TO CHRISTMAS

Christmas party season set to start

47% of those intending to buy a new festive outfit will do so as a treat for themselves

DEC 4TH

21 DAYS TO CHRISTMAS

Average date when Brits start their Christmas food shopping

1 in 2 Brits like to try the Christmas ranges offered by different supermarkets

DEC 5TH

20 DAYS TO CHRISTMAS

SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY

1 in 3 agree they want more unique gifts this Christmas in 2026

DEC 6TH

19 DAYS TO CHRISTMAS

The average day that Brits claim to finish their gift shopping

Those who shop for Christmas earlier spend an average of +44% more on Christmas!

DEC 9TH

16 DAYS TO CHRISTMAS

Letters to Santa postal date

42% of parents are interested in reading Christmas Gift Guide content

DEC 10TH

15 DAYS TO CHRISTMAS

CHRISTMAS JUMPER DAY

£2.6m was raised for Save the Children in 2025

DEC 12TH

13 DAYS TO CHRISTMAS

The average day that Brits think the real festive period starts

2 in 3 Brits agree that the "the magic of Christmas has been lost"

DEC 14TH

11 DAYS TO CHRISTMAS

Green Monday (one of biggest online booking days)

65% intend to do at least half of their Christmas gift shopping online in 2026

DEC 15TH

10 DAYS TO CHRISTMAS

Pre-Christmas Food Delivery Opportunities

47% are likely to consider using food delivery services during the festive period in 2026

DEC 17TH

8 DAYS TO CHRISTMAS

Last 2nd Class post in 2025 (2026 TBC)

Men are TWICE as likely to start their Christmas shopping in the week before Christmas

DEC 18TH

7 DAYS TO CHRISTMAS

Merry and Flight

3 in 5 readers would consider travelling abroad over the festive period

DEC 19TH

6 DAYS TO CHRISTMAS

SUPER SATURDAY

54% of Christmas shoppers finish their food shop in this week

THE COUNTDOWN CONTINUES....

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DEC 20TH

5 DAYS TO CHRISTMAS

Last 1st Class post (TBC) + last working Friday before Christmas

4 in 5 still send Christmas cards or letters

DEC 21ST

4 DAYS TO CHRISTMAS

Winter Solstice (shortest day of the year)

24% often feel lonely at Christmas - rising to 35% for those who are struggling financially or living alone

DEC 22ND

3 DAYS TO CHRISTMAS

Pre-Christmas Food Delivery Opportunities

Being short on time (37%) and running out of key items (34%) are the top reasons to use delivery services over Christmas

DEC 23RD

2 DAYS TO CHRISTMAS

Movie Moments

43% say watching Christmas movies is one of their favourite Christmas activities

DEC 24TH

1 DAYS TO CHRISTMAS

Christmas Eve

1 in 5 buy last minute food and drink items on Christmas Eve

DEC 25TH

Christmas Day

Spending time with family (81%) is the #1 aspect of Christmas that our readers enjoy

DEC 26TH

+1 DAYS AFTER CHRISTMAS

Boxing Day

1 in 6 shopped in Boxing Day Sales last year. It is also the most popular day to have an additional Christmas dinner!

DEC 27TH

+2 DAYS AFTER CHRISTMAS

Twixmas Begins

Post Christmas slump: 2 in 5 say they feel the unhealthiest over the Christmas period. The second-biggest traffic day on the Buyline channel in December

DEC 28TH

+3 DAYS AFTER CHRISTMAS

New Year's Resolutions

Searches for "Gym membership" peak and "New Year's Resolutions" begin to increase

DEC 29TH

+4 DAYS AFTER CHRISTMAS

Post-Christmas Food Delivery Opportunities

55% would consider using food delivery services in the period between Christmas and New Year

DEC 30TH

+5 DAYS AFTER CHRISTMAS

New Year's Preparation

1 in 5 bought food or drink specifically to Celebrate New Year's Eve last year

DEC 31ST

+6 DAYS AFTER CHRISTMAS

New Year's Eve

3 in 5 stayed up past midnight to celebrate New Year in 2025

JAN 1ST

+7 DAYS AFTER CHRISTMAS

New Year's Day

Doing more exercise (43%) and spending more time with friends and family (37%) were the top resolutions in 2025

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THE END