

BETWEEN THE LINES

KELLY ANDERSON GROUP - MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



Online Shipments During the Holidays

With every holiday package that appears on a doorstep, holding a special gift inside, there's an online order being sent to a delivery service where they do whatever it takes to ensure its timely arrival for Christmas morning.

Online purchasing has seemingly become the norm of today's society, largely affecting the package and delivery industry. Some are struggling to keep up, while others have possibly overestimated the numbers. According to NPR, delivery services between Thanksgiving and Christmas, such as the United Parcel Service (UPS) and the U.S. Postal Service (USPS), had predicted they would deliver over 800 million packages in 2019, increasing in 2021 to 13.2 billion mail pieces total. During the 2021 November and December holiday seasons, retail sales saw a 14.1 percent increase from 2020 sales, according to the National Retail Federation (NRF). It resulted in \$886.7 billion in sales, far exceeding what the NRF had predicted for 2021. Products ordered included clothing, groceries, building materials and more. Some sources even say further projections are set for 2022. The majority of these numbers can be presumed to result from the online shipping world.

This increase in internet purchases means more package deliveries, and more package deliveries mean more trucks, drivers and employees are needed. Most fleets like UPS, FedEx and the USPS hire seasonal employees to keep up with the peak season. However, despite a large number of mail being received by the USPS in 2021 and the correlated predictions for this year, FedEx announced in September of this year that they were so far seeing lower order requests than originally foreseen for 2022.

FedEx said they overestimated their delivery demand in 2021 where contractors ended up paying for trucks they never used and employees they never needed. In fear of this scenario occurring again, they are preparing instead to cut the number of new hires and combine servicing centers, according to Reuters. Before FedEx's announcement, Amazon also admitted they had overbuilt warehouses by \$2 billion, as reported by Wired, and consequently induced higher prices for the companies utilizing them. These businesses then had to increase their prices to keep up with the change, especially going into the holiday season.

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FedEx's report of a decrease in consumer orders most likely stems from inflation and consumers' hesitancy to purchase online abundantly - or even normally - due to the heightened prices. ShopifyPlus states in an article, "Consumers and merchants continue to adjust to the rapidly changing commerce landscape we've witnessed over the past two years." Despite these fluctuations, UPS is still planning to hire the same number of seasonal workers as 2021 for this year, according to a spokesman, which is more than 100,000 employees. This decision is a positive for those in need of jobs, especially during the Christmas season, but it could mean financial difficulty for UPS and other companies.

No matter which direction the number of packages goes this year, all the delivery companies can do is prepare for the worst and best-case scenarios - however they may define that - to ensure families receive their Christmas deliveries.

"This increase in internet purchases means more package deliveries, and more package deliveries mean more trucks and drivers are needed."

Christmas Traditions Around the World

One of the beautiful aspects of this world is that countries across the planet hold different Christmas traditions - some interesting, some odd, and all unique.

Here in the United States, many different cultures throughout the nation have their special traditions. Although, the most common range from the Christmas tree and mistletoe, to opening presents on Christmas morning. Western society also tends to believe in the idea of Santa Claus delivering gifts for good children, as well as celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ. There are even more unique traditions involving pickle ornaments or trinkets hidden in the Christmas tree. However, America is not the only place to believe in these stories and follow these traditions.

The United Kingdom, Canada and other countries also pass on similar traditions such as a decorated fir tree and Christmas caroling. Naturally, though, there are differences. For instance, in Toronto, Canada they hold a spectacular and bright event called the Cavalcade of Lights where thousands of lights and fireworks brighten up the sky and town right outside City Hall. In the UK, they pop open colorful, paper table decorations called "crackers" and find a small gift and riddle inside. Across the globe in the Philippines, citizens throughout various cities and villages gather in San Fernando for the Giant Lantern Festival. A competition is held to see who can construct the grandest, brightest and most beautiful and elaborate lantern displays, which are made of local materials and lit candles. Then there are countries in Scandinavia that believe in a "Yule Goat" which dates back to pagan beliefs but has become a simple Christmas symbol today. In coloration to this myth, citizens in Sweden build a giant straw Gävle Goat every Advent where burning down the goat has also become tradition. These various practices show how every culture carries its own special way of celebrating this time of year, including the history behind them.

From St. Nicholas to Yule goats, every country bares roots in their unique traditions, which are what make them all special. Everyone can learn something new from these customs and cultures, hopefully seeing how connected humanity is despite the differences.

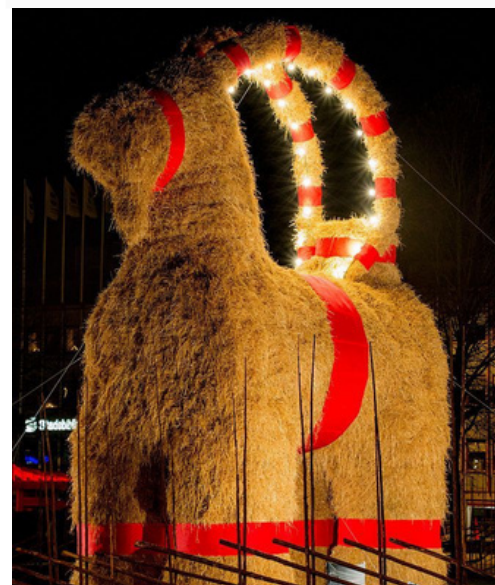


Photo of the giant straw Gävle Goat in Sweden. Photo credit to Getty Images.

TRIVIA

What is the most popular American holiday tradition?



If you have any questions about these topics or how
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please contact:

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Company Updates

- **Service Providers**, be sure to sign up your trainers for **Qualification Certification** before your peak season! As an approved FXG vendor, we offer our **Impact Safety Trainer Program** which can help get your drivers qualified! We are continuing classes through 2023! Visit our website to see where we're traveling to ([Link at the bottom of this page](#)).

Team Member Spotlight

Jimmy Tikunoff



Position: *Multimedia Producer*

Length at company: *1 year 8 months*

What I Love About My Job: *Company lunch & events (such as our Christmas party)*

QUIZ ANSWER: **Decorating the Christmas tree is the most popular American tradition according to the New York.**