



# BrandedPay™ Holiday 2020 Report

Forecasting a big year for gift cards



**BLACKHAWK**  
N E T W O R K



# Looking to Holiday 2020

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This holiday shopping season will be unlike any other year. Consumers are trying to plan around the unknown and are getting ready to celebrate remotely. As the holidays approach with COVID-19 pandemic restrictions in full force in the US, consumers and retailers alike are getting ready to find new ways to connect to friends and family this year.

To understand consumers' feelings about holiday shopping this year, we conducted a survey of 1,500 Americans in late August, 2020. We combined that data with analysis of our own sales data across 50,000 US merchant locations from the last two years. In the end, we're forecasting that shoppers are going to shop earlier, shop online more and shop for gift cards specifically more than ever.

The convenience and flexibility that gift cards offer have always been appealing, but this year consumers plan to turn to gift cards to help deal with the uncertainty and difficulty of shopping in 2020.







# Getting an Early Start

Some shoppers say that they plan to start holiday shopping earlier this year. Items are out of stock, store hours are restricted, lines are long and everything moves a little bit slower.

**28% of consumers**

surveyed are starting their holiday shopping earlier this year, and many are point to the pandemic as their reasoning.



**The top 3 reasons surveyed consumers report they are shopping earlier are:**



**They are worried COVID-19 will impact their ability to shop**

**46%**



**They want to avoid crowds and long lines**

**41%**



**They are trying to budget their holiday spending**

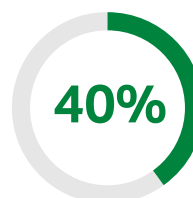
**40%**

# Turning to Gift Cards

Gift cards are an appealing solution to many of the problems faced by holiday shoppers this year. As a result, they are more interested in gift cards and plan to buy more of them this year.



say they are more likely to buy more gift cards this year



of their holiday gifting budgets are going to gift cards—\$313 on average and a 19% increase over 2019



10 gift cards on average—twice as many as last year



of surveyed employees would like to receive a gift card from their employers this year

**Friends and family have been exchanging gift cards throughout the pandemic, and many of those unused gifts are about to be used.**



66% of surveyed shoppers have an unused gift card purchased or received during the pandemic



72% plan to use them for holiday shopping



56% for self-use



28% for gifting





# Embracing Digital Options

Everyone has adapted to 2020 by going digital, and holiday shoppers plan to continue that trend.



Use of eGifts has also grown a lot this year: Blackhawk Network sales data shows that eGifts sold on merchant websites are up 74% over 2019.



A few of the gift card categories that are seeing a lot of growth are also some of the most popular gift card categories for holiday shopping, including:



71% increase  
in home goods



29% increase  
in restaurant



18% increase  
in fashion



# Doing More to Help Others

Uncertainty and lockdown restrictions have created economic chaos as well, and as a result many members of our communities are struggling. People have responded with an outpouring of charity and support. Shoppers are interested in options like the Giving Good™ gift cards, which donate a portion of the face value of the card to a selected charity.



plan to make a charitable donation this year



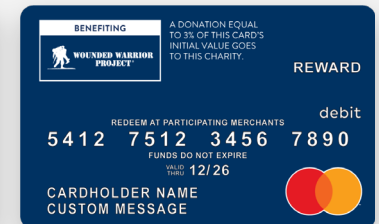
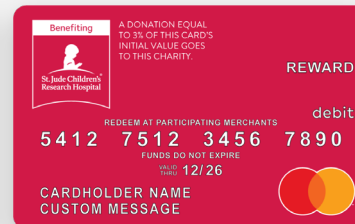
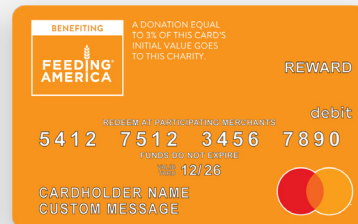
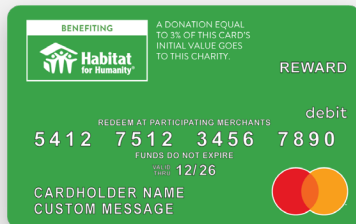
plan to donate more than last year



are interested in a gift card that gives back



are likely to purchase gift cards as a way to give back

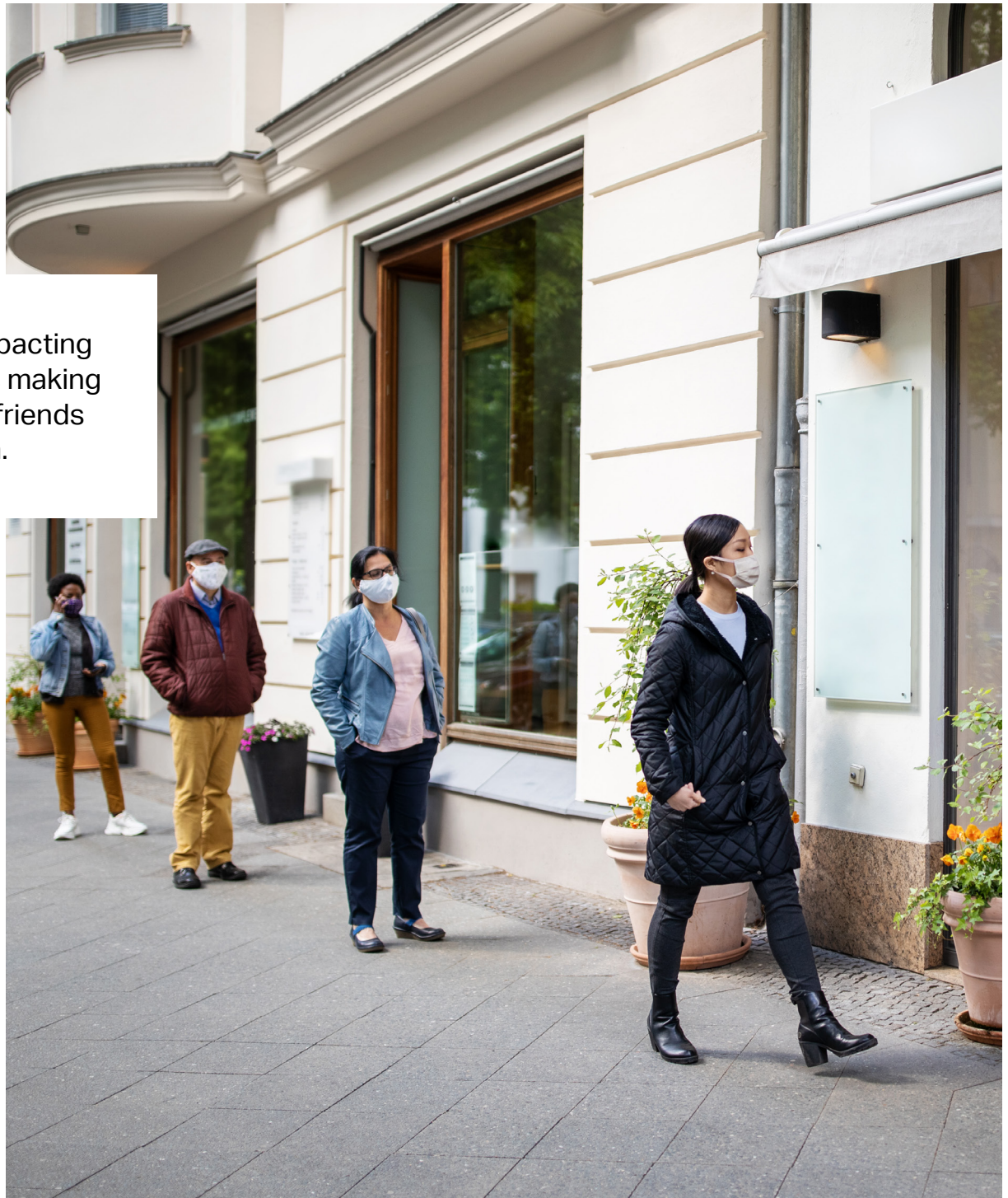




# Shopping in a Pandemic

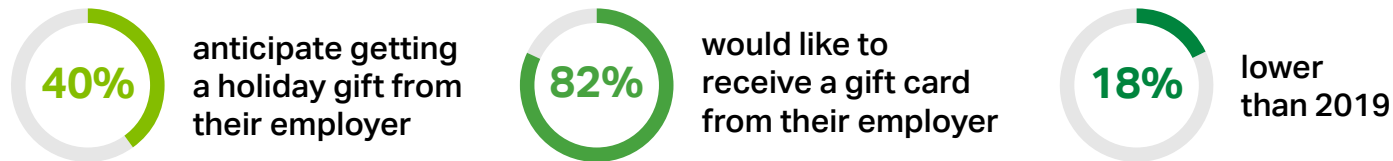
Like everything else this year, COVID-19 is impacting shoppers' holiday plans. Everyone in the US is making plans to celebrate remotely and send gifts to friends and family they won't be able to visit in person.

## This year:



# Gifts From Work

The American workplace has been a focus of upheaval during 2020. Office parties and holiday team-building exercises are most likely canceled and many companies are struggling to stay afloat. Fewer employees expect to get gifts from work this year, but those that do would prefer to get gift cards.



## Top 3 favorite holiday gifts:



## Employees say they like gift cards because:







# About Blackhawk Network

Blackhawk Network delivers branded payment programs to meet our partners' business objectives. We collaborate with our partners to innovate, translating marketing trends in branded payments to increase reach, loyalty and revenue. With more than 1,000 brands and card partners in more than 280,000 retail locations in 28 countries, we connect with more than 300 million shoppers across the globe each week. Join us as we shape the future of global branded payments.

*METHODOLOGY: This eBook reflects the findings of an online survey completed by 1,500 consumers between August 24 and August 31, 2020. This data is combined with analysis of 2018–2020 sales data across our 50,000 US merchant locations.*

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