

Optimove Insights :

2025 Consumer Summer Shopping Report

June 2025

Insights

Winning Consumer Trust in a Time of Tariffs, Tight Budgets, and Economic Uncertainty

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Part 1:

Executive Summary

Winning Summer 2025 with Empathy, Relevance, and Omnichannel Agility

Optimove's 2025 Consumer Summer Shopping Survey, conducted among 320 U.S. consumers aged 18 to 65 with household incomes above \$75,000, reveals how economic pressures, personalization, and omnichannel expectations are shaping consumer behavior this summer.

Key findings show that consumers remain highly sensitive to economic conditions. Fifty-five percent are very concerned about tariffs, with many already adjusting their budgets as a result. Inflation remains top of mind for 83 percent of respondents. Together, these concerns are driving demand for brands to be more empathetic, transparent, and responsive.

Consumers are shopping earlier, with 70 percent beginning their summer purchases between March and May. Despite economic headwinds, 39 percent plan to spend more than last year, and 37 percent plan to spend the same. Value and quality are top priorities, with 82 percent ranking quality as their most important purchase factor and 75 percent saying price drives urgency.

Personalization plays a major role in engagement. More than half of respondents say personalization makes them feel understood or guided, and 46 percent are more likely to open brand emails when they feel relevant. Email remains the dominant communication channel, with 48 percent preferring it over SMS or app notifications.

Omnichannel behavior is the norm. Eighty-two percent (82%) of shoppers check prices online while in-store, and many engage in research online, purchase in-store (ROPIS) behavior, especially for beauty and hard goods. Consumers are intentional with their choices, with 94 percent reporting they often know where they will shop online before browsing.

Although sustainability has declined as a top priority, it still matters. Forty-three percent say it is extremely or very important, and 79 percent say it is at least somewhat important.

This report offers actionable recommendations to help retailers respond with empathy, relevance, and agility, especially in a season marked by uncertainty and evolving customer expectations.

Positionless Marketing is emerging as a key enabler for brands to respond empathetically and efficiently. By removing internal silos and giving every marketer the ability to take action, whether creating personalized content, analyzing data, or optimizing campaigns, Positionless Marketing empowers teams to meet customer needs in real time, with empathy and impact. It frees marketing teams from the limitations of fixed roles, giving every marketer the power to execute any marketing task instantly and independently. In an era of economic stress and shifting expectations, this agility is critical.

Report Methodology

The report is based on results from the Optimove 2025 Consumer Summer Shopping Survey that queried 320 U.S. citizens in April-May 2025. Respondents were 18-plus, 49% male/51% female (no respondents were non-binary or declined to answer), and household incomes were \$75,000-plus.

Part 2:

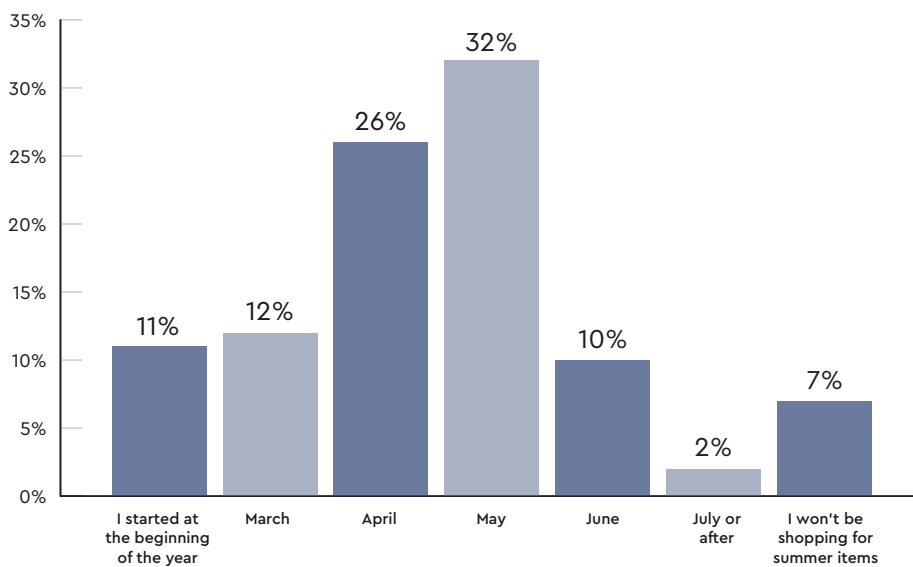
Charts and Detailed Results

When respondents started Summer shopping

Seventy percent (70%) of consumers responded that they shopped for summer items starting in March, April and May. Eleven percent (11%) already began as of January 2025. and 19% said they shop for summer items in June or later.

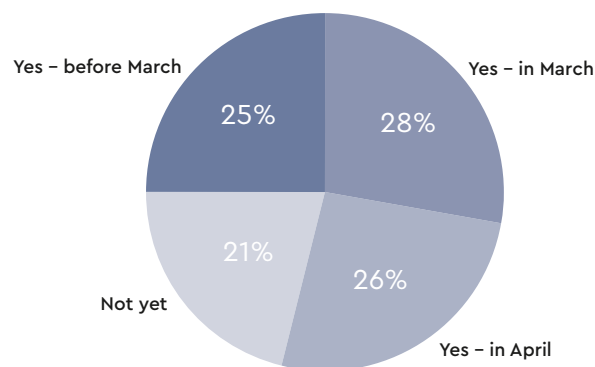
A quarter of respondents (25%) noted that they started receiving offers from brands before March and 28% in March. It indicates that brands are in synch with consumers.

In thinking about summer and your needs, when will you start shopping?



Source: Optimove Insights 2025 Consumer Summer Shopping Survey

Did you start receiving special offers for summer items?

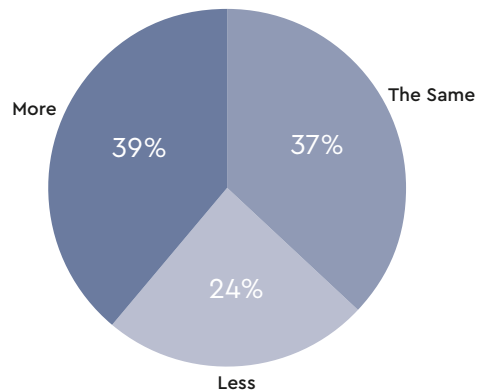


Source: Optimove Insights 2025 Consumer Summer Shopping Survey

Budget

Thirty-nine percent (39%) say their budget is more than 2024 summer shopping, thirty-seven percent (37%) say it is the same.

Is your budget for shopping for the summer more, less or the same as 2024 (last year)?



Source: Optimove Insights 2025 Consumer Summer Shopping Survey

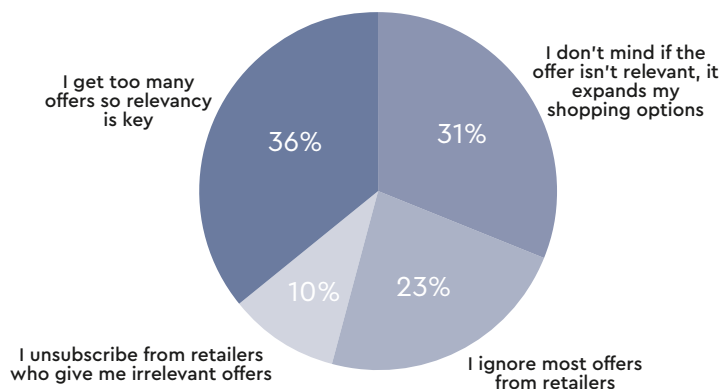
Personalization, Relevancy

Relevance of an offer is important to 46% of consumers as 36% of noted that relevancy is important as they get too many offers from brands, and 10% say they unsubscribe from brands that give irrelevant offers.

Fifty-seven percent (57%) of consumers say personalization is important to them either because "it lets me know the brand knows me" (38%), or it is like having a shopping helper (19%).

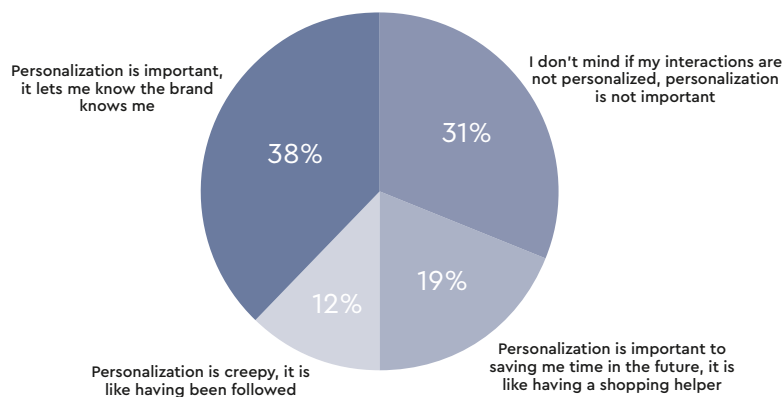
With that said, forty-five percent (45%) of consumers noted that the number one thing that will get them to open an email is relevancy, followed by 'identity of the brand' 19%, and 'personalization beyond my name' (17%).

How important is the relevancy of an offer from a retailer?



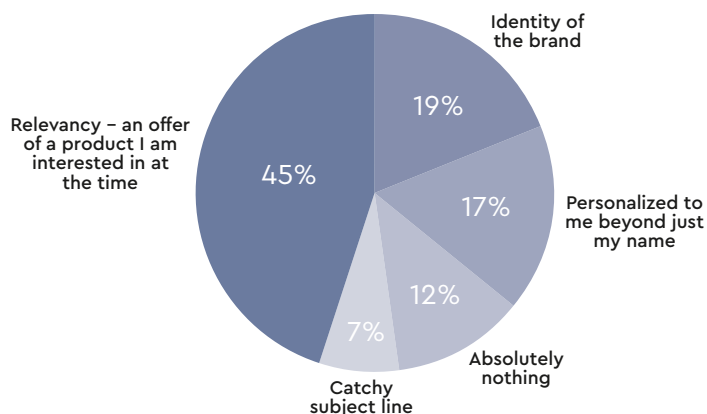
Source: Optimove Insights 2025 Consumer Summer Shopping Survey

How important is personalization in your shopping from a retailer?



Source: Optimove Insights 2025 Consumer Summer Shopping Survey

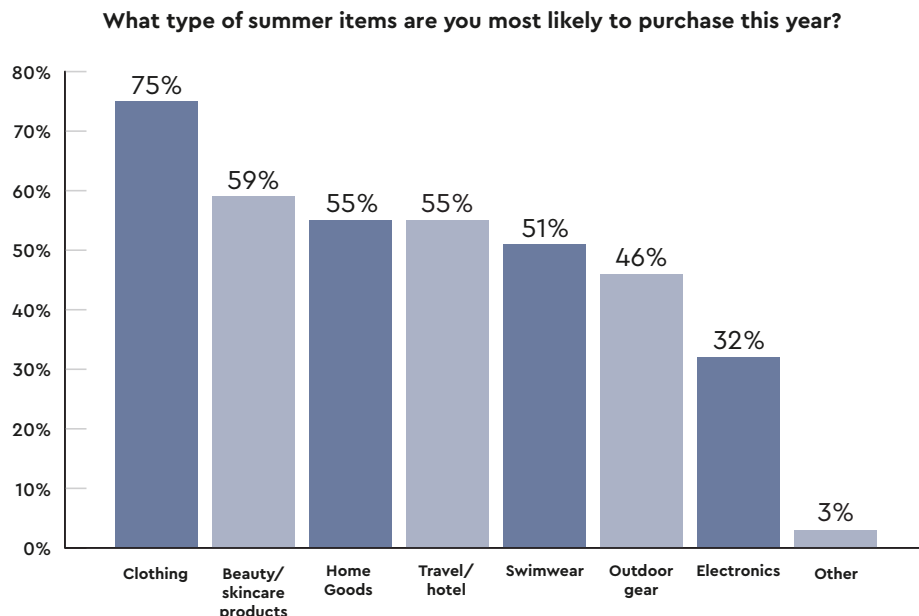
What is the number 1 thing that will make you open a marketing email?



Source: Optimove Insights 2025 Consumer Summer Shopping Survey

What people will buy

The top items that respondents plan to buy are clothing (75%), beauty products at (59%), home goods (55%), travel (55%), swimwear (51%) and outdoor gear (46%).



Source: Optimove Insights 2025 Consumer Summer Shopping Survey

Research Online Purchase In-Store (ROPIS): The new standard

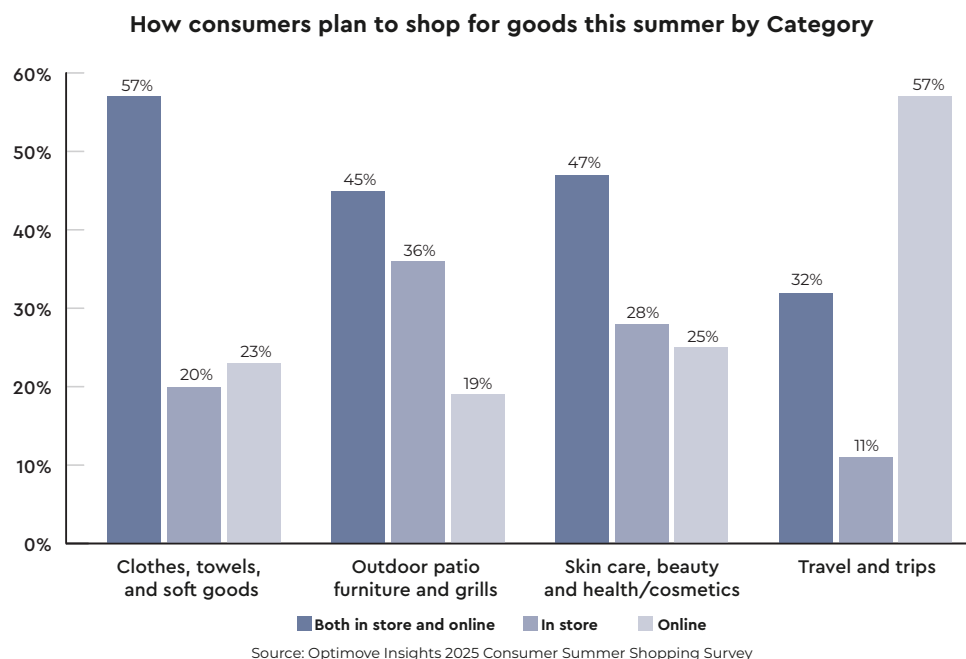
Respondents indicate across all product categories (soft goods, hard goods, beauty/health, travel) a preference for shopping by ROPIS (Research Online, Purchase In-Store).

Soft goods: Almost sixty percent of respondents (57%) buy soft goods like towels and clothes are inclined to shop both in-store and online, while 20% will shop only in-store, and 23% will only shop online.

Hard goods: When buying hard goods like patio furniture and grills, eighty-one percent (81%) want to see the products in person, as 45% will shop in-store and online, and 36% in-store only. Just 19% are willing to gamble by only shopping online.

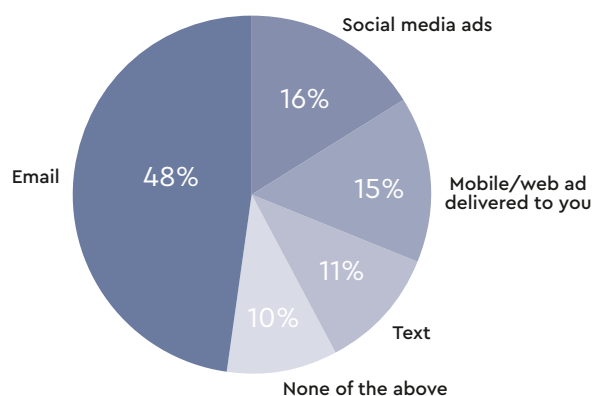
Beauty, health, and cosmetics: As consumers want to touch and feel products, three in four consumers (75%) want to shop in-store, with 47% saying they will shop in-store and online, and 28% in-store only. The remaining 25% of respondents plan to shop online only. These online-only customers will likely replenish products from a trusted retailer and manufacturer.

Travel: Not surprisingly, eighty-nine percent (89%) of travel-related purchases will be online, with 57% online only, just 11% plan on buying travel in-store at a travel agency.



Email remains king as almost half (48%) of respondents prefer it as their first choice to receive offers from brands.

What is your FIRST CHOICE in the way you receive notifications of summer sales offers from brands you follow?

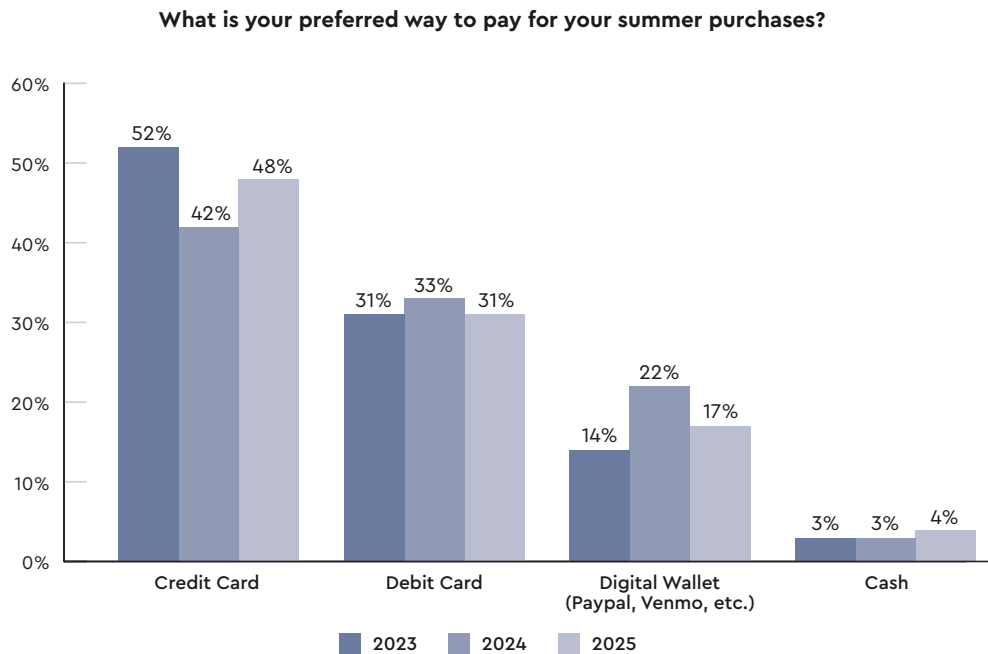


Omnichannel continues to be important in 2025

Eighty-two percent (82%) of shoppers said that they check prices at least "often" online when shopping in-store. Forty-three percent (43%) say they check very often. It underscores that retailers need omnichannel capabilities, or those brands will be disadvantaged when connecting with customers.

The preferred ways to pay

Credit and debit cards remain the preferred way to pay for purchases with 83% choosing one of those methods. In 2024, twenty-two percent (22%) of shoppers preferred digital wallets, in 2025 it receded to 14%. Year after year, cash is not king when it comes to payment methods hovering around 3%.

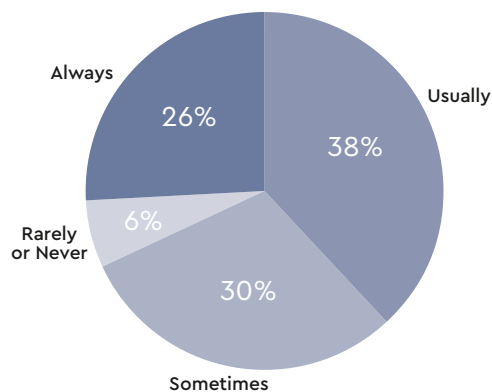


Source: Optimove Insights 2025 Consumer Summer Shopping Survey

Consumers Predetermine Where They Will Shop Online

When shopping online, ninety-four percent (94%) of respondents at least "sometimes" pre-determine where they will shop before going online and buying; and 64% "usually" or "always" predetermine where they will shop.

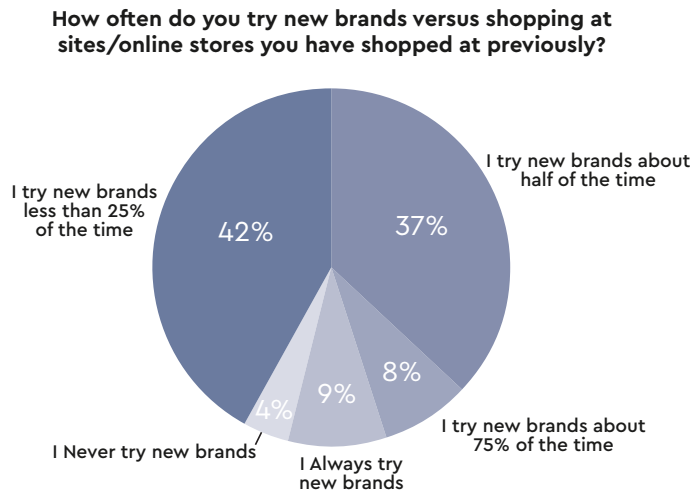
When shopping online, do you pre-determine where you will shop before going online and buying?



Source: Optimove Insights 2025 Consumer Summer Shopping Survey

Three in Ten Frequently Try New Brands

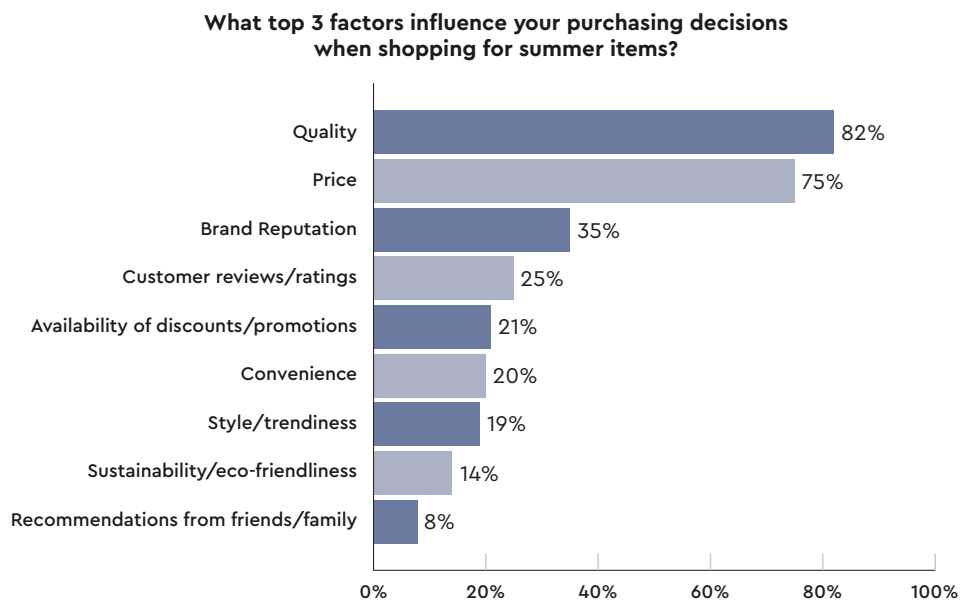
Overall, shoppers show a tendency to brand loyalty. Fifty-four percent (54%) try a new brand more than half of the time; and 17% will try a new brand more than three quarters of the time. This indicates half of consumers are not brand loyal.



Source: Optimove Insights 2025 Consumer Summer Shopping Survey

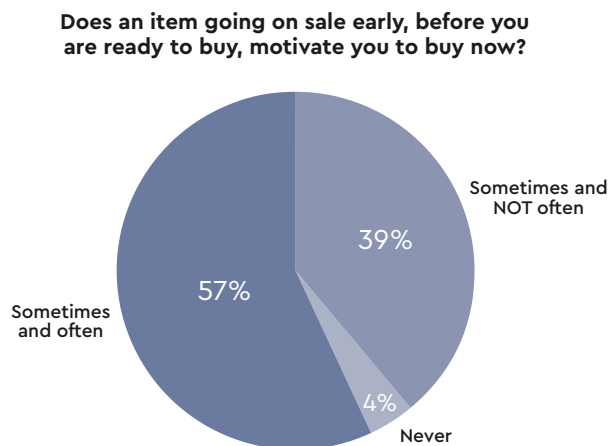
Quality over price

While 75% of respondents said that price motivates them to "buy now," quality is the most important factor in making the purchase decision. The top three factors in a purchase are quality (82%), price (75%), and brand reputation (35%).



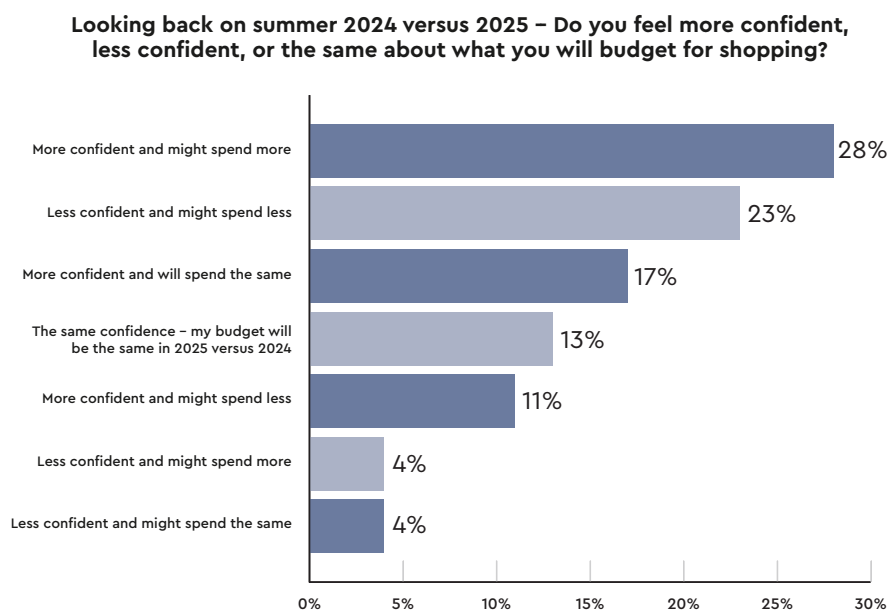
Source: Optimove Insights 2025 Consumer Summer Shopping Survey

More than half of respondents noted that an item going on sale, motivates them to buy now cited by 57% of consumers.



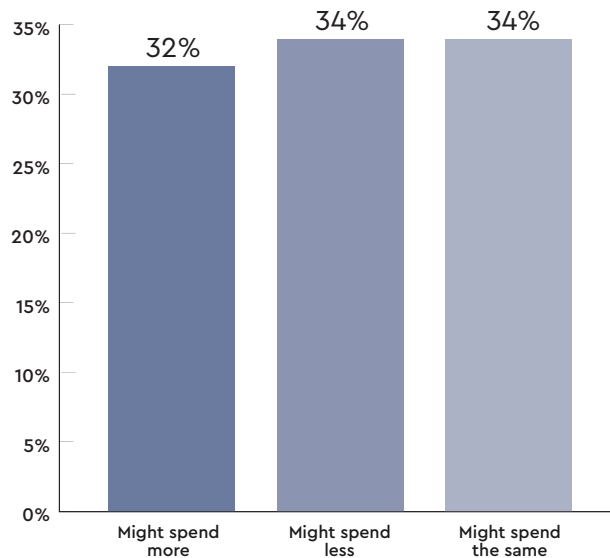
Source: Optimove Insights 2025 Consumer Summer Shopping Survey

In addition, in 2025, almost a third of shoppers (32%) said that they might spend more in Summer 2025 than 2024.



Source: Optimove Insights 2025 Consumer Summer Shopping Survey

Spending plans of consumers who feel more confident about their shopping budget this year compared to last



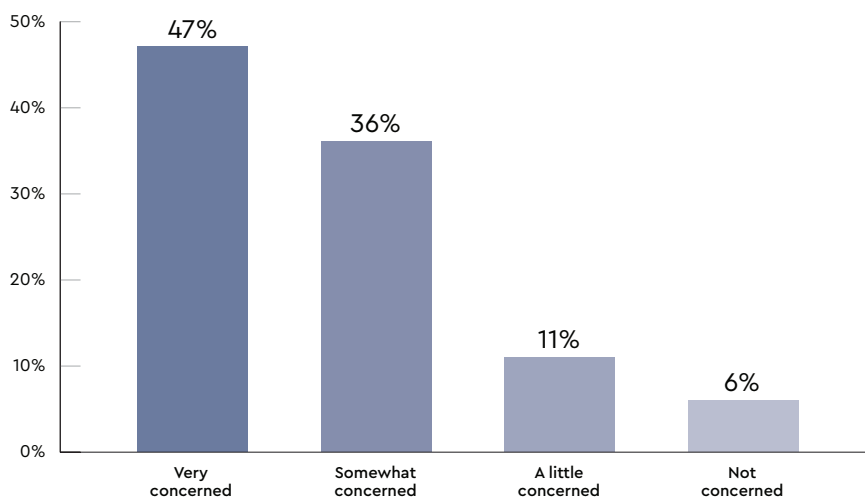
Source: Optimove Insights 2025 Consumer Summer Shopping Survey

Consumer Concerns About Inflation and Tariffs

83% of respondents expressed concern about inflation, with nearly half (47%) significantly concerned and likely are changing their spending habits.

Concerns About Inflation

Consumers are concerned about inflation

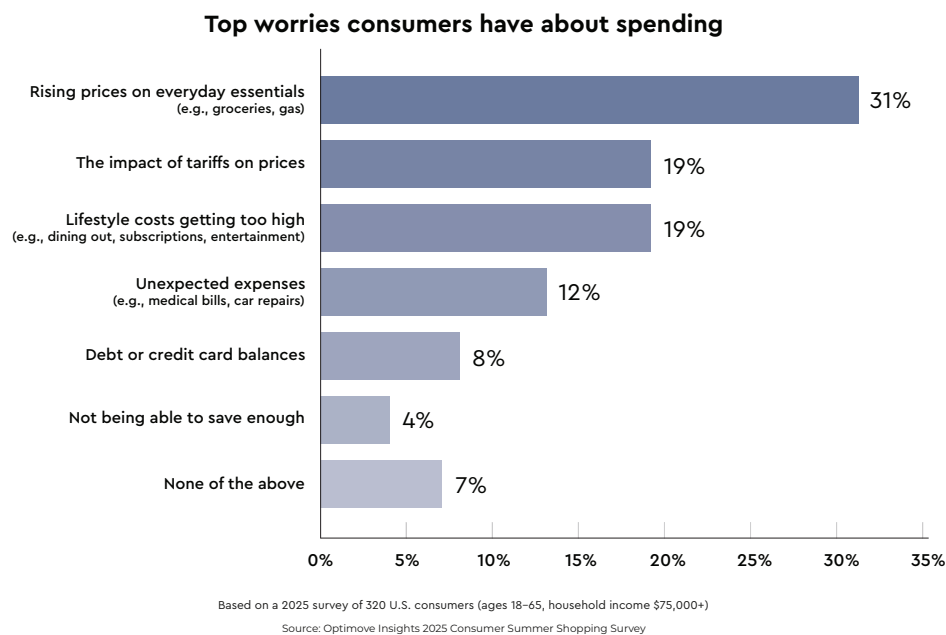


Based on a 2025 survey of 320 U.S. consumers (ages 18–65, household income \$75,000+)

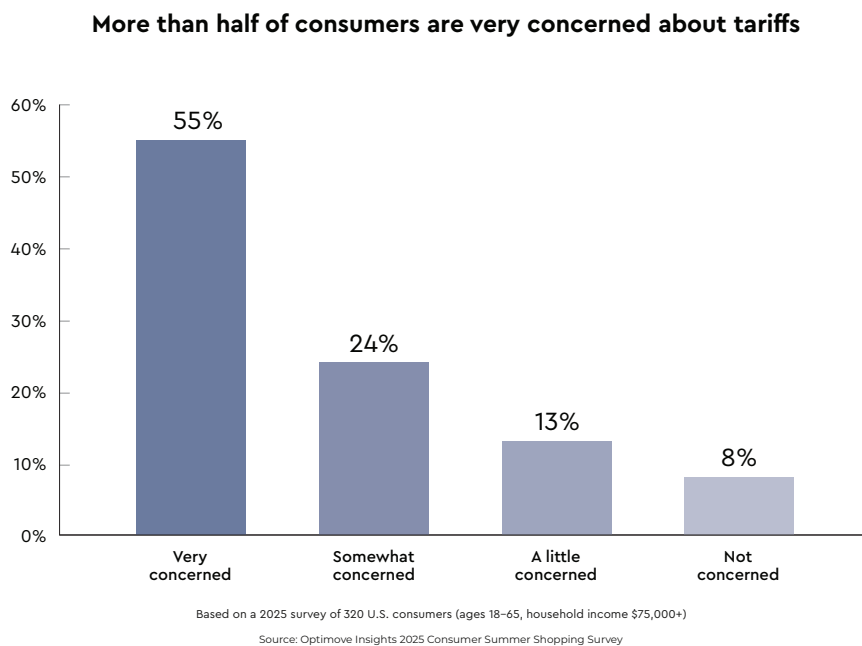
Source: Optimove Insights 2025 Consumer Summer Shopping Survey

- Everyday essentials like groceries and gas were cited as the top spending worry by 31% of consumers.
- 19% reported tariffs as their top concern, tied with lifestyle costs such as dining out and entertainment.

Top Spending Worries

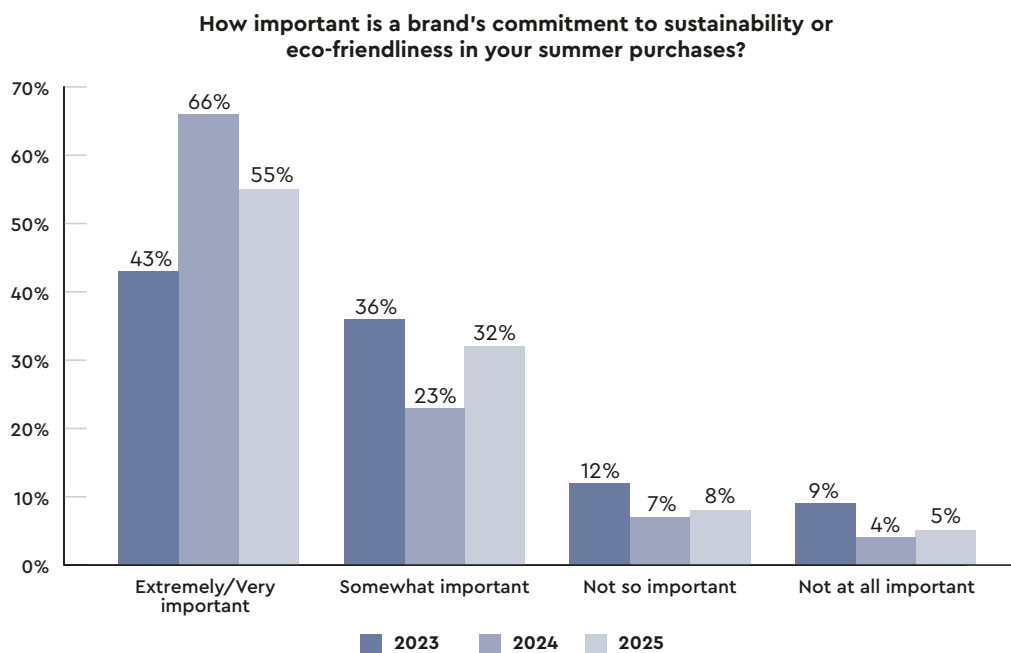


- A majority (55%) are 'very concerned' about tariffs, stating that price increases are already impacting their budgets.



Consumers care less in 2025 about a brand's commitment to the environment

Consumers had a growing importance on a brand's commitment to the environment. In 2024, 66% of consumers found it extremely or very important, compared to 43% in 2023. However, in 2025, those who find it extremely or very important dropped to 43%. Overall, seventy-nine percent (79%) say a brand's commitment to the environment is at least somewhat important, compared to 89% on 2024. This is perhaps a reflection the interest in the environment by Administrations. Even with that said, eight in ten people do care about the environment.



Source: Optimove Insights 2025 Consumer Summer Shopping Survey

Part 3:

Recommendations for Marketers

Retail Recommendations for Summer 2025: Lead with Empathy, Act with Agility

Optimove's 2025 Consumer Summer Shopping Report reveals a customer landscape shaped by early planning, cautious optimism, digital dependency, and sensitivity to economic pressure. For retailers to win this summer, they must balance personalization and price, emotional intelligence and agility, and online-to-offline consistency.

1. Lead with Empathy in a Tariff-Conscious Economy

55% of consumers are "very concerned" about tariffs, and 83% remain worried about inflation. Brands must show they understand the financial anxiety their customers face:

- Acknowledge economic realities in your messaging.
- Be authentic and transparent about how tariffs may affect pricing or product availability.
- Prioritize language that reassures and supports rather than pressures.

2. Personalize with Precision

Personalization is no longer optional; it's expected:

- 57% of shoppers say personalization helps them feel "understood."
- 45% say relevance is the top reason they engage with brand emails.
 - Use zero- and first-party data to tailor content, products, and promotions.
 - Deploy AI-driven segmentation to identify at-risk customers and re-engage them proactively.

3. Deliver a Seamless Omnichannel Experience

82% of consumers check online prices while shopping in-store.

ROPIS (Research Online, Purchase In-Store) is now the norm across beauty, apparel, and hard goods:

- Ensure price, promotions, and product availability are consistent across all touchpoints.
- Connect your digital and physical channels through loyalty programs, mobile app tools, and personalized offers.

4. Start Early and Maintain Momentum

70% of consumers begin their summer shopping before June. Retailers must:

- Launch campaigns by March or April to meet early demand.
- Refresh messaging and offers mid-season to capture late buyers and retarget early browsers.

5. Communicate Transparently

Consumers are making financially informed decisions and want clarity:

- Explain product availability, delivery timelines, and pricing shifts.
- Use plain language and avoid overpromising. This builds trust — especially as loyalty grows more fluid.

6. Focus on Quality and Value; Not Just Price

While 75% say pricing influences urgency, 82% prioritize quality above all else:

- Lead messaging with value, durability, and usefulness.
- Consider bundling, loyalty rewards, or buy-now-pay-later options to reinforce value without discounting too aggressively.

7. Prioritize Email; But Make It Count

Email remains the #1 preferred communication channel (48%), but consumers are ruthless with irrelevance:

- Build smart triggers based on behaviors and lifecycle stages.
- Avoid generic blasts. Even small tweaks (name, interest, last action) increase open rates and reduce churn.

8. Reward Loyalty

Nearly half of consumers frequently try new brands. Loyalty can no longer be assumed:

- Use predictive analytics to spot at-risk or dormant customers.
- Reinforce loyalty with exclusive content, personalized rewards, and early access offers.

9. Be Environmentally Thoughtful

While concern about brand sustainability has dropped (from 66% to 43% rating it "very important"), 79% still say it matters at least "somewhat":

- For environmentally engaged segments, make sustainability messaging visible.
- Focus more broadly on transparency, ethical sourcing, and value for money.

10. Stay Responsive and Agile

With consumers adapting to economic conditions, brands must:

- Monitor trends weekly, not quarterly.
- Be ready to shift offers, creative, and product positioning to meet real-time behaviors and sentiment.

This summer's winning formula isn't just about price or promotion, it's about relevance, responsiveness, and respect. Retailers that lead with empathy, personalize across touchpoints, and remove friction from omnichannel experiences will stand out and build stronger, longer-term customer relationships.

11. Use Gamification to Create Active Brand Engagement

In a season where consumers are inundated with offers and messaging, gamification stands out by making brand interaction fun, rewarding, and participatory. It transforms passive browsing into active engagement driving higher retention and emotional connection.

- Reinforce Loyalty Behaviors: Use gamified experiences like points, challenges, badges, and streaks to reward repeat purchases, referrals, or social shares.
- Educate Through Play: Turn product education into short quizzes, pick-your-favorite experiences, or interactive polls that double as insight tools.
- Deliver Value in a Fun Format: Integrate spin-to-win wheels, scratch cards, or tiered missions tied to spend levels or seasonal milestones.
- Involve Customers in the Brand Story: Launch "choose your adventure" campaigns or crowdsource limited-time product options to make customers feel invested.

Emotional Connections: Gamification appeals to the emotional side of shopping while reinforcing the rational benefits of loyalty and rewards. It's especially effective with younger demographics, price-sensitive shoppers, and customers who might otherwise disengage due to economic stress.

12. Empower Teams with Positionless Marketing to Act with Empathy and Speed

Traditional marketing structures can slow down response times and hinder personalized outreach during high-pressure seasons. Positionless Marketing breaks down these barriers, enabling marketers to act quickly, empathetically, and effectively without waiting on analysts, creatives, or engineers:

- Equip teams to instantly identify, segment, and engage at-risk customers using AI insights.
- Enable rapid content creation and deployment tailored to customers' emotional and financial states.
- Align messaging and execution across all channels without delays or handoffs.

In economically uncertain times, empathy must be fast. Positionless Marketing makes it possible.

Emotional Connections: Gamification appeals to the emotional side of shopping while reinforcing the rational benefits of loyalty and rewards. It's especially effective with younger demographics, price-sensitive shoppers, and customers who might otherwise disengage due to economic stress.

About Optimove

Optimove, the leader in Positionless Marketing, frees marketing teams from the limitations of fixed roles, giving every marketer the power to execute any marketing task instantly and independently. Positionless Marketing has been proven to improve campaign efficiency by 88%, allowing marketing teams to create more personalized engagement with existing customers.

Optimove is recognized as the Visionary Leader in Gartner's Magic Quadrant for Multichannel Marketing Hubs. Being a visionary leader is a hallmark of Optimove. It was the first CRM Marketing Platform to natively embed AI with the ability to predict customer migrations between lifecycle stages in 2012.

Today, its comprehensive AI-powered suite is at the leading edge of empowering marketers to optimize workflows from Insight to Creation and through Orchestration. Optimove provides industry-specific and use-case solutions for leading consumer brands globally.

About Optimove Insights

Optimove Insights is the analytical and research arm of Optimove, dedicated to providing valuable industry insights and data-driven research to empower B2C businesses.