

# How-To Handle 2020 Holiday Season Setbacks

Setting up your customer service team up for success

## The Setback

Salesforce predicts **7 million gifts** will be at risk for not arriving in time for the holidays

## Set-up For Success



**Provide holiday shipping deadlines** – Set up “order today to get your gifts in time for Christmas” messaging and campaigns. Be generous with the time needed to process and deliver orders to ensure that your business meets the promise.

**Proactively communicate delays** – Create an outbound email campaign for delayed orders and provide appeasement or an apology. While nobody likes receiving the news that their order is delayed, customers will feel more at ease knowing they are being taken care of and things are being handled.

**Provide updates** – What’s worse than a package delay? Having to continuously contact a company for order processing and tracking information. Keeping customers in the loop on their order status will keep them happy and reduce the number of incoming service queries.

## The Setback

With digital sales projected to **increase by 90%** over last year, the usual surge in **online customer service queries** is anticipated to be higher than ever before

## Set-up For Success



**Forecast and monitor trends** – Keep tabs on any factors that may impact ticket queues and volumes.

**24/7 support** – Customers expect service whenever they need it. If your business is not already providing around-the-clock service, now is the time!

**Offer overtime** – If you don’t have the time or resources to train seasonal staff, offer overtime opportunities to your support team to help manage influxes of tickets.

**Leverage automation** – Implementing AI reduces wait time and alleviates pressure from support staff, especially during spikes in ticket volume. Thankful’s automation technology also has the ability to merge tickets for duplicated issues.

## The Setback

**90%** of people report **feeling more stress during the holidays** and this year will be no exception

## Set-up For Success



**Have empathy** – Compassion is important and it matters more now than ever. Holidays aside, it's been a challenging year.

**Listen to your customers** – They'll tell you what they need. Show them you care by inviting their feedback and taking action.

**Provide where you can** – Identify areas where you can go the extra mile for your customers, such as offering free shipping or deferred payment plans.

## The Setback

Nearly **70%** of people have already **started their holiday shopping** and that head start gives them time to make returns and exchanges

## Set-up For Success



**Seasonal policy updates** – Consider changing your policies for the holidays, such as allowing customers to return their Black Friday and Cyber Monday purchases after the New Year.

**Don't wait** – Make sure all policies are updated and that your team is prepared for the onslaught of returns and exchanges to hit earlier this year. **#ThankfulTip: using AI automation is a great way to provide 24/7 support if human agents are not available.**

## The Setback

**2020 ... the year of unpredictability**

## Set-up For Success



**Be prepared for the unexpected** – If we've learned anything this year, it is that anything can happen at any time. Be ready to make quick changes to your game plan.

**Communicate internally and externally** – Keep both agents and customers in the loop on all happenings and any changes that are being made. Consistent communication is key, especially during times of uncertainty.