

Gift In Pandemic – What’s Changed and What’s Working
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Gift giving and Gift Receiving

During holidays, birthdays or anniversaries, people often strengthen and maintain their relationships with their loved ones by exchanging gifts. According to survey conducted by The Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants (2020), most Canadians spent around CAD 600 on gifts during holidays in 2020. Gift-giving becomes more symbolic as it is a way of expressing gratitude and love in a relationship. They are always looking for unique gift ideas online only to choose the most suitable gift to express and convey our appreciation for their loved ones. A gift that evokes memories or carries special meaning can become the most cherished item in a receiver's life. For example, thoughtful or sentimental gifts can also enhance and establish our interpersonal relationships with others. It is important to note that giving gifts are not limited to special occasions. No need to wait until a certain occasion or holidays to give gifts, you can give gifts at any time to show your love to the person you care about. The inexplicable joy when receiving an unexpected gift will definitely brighten their day. According to an article about unexpected gifts, Dr. Laura, a licensed psychologist stated, “With unexpected gifts, you can make the other person feel loved, appreciated, and cared for” (Amy, 2019) . The act of giving gifts is essential for interpersonal relationships as it fosters stronger bonds between friends and families even if you are further apart from each other. As Covid-19 has continuously spread across the globe, countless loved ones are forced to separate because of travel restrictions and temporary border closure. Plans continued to be postponed or cancelled, making reunion impossible. Due to the long distance sending thoughtful gifts to those who are far away from you to show them how much you love and miss them will melt away the miles.

Gifting in Pandemic

The Covid-19 pandemic has changed the way we live, work, shop, learn and spend our time with family and friends. Eventually, it alters the way we buy and give gifts. Throughout the pandemic, consumer behavior has shifted to online shopping. Due to social-distancing and stay-at-home orders, people have less interaction and it is difficult to maintain relationships. However, connections promote wellness, and a way to keep people connected is through gifting. The number of gifts purchased online have increased drastically. Google data (2020) have shown that the searches on “online gift” have increased by 80% in 2020 compared to 2019 (Maria, 2021). Many milestone events such as graduations, weddings, baby showers and vacations have been canceled or rescheduled until further notice. The desire to give has expanded, people want to compensate for lost time and lost memories by recreating the experience and celebrating at home. According to a CNBC news report, people looked for more meaningful gifts compared to past years (Melissa, 2020). They are willing to put more time and effort in finding personalized gifts, crafts and even handmade goods (Melissa, 2020). The searches on custom gifts, care packages and greeting cards have also dramatically increased around the globe (Maria, 2021). A study from DeBeers Group (2020) examined the major trends of consumer behavior during the covid-19 period in the U.S. (Stockton, 2020). Their research found that approximately 90% of the consumers wanted to give a gift that holds its value over time, while nearly 60% of the consumers suggested that gifts should be meaningful and symbolize connectedness (Stockton, 2020). Interestingly, searches on eco-friendly gifts and recyclable gift wraps have increased 37% and 110% on Esty representatively (Melissa, 2020). Evidently, researches have also shown the pandemic has slowly restored the ecological system by significantly reducing the emission of greenhouse gases, water and air pollution and improved air quality (Rume, & Islam, 2020).

Hence, many people begin to reflect on and pay attention to their behavior towards the environment as well.

Over the past year, people started losing hope that things might get better due to the uncertainty of life, societies and endless lockdowns. Moreover, covid-19 pandemic has a negative impact on mental health (Panchal, Kamal, Cox, & Garfield, 2021). People reported to have experienced a number of pandemic-related psychological problems, such as anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and suicidal thoughts (Panchal, Kamal, Cox, & Garfield, 2021). As we noticed that societies and people's lives around the world suffer through difficult times, we realized it is necessary for us to do something by sending love and support to the ones we cared about. A Sitecore report has shown that about 80% of consumers raise their awareness of their own mental health needs and their family, friends and colleagues. People paid more attention to “therapy” and self-care gifts, such as skin-care kit or body care duo, 5-minutes journal, self-help books, weighted blankets etc. Dayna Isom Johnson, a trend expert at Esty stated that “This year is more about consideration and thoughtfulness when purchasing gifts,” (Melissa, 2020). Gifting is a simple way for people to deliver love. In addition, tagging a handwritten heartfelt gift note on your gift can further express the givers’ feelings and their reasons for buying this gift. Thereby sending “hope” to the receivers that there is something they can look forward to and they are not alone during this tough period . Dropping off the gifts at friends’ doors or organizing their delivery through mail is the best way to exchange our gifts safely nowadays. Remember to make sure your loved one stays protected while sending them gifts!

Some Gift Ideas People Can Send During The Pandemic

Personalized Photo album

Individuals can create and illustrate their past stories or events. For example, their moments during their wedding, birthday, baby shower. Personalized photo albums allow you to preserve important memories. Each image presents a story, nothing is sweeter than sharing those personal snapshots about your experiences is a great way to connect with your family and friends!

Personalized Watches

Customizing your luxury watch is a unique way to convey personal style. This customized watch reminds you of someone's love countless times each day. You would be able to personalize the watch back with your heartfelt messages. The watch signifies the mark of togetherness, that “we are in this together” during this difficult period.

Personalized T-shirts

A customized t-shirt is a must-have in your wardrobe. You can portray your message through your customized t-shirts. It emphasizes togetherness and shows how much you love and care about each other.

Personalized Bottles

A personalized water bottle is sustainable, eco-friendly and a gift that can last for a lifetime. It comes in different fun colors which suit every style, age and personality.

Personalized Blankets

A personalized weighted blanket symbolizes warmth, kindness and friendship. It will keep you cozy and calm in these difficult times.

Personalized Jewelry

Personalized jewelry is unique, identifiable and lasts for a lifetime. It symbolizes how much the receiver means to you and commemorates the connection you have with them. This gift is a great way to express your sincerity and thoughtfulness.

An Act of Kindness

We are all in this together, gifting plays an important role during the pandemic. A thoughtful gift can speak volumes and convey a thousand words. An article from Forbes interviewed Chris Gray, a psychologist of buycology about his observations on gift gifting in Covid-19 pandemic. He stated “The pandemic has created a lot of anxiety. We’re reminded the world is not permanent. By giving gifts and things that are enduring and are a lasting expression of care, it helps us soothe a bit of that anxiety.” (Danziger, 2020). People seek ways to connect more and send gifts and cards to express hope for new beginnings. A study has found that interpersonal relationships are related to mental health and well-being during covid-19 (Pieh, O’rourke, Budimir, & Probst, 2021). The better the quality of the relationship, the better their mental health, whereas, poor relationship quality results in numerous mental health symptoms and poor well-being (Pieh, O’rourke, Budimir, & Probst, 2021). Therefore, gifting during a pandemic can show that you truly care about your favorite person and it will make a huge difference for someone who is struggling with loneliness or mental health problems. With the sudden societal shift and spending most of the time staying at home, we learn to appreciate and cherish the littlest moments and people in our lives. We all need a little sweetness to get through difficult times, it is always nice to surprise someone with a meaningful gift to ensure their sense of closeness. Here, GiftAFeeling can help you to find your perfect day-brightening gift for your special ones. Your kind deeds will encourage others to do the same. So, don’t hesitate to send love to your friends and family!

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