

FESTIVE FORECAST

Holiday Insights Unwrapped

Consider this your seasonal playbook: a guide to this year's consumer sentiment, spending intentions and expectations. Plus, the strategies that will keep your brand relevant, visible and chosen, when it matters most.

2025



SEASONAL SNAPSHOT

The numbers that count

A strong finish to the year isn't just about pushing harder, it's about tuning into what customers want most. Reading the signals that others miss. This season, the winners will be the brands that understand the customer mindset, cut through the noise and act early.

Here are the top insights set to shape the season:

1 in 3 

Australians (36%) are stressed about upcoming holiday expenses.

44% plan to spend less than last year

43% plan to start shopping earlier



Self-gifting and self-care are likely to dominate wishlists



Black Friday Cyber Monday (BFCM) is a battleground:

45% of shoppers will hold out for sales before making big ticket buys



Insight: Shoppers are stressed, and many are getting strategic – shopping earlier, spending less and making the most of sales. Savvy businesses will preserve the festive spirit by crafting compelling offers, preparing early, and easing friction at the checkout.

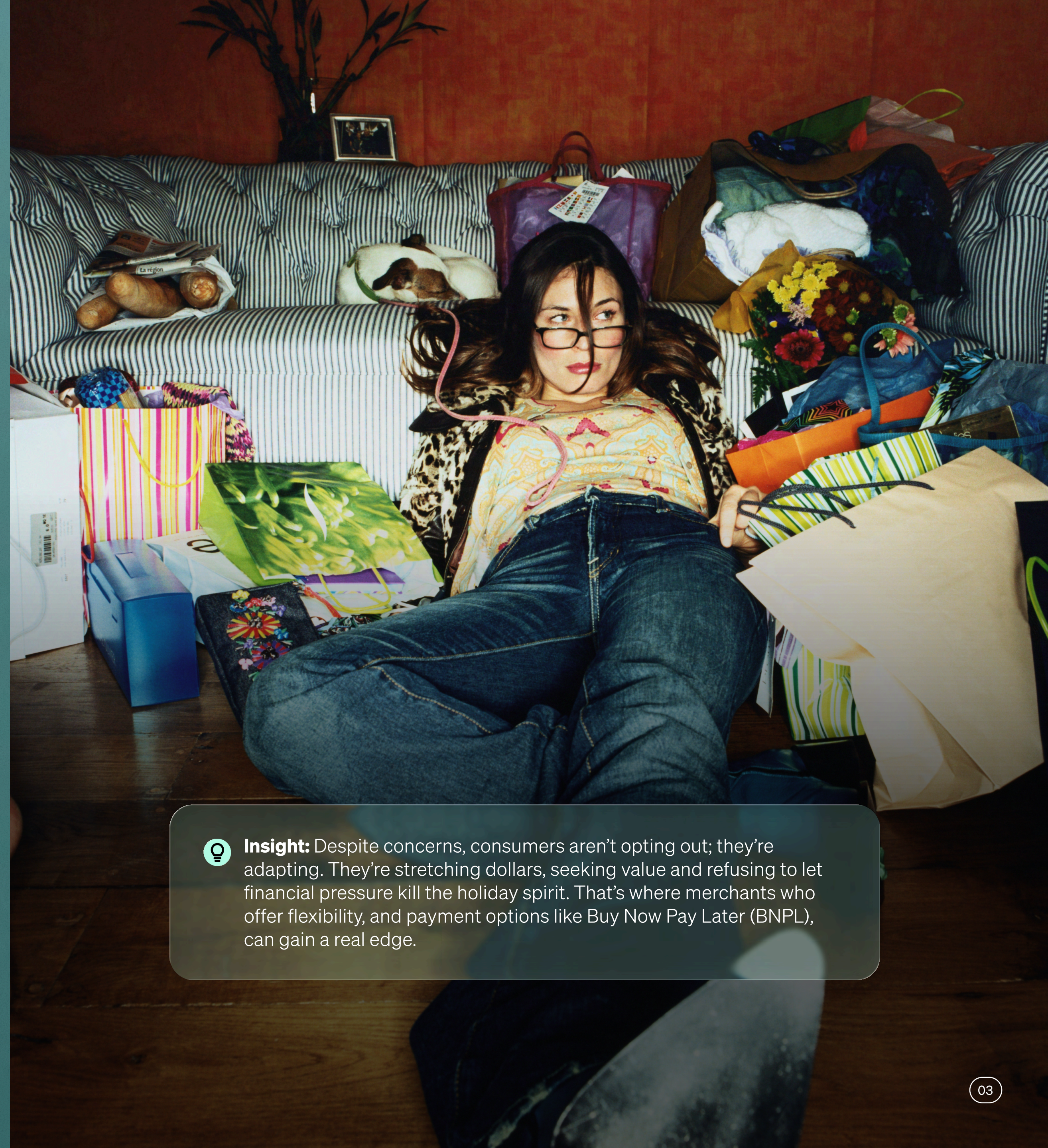
Holiday stress is real, be the one to bring the magic.


The 2025 holiday season is unfolding against a tough economic backdrop. Rising costs. Debt pressure. Financial uncertainty. It's influencing how, and when, shoppers spend.

1 in 3   
plan to set a budget and start saving (now)

2 in 5     
More than 2 in 5 plan to shop earlier and spend less overall

30%  plan to give fewer gifts



 **Insight:** Despite concerns, consumers aren't opting out; they're adapting. They're stretching dollars, seeking value and refusing to let financial pressure kill the holiday spirit. That's where merchants who offer flexibility, and payment options like Buy Now Pay Later (BNPL), can gain a real edge.

All they want for Christmas

Discover what Aussies plan to buy this season – because knowing the wishlist means owning the basket.



Insight: Value matters, but so does emotional connection. These categories speak to comfort, small luxuries and personal reward. Combine compelling offers, like gift cards or curated bundles, with payment flexibility to make gift giving feel frictionless.

TOP CATEGORIES AUSTRALIANS WILL BUY:



What do they want under the tree?

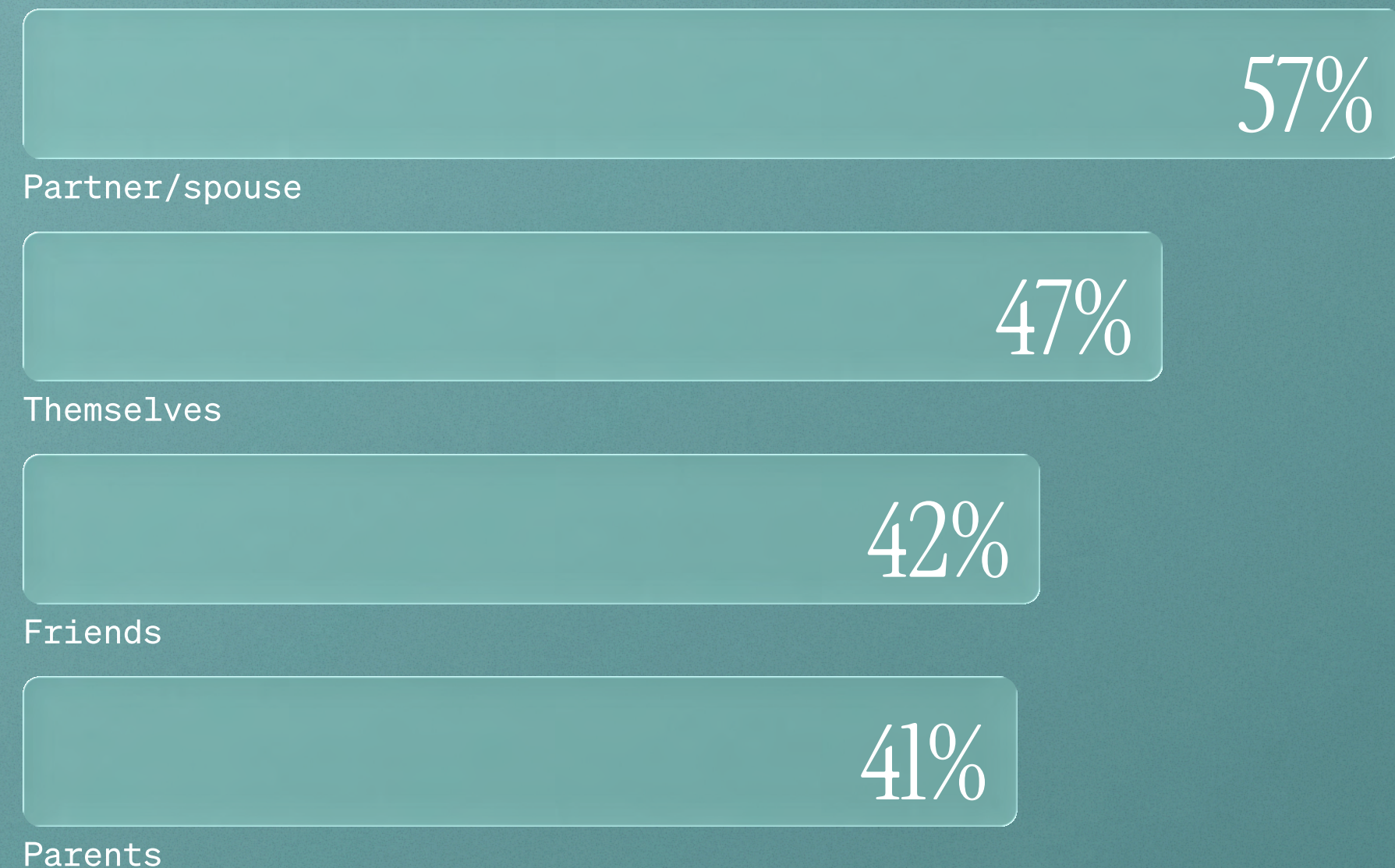
Australians most want to receive clothing and shoes (36%). Other items they're wishing for include jewelry, books and home & garden gifts.



A gift for them. A gift for me.

Australians are generous.
But they're not forgetting themselves.

WHO AUSSIES ARE BUYING FOR:



Self-care is having a moment

Even in a cautious climate, shoppers are making space for personal wellbeing.

Nearly three-quarters (72%) plan to purchase self-care items this season (for others or themselves), and two-fifths (41%) say they're more likely to indulge in these kinds of products than last year.

WHAT THEY'LL BE GIFTING:



Home comforts
(candles, soft
furnishings)



Health, beauty and
wellness products



Food and grocery
items

WHAT THEY'RE HOPING TO RECEIVE:



Home & garden gifts



Health, beauty and
wellness treats



Food experiences

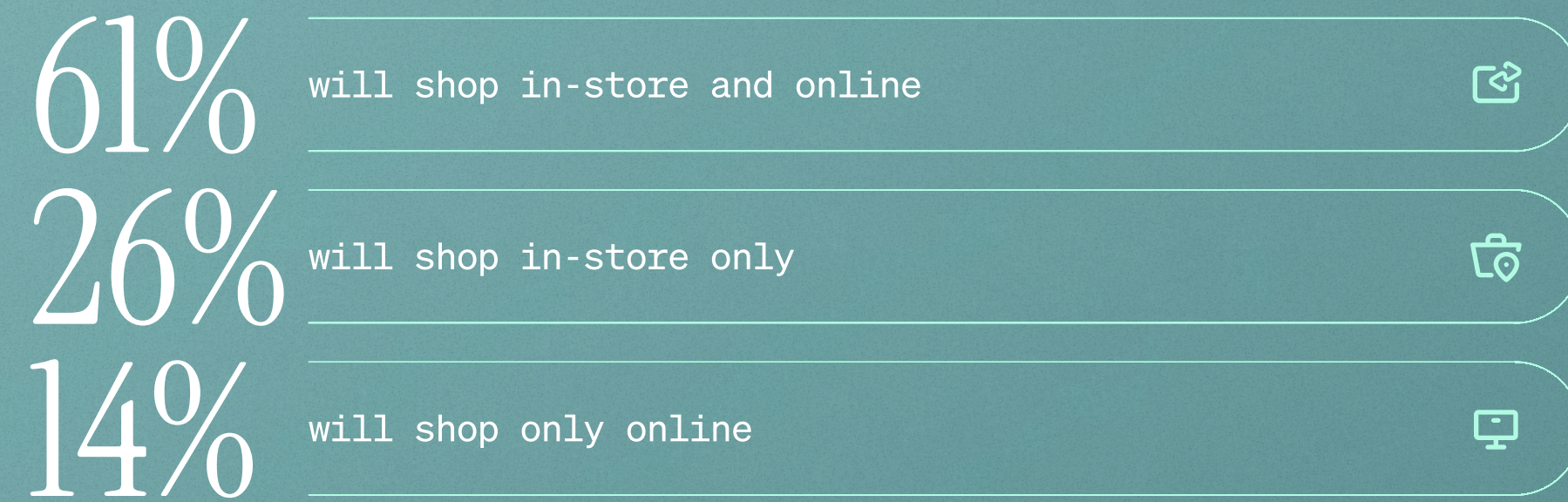


TIP: This isn't reckless spending, it's selective splurging. Shoppers want purchases that feel worth it. So position your products as small luxuries with big emotional payoffs, and consider positioning self-care items close to checkout.

Omnichannel cheer

Consumers will shop both aisles: in-store and online. If your experience doesn't shine across both, you're leaving opportunity on the table.

WHERE AUSSIES WILL SHOP:



WHERE THEY'LL GO ONLINE:

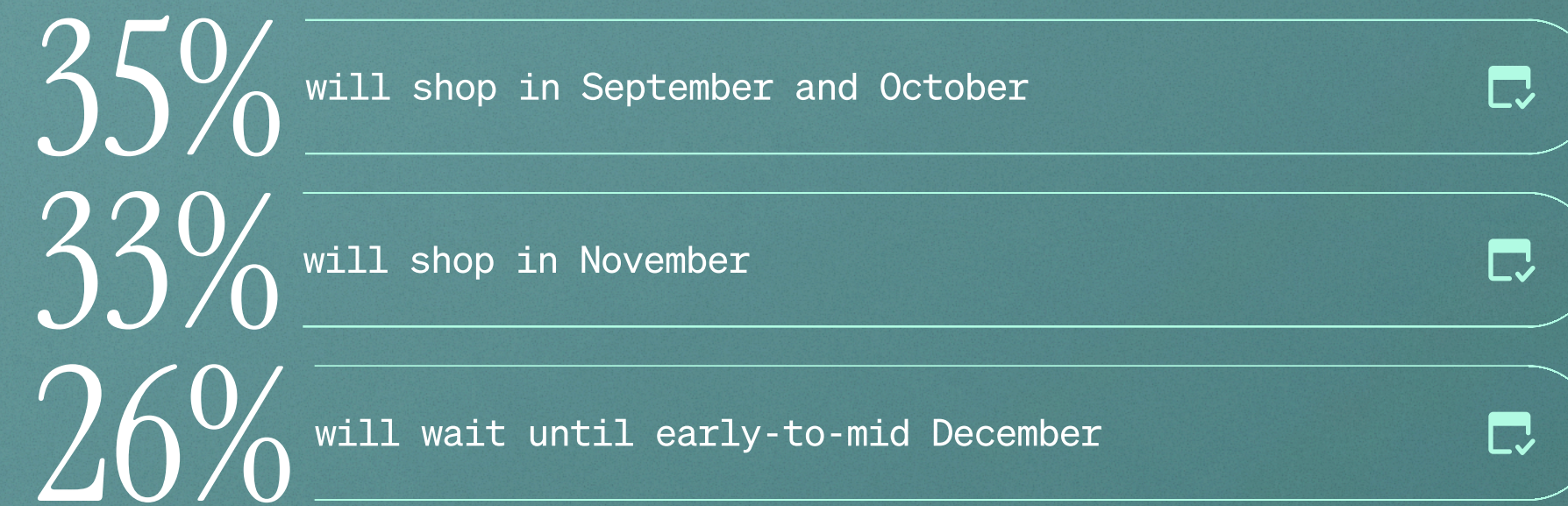




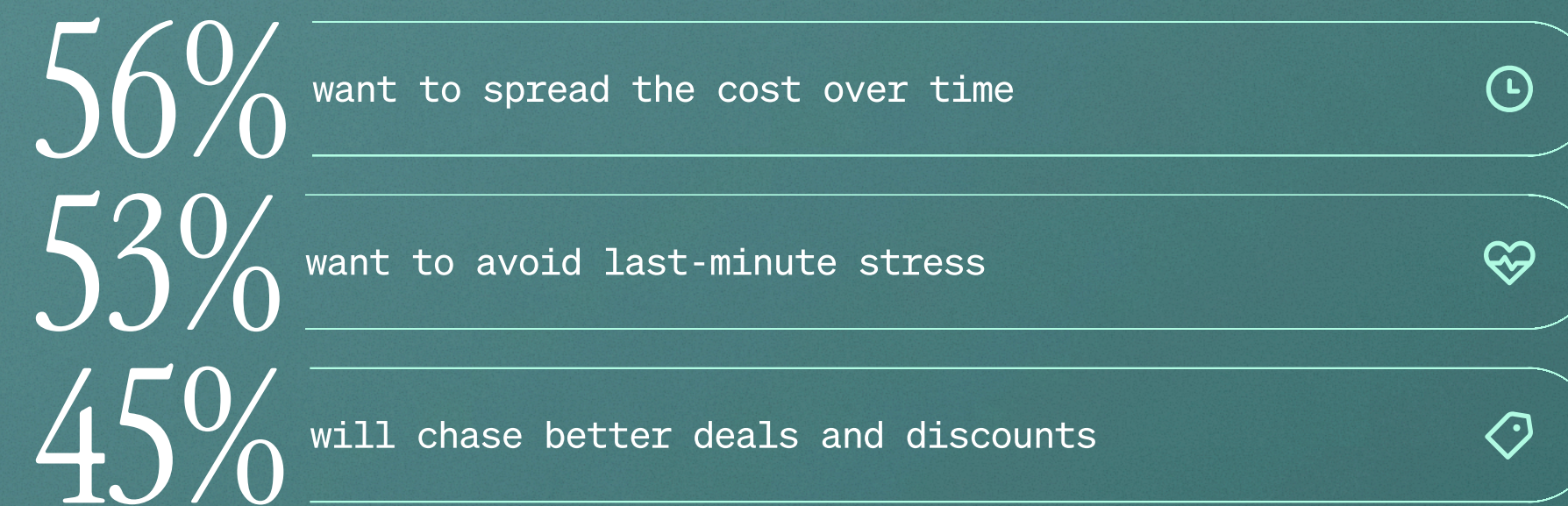
Tip: Help shoppers spread the cost of the holidays without time pressure. Payment options like BNPL allow consumers to make payments across multiple weeks - and paycheck - to lighten the load.

WHEN THEY'LL SHOP:

Earlier than ever. In fact, 67% plan to do most of their buying between September and November, while 26% will wait until early December.

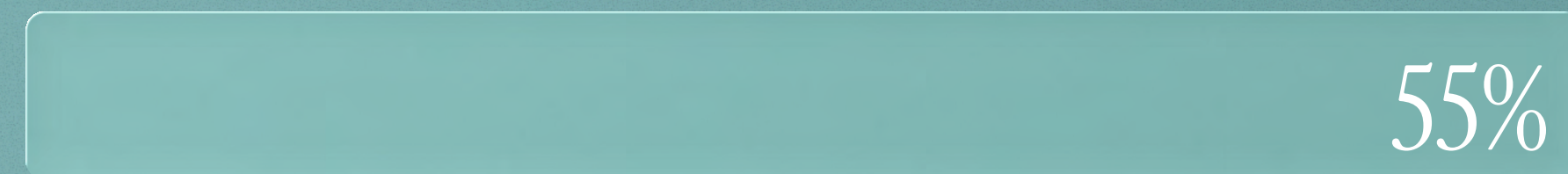


WHY ARE CONSUMERS SHOPPING EARLIER?

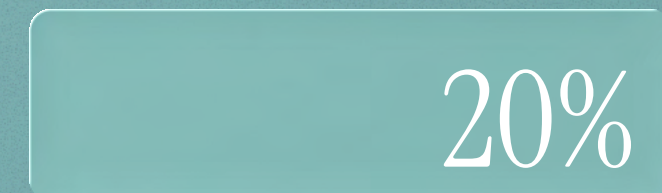


'Tis the season to budget

Holiday budgets vary, but big spenders are still in the game.



plan to spend less than \$750



plan to spend between \$750 and \$1500



plan to spend \$1500 to \$2250



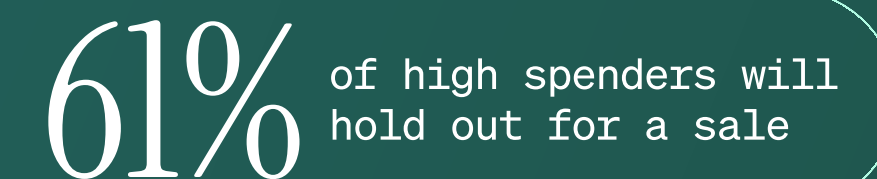
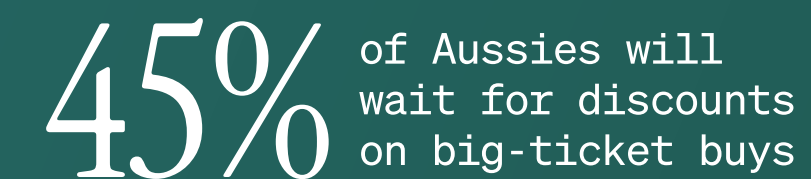
will spend over \$2250

Key takeaway:

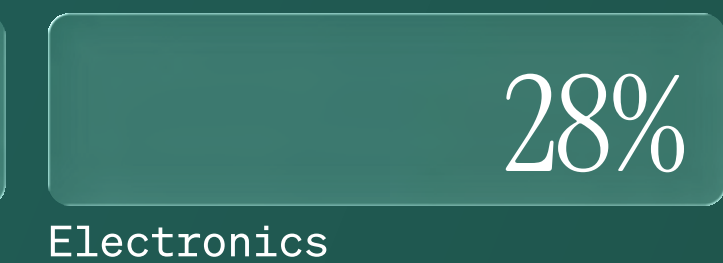
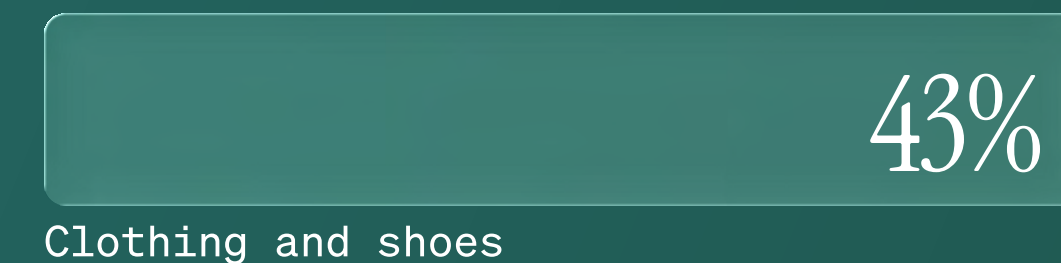
High spenders are few, but they matter. They're strategic, value-driven and they love a sale.

Sales are when the season starts

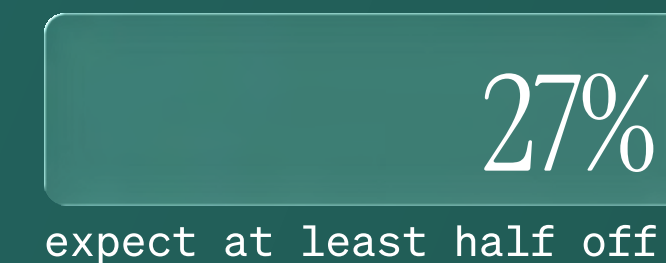
Shoppers are willing to wait for the right price, especially on high-ticket items. This patient, strategic mindset signals a value-conscious shopper who still intends to spend, but only when the perceived value is high.



WHAT ARE PEOPLE PLANNING TO BUY IN THE SALES?



WHAT KIND OF OFFER WILL WORK BEST?



Tip: The holiday season isn't shrinking, it's shifting. A dual-track approach will win: one for the budget-conscious, another for premium buyers looking for value. Both groups will be active this season; the challenge is earning their trust early.

Afterpay's edge

Less stress for them. More sales for you.

A massive 94% of businesses offering BNPL as a payment solution say it's vital to success during peak season. And shoppers agree. At least 40% are somewhat likely to use BNPL this holiday season, rising to 48% among those feeling financial stress.

WHY AFTERPAY LEADS:

53%

Convenience

46%

Reliability

45%

Flexibility

44%

Speed

36%

Budget control

Among all BNPL providers in Australia, Afterpay ranks highest thanks to its flexibility, speed, reliability, budget management and transparency.

THE BOTTOM LINE:

Holidays are about connection, not chaos. The brands that understand this will sleigh the season.

Brands that make shopping stress free, gifting joyful and payments flexible, will lead the season. Deliver value without friction, and you'll do more than win sales. You'll win trust, loyalty, and the next year ahead.

METHODOLOGY:

Morning Consult's Afterpay Global Holiday Shopping Survey (July 2025) was conducted between July 17th - 30th, 2025 among n2,202 Adults aged 18-65 and n251 Retail Business Decision Makers in Australia. All interviews were conducted online. The margin of error was +/- 2% for Adults, +/- 6% for Retail Business Decision Makers, and varied among subgroups. All subgroups highlighted in reporting have a base N size of 50 or more unless otherwise stated.

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