

Delivering what customers want

Here at Hermes we commission research every year into international online shoppers' usage of and attitudes towards parcel deliveries.

Now in its fifth year, this independent research is designed to track trends in purchasing habits and delivery requirements, as well as exploring attitudes to existing services and needs of online shoppers across three European countries. Our aim is to provide valuable insight not only to our customers, but to the wider retail community. We're committed to gaining a better understanding of how the international consumer buys online, as well as demonstrating our support for the continued growth in internet shopping, both in the UK and overseas.

All of our research was carried out by BDRC Continental, an independent full service market research agency with over 20 years specialising in transport, logistics, travel, and hospitality research. They've experience of carrying out surveys in over 80 countries and in 2014 expanded the sample to include online shoppers from France. We interviewed 2,000 people in the UK and 1,000 each in both France and Germany who had taken deliveries from e-retailers at least three times in the preceding three months. We've also included new insights into how consumers shop online, such as research into multichannel shopping behaviours and the returns process.

How research helps

At Hermes we want to make sure that the parcel recipient is getting the service they deserve. That's why it's important for us to use our research findings to tailor our offering and make the services we supply work as hard as they can. Last year we introduced a delivery service on Sundays, as a result of our 2012 report. The results showed 59% of people had asked to receive parcels on a Sunday, a day that many carriers tend to neglect, but Hermes now provide a delivery service on. This year's report again gives us a valuable insight into international delivery preferences and has allowed us to think about how we can improve our services once more. We've outlined some of the most important findings in this white paper to help you manage proof of delivery and redelivery options in line with what your customers prefer.

VIEWS ON PROOF OF DELIVERY

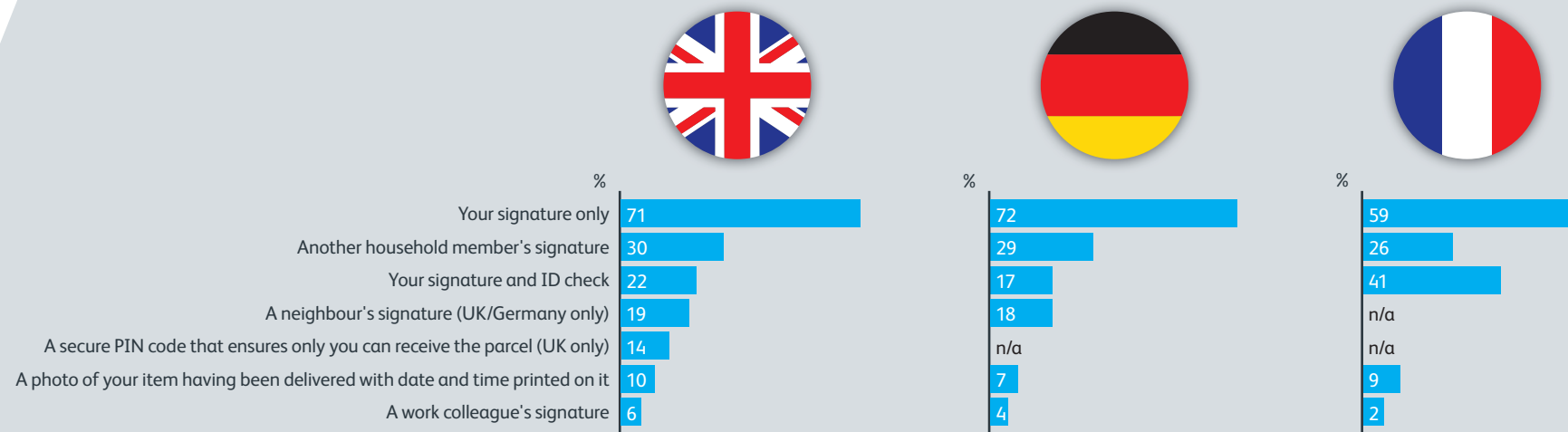
Preferred proof of delivery options

When it comes to proof of delivery there is a clear favourite for online shoppers. In each of the three markets we researched – the UK, Germany and France – respondents indicated a preference for a signature to confirm proof of delivery. Almost three quarters of people in the UK and Germany gave this as their preferred option, while 59% of French shoppers who took part in our research gave the same answer.

In fact, it is interesting to see just how closely the preferences in the UK and Germany mirror each other. The major difference in attitudes is in France where 41% of shoppers expressed a preference for a signature and ID check, almost double the numbers in the UK and Germany.

Elsewhere, around a fifth of people in the UK and Germany were happy for a neighbour to sign for their parcel. A tenth of all respondents were comfortable having a photograph of their item being delivered as proof of delivery, while few online shoppers are keen on colleagues signing for parcels they have delivered to work varying from 2% in France to 4% and 6% in Germany and UK.

Mid Value item (£75/€75)



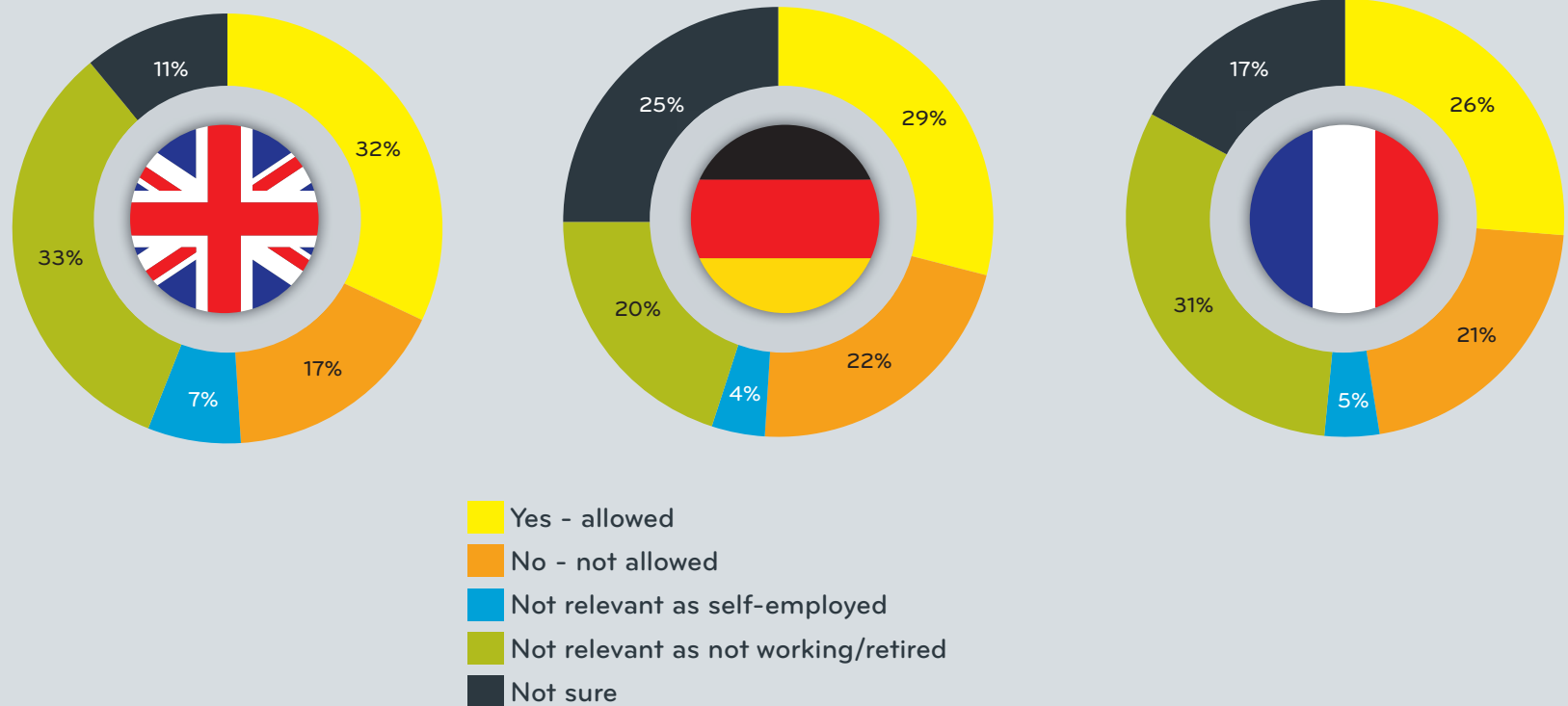
Base: All regular online shoppers (UK 2,003, Germany 1,003, France 1,000) Q47a, Q47b

VIEWS ON DELIVERY AT WORK

How many people can accept deliveries at work?

Our survey of workplace deliveries revealed that around a third of Britons are allowed to accept deliveries at work, which drops slightly to 29% in Germany and 26% in France. Around a fifth of the people we surveyed in all three countries were not allowed to have parcels delivered to work at all.

While the figures for the UK and France were broadly similar, Germany threw up some interesting differences with those who are retired, self-employed or not working (and therefore don't have a workplace) representing just 24% of the sample. In the UK the percentage is much higher at 40% and 36% in France, this is largely due to the number of those not working equating to 33% in UK and 31% in France.



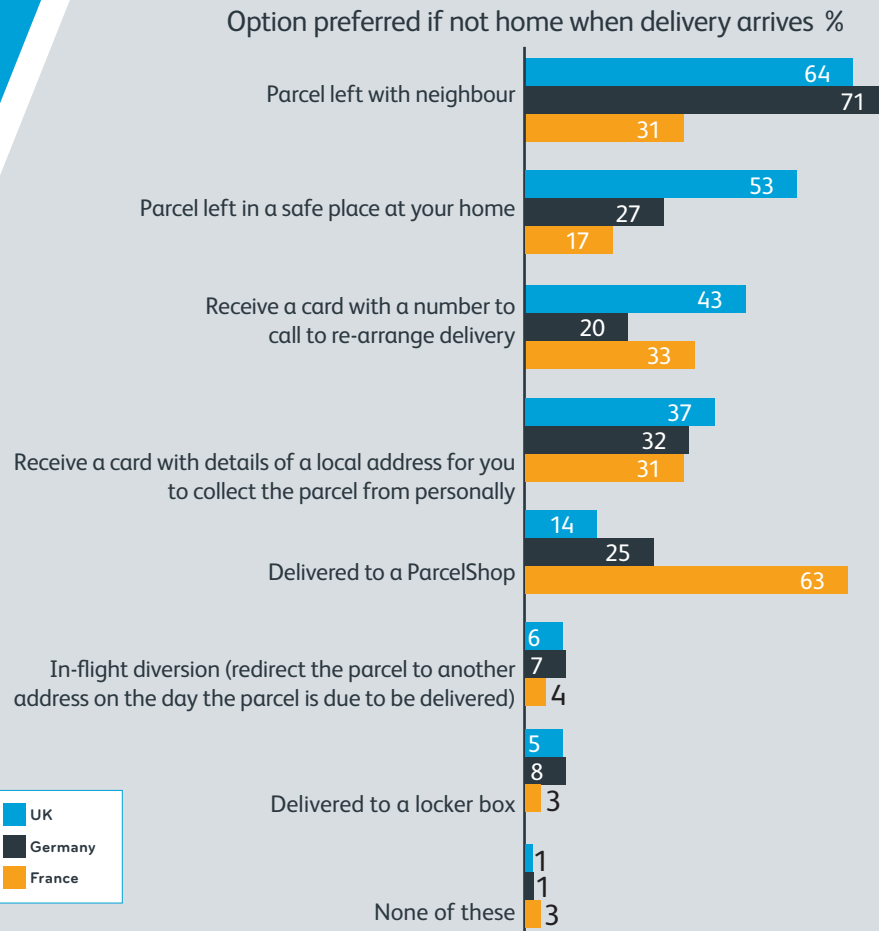
Base: All regular online shoppers (UK 2,003, Germany 1,003, France 1,000) Q52

VIEWS ON REDELIVERY

Preferred delivery option

What happens when people miss a delivery? Our survey revealed some notable differences. People in France are much less keen for parcels to be left with neighbours for instance, while those of us in the UK are much happier for deliveries to be left in a safe place.

In France, online shoppers are much more open to collecting their parcels from a ParcelShop. And German shoppers aren't willing to travel as far to collect their undelivered items.



Distance prepared to travel to collect undelivered items (on average)



2.24mi



1.56km



2.4km

1km	2km	3km
1.6 miles	3.2 miles	4.8 miles

Delivery to neighbours? (France only)

23% Yes - and I have asked them to in the past
 27% Yes - but I have not had the need to ask them
 15% No - I do not know them
 18% No - I do not want to impose
 11% No - I do not trust them
 7% Not sure

Base: All regular online shoppers (UK 2,003, Germany 1,003, France 1,000) Q50, Q51, Q53

VIEWS ON CHANGING DELIVERY DETAILS

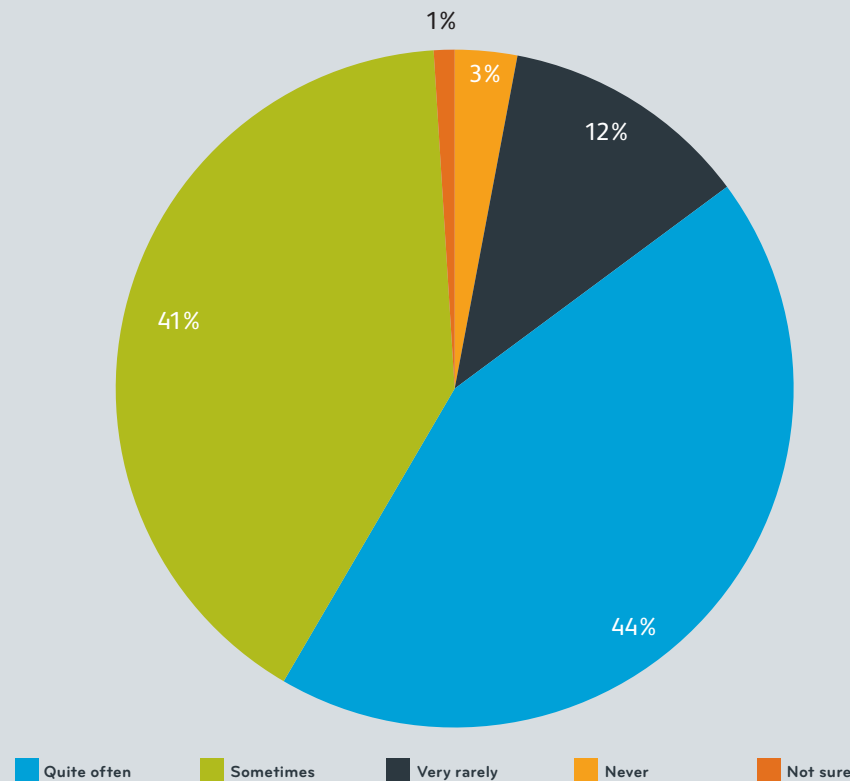
Frequency of delivery detail changes

When we asked our sample of regular online UK shoppers how often they needed to change delivery details (after an item had been shipped), almost half said that it was something they did quite often. A further 41% told us that they changed their delivery details sometimes. Just 15% amended details very rarely or never.

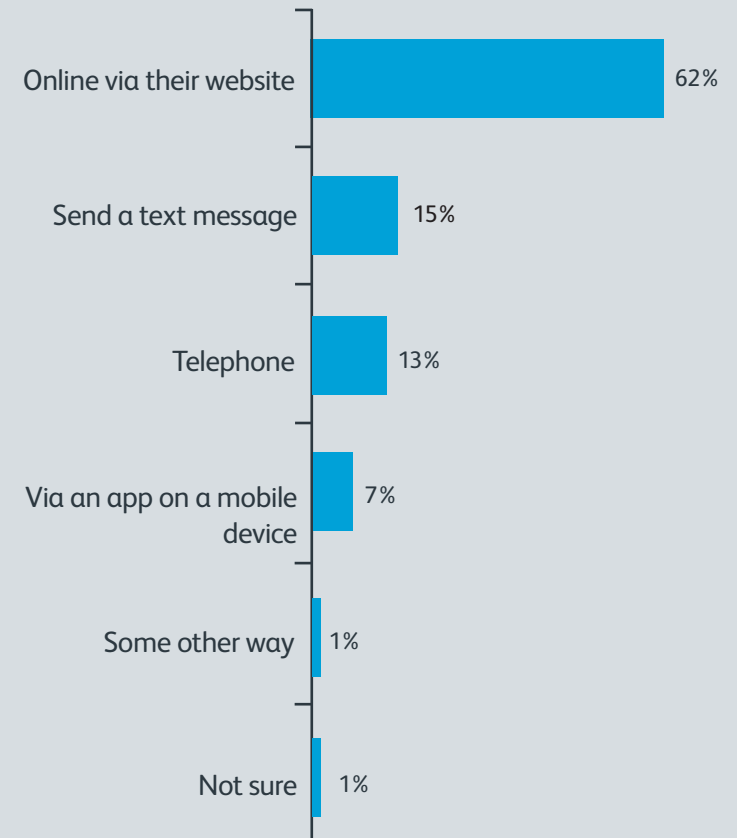
Preferred way to notify company of changes to a delivery

Updating details online via a company's website was by far the most popular way to change a delivery address, accounting for 62% of responses.

How often do you need to change the delivery details for goods you have ordered online?



Preferred way to notify delivery company of changes to a delivery



Base All regular online shoppers (UK 2,003)

WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM THIS RESEARCH?

Preferred redelivery options

- In Britain and Germany two thirds of online shoppers are happy for parcels to be left with a neighbour but this drops to a third in security-conscious France, where they prefer collecting from a ParcelShop
- Brits are much happier for parcels to be left in a safe place than their French and German counterparts
- Germans don't like travelling far to collect undelivered items; the maximum distance they are willing to travel is 1.56km compared to those in the UK and France who will travel over 2.2km

Changing delivery details

- Changing delivery details is something almost half of our respondents do "quite often" with a further 41% doing it "sometimes", suggesting it's a common practice
- Going online is by far the most popular way to notify the delivery company of a change to a delivery

Proof of delivery

- A signature from the intended recipient is still by far the preferred method for confirming proof of delivery
- However, the French seem more security-conscious, with a signature and ID check more popular than another household member's signature

Delivery at work

- Between a third and a quarter of people surveyed are allowed to accept deliveries at work
- Fewer online shoppers in Germany are retired or not working
- But a higher proportion in Germany are not sure whether they can accept workplace deliveries – perhaps suggesting that it's something they haven't even considered

Base: All regular online shoppers (UK 2,003, Germany 1,003, France 1,000) Q47a, Q47b, Q50, Q51, Q53

HOW HERMES CAN HELP

Hermes' Proof of Delivery (POD)

We provide a range of secure delivery options, supported by state-of-the-art visibility, to benefit the retailer in problem delivery locations, where there may be a high level of risk. For the customer, the service offers added security for high-value items or those of particular importance.

PIN-protection – extra security

In addition to signed proof of delivery, we also offer a PIN-protected proof of delivery solution. This is thought to be the only password-based POD service of its kind currently available in the UK. The secure four-digit PIN will be generated by the retailer. The encrypted data will then be sent to Hermes' mobile communications system and to our network of couriers via hand-held terminals (HHTs), so the recipient can securely validate the delivery.

To find out more about how Hermes can give your business the edge with a range of customer-centric proof of delivery and redelivery options, please call [0844 543 7067](tel:0844 543 7067) or e-mail hermes-uk@hermesworld.com

Alternatively, to download our Proof of Delivery product information sheet, please [click here](#)