

Emerging E-commerce Culture Bad for Environment, Warns Augusto Beato

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Portland SEO's Augusto Beato called upon online purchasers to help reduce carbon emissions by not ordering clothes with the explicit goal of returning them.

Citing a recent survey that found that 40 percent of all online clothing purchases are returned, Beato insisted that the emerging "culture" in e-commerce has been responsible for the increase in carbon dioxide emissions.

He pointed out that the consumers' habit of ordering clothes with the goal of returning them increases deliveries to people' houses. For instance, they buy several sizes of the same product to see which one fits.

Some consumers also admit to wearing an outfit to pose for a social media photo before returning it.

"In the customers' desire to trick retailers into shipping items that they would eventually ship back, they ignored the consequences in the form of an environmental footprint," said Beato, who is the CEO of Portland SEO.

On the other hand, brands are willing accomplices with their "free-shipping" schemes.

Part of the reason for buying clothes online has been so popular is that many brands make it possible to return unwanted items without hassle or cost. "Unfortunately, brands are unlikely to help bring about the change needed since rescinding free shipping would put them at a competitive disadvantage," Beato says.

Brands seeking to boost online sales may tap the expertise of Portland SEO through this link.

Beato pointed out that transportation overtook power plants in 2016 as the top producer of carbon dioxide emissions for the first time since 1979. A quarter of this footprint comes from medium- and heavy-duty trucks doing last-mile deliveries after goods have been transported by plane or ship to a warehouse.

Furthermore, the demand for speedy delivery and returns means that trucks are often less than full than they were previously, which increases the carbon footprint of each item people buy or return.

In the past, trucks only needed to go to clusters of malls or shopping centers, but now they are going back and forth to people?s houses. Deliveries are now expected to go into neighborhoods that were never designed for freight traffic ? creating congestion, noise problems, and infrastructure damage in addition to emissions.

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