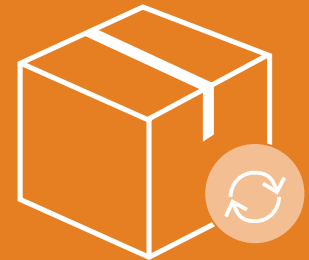


# RETURNS-STUDY 2016

HOW FAIR ARE CUSTOMERS IN ONLINE TRADE?



September  
2016

Händlerbund  
Study



856

Surveyed  
Online Merchants

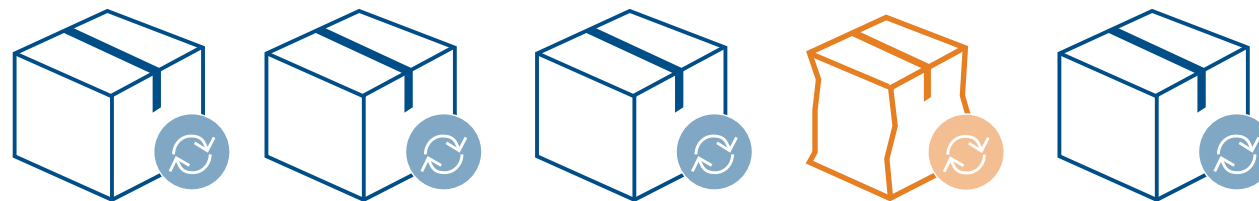


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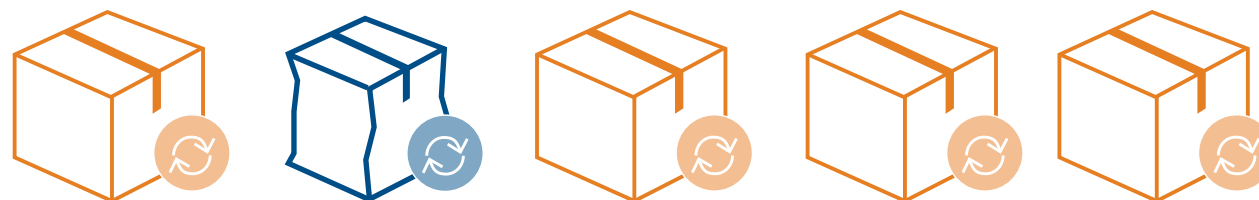


WE ASKED  
**856** ONLINE  
MERCHANTS



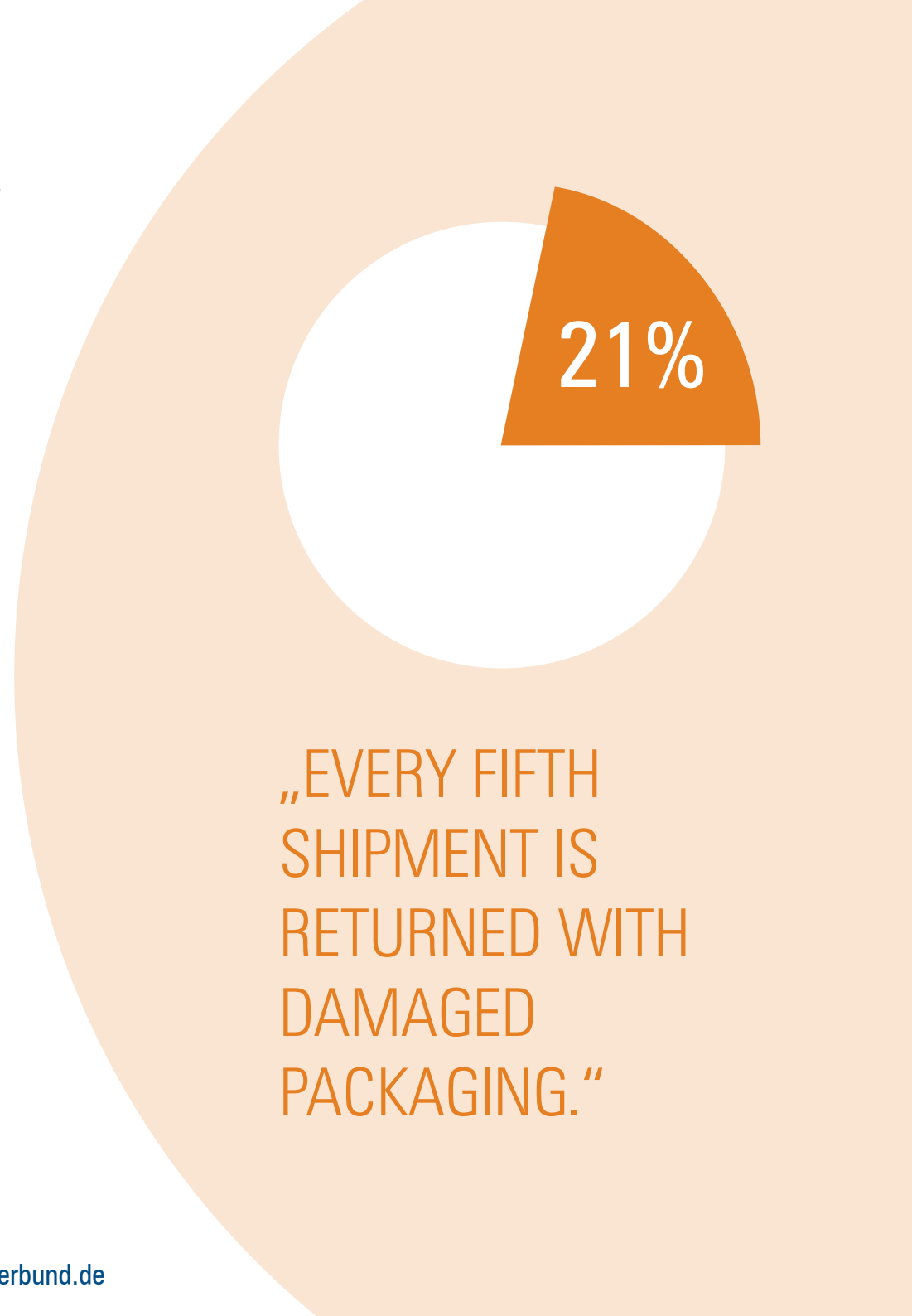
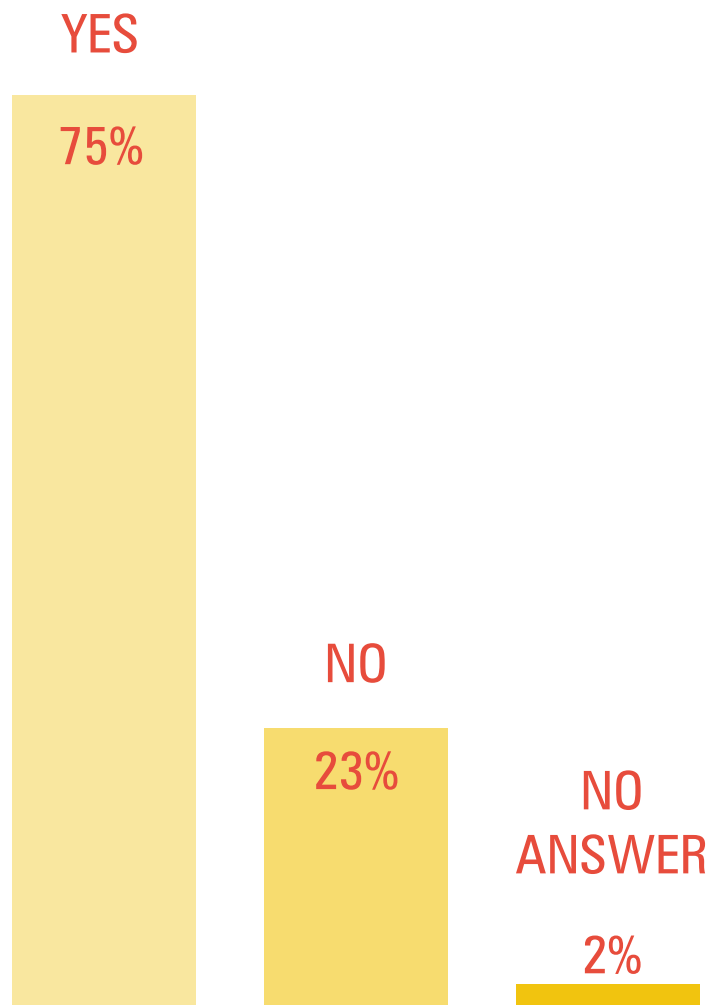
## FOREWORD RETURNS-STUDY 2016

As part of the FairCommerce Initiative the Händlerbund, along with online merchants in Germany, is carrying out a survey of the problems regarding the right of withdrawal. The legislature is granting customers dealing with long-distance transactions extensive rights. When it comes to Fairness, online merchants have to trust their customers and are regularly disappointed. The results of the study show how severe the abuse of revocation rights in online trade is.



## 1 | DAMAGED ORIGINAL PACKAGING BY FREQUENCY

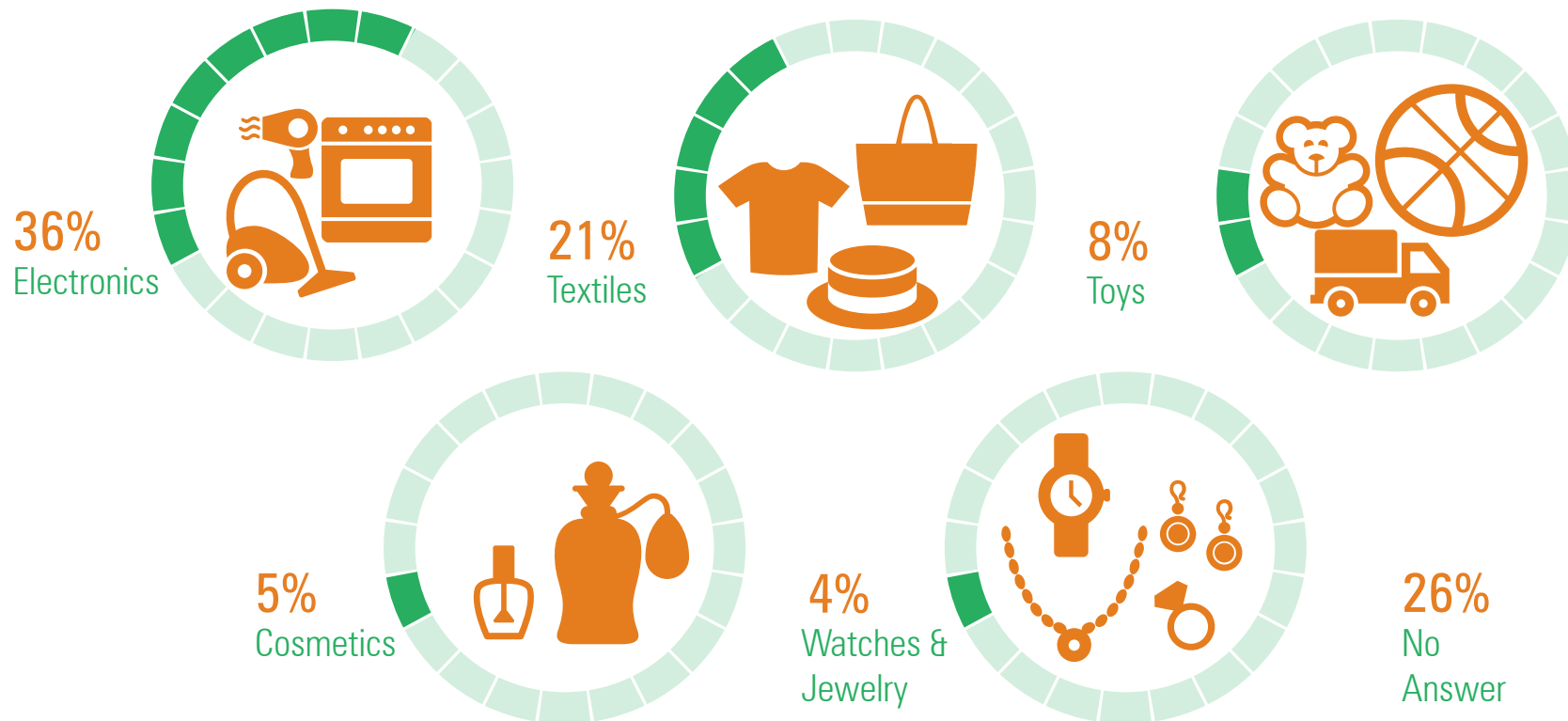
We asked online merchants if they received returns with damaged original packaging.



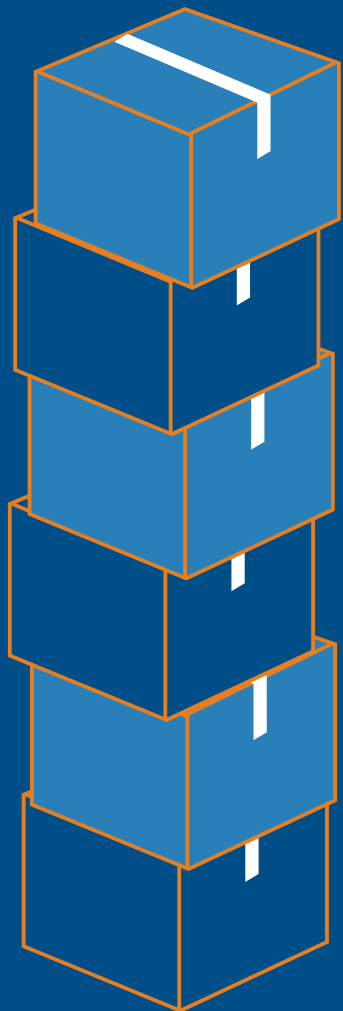
„EVERY FIFTH SHIPMENT IS RETURNED WITH DAMAGED PACKAGING.“

## 2 | DAMAGED ORIGINAL PACKAGING BY PRODUCT GROUPS

On average, half of the damaged returns that online merchants receive can't be resold at the original price and the online merchant is forced to offer the item at a discount of (on average) 35%. The loss of sales is enormous.



„ALMOST EVERY SECOND RETURN  
CONTAINS DAMAGED GOODS.“



44%

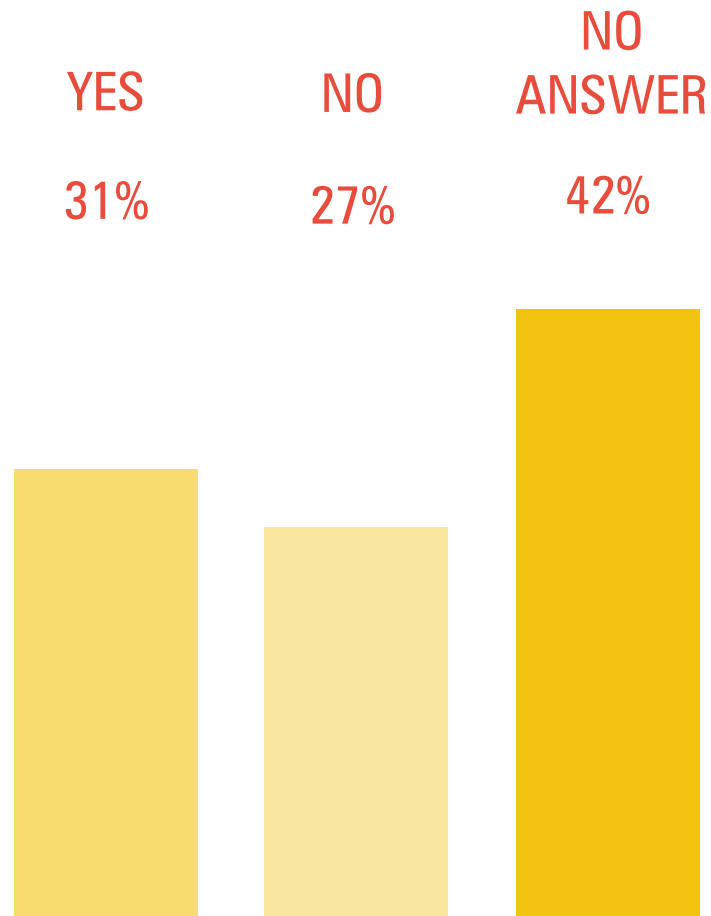
The goods then have to  
be discounted by 35% -  
textiles by 42%!

SALE



### 3 | DAMAGED TEXTILES BY FREQUENCY

Among online merchants, textile deliveries that were returned already worn or damaged made up 1/3 of all returns. Of all returns, online merchants find textiles in almost every fifth delivery that have been damaged or worn.



18%

„ONLINE MERCHANTS  
FIND TEXTILES THAT  
HAVE BEEN DAMAGED  
OR WORN IN EVERY  
FIFTH RETURN.“

#### 4 | DAMAGED TEXTILES BY BUSINESS SEGMENT

Almost half of the online textile merchants who have had problems with returned damaged goods come from the women's and men's clothing sector. Sportswear, household textiles and underwear are also problematic sectors.





## 5 | RIGHT OF WITHDRAWAL PROBLEMS – TOP 10

### LEGAL UNCERTAINTY

Ignorance of the legal situation by online merchants and buyers can cause a disregard for return deadlines, explicit notices of withdrawal and grounds for exclusion regarding the right of withdrawal.

### SETTLEMENT PROBLEMS

The distinction between withdrawal and a lawful guarantee can frequently lead to problems. Buyers try to persuade the merchants to cover the costs of returns citing product defects or product inadequacy as the reason for the return.

### BUYER CONSCIENTIOUSNESS

Buyers can be construed as oppressive and extortionate. They know their rights as buyers, however not what is required of them.

### REASONABLENESS

Selection orders or indiscriminate orders cause online merchants unnecessary costs and effort.

### FREIGHT COLLECT COSTS

When goods are returned freight collect; contrary to the terms and conditions.

### NEGATIVE REVIEWS

Especially troublesome are negative reviews for Ebay and Amazon merchants which are used as a means of pressure.

### FRAUD ATTEMPTS

Buyers exchange the received goods with different, less valuable or damaged products and send these back as the authentic return.

### TERMS OF USE

Legal requirements differing from the provisions put in place by online markets like Ebay or Amazon, can cause ambiguity and insecurity.

### B2B TRADE

Consumer Law for withdrawal has been widely expanded to include commercial business.

### ASSIGNMENT PROBLEMS

Returns without notification lead to assignment problems from the return shipments and problems for the online merchants during processing.

# RESULTS

MORE THAN

**3/4**

of online merchants receive returns with damaged original packaging.

Every  
**5<sup>th</sup>**

return in online trade is returned worn, dirty or without a label.

WITH

**35%**

is the average discount that has to be granted for the resell of returned goods.

**15%**

of all the online merchants surveyed complained of ambiguities currently in the right of withdrawal.

In

**44%**

of the cases, returned textiles cannot be resold at the original price.

## ABOUT

# HÄNDLERBUND

As the largest online trade association in Europe, Händlerbund is an important voice in the e-commerce industry and also a valued partner. The association promotes exchange between traders and service providers to support digital and stationary trade in a sustainable manner as well as broadening the horizons for the future. Händlerbund actively engages with its members and partners thanks to the representation and bringing together of various services throughout Europe.



The Fair Commerce Initiative was brought into existence by the Händlerbund and it stands for fair competition and is against the abuse of legal written warnings. After only one year, 35,000 online shops have joined the Fair Commerce Initiative.

## BASIC INFORMATION

Over 50,000  
protected online  
presences



The largest online  
trade association in  
Europe



One of the leading  
legal text providers  
on the Internet



Founded in 2008

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Händlerbund-Study  
September 2016

**STUDY 2016**

WE ASKED  
**856 MERCHANTS,**  
IF THEY HAVE  
EVER RECEIVED  
RETURNS CONT-  
AINING DAMAGED  
GOODS.