

ShipMatrix Parcel Market Forecast for Peak 2026

October 27, 2026: Despite economic challenges, ShipMatrix estimates that 2.4 billion packages will be delivered during the peak season of 2026 for an increase of 4 percent over peak of 2025 helped by an extra shopping day.

Though, in peak 2026, the shippers will be paying about 16 percent higher in parcel rates as compared to last year largely driven by GRI increase and recent spike in fuel prices that could go higher in December.

Key factors impacting the peak volumes include:

- higher fuel prices (due to war with Iran) that is siphoning off \$270 per month per household from spending on other items;
- higher shipping charges leading some retailers to raise the minimum amount spent for free shipping;

While UPS planned hiring seasonal workers for this peak will be 9 percent lesser compared with last year, Amazon is hiring 20 percent more workers for its fulfilment and operational facilities driven by shift of B2C parcel volume from carriers to large retailers' own delivery networks.

In the first-half of 2026, the total U.S. domestic parcel volumes increased for Amazon by 9.7 percent (result of UPS glide down of Amazon volume and Amazon's own expansion into rural America) and for FedEx by 4.6 percent. However, the volumes decreased for UPS by 5.7 percent and USPS by 3.1 percent.

The volume lost by UPS and USPS was more than the gain by Amazon and FedEx, with those additional 145 million packages being diverted to private networks of large retailers like Wal-Mart, as well as alternate carriers like GoFo, Uni-Uni, SpeedX, Doordash, Jitsu, Veho, OnTrac, and Better Trucks, who have expanded their coverage area in anticipation of tsunami type changes brewing in the parcel market.

About ShipMatrix, Inc.:

Since 2000, ShipMatrix has supported hundreds of customers shipping billions of parcels to manage visibility, transportation spend and customer experience, And, its reporting of on time performance of the national carriers has been cited by UPS and USPS as THE source for their high service performance in peak periods.

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