

## LOGISTICS

# Retail milestones set to lift shipping volumes, DHL says

### Parcel delivery giant tips a 50 per cent jump next month as Black Friday and Singles' Day unfold

**Daniel Ren** in Shanghai  
ren.wei@scmp.com

International and mainland express delivery companies can expect a 50 per cent jump in shipping volumes next month as the mega shopping events Black Friday and Singles' Day spark a surge in online orders, according to DHL Express.

The Covid-19 pandemic had already bolstered the e-commerce sector, triggering stronger demand for shipping, the courier service giant said in a statement.

shipping volumes, which during November were expected to rise 30 per cent to 40 per cent in the region from a year earlier, according to Sean Wall, an executive president at DHL Express Asia-Pacific.

With rising volumes coming amid the pandemic, the challenge for logistics providers is huge as they have to keep their workers safe while they are handling the massive amount of shipments.

DHL, which has 100,000 employees in more than 220 countries and territories, said it had provided its staff with face masks and disinfectants. Social distancing and remote working rules have also been imposed.

The company has also removed the need for customers to sign for their shipments.

Black Friday falls on November 27 in the United States this year, while China's Singles' Day shopping festival takes place on November 11.

The coronavirus pandemic had fired up demand for online shopping, triggering a 35 per cent jump in shipping volumes this year, DHL said.

Singles' Day – the world's largest online shopping event – would fuel more growth of the mainland's e-commerce sector, consultancy Bain & Co said.

A Bain survey of mainland consumers showed that 40 per cent of the respondents plan to spend more on November 11 this year than last year.

Last year, sales on the day reached 410 billion yuan (HK\$473 billion), double the equivalent amount US online retail giant Amazon generates in a month.

It is seen as a proxy for consumer spending on the mainland as well as an important barometer of economic health.

## ¥410b

Total sales on Singles' Day last year, which is double the equivalent amount US-based online retail giant Amazon generates in an entire month

"Over the years, we have seen consumers and even businesses shift their purchases online, but the pandemic has truly pushed the trend to leapfrog a few years ahead," said Ken Lee, chief executive of DHL Express Asia-Pacific.

He added that the coming peak season in November – when the annual Black Friday and Singles' Day shopping events are held – would pose challenges to the logistics sector this year.

DHL Express has invested €1 billion (HK\$9.1 billion) this year to improve its infrastructure and network.

The company, part of Deutsche Post DHL Group, did not provide any absolute figure for