

How the 'Pressure Tipping' Trend Is Impacting Consumers and Businesses in America

Let's face it: We've all stood in line at a coffee shop, just cashed out with a drink in hand, when a window pops up on the store's iPad asking how much you'd like to tip. These touch screen prompts are becoming more and more prevalent everywhere, and it's catching many by surprise.

Like many other Americans, thoughts might race through your mind like, "Am I required to tip at a coffee shop?" Or maybe even, "If I don't tip does that mean I'm not a generous giver?"

Whether you're buying a cup of coffee, picking up takeout food or checking out at your local pet store, you may be wondering if tipping etiquette has changed.

In an effort to help support struggling businesses during the pandemic, many owners added an option to tip employees. But now consumers are calling this "pressure tipping" because they feel like an implication that they should tip. This trend has stuck "post pandemic," and now Americans are starting a debate on what services require a tip and which ones do not.

Research from National Etiquette Expert Diane Gottsman shows:

- iPad tipping isn't inherently bad, and the prompts on the screen often calculate for you 10%, 15%, and 20%, so you don't have to.
- Gottsman says if you are at a coffee shop buying a prepackaged pastry, you don't need to tip.
- If you're at a store and there was an additional amount of work that went into preparing your order, then giving a few dollars is a nice gesture.

- To-Go orders require packaging food, providing condiments, napkins and utensils, so providing a tip at your discretion is helpful.

Interesting enough, a report from shows that Americans are actually worse tippers now than before the pandemic despite more opportunities to give.

“Although more than one-third of Americans pledged to become better tippers in 2020 and 2021 in order to support those who had lost wages during the pandemic, the commitment doesn’t seem to have fully materialized,” reports.

Many attribute the decrease in tipping to the increase of prices nationwide and Americans spending on a tighter budget.

Either way, the next time you are at a checkout counter staring at the iPad tipping screen, do what you feel is best and led by the Holy Spirit. At the end of the day, we are called to be generous givers—not out of guilt or pressure but to display the characteristics of God to the world around us.
{eoa}

Shelby Lindsay *is an assistant editor for Charisma Media.*