

# Delivery Services in Curaçao

A Mystery Shopping Research  
Comparing Online Shopping Delivery Services  
from the USA to Curaçao

## RESEARCH REPORT



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## Colophon

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RE-Quest Research & Consultancy

Authors: Drs. Lise Anna Janson  
Dr. Renske R. Pin

Contact: [info@requestcaribbean.com](mailto:info@requestcaribbean.com)

This publication can be downloaded from: [www.requestcaribbean.com](http://www.requestcaribbean.com)

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## Disclosures

This mystery shopping research is conducted by RE-Quest, an independent research company based in Curaçao, commissioned by MyMalls, one of the delivery services assessed in this research. To ensure the objectivity and independency of the research, MyMalls agreed upon the following:

1. At the start of the project, RE-Quest informed all five delivery services a mystery shopping research would take place, assessing their services in the following two months. This to ensure all five parties had an equal and therefore fair starting position. All five delivery services confirmed receiving the letter.
2. At the start of the project, MyMalls agreed RE-Quest would publish the results to the public, regardless of the outcomes.
3. After determining the definitive objective and research questions, RE-Quest independently performed and reported the assessment without interference from MyMalls or other parties.

Information from, and communication with the delivery services was recorded in a period of two months, starting from the moment of confirmation of receiving the letter about the research and methodology.

At the end of the assessment, one of the ten ordered packages was not yet delivered. To be able to include the results of the delivery of this package in the research, the delivery costs were estimated based on the available information and the delivery time counted up until the moment of finalizing this report on May 22nd, 2018.

To ensure elimination of (preference) bias, the mystery shopper assigned by RE-Quest was informed on the identity of the delivery service that initiated the research *after* performing the assessment.

## Summary

Consumers in Curaçao sometimes encounter limited local assortment and high prices of retail products. Online shopping, specifically in the USA at e.g. Amazon or FashionNova, provides an interesting alternative. But what are the fastest and cheapest ways to deliver the products to your door in Curaçao?

In this research we compared the delivery costs, delivery time and customer service of five delivery services: Aeropost, eZone, MyMalls, MyUS and PuntoMio (Cpost). We asked a mystery shopper to order home delivery of the same package twice with each delivery service. One time with the aim to get it delivered as *cheap* as possible, one time to get it delivered as *fast* as possible.

The results show large differences in delivery costs, time and customer services. For the delivery of the same package, the delivery costs ranged from \$39,94 to \$149,34 (excl. taxes) and the delivery time from 1 to 22+ days. In some cases, the service was effortless. In other cases, contacting the helpdesk up to 6 times was necessary to get the package delivered, with variable scores on customer friendliness, solution orientation and clear communication.

Top 3 cheapest delivery:

1. eZone
2. PuntoMio
3. Aeropost

Top 3 fastest delivery:

1. MyMalls
2. MyUS
3. eZone

Top 3 best customer service:

1. MyMalls
2. MyUS
3. eZone

Where MyMalls scores high on delivery time and customer services, they offered by far the most expensive option. eZone scores high on delivery price: with both orders, they offered the lowest price. However, they do not offer home delivery: packages have to be picked up at their collection point. MyUS and Aeropost both have fair prices and delivery times, but the helpdesk of Aeropost had to be contacted up to five times to get the package delivered. PuntoMio offered low prices but required up to six times contacting the helpdesk, and one package was not yet delivered at the end of the assessment after 22 days.

When ordering in the USA, customers have to take into account a proportionally high amount for delivery. For the products we ordered with a total value of \$88.03, an additional fee for delivery of the package (incl. taxes) varied from \$57.56 to \$170,73 (almost 2 times the products value).

Customs duty and entry fees in Curaçao are based on product value and rates depending on product groups. Ten times the same products were ordered with the same product value, but remarkably the paid taxes (customs duty and entry fee) varied substantially, from \$12.06 to \$40.36.

When choosing the best delivery service to get products from the USA to Curaçao, one should consider what is most important: delivery price, delivery time or service.

# 1. Introduction

## Online Shopping in Curaçao

Curaçao is a relatively small market with a population of approximately 160.000 people. Therefore, most products sold in Curaçao are imported to the island. This causes extra costs and extra delivery time for the vendors in Curaçao. In addition, this may cause extra costs and a more limited availability of products in stores for the buyers compared to shopping possibilities in the United States of America or Europe.

Online shopping, especially in the United States, provides an interesting alternative. Several delivery services in Curaçao make it possible to use this alternative. By creating an account at those delivery services, a customer will receive an address in the United States. With this address, it is possible to use all online shopping possibilities in the United States. The online order will be delivered at that address. Thereafter, the delivery service from Curaçao makes sure to deliver the order in Curaçao.

## Objective: Comparison Delivery Services

This mystery shopping research assessed five delivery services in Curaçao.



The following five delivery services in Curaçao are assessed and compared (in alphabetic order):

- 1) Aeropost
- 2) eZone
- 3) MyMalls
- 4) MyUS
- 5) PuntoMio (Cpost)

The objective of this research is twofold:

- To gather general information about delivery services in Curaçao.
- To gather information to enable delivery services in Curaçao to improve their services.

This report on the results of the comparison is open to the public. It can be used by both private customers and businesses, to make an informed decision when choosing a delivery service.

## Research Questions: Price, Delivery time and Service

Price, delivery time and service are important aspects for customers when it comes to choosing a delivery service. In this research, we compared five delivery services regarding delivering products from the United States to Curaçao. We assessed the following aspects:

- Price and possible special offers.
- Delivery time and delivery method (to door, or pick-up at collection point).
- Communication and customer services.

By assessing these aspects, we could answer the following questions:

- Who has the best price?
- Who has the best delivery time?
- Who has the best service?

## 2. Method

### Mystery Shopping

In the period of mid-March 2018 to June 2018, we performed a mystery shopper assessment of five delivery services in Curaçao. Mystery shopping is a long-established research technique to measure any customer service process. To assess the delivery services, the mystery shopper acted as a regular customer and reported back on the experiences in a detailed and objective way. The mystery shopper created new accounts for all delivery services and online stores, using two aliases. None of the delivery services knew which names and details were used to create the accounts.

### Which delivery services were assessed?

In this research we compared the delivery costs, delivery time and customer service of five delivery services: Aeropost, eZone, MyMalls, MyUS and PuntoMio (Cpost).

### What was ordered?

The mystery shopper ordered a package with a set of three different products, varying in product size and weight, at two different online stores in the United States. The total value of the three products was \$88,03. All products ordered during the assessment, were donated to local foundations in Curaçao.

amazon



1) MP-3 player (Amazon)

amazon



2) Stock pot (Amazon)

FASHIONNOVA



3) Sneakers (FashionNova)

### How were the orders placed?

Time and costs are important considerations for customers when it comes to delivery. Therefore, we asked the mystery shopper to order the delivery of the same package twice with each of the five delivery services, following two scenarios:

- one time with the aim to get it delivered as *cheap* as possible;
- one time to get it delivered it as *fast* as possible.

This implies with every choice made during the ordering process, the mystery shopper opted for the option that was best suitable for the delivery to be either as *cheap* or as *fast* as possible, to the mystery shoppers' home address.

### What aspects were assessed and how?

The mystery shopper focused on three important aspects regarding the delivery services:

- Who has the best *price*?
- Who has the best *delivery time*?
- Who has the best *service*?

We measured delivery *price* in US dollars:

- we noted the prices for the delivery and for taxes
- we converted NAF prices into dollars<sup>1</sup>
- we noted special offers regarding the price for delivery
- we noted differences in price for home delivery or pick-up at collection point

We measured delivery *time* in days:

- we counted all days for delivery, starting from the day after activating the order to the day of delivery, including weekend and public holidays (Kingsday, Ascension Day and Labor Day), and divided it in:
  - Delivery time internationally (USA to CUR): how many days did it take to deliver the package from the United States to the delivery service in Curaçao?
  - Delivery time locally (CUR to home address): how many days did it take to deliver the package from the delivery service in Curaçao to the home address of the mystery shopper?
  - Total delivery time: how many days did it take in total to deliver the package from the United States to the home address?
- we counted all business days for delivery, starting from the day after activating the order to the day of delivery, excluding weekend days and public holidays (Kingsday, Ascension Day and Labor Day).
- we noted special offers regarding the delivery time
- we noted differences in time for home delivery or pick-up at collection point

We measured the *customer service*:

- we noted the possibilities to contact customer services (chat/phone/email)
- we contacted customer service online (email and/or chat-function) and by phone with questions regarding the order, and rated the experienced *customer friendliness*, *solution orientation* and *clear communication* of the customer service on a 5-point scale (1 = very poor, 5 = very good)
- we counted the amount of contact moments with the customer services, necessary to get the package delivered
- we noted the possibility for home delivery or pick-up at collection point

Besides price, delivery time and service, other aspects can be interesting to (potential) clients. For instance, the possibility to calculate the costs for delivery on the website, to be able to return your package, or the possibility to pay with local currency. We did not test these aspects in this research.

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<sup>1</sup> using the exchange rate of 1,80 NAF for 1 dollar (using the middle rate on 15-05-2018 via: [www.centralbank.cw/exchange-rates](http://www.centralbank.cw/exchange-rates)).

### 3. Results

#### 3.1 Overview of the results

Table 1 and 2 give an overview of comparing the delivery of ten identical packages, using five delivery services. One time ordered to get the package delivered as *cheap* as possible and one time as *fast* as possible.

RANKING	Order			Delivery Costs in Dollars			Delivery Time in Days				Customer Service					
	Company	Ordered Cheap/Fast	Costs Products	Costs Delivery	Costs Taxes	Total Delivery Cost	Delivery time Internationally: USA - CUR	Delivery time Locally: CUR - Home address	Total Delivery Time	Total Delivery Time excl. weekend- and holidays <sup>2</sup>	Count necessary contact moments	Customer Friendly	Solution Oriented	Clear Communication	Overall Rating service	Delivery Method
1	eZone	Cheap	88,03	39,94	18,67	58,61	11	n.a.	11	5	0	2	3	2	2,3	Pick-up at Collection Point
2	eZone	Fast	88,03	39,94	18,72	58,66	6	n.a.	6	4	3	2	3	2	2,3	Pick-up at Collection Point
3	PuntoMio	Fast	88,03	44,92	19,00	63,92	8	12	20	11	5	1	1	1	1,0	Home Delivery
4	Aeropost	Fast	88,03	45,50	12,06	57,56	3	4	7	5	5	2	2	1	1,7	Home Delivery
5	MyUS	Cheap	88,03	50,93	33,19	84,12	unknown	unknown	4	3	0	4	3	4	3,7	Home Delivery
6	MyUS	Fast	88,03	54,94	40,36	95,30	unknown	unknown	3	3	0	4	3	4	3,7	Home Delivery
7	Aeropost	Cheap	88,03	55,50	16,44	71,94	4	7	11	7	4	2	2	1	1,7	Home Delivery
8	PuntoMio	Cheap	88,03	61,59	16,89	78,48	22+	unknown	22+	14+	6	1	1	1	1,0	Home Delivery
9	MyMalls	Cheap	88,03	70,70	23,78	94,48	4	0	4	1	0	5	5	5	5,0	Home Delivery
10	MyMalls	Fast	88,03	149,34	21,39	170,73	1	0	1	1	0	5	5	5	5,0	Home Delivery

Table 1: Deliveries ordered by Costs Delivery (excl. taxes)

RANKING	Order			Delivery Costs in Dollars			Delivery Time in Days				Customer Service					
	Company	Ordered Cheap/Fast	Costs Products	Costs Delivery	Costs Taxes	Costs Total Delivery	Delivery time Internationally: USA - CUR	Delivery time Locally: CUR - Home address	Total Delivery Time	Total Delivery Time excl. weekend- and holidays <sup>3</sup>	Count necessary contact moments	Customer Friendly	Solution Oriented	Clear Communication	Overall Rating service	Delivery Method
1	MyMalls	Fast	88,03	149,34	21,39	170,73	1	0	1	1	0	5	5	5	5,0	Home Delivery
2	MyUS	Fast	88,03	54,94	40,36	95,30	unknown	unknown	3	3	0	4	3	4	3,7	Home Delivery
3	MyUS	Cheap	88,03	50,93	33,19	84,12	unknown	unknown	4	3	0	4	3	4	3,7	Home Delivery
4	MyMalls	Cheap	88,03	70,70	23,78	94,48	4	0	4	1	0	5	5	5	5,0	Home Delivery
5	eZone	Fast	88,03	39,94	18,72	58,66	6	n.a.	6	4	3	2	3	2	2,3	Pick-up at Collection Point
6	Aeropost	Fast	88,03	45,50	12,06	57,56	3	4	7	5	5	2	2	1	1,7	Home Delivery
7	eZone	Cheap	88,03	39,94	18,67	58,61	11	n.a.	11	5	0	2	3	2	2,3	Pick-up at Collection Point
8	Aeropost	Cheap	88,03	55,50	16,44	71,94	4	7	11	7	4	2	2	1	1,7	Home Delivery
9	PuntoMio	Fast	88,03	44,92	19,00	63,92	8	12	20	11	5	1	1	1	1,0	Home Delivery
10	PuntoMio	Cheap	88,03	61,59	16,89	78,48	22+	unknown	22+	14+	6	1	1	1	1,0	Home Delivery

Table 2: Deliveries ordered by Total Delivery Time

<sup>2</sup> Excluded Holidays: Kingsday, Labor Day, Ascension Day.

<sup>3</sup> Excluded Holidays: Kingsday, Labor Day, Ascension Day.

### 3.2 Results Delivery Costs

The results show large differences in delivery costs. For the delivery of the same package, the delivery costs (excl. taxes) ranged from \$39,94 to \$149,34. eZone is the delivery service that provided the cheapest way to receive the package. However, with eZone, it was not possible to receive the package at a home address. MyMalls, on the other hand, provided the most expensive way to receive your package. Aeropost and PuntoMio ask approximately the same amount for the delivery costs (excl. taxes).

RANKING	Order		Delivery Costs in Dollars				Delivery Method
	Company	Ordered Cheap/Fast	Costs Products	Costs Delivery	Costs Taxes	Total Delivery Cost	
1	eZone	Cheap	88,03	39,94	18,67	58,61	Pick-up at Collection Point
2	eZone	Fast	88,03	39,94	18,72	58,66	Pick-up at Collection Point
3	PuntoMio	Fast	88,03	44,92	19,00	63,92	Home Delivery
4	Aeropost	Fast	88,03	45,50	12,06	57,56	Home Delivery
5	MyUS	Cheap	88,03	50,93	33,19	84,12	Home Delivery
6	MyUS	Fast	88,03	54,94	40,36	95,30	Home Delivery
7	Aeropost	Cheap	88,03	55,50	16,44	71,94	Home Delivery
8	PuntoMio	Cheap	88,03	61,59	16,89	78,48	Home Delivery
9	MyMalls	Cheap	88,03	70,70	23,78	94,48	Home Delivery
10	MyMalls	Fast	88,03	149,34	21,39	170,73	Home Delivery

Table 3: Deliveries ordered by Costs Delivery (excl. taxes)

A remarkable note is that the delivery costs of Aeropost, turned out to be more expensive when ordering the products 'as cheap as possible', compared to the same order following the guidelines of receiving the package 'as fast as possible'. This may be explained due to the different possibilities of consolidation, see chapter 'special offer: consolidation'.

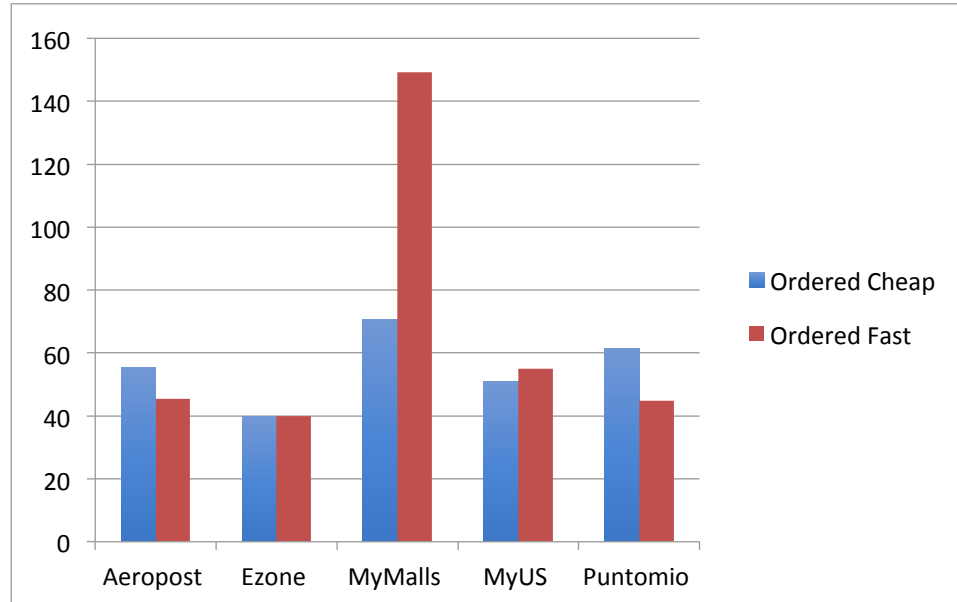


Figure 1: Delivery costs in dollars (excl. taxes) of the delivery of ten identical packages, ordered as fast as possible vs. ordered as cheap as possible

The package of the second order of PuntoMio, while following the guidelines of receiving the package *as cheap as possible*, was not yet received when the assessment of this research ended. To be able to include the results of the delivery of this package in the research, the delivery costs were estimated based on the available information communicated by PuntoMio. This turned out to be more expensive than the first order.

## Costs for taxes

Customs duty and entry fees in Curaçao are based on product value and rates depending on product groups.<sup>4</sup> Striking is that the same products were ordered ten times, with the same product value, but the taxes (customs duty and entry fee) paid differed considerably, from \$12.06 to \$40.36.

## Special offers regarding the delivery price

The delivery services offer specific special offers regarding the price for delivery.

Delivery Service	Extra costs Home Delivery	Extra costs Subscription	Saving costs by Referring a friend	Saving costs with Consolidation
Aeropost	Yes, \$5, - fixed fee.	No	Yes, up to \$10	Yes
eZone	HD is not possible	No	Yes, up to \$15	No
MyMalls	No	No	Yes, up to \$25	Yes
MyUS	No	Yes: \$7 /month (but 30-day free trial)	No	Yes
PuntoMio	Yes, \$8,30 fixed fee.	No	No	No

Table 4: Special offers regarding price: extra costs and savings

### Extra costs Home Delivery

With use of eZone, it was not possible to receive the package at a home address. Pick-up at a collection point was the only option. MyUS and MyMalls, on the other hand, only provided the possibility to deliver at a home address. PuntoMio and Aeropost offered the choice to receive the package at a home address, or to pick-up the package at a collection point. When choosing home delivery, one pays an extra fixed fee of \$5, - for Aeropost and \$8.30 for PuntoMio per delivered package.

When delivering the package at a home address, MyMalls and PuntoMio offered the possibility to pay with swipe. MyUS and Aeropost only offered the possibility to pay in cash. Moreover, in all cases the delivery person of both delivery services did not have spare change.

### Extra costs Subscription

Creating an account with eZone, Aeropost, PuntoMio and MyMalls was free of charge. MyUS requested to choose a membership when subscribing to their services. The print screen below shows the different membership options. The mystery shopper used the 'free trial premium' option.

The screenshot shows the MyUS website's pricing page. The header reads "Find the perfect plan for your shipping needs". Below this, there are three columns representing different membership plans: "SINGLE PACKAGE", "FREE TRIAL PREMIUM", and "+ MAIL". The "FREE TRIAL PREMIUM" column is highlighted with a green border. The table lists various shipping benefits and their availability for each plan. At the bottom, there are "SIGN UP" buttons for each plan. A note at the bottom states: "Cancel within the trial period and you will not be billed. After 30 days, your membership will automatically continue at \$7 per month for as long as you remain a member. No contracts or cancellation fees."

	SINGLE PACKAGE	FREE TRIAL PREMIUM	+ MAIL
I WANT TO SHIP:	One Package from One Store	Packages from Multiple Stores	Multiple Packages & US Mail
MyUS Shipping Discount ?	✓	✓	✓
Premium Shipping Discount ?	20%	20%	20%
US Tax-Free Shopping ?	✓	✓	✓
Free Package Consolidation ?	—	✓	✓
Free Package Repacking ?	—	✓	✓
Free Package Storage ?	—	30 Days	30 Days
Monthly Fee	No Membership Fees	FREE	\$25
	SIGN UP	START FREE TRIAL	SIGN UP

\$7/month after 30-day free trial

Cancel within the trial period and you will not be billed. After 30 days, your membership will automatically continue at \$7 per month for as long as you remain a member. No contracts or cancellation fees.

<sup>4</sup> For more information, see: <http://www.douane.cw/nl/tarief-van-invoerrechten/>

### *Saving costs by Referring a friend*

MyMalls, eZone, and Aeropost offered a special deal to reduce the costs for delivery by referring a friend to make use of their services. You can use this special offer more than once, by inviting more friends. You will receive a discount on your next order, if your friend registered at the delivery service and placed his first order.

The offered discount differed per delivery service:

- MyMalls offered a discount of \$25, -
- eZone offered a discount of \$15, -
- Aeropost offered a discount of \$10, -

**Refer A Friend Program**

PuntoMio and MyUS do not offer a discount by referring friends to use their service.

### *Saving costs with Consolidation*

Aeropost, MyMalls and MyUS offered the possibility to consolidate products to reduce the costs for delivery. PuntoMio and eZone did not offer the possibility to consolidate the products. Consolidation means the delivery service will merge your products into one package. In this way, you will save costs because the delivery service handles your products as one package. In addition, the size of your package can be reduced, which also reduces the price.

Consolidation turned out to be an interesting option to reduce the price for delivery. For instance, with MyMalls it was possible to save up to \$78,64 in delivery costs with consolidation.

However, in general, it was not always clear how it was possible to request consolidation. Furthermore, it was unclear how much could be saved and if consolidation would affect the delivery time. To request consolidation, the mystery shopper had to take different steps per delivery service.

#### *MyUS*

MyUS asked to indicate the delivery preferences. The option 'hold the products', made sure the products would be collected at the address in the United States. They would only be send to Curaçao, if the customer activated the process of delivery. In that way, MyUS was able to consolidate the products into one package. Information regarding consolidation could be found on the website of MyUS, when subscribing to MyUS and in the welcome e-mail after registering at MyUS.

☐ FedEx Economy

5 to 10 business days

Hold	Shipments ONLY sent when YOU submit a ship request through My Suite
Automatic	Packages are forwarded automatically when they arrive
Weekly	Packages are consolidated and shipped once a week
Bi-Weekly	Packages are consolidated and shipped once every two weeks
Monthly	Packages are consolidated and shipped once a month

Merchandise shipping schedule ?

Hold

#### *MyMalls*

MyMalls frequently pointed out the possibility to consolidate the products and save money. When the products arrived at the address in the United States, the mystery shopper had to confirm and pay for delivery. At this point, the option for consolidation was offered. The mystery shopper had to send a request for consolidation via the website. The confirmation of the consolidation followed in a couple of hours. Thereafter, the process of delivery was activated.

#### *Aeropost*

Aeropost, did not clearly promote the option for consolidation. During the first order, trying to receive the package 'as fast as possible', the mystery shopper had to contact the customer service of Aeropost. In this conversation, consolidation was suggested.

A summary of this phone call:

- Aeropost: *'Should I request consolidation for your products? This will reduce the delivery costs.'*
- Mystery shopper: *'No thank you. I need the products as fast as possible.'*
- Aeropost: *'I am sure this will not affect the deliver time in any way. And it will save you money.'*

All products were consolidated in one package and the confirmed delivery time did not change.

During the second order at Aeropost, trying to receive the package 'as cheap as possible', the mystery shopper again requested consolidation. On the website, it was not clear how to arrange consolidation. Therefore, the request was send by e-mail to the customer service. The possibilities for consolidation offered were different this time. According to customer services it was only possible to consolidate products that were ordered at the same online store. So, only two out of the three products could be consolidated, while it was possible to consolidate all three products (from different stores) in the previous order. A print screen of the chat conversation with Aeropost about this matter is listed below.

charlyjoseph2323... at 11:37, Apr 30:

I just heard from a friend that it was possible for him to consolidate three packages in one from different stores.

charlyjoseph2323... at 11:37, Apr 30:

Are you sure this is not possible?

Olger at 11:39, Apr 30:

yes maybe he used another company but through our service is only possible to consolidate package that belongs to the same order

charlyjoseph2323... at 11:39, Apr 30:

No he used Aeropost

### 3.3 Results Delivery Time

The results show large differences in delivery time. For the delivery of the same package, the delivery time ranged from 1 up to 22+ days. MyMalls offered the fastest delivery time, even compared to the delivery services that offered pick-up at a collection point. PuntoMio offered the least fast delivery time.

RANKING	Order		Delivery Time in days				Customer Service
	Company	Ordered Cheap/Fast	Delivery time Internationally: USA - CUR	Delivery time Locally: CUR - Home address	Total Delivery Time	Total Delivery Time excl. weekend- and holidays <sup>5</sup>	Delivery Method
1	MyMalls	Fast	1	0	1	1	Home Delivery
2	MyUS	Fast	unknown	unknown	3	3	Home Delivery
3	MyUS	Cheap	unknown	unknown	4	3	Home Delivery
4	MyMalls	Cheap	4	0	4	1	Home Delivery
5	eZone	Fast	6	n.a.	6	4	Pick-up at Collection Point
6	Aeropost	Fast	3	4	7	5	Home Delivery
7	eZone	Cheap	11	n.a.	11	5	Pick-up at Collection Point
8	Aeropost	Cheap	4	7	11	7	Home Delivery
9	PuntoMio	Fast	8	12	20	11	Home Delivery
10	PuntoMio	Cheap	22+	unknown	22+	14+	Home Delivery

Table 5: Deliveries ordered by Total Delivery Time

The package of the second order of PuntoMio, while trying to receive the package 'as cheap as possible', was not yet received when the assessment of this research ended. To be able to include the results of the delivery of this package in the research, we counted the delivery time until the moment of finalizing this report on May 22nd, 2018 (22+ days).

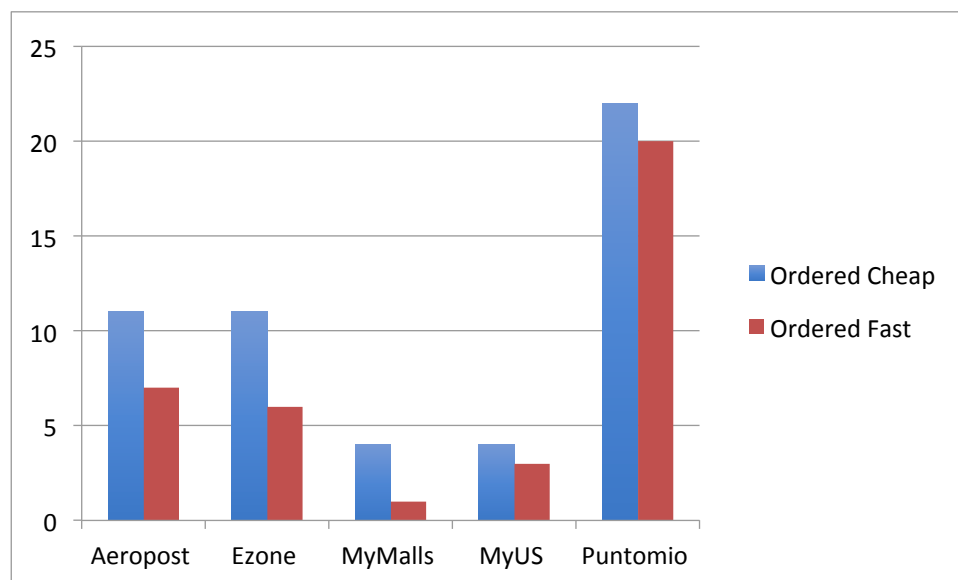


Figure 2: Delivery time in days of the delivery of 10 identical packages, ordered as fast as possible vs. ordered as cheap as possible, counted incl. weekend- and holidays

#### Delivery time internationally

In this assessment, the aim was to receive the package at a home address. With MyMalls and MyUS, home delivery was the only possibility they offered. However, with eZone, Aeropost and PuntoMio,

<sup>5</sup> Excluded Holidays: Kingsday, Labor Day, Ascension Day.

it was possible to pick up the package yourself at the collection point as soon as the package arrived in Curaçao (after the Delivery time Internationally: USA - CUR). This could save the customer time (in this case 4-7 days when delivered by Aeropost and 12 or more days when delivered by PuntoMio).

### Delivery time locally

The delivery time locally, is amongst others, influenced by the possible delivery methods. Four out of the five delivery services offered the possibility to receive the package at a home address. However, for three out of the five delivery services, it was not clear which delivery methods were possible. This unclarity might have delayed the delivery time locally, and therefore, the total delivery time.

### Special offers regarding the delivery time

Aeropost offered the possibility to 'pre-alert' the packages in the online account, so they could ensure a faster delivery process. The mystery shopper used this option during the first order. None of the products were matched correctly with the details subscribed to the pre-alert. The pre-alert

Date / Time	Urgent Fee (up to 10 boxes)	Each Additional Box
Fri 6PM to Mon 1PM	\$5	\$1
Mon 1PM to Mon 6PM	\$15	\$1
Mon 6PM to Thu 3PM	\$5	\$1
Thu 3PM to Fri 6PM	\$20	\$2

**Please note: All urgent ship requests must be submitted BEFORE 3PM ET (UTC/GMT -5 hours) Monday through Friday, for same day processing.**

Our urgent fee structure allows you to take advantage of lower prices during times of less demand, and maintain a high level of service during periods of peak demand. Regulatory or US export requirements may limit our ability to process an Urgent Ship Request on the same day it is submitted.

option did not offer the promised benefit.

MyUS offered varied shipping options. The 'urgent handling' option leads to extra costs, see print screen.

### 3.4 Comparing the companies' fastest and cheapest option to deliver

The mystery shopper ordered the delivery of the same package twice with each of the five delivery services, one time with the aim to get it delivered as *cheap* as possible and one time to get it delivered it as *fast* as possible.

When comparing the results, we noticed the following:

- With eZone we paid the same (but ordering cheap took five extra days delivery time)
- With MyMalls we paid more than double, \$78.64 extra, to deliver fast (3 days faster)
- With MyUS we paid \$4.01 extra to deliver fast (1 day faster)
- With Aeropost we paid \$10 less when ordering as fast as possible
- With PuntoMio we paid \$16.67 less when ordering as fast as possible (20 vs. 22+ days)

When ordering with MyUS, there is clarity on paying extra for 'fasten delivery'. With the other delivery services, there is no clear correlation between trying to order the package as *fast* as possible and delivery time; or trying to order the package as *cheap* as possible and delivery price. See also: 3.5 Results Customer Services on clear communication.

Delivery Costs in \$ (excl. taxes)			Delivery Time in Days		When ordered aiming to be delivered as cheap as possible...	
Company	Ordered Cheap	Ordered Fast	Ordered Cheap	Ordered Fast	it saved... (in \$)	it cost... extra days of delivery
Aeropost	55,50	45,50	11	7	-10	4
eZone	39,94	39,94	11	6	0	5
MyMalls	70,70	149,34	4	1	78,64	3
MyUS	50,93	54,94	4	3	4,01	1
PuntoMio	61,59	44,92	22+	20	-16,67	2

Table 6: Comparing the delivery costs and time of deliveries ordered as fast and cheap as possible

### 3.5 Results Customer Service

The results show large differences in customer services. In some cases, the service was effortless; in other cases, contacting the helpdesk up to six times was necessary to get the package delivered, with variable scores on customer friendliness, solution orientation and clear communication. MyMalls offered the best service during the delivery process and PuntoMio offered the least best service during the delivery process.

	Order		Customer Service					
RANKING	Company	Ordered Cheap/Fast	Count necessary contact moments to get delivery	Ratings 1 - 5 scale (1 = very poor, 5 = very good)				Delivery Method
				Customer Friendly	Solution Oriented	Clear Communication	Overall Rating service	
1	MyMalls	Fast	0	5	5	5	5,0	Home Delivery
2	MyMalls	Cheap	0	5	5	5	5,0	Home Delivery
3	MyUS	Fast	0	4	3	4	3,7	Home Delivery
4	MyUS	Cheap	0	4	3	4	3,7	Home Delivery
5	eZone	Fast	3	2	3	2	2,3	Pick-up at Collection Point
6	eZone	Cheap	0	2	3	2	2,3	Pick-up at Collection Point
7	Aeropost	Fast	5	2	2	1	1,7	Home Delivery
8	Aeropost	Cheap	4	2	2	1	1,7	Home Delivery
9	PuntoMio	Fast	5	1	1	1	1,0	Home Delivery
10	PuntoMio	Cheap	6	1	1	1	1,0	Home Delivery

Table 7: Deliveries ordered by Overall Rating service

#### Service offered: Pick-up or Home Delivery

The delivery services can offer two possible ways to deliver the package: home delivery or pick-up service, where the customer collects the package at a local collection point. Table 8 gives an overview of the different delivery methods and corresponding preconditions.

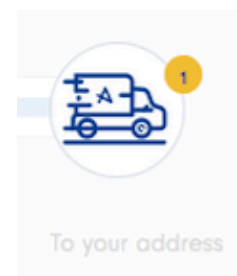
Company	Pick-up Service	Opening Hours Pick-up Service	Home Delivery	Extra costs Home Delivery	Special offer regarding delivery time	Clarity on delivery methods
Aeropost	Yes	Mon – Fri 09.00 – 18.00h, Sat: 09.00 – 13.00h	Yes	\$5, -	Pre-alert	No
eZone	Yes	Mon – Fri: 08.00 – 17.00h	No	Inapplicable	No	No
MyMalls	No	Not relevant	Yes	Inapplicable	No	Yes
MyUS	No	Not relevant	Yes	Inapplicable	Urgent handling	Yes
PuntoMio	Yes	Mon – Thur: 07.30 – 17.00, Fri: 07.30 – 16.30; Sat: 08.00 – 11.30 (Based on location 'Groot Kwartier')	Yes	\$8,33	No	No

Table 8: Overview delivery methods and preconditions

The mystery shopper had to add a home address when opening an account at every delivery service. It seemed like the products would be delivered at a home address. However, Aeropost, eZone and PuntoMio, provided conflicting information during the delivery process in relation to the available delivery methods:

#### Aeropost

- In the online account, the preferred delivery method was asked. The mystery shopper chose 'at home'.
- The delivery process in the online account indicated that the products would be delivered at the home address.
- The confirmation e-mail about the arrival of the products, however, indicated that the products needed to be picked up at the collection point.
- When contacting the customer service about this, the mystery shopper had to indicate again that the products should be delivered at a home address.
- The mystery shopper needed to contact the customer services three times



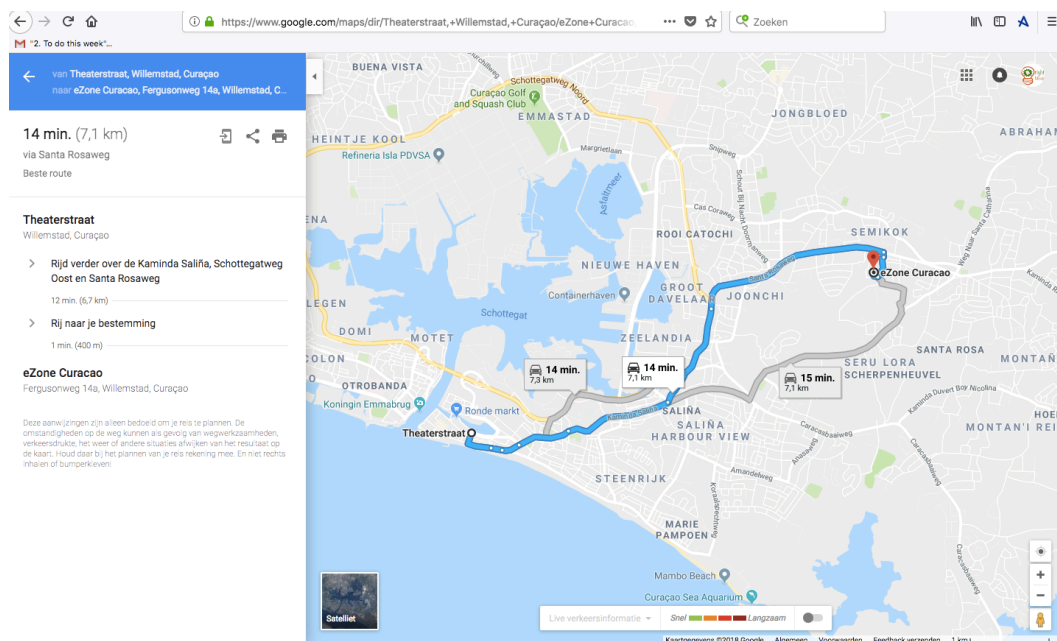
to get the packages delivered at the home address; one time by phone during the first order, and one time by e-mail and one time by phone during the second order.

### eZone

- Home delivery is promoted in the welcome e-mail after registering.
- The confirmation e-mail about the arrival of the products, however, stated: 'your package is here'. It does not indicate if eZone would deliver the products, or that they had to be picked up at their collection point.
- The mystery shopper contacted the customer service about this. They pointed out that it is only possible to pick-up the products at their collection point.
- The mystery shopper used Google Maps to find the address of eZone, as pointed out on their website and in their e-mails. This turned out to be a wrong address, located in Santa Rosa, instead of the correct location at the Emancipatie Boulevard. After contacting the customer service, it was possible to find the right location.



**We will deliver right to your door!**



### PuntoMio

- On the website of PuntoMio it was indicated that the customer has to pick-up packages at the nearest post office.
- In the online account, the 'delivery address' for the ordered products was stated as the home address of the mystery shopper.
- The confirmation e-mail about the arrival of the products, on the other hand, indicated that the products needed to be picked up at the collection point.
- While contacting the customer service about this, the mystery shopper heard that home delivery is possible, but that she had to fill in a form to request home delivery.



**Home Delivery Service Application Form**

## Possible ways to get in contact with customer services

The delivery services offered different possibilities to contact the customer service. For instance, it was not possible to contact MyMalls, nor MyUS on a Curaçao phone number, or to visit their offices in Curaçao. MyMalls does offer an emergency phone number in the United States, in case you need to contact them urgently. And MyUS offered a 'call-back service' via a phone number in the United States. eZone and PuntoMio did not offer the possibility to chat with the customer service. For an overview of the contact possibilities, see table 9.

Delivery Service	Possibilities to contact customer services by...					Possible to...	
	Email	Contact form on website	Chat	Phone number	Office in Curaçao	Pick up at collection point	Home delivery
MyMalls	No	No	Yes	Yes (US)	No	No	Yes
MyUS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes (US)	No	No	Yes
eZone	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Aeropost	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
PuntoMio	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Table 9. Overview of the services offered

## Necessary contact moments customer service to get the package delivered

In some cases, the delivery service was effortless; in other cases contacting the helpdesk up to six times was necessary to get the package delivered. Contacting customer services was in some cases necessary due to an unclear process: e.g. because no information was provided on when or how the delivery would take place. When contacting customer services with a question, the response time varied considerably: in some cases, it took one minute to get an answer, in some cases it took nineteen days. For an overview of all contact moments during the assessment see table 10.

Company	Ordered Cheap/Fast	Contact moments	Subjects	Total necessary contact moments to get order delivered	Response time
eZone	cheap	1 x contact form website	1 x Chosen contact by mystery shopper	0	5 days
MyMalls	fast	1 x chat	1 x Chosen contact by mystery shopper	0	3 minutes
MyMalls	cheap	2 x chat	2 x Chosen contact by mystery shopper	0	9 - 30 minutes
MyUS	fast	1 x chat	1 x Chosen contact by mystery shopper	0	1 day
MyUS	cheap	1 x e-mail	1 x Chosen contact by mystery shopper	0	1 day
eZone	fast	3 x phone	3 x Necessary contact due to unclear process	3	1 - 4 minutes
Aeropost	cheap	1 x phone, 2 x e-mail, 1 x chat	4 x Necessary contact due to unclear process	4	40 minutes - 7 days
Aeropost	fast	3 x phone, 1 x e-mail, 2 x chat	1 x Chosen contact by mystery shopper 5 x Necessary contact due to unclear process	5	3 minutes - 2 days
PuntoMio	fast	3 x phone, 4 x e-mail	2 x Chosen contact by mystery shopper 5 x Necessary contact	5	13 minutes - 8 days
PuntoMio	cheap	7 x e-mail	1 x Chosen contact by mystery shopper 6 x Necessary contact	6	8 minutes - 19 days

Table 10: Contact moments

## Ratings for the experienced customer services

To answer the question which delivery service offered the best service, the mystery shopper rated three main aspects: 1) customer friendly, 2) solution oriented, 3) clear communication on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 means 'very poor' and 5 means 'very good'.

The experienced customer service varied greatly. MyMalls scored the highest ratings: an average of 5 (very good) for all aspects. PuntoMio scored the lowest ratings: an average of 1 (very poor) for all aspects. MyUS scored second best with a 3.7, followed by eZone (2.3) and Aeropost (1.7).

In several cases, delivery services were not able to provide clear information on the delivery costs and delivery method when ordering the delivery. And in all cases the costs for taxes were unclear until the moment of receiving the order.

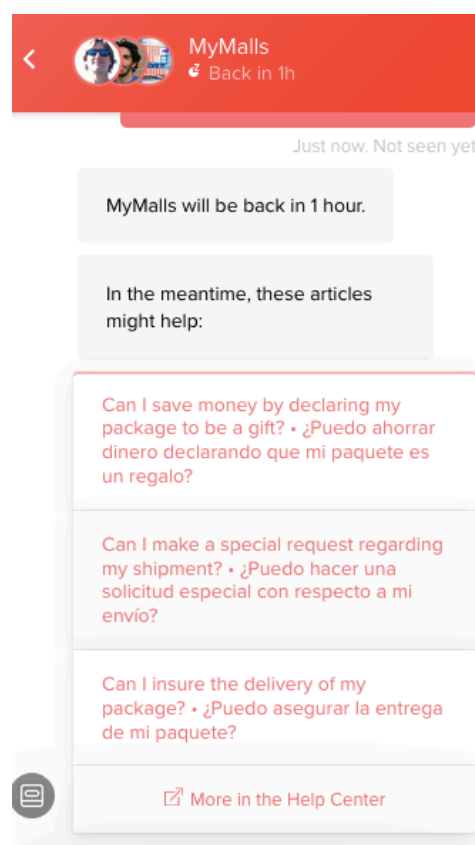
Delivery Service	Were the delivery costs clear when activating the order?	When were the delivery costs clear?	Was the delivery method clear when activating the order?	When was the delivery method clear?
Aeropost	No	When contacting the customer service to request home delivery.	No	When contacting the customer service to request home delivery.
eZone	No	When receiving a confirmation that the products arrived.	No	When contacting the customer service to request home delivery.
MyMalls	Yes	When activating the delivering.	Yes	When activating the account.
MYUS	Yes	When activating the delivering.	Yes	When activating the account.
PuntoMio	No	When contacting the customer service to request home delivery.	No	When contacting the customer service to request home delivery.

Table 11: Overview 'clear communication'

The functionalities and services offered by the customer services varied between the five delivery services. Below follows a detailed description for each delivery service.

### MyMalls

During the process of the delivery, everything was clear to the mystery shopper. The questions asked by the mystery shopper were answered in a quick, correct and friendly manner via the chat function of MyMalls. In addition, MyMalls presented extra information to ease the process. For instance, when asking a question via the chat function, an estimated time was indicated for MyMalls to answer the question, and some suggestions were made with useful information from the Frequently Asked Questions.



### MyUS

During the process of the delivery, most of the presented information was clear to the mystery shopper. The contact possibilities differed in functionality, however. For instance, the chat function did not function well. Several times it was not possible to start the chat function.

### eZone

The process of the delivery was not clear on several points. The communication with eZone was minimal. For instance, no confirmation was sent after activating the process of delivery from the United States to Curaçao. In addition, the layout of the online account of eZone is very basic and lacks general information about eZone, such as the contact details.

### Aeropost

The process of the delivery was on several points not clear. In addition, when contacting the customer service, the level of customer service differed. For instance, when contacting Aeropost by e-mail to ask if the products could be delivered at home, they replied it would be delivered within a day, however, after three days the products were still not delivered. When the mystery shopper

*called* Aeropost to request the home delivery, both times the packages were delivered within an hour.

The employee of Aeropost was very friendly on the phone. However, it was not always clear to whom he was talking. During the phone call with the mystery shopper, he talked to his colleagues and to other customers as well, while the mystery shopper was still listening.

#### *PuntoMio*

The process of the delivery was on most points not clear. With both orders, the mystery shopper received confirmations from the online stores that the products were delivered at the PuntoMio address in the United States. In the online account of PuntoMio, however, it was not visible that any products had arrived. In the online account it was requested to 'activate the account'. But the account was already activated. After contacting the customer service, the mystery shopper asked what to do differently to avoid this struggle the next time. PuntoMio could not answer this question. With the next order, the same thing happened again.

The mystery shopper had to contact PuntoMio six times due to unclear delivery processes. Moreover, the last package of PuntoMio was not yet delivered at the moment of ending the assessment of this research.

## 4. Conclusion

Consumers in Curaçao sometimes encounter limited local assortment and high prices of retail products. Online shopping, specifically in the USA at e.g. Amazon or FashionNova, provides an interesting alternative. But what are the fastest and cheapest ways to deliver the products to your door in Curaçao?

In this research we compared the delivery costs, delivery time and customer service of five delivery services: Aeropost, eZone, MyMalls, MyUS and PuntoMio (Cpost). We asked a mystery shopper to order home delivery of the same package twice with each delivery service. One time with the aim to get it delivered as *cheap* as possible, one time to get it delivered as *fast* as possible.

The results show large differences in delivery costs, time and customer services. For the delivery of the same package, the delivery costs ranged from \$39,94 to \$149,34 (excl. taxes) and the delivery time from 1 to 22+ days. In some cases, the service was effortless. In other cases, contacting the helpdesk up to 6 times was necessary to get the package delivered, with variable scores on customer friendliness, solution orientation and clear communication.

Top 3 cheapest delivery:

1. eZone
2. PuntoMio
3. Aeropost

Top 3 fastest delivery:

1. MyMalls
2. MyUS
3. eZone

Top 3 best customer service:

1. MyMalls
2. MyUS
3. eZone

Where MyMalls scores high on delivery time and customer services, they offered by far the most expensive option. eZone scores high on delivery price: with both orders, they offered the lowest price. However, they do not offer home delivery: packages have to be picked up at their collection point. MyUS and Aeropost both have fair prices and delivery times, but the helpdesk of Aeropost had to be contacted up to five times to get the package delivered. PuntoMio offered low prices but required up to six times contacting the helpdesk, and one package was not yet delivered at the end of the assessment after 22 days.

When ordering in the USA, customers have to take into account a proportionally high amount for delivery. For the products we ordered with a total value of \$88.03, an additional fee for delivery of the package (incl. taxes) varied from \$57.56 to \$170,73 (almost 2 times the products value).

Customs duty and entry fees in Curaçao are based on product value and rates depending on product groups. Ten times the same products were ordered with the same product value, but remarkably the paid taxes (customs duty and entry fee) varied substantially, from \$12.06 to \$40.36.

When choosing the best delivery service to get products from the USA to Curaçao, one should consider what is most important: delivery price, delivery time or service.

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