



HOLIDAY CAMPAIGNS A-Z

The 26 Things Not to Forget When Marketing Over the Holidays





ANALYZE

Analyze last year's sales data. What was your top seller? Which days did business spike?

Historical data should be your first stop in planning your holiday marketing strategy. Sit down with last year's numbers to identify the category of items that sold the best in your online store and your brick-and-mortar shop. Then make sure that (1) you're stocked up appropriately, and (2) your marketing campaigns speak to those seasonal buying patterns. Last year's sales trends can also help inform the timing of your marketing campaigns, so you should tailor messaging to give things a boost during typical dips (with a sale or promotion) and spikes (with "going fast" or FOMO messaging, or "Fear of Missing Out").

B BRICK AND MORTAR

Speed up checkout time at your brick-and-mortar shop to ensure a good customer experience.

One way to surprise and delight customers (who are your best evangelists, after all) this busy time of year is to have a speedy checkout at your brick-and-mortar store. An easy way to ensure this is to adopt a point-of-sale that can accept mobile payments like Apple Pay. They're the fastest and most convenient way to process payments—not to mention the most secure.

CALLS-TO-ACTION

Use eye-catching, actionable calls-to-action (CTAs) to entice new customers to your website with offers and coupons.

Create a Holiday coupon, special, or campaign that will encourage people to download an offer and buy from your store. Use CTAs on all of your applicable blog posts, social promotion, and emails to direct traffic to that offer and increase your conversions.





DISCOUNT CODES

Promote discount codes on social channels and in your marketing emails to encourage urgency in customers' buying patterns.

Customers are used to sales and deals around the holidays, so make sure you're offering your buyers something valuable that they can't refuse. Try using different promotional deals for new customers vs old customers. Aim to entice your old customers back while running different promotions for new customers. And when you're buying ads, make sure you're tracking their efficacy by measuring how many people purchased products both in the store and online as a result of your campaigns.



EXPERIMENT

Think of a few questions about your funnel you want answered -- could your lead to MQL conversion rate be higher? Test and experiment a few ways to increase that conversion rate.

How does your buyer persona's behavior change around the holidays vs. the rest of the year? Try testing your social media posting strategy at different times of the day, week, or month. It might be worth increasing your efforts at the beginning of the Holiday season vs. the end. You can also try re-engaging old prospects who became leads or customers last year at the same time to entice them back to your site.



FACEBOOK LIVE

Utilize Facebook Live to expand your audience, showcase your brand, and build relationships with your fans and followers using video content.

Facebook Live is now ranking higher on news feeds than non-video content. Take advantage of the rise in popularity of Facebook Live and share a behind-the-scenes look at how your business is taking extra care of holiday orders on Facebook Live.

GIFT CARDS

Knock holiday gift card sales out of the park by standing apart from the pack.

It's no secret that gift card sales skyrocket during the holidays. According to the National Retail Federation, nearly two-thirds of holiday shoppers bought at least one gift card last year. But to compete with big-box stores, you need to differentiate. One way to get people's attention is to offer gift cards custom designed for your business—something that's quirky, funny, or resonates with locals. And then you need to market them. At your brick-and-mortar store, display your gift cards prominently at the register with an eye-catching display, making sure to highlight any promotions (for example, "buy a \$50 gift card, get a candle for yourself"). Then create a social media and email marketing plan that's targeted to your repeat customers who are already primed to purchase gift cards for friends and family.



HAVE A PLAN

Have a plan B for high profile marketing campaigns. If you see that something isn't working, have a backup option ready. It could be as small as a new subject line for your promotions or as big as a new campaign.

Having a backup plan is especially critical during the holiday season. Here are a few ideas to get you started:

- Have a campaign that you can turn on in a jiffy to keep generating holiday sales.
- Save a small budget to run last minute FB ads if you don't hit your goals organically
- Plan a video to boost conversion rates on your site around the holidays
- Create a new offer or sale for last minute deals
- Write a redirect email in case your run into glitches during live events!



INSTAGRAM ADS

Use paid Instagram ads to expand your Instagram audience and showcase your brand to new users.

Find brands you can partner with on Instagram and trade posts promoting each other during the Holidays.





JOIN INBOUND.ORG

Join inbound.org to get the questions you have answered by a community of marketers.

Get holiday lessons, tips, and tricks from marketers like you, or find potential co-branding partnerships for the holiday season.

KEEP IN TOUCH

Keep in touch with purchasers after they buy. After all, if they've bought from you once, they're likely to buy from you again! Re-engage using retargeting ads, or offer them deals and loyalty programs to keep them coming back.

Don't let your acquisition push in Q4 go to waste -- continue to generate revenue from these buyers well into the new year by following up with them. If your product is consumable (like candles or supplements), send an email reminding them they might be running low in a couple of weeks. Alternatively, follow up with complementary products or tips to help them get started in the new year.





LISTS

Pay attention to the health of your contact lists. Dig into you data and find out which contacts are still engaged with your audience and which aren't. Don't waste your resources trying to nurture unengaged contacts!

Do it before the holidays so the increase in holiday marketing volume doesn't negatively impact your deliverability.



MOBILE

Is your website and marketing content optimized for your mobile audience? By 2017, Mobile commerce will account for 24.4% of overall ecommerce revenues -- which means if your site isn't already optimized for mobile audiences and purchases, it needs to be.

The holidays are a great time to encourage quick purchases, so make it easy for your customers by adding a special Holiday section on your website that's optimized for mobile. Highlight what specials and deals you have going, and showcase how easy it is for your customers to buy from your site! If you have a store app, don't forget to encourage app downloads throughout the Holiday season!

A warm, cozy scene featuring a white ceramic cup filled with a dark liquid, likely tea, resting on a thick, textured, light-colored knitted blanket. The background is softly blurred, showing more of the blanket and a hint of a white object. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent reddish-orange filter.

NURTURING

Nurture your contacts with helpful, relevant content and offers to turn leads into prospects and prospects into customers.

Use the Holiday season to come up with new offers and seasonal lead nurturing content! Create new or revamp old offers, introduce a Holiday lead nurturing track into your funnel, or simply re-engage your contacts with Holiday promotional deals.



OMNICHANNEL

Audit your inventory and pricing strategy to ensure a consistent omnichannel shopping experience.

A growing trend in consumer behavior is to browse items online and then head into stores to complete the purchase (where they can assess the item in person). So if you have both a brick-and-mortar and an online store, it's important to keep both your inventory and pricing consistent across both channels to ensure completion of the buying journey.



PRICING

Always be mindful of your pricing model and evaluate whether your current pricing structure works for your audience. Is the pricing structure a deterrent to increasing your monthly or annual recurring revenue? Is your product providing enough value at the right price compared to your competitors?

The start of the new year means now is the time to reevaluate your pricing and make necessary changes or big product announcements. Take advantage of the holidays to do some price testing or generate buzz for your products using new discounts and deals.



QUESTIONS

Turn questions into content - look at your customers' frequently asked questions on your site and use it to brainstorm new content ideas.

Don't forget about holiday-specific FAQs from last year! Dig into old emails, comments, and reviews from previous years that caused customer hurdles, and turn them into useful content campaigns to prevent confusion. This will help you delight your customers and give you the opportunity to create Holiday lead nurturing tracks!



REWARDS PROGRAM

Beef up your rewards program to encourage repeat buying during the holiday season.

A recent survey found that sixty-eight percent of 20- to 34-year-olds would change where they shopped if it meant getting more rewards. And one-third of respondents reported buying something they didn't need or want just to improve membership status. So if you're not offering a rewards or loyalty program—which is easy to set up at your brick-and-mortar store—you're likely leaving money on the table this season.

SOCIAL SHARING

Encourage audience expansion by adding social sharing buttons to all of your content, emails, offers, blog posts, etc. People are more likely to share your content when you make it easy for them!

During the holiday season, make sure that buyers can share products or their entire save-for-later lists. The easier it is for them to share their desired products with their loved ones, the more likely their loved ones are to purchase from you!



TWITTER CARDS

Use Twitter cards to create more engaging Tweets that allow your users to view your landing pages, download your app, sign up for a mailing list, or use your coupons all within Twitter.

Promote Holiday coupons or video content with Twitter Cards to create more powerful, eye-catching tweets that drive engagement from your Twitter following.





UNEXPECTED MARKETING CHANNELS

Stay within your holiday marketing budget by leveraging inexpensive, unexpected marketing channels.

Consumers are inundated with marketing messages this time of year. To cut through the noise, you need to leverage unexpected channels. Receipts are one (inexpensive) channel to consider. You're already sending out a receipt after each purchase, so why not customize it with callouts to holiday promotions and a link to your online store? This may encourage additional purchases from customers or from people to whom they forward the receipt.

A photograph of a small, rustic wooden cabin with a snow-covered roof, nestled in a snowy forest of tall evergreen trees at night. The cabin's interior light is visible through the window, and a small fire burns in a hearth in the foreground. The sky is dark blue.

VIP EXPERIENCE

Create a VIP experience for your regular customers by offering special perks.

Now's the time to give your repeat customers the VIP treatment (both to show appreciation and encourage more sales). One idea is to send out an email (make sure you're segmenting to your loyal customers) inviting them to a holiday cocktail party where they get first dibs on your seasonal merchandise. You could also include a special promo code for online purchases.



WORKFLOWS

Optimize your workflows to make sure the same contacts aren't getting bombarded with lots of emails because they're enrolled in too many workflows.

Be mindful of bombarding your contacts with too many emails as you add in new holiday messaging and content. Too much email leads to unhappy, unengaged contacts, so make sure you're not focusing too much on adding new content and not enough on targeting the Holiday content the right people.

X - CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

A happy customer can generate word-of-mouth marketing and referrals for your business. If their experience is good, they'll come back to buy again and again!

When you're rushed during the holiday season, it can be easy to let customer experience slip. With so many first-time buyers, customers' impressions of customer service are critical. Consider personal touches in your packages or discounted gift wrapping to make life easier. Your customers won't forget!



YEAR-END SALES

Create urgency in your messaging to encourage the sale.

Customers are used to holiday deals and discounts, so it's important to create a sense of urgency so they know they're time-limited to get the good deal. Don't miss out on the opportunity to increase your sales by encouraging immediacy in your messaging.



Z - BUZZ

Generate buzz for your brand by hosting an exclusive offer for your first 100 customers.

With the holiday season being a big time for shoppers to spend money, leveraging sales, discounts, and deals to entice customers is a win-win. If you can create a sense of exclusivity with Holiday events or exclusive deals, you can help generate excitement toward your brand.



LOOKING FOR EVEN MORE, IN-DEPTH MARKETING TIPS AND IDEAS?

Check out HubSpot's
Marketing Blog

Check out Square's
blog, Town Square



The background of the slide is a composite image. The top and bottom sections show a close-up of a dark, frost-covered branch against a blurred, light blue-grey background. The middle section is a solid dark red rectangle. On the right side of this red rectangle, a red tassel hangs vertically.

How helpful was this ebook?

Not at all helpful

Somewhat
unhelpful

Neutral

Somewhat
helpful

Very helpful