eCommerce For The Holidays

Moderator: Alaina Capasso
aecapasso@uri.edu
RI Small Business Development Center
Webinar Coordinator

Presentation by:
Amanda Basse
We exist to train, educate, and support entrepreneurs of both new (pre-venture) and established small businesses. Positioned within the nationwide network of SBDCs, we offer resources, key connections at the state and national level, workshops, and online and in-person support that equips us to help Ocean State entrepreneurs reach the next level of growth.
Who is This For?
Why Holiday Campaigns Matter

The holiday season is the most lucrative period for retail, with sales often representing up to 30% of annual revenue. Many e-commerce sites report their highest traffic volumes during the holiday season.

Missing out on maximizing the holiday season can have a significant impact on yearly figures.
Unlock the Holiday Potential for Your Business
Consumer Behavior Shifts

Consumers are more open to purchasing, often seeking gifts for others and deals for themselves.

This openness means that even visitors who aren't regular customers have a better chance of converting during the holidays.

A significant portion of holiday shoppers will try new stores or brands during the holidays, especially if enticed by deals or unique products.

This is a chance not just for a one-time sale but for acquiring lifelong customers. A single positive shopping experience can lead to multiple sales as satisfied customers share their finds with friends and family.
Plan Your Calendar
Recognize Key Shopping Dates

**Green Monday**: Often the second Monday of December and is one of the biggest online shopping days.

**Free Shipping Day**: December 14, where e-commerce stores offer free shipping.

**Small Business Saturday**: The Saturday after Thanksgiving, to celebrate the impact of small business on our communities.

These lesser-known dates can be advantageous. Not every competitor will capitalize on them, creating an opportunity for unique promotions.
Shipping Deadlines

Every major shipping carrier has cutoff dates for holiday deliveries.

Consider your processing times and provide clear last-order dates for holiday delivery.

Proper communication around shipping ensures customer satisfaction and reduces potential shipping-related complaints.
Post Holiday Sales

When: Days immediately following Christmas and leading up to New Year.

Nature of Sales: Overstock clearance, end-of-year sales, and New Year-themed promotions.

Implication: Many consumers hunt for post-holiday deals, especially those spending gift cards or making exchanges. It's an opportunity to keep the momentum going.
Returns and Exchanges

Typically, the first week of January sees a spike in returns.

Ensure easy return policies and clear guidelines to manage post-holiday returns efficiently.

A smooth return experience can help retain customers and build trust.
Inventory
Data-Driven Decisions

Use sales data from previous years to forecast the potential demand for products.

Identify which items gained popularity towards the end of the year.

Take time to understand past patterns, to make informed decisions about which products to stock up on.
Diversify Inventory

**Trending Products:** What’s hot right now?

**Core Products:** Ensure ample stock for bestsellers and signature items.

**Seasonal Specials:** Introduce holiday-themed products or bundles.

**Order Bumps:** Stock smaller, affordable items that can be easily added to a cart for last-minute gifting or to qualify for free shipping.

Offering a range of products caters to diverse shopper needs, increasing the chance of multiple purchases or upsells.
Inventory Management

Implement software that tracks stock levels, provides insights, and predicts demand.

Ensure your inventory system is integrated with your e-commerce platform for real-time updates.

Leveraging technology minimizes human error, provides real-time data, and aids in making informed decisions.
Website Readiness
Responsive Design

People are increasingly transitioning to shopping on their phones. People are busy and do shopping in between tasks.

Ensure your site looks and works well on smartphones, tablets, and desktops.

A seamless mobile experience can capture more sales, as many shoppers browse and buy on-the-go.
Website Speed

Slow-loading sites can deter potential buyers, with every second of delay impacting conversion rates.

Compress images, utilize CDNs, and streamline code.

Faster load times improve user experience and can boost SEO rankings, driving more organic traffic.

What is a CDN: Amazon
Simplify Your Checkout

The fewer clicks between a user and a purchase, the better. Reduce your FRICITION.

**Guest Checkout**: Not everyone wants to create an account; offer a guest checkout option.

**Payment Options**: Integrate multiple payment methods, including credit cards, digital wallets, and buy-now-pay-later options.

Simplifying the checkout process reduces cart abandonment rates.
Secure Your Site

**SSL Certificate:** Ensure your site is secure, displaying the padlock symbol in the browser.

**Trust Badges:** Display security and payment badges to reassure customers.

Building trust can lead to higher conversion rates as customers feel more comfortable making a purchase.
Holiday Themes

Update banners, hero images, and CTAs with holiday themes.

Special Deals Section: Create a dedicated section or page for holiday promotions.

Themed elements can get shoppers in the festive spirit, encouraging more holiday purchases.
Banners and Header Images

SPECIAL OFFER
Christmas Sale!
UP TO 50% OFF

SHOP NOW
www.reallygreat-site.com

MAKE THIS
Download the Holiday Baking Guide!
GIVE ME THE FREE GUIDE!

THE WINTER SUPER SALE
UP TO 80% OFF FROM DEC. 15 TO JAN. 15
ACROSS ALL ANISSA & TAM CO. STORES!
Offers
Positioning Matters

Flash Sales
Insiders Look
Buy One Get One
Early Bird Discount
Member Discounts
Limited Stock Offers
Tiered Discounts- buy more, save more
Spin the Wheel
Gift card with purchase
Check Out the Competition

Source: BlackFriday.com
Marketing
Email Marketing

These are your ‘hottest’ audiences.

Tailor messages based on past purchase history, browsing behavior, and user preferences.

Sequence of emails leading up to major sale days, creating anticipation.

Personalization: Use the recipient's name, suggest products based on browsing history.

Well-crafted emails can result in higher open rates, click-throughs, and conversions.
Paid Ads

**Targeting:**

COLD: Buyer demographics

WARM: Serve ads to users who've visited your site (or social media pages, or watched your videos) but haven’t made a purchase.

HOT: People who have added to cart or spent a certain amount of time on your page(s)
Holiday Themed Ads
Get Festive: Share holiday-themed content, behind-the-scenes looks, or showcase popular products.

Exclusives: Announce limited-time offers exclusively on social platforms to engage followers.

User-Generated Content: Encourage customers to share their purchases or experiences using a branded hashtag.

Active social media presence can boost brand visibility, engage customers, and drive direct sales.
User Generated Content

Source: Billo.app
Create Holiday Themed Social Media

HOLIDAY SALE
Enjoy 40% off in all our items this holiday season!

www.reallygreatsite.com

Holiday Minis
We’re now booking Holiday Minis for the season. Please click the link in my bio to sign up today.
Influencers

Collaborate with influencers relevant to your product category.

Unboxing & Reviews: Send products for influencers to review or unbox, showcasing to their audience.

Discount Codes: Provide influencers with unique discount codes for their followers.

Influencers can introduce your brand to a broader audience and add credibility.
annamariadamm Follow

148w

Cozy Indoor Christmas Feeling 😊 Werbung*
Irgendwie fehlen die Weihnachtsmärkte dieses Jahr. Deshalb haben wir kurzerhand mit @otto.de bei @katharinadamm_official einen kleinen Weihnachtsmarkt gemacht, mit Crêpes, Glühwein und allem was dazu gehört! 😊
#heimnachten
See translation

rajitdhank 145w

I love you

Reply

bel.lamuelle 147w

❤️❤️

Reply

24,353 likes
DECEMBER 19, 2020

Source: Instagram

Source: SouthernBelleInTraining
Influencers fall into certain categories based on their reach:

- Nano-influencers: 1,000–10,000 followers
- Micro-influencers: 10,000–50,000 followers
- Mid-tier influencers: 50,000–500,000 followers
- Macro-influencers: 500,000–1,000,000 followers
- Mega-influencers: 1,000,000+ followers
According to Influencer Marketing Hub, here are some price points you can expect when working with micro-influencers:

Instagram: $100–$500/post
YouTube: $200–$1,000/video
TikTok: $25–$125/video
Twitter: $20–$100/Tweet
Facebook: $250–$1,250/post
Timing
When to Begin

4 weeks before you launch your offer

Plan your content

Get your product photos taken

Decide on which platforms to market

Get your pixels and conversion tracking in place
Countdown

29 days until Black Friday

31 days until Small Business Saturday

33 days until Cyber Monday

43 days until the start of Hanukkah

61 days until Christmas

62 days until Kwanzaa
Post Holiday Strategy
Encourage customers to share photos of their holiday purchases in use. This can serve as social proof for future customers.

Use a hashtag.

Follow up with a request for a review. Incentivize feedback: gift cards, drawings, offers.

Show the human side of your business. Share post-holiday wind-down activities or team celebrations.
Email Engagement

Send personalized thank you emails to first-time customers. A simple acknowledgment can make them more likely to return.

Loyalty Rewards: Offer special deals or additional loyalty points to returning customers to encourage repeat business.

Feedback Surveys: Ask new customers about their shopping experience. This not only provides valuable insights but also demonstrates that you value their opinion.

Special Offers: Provide unique deals or early access to sales for those who made their first purchase during the holidays.
Plan for Upcoming Events

Valentine's Day
Presidents Day
Easter
Memorial Day

Utilize the momentum from the holiday season to prepare for upcoming special days.

Give holiday shoppers early access or sneak peeks to upcoming collections or sales.
Analyze
Debrief

Gather feedback from different departments (customer service, shipping, marketing) to understand challenges faced and areas of improvement.

Which strategies worked best?

Look at your numbers!! Look for patterns. Did you grow? Where are opportunities to improve?
Website
Offers
Checkout process
Graphics
Timing
Metrics to Track

Traffic YoY and MoM

New Users vs Returning Users

Traffic by Source

Conversion Rate

Average Order Value

Sales
Conclusion
The holiday season offers a golden opportunity for e-commerce businesses, presenting a time of heightened consumer spending and intensified search for the perfect gifts.

By meticulously planning, executing, and monitoring each facet of your e-commerce operations, you can ensure a successful and profitable holiday season. Beyond immediate sales, the holidays provide a chance to create lasting impressions, nurture customer relationships, and set the stage for growth in the coming year.
Familiarize yourself with the holiday calendar to anticipate major sales events and customer behaviors.

Utilize historical data, ensure smooth supplier communication, diversify inventory, and prepare for post-holiday returns.

Enhance your website's speed, design, navigation, and checkout process to facilitate smooth shopping experiences.

Harness the power of email marketing, social media, PPC, retargeting, and, importantly, influencer collaborations to reach a broader audience.

Continuously monitor performance metrics, gather feedback, and adjust strategies in real-time to optimize results.
Resources:

Look at Black Friday Flyers

Facebook Ads Library

Find an Influencer

Get User Generated Content

Influencer Rates

Holiday Graphics
Questions?

Type your question to the chat box

Contact Us:

401-874-7232


aecapasso@uri.edu