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GEAR UP FOR THIS SEASON

Holiday Marketing Checklist

Last minute tips for
boosting sales



Introduction



For businesses, there cannot be a more important time of year than the holiday season, which provides 20-40% yearly sales for small to mid-sized retail businesses.

Yet as shoppers flood the malls and Amazon to grab the best deals, some businesses, unaccustomed to the uptick in demand, crack under the strain of keeping up. Company websites crash with the influx of traffic while overworked employees face snaking lines of impatient customers.

You, the marketer, are likewise probably swamped with hectic schedules and unexpected challenges. That's why we wanted to make your life a little easier with a checklist of easily forgotten tasks. In here, you'll find topics covering:

- General marketing tips
- Website
- Social media
- Email



Preparation and Goals



Remember your S.M.A.R.T goals

What bigger purpose does your Christmas campaign serve? Don't just say "to increase sales". Make sure your goals are S.M.A.R.T: **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**ttainable, **R**elevant, and **T**imely. If you already have a clear objective, don't lose it in mind. Compare your content pieces to see if they make any meaningful contribution to your goal and whether they're relevant or not.



Review your core message for your campaign

If you want to be memorable, it's not enough to just roll back your prices, since every business is doing that. Surrounding your marketing efforts around a core message can help spread awareness about your brand and products.

Example: Budweiser launched its holiday campaign by advocating for people not to drink and drive, promoting their launch of alcohol-free beer. Among the countless other beer companies advertising drinking, this was a refreshing unique message.





Prepare for unexpected costs

Make room for extra expenses such as advertising, which can get costly around the holiday season as businesses compete for limited ad spots. Other costs like damage control in case your website crashes should also be considered.



Get ready for an increase in customer service related issues

With a rise in sales, there comes a rise in complaints. Be ready for an increase in calls, live chat requests, and emails from people who need assistance with their products.



Website



Ensure your website is prepared for a large influx of traffic

Check with your Content Delivery Network (CDN) or hosting provider to see if they can handle larger-than-usual amounts of traffic. If they can't, look into upgrading to a better server and compare the costs to the potential benefit. You don't want an influx of traffic to cause your website to crash, preventing would-be customers from making purchases.





Make sure your website is mobile-friendly



The easiest way to do this is to load the website on your own phone, but there are also tools such as [Google's Mobile-Friendly Test](#) that can give you a full usability report. If you find that your website isn't mobile-friendly, it's a good idea to speak with your IT team or if you don't have one, hire an expert to get it fixed for you.



Test for speed

Test your website's loading speed yourself or with [online speed assessments](#). If you get a low score, or your website takes more than 3 seconds to load, you can speed it up by:

- Compressing your images
- Leveraging browser caching
- Reduce redirects and fix broken links



Make the design holiday-themed



This can range from heartwarming pictures full of Christmas coziness to bold red-and-green ornaments expressing fun and joy. Remember that a festive website makes people feel things, and he or she will connect the elicited emotion to your brand, so make sure the design aligns with your brand image.



Optimize your call to actions around your holiday deals

Your holiday deals should be at the forefront of your homepage. You can choose to implement a rolling or fixed banner to showcase discounts or reinforce a sense of urgency by having a countdown clock.

Social Media



Double-check your content calendar

Prepare and schedule posts well before the posting date, using different mediums such as video, images, and text, on different platforms to bring a stronger message to your followers.



Get your advertisements approved early

With more businesses advertising at this time of year, social platforms are busy and may take longer than usual to approve your ads. By getting them approved early, you don't run the risk of falling behind schedule and potentially losing sales.



Give your banners and profile picture a festive makeover

What better way to show your Christmas spirit than to decorate your social pages? Changing your cover and profile photos lets people know that your business is participating and probably has some discounts. To really want to drive the message home, highlight your holiday sales and campaign message on your cover photo.



Use Christmas related hashtags

What Christmas-related hashtags are trending? Remember to include these in some of your social media posts to give it a boost in visibility.

Email



Segment your email list

Not everyone in your mailing list has the same motivation, spending habits, and preferences. By splitting it up into categories, you'll have a better understanding of what types of emails will be relevant to them. By sending your readers a tailored message, you're able to connect with them on a level that your competitors might not.





Gift your reader

Remember that your reader's inbox is probably flooded with promotional offers right now. Set yourself apart by giving your audience something of value for free, like a humorous checklist, a free giveaway, or a gift guide.



Make it mobile-friendly

Unlike for websites, there isn't a tool to check if your emails are mobile-friendly, so you'll have to do it manually yourself. If needed, adjust the length of your subject line and preheader text so people know what you're talking about at a glance. In addition, using responsive HTML ensures that your email template will always conform to the screen it's displayed on.



Don't forget social media buttons

Include social media buttons at the end or beginning of your emails so people know how to connect with you on social platforms. For content pieces, give people a chance to share or tweet it by prompting them with a button.





May your holidays be stress-free

Although this checklist won't shorten your endless to-do list, we hope that it at least eases some worrying.

Starting a new website project during the New Years?

Contact us at hello@thousand.plus and let's make it happen.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS
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