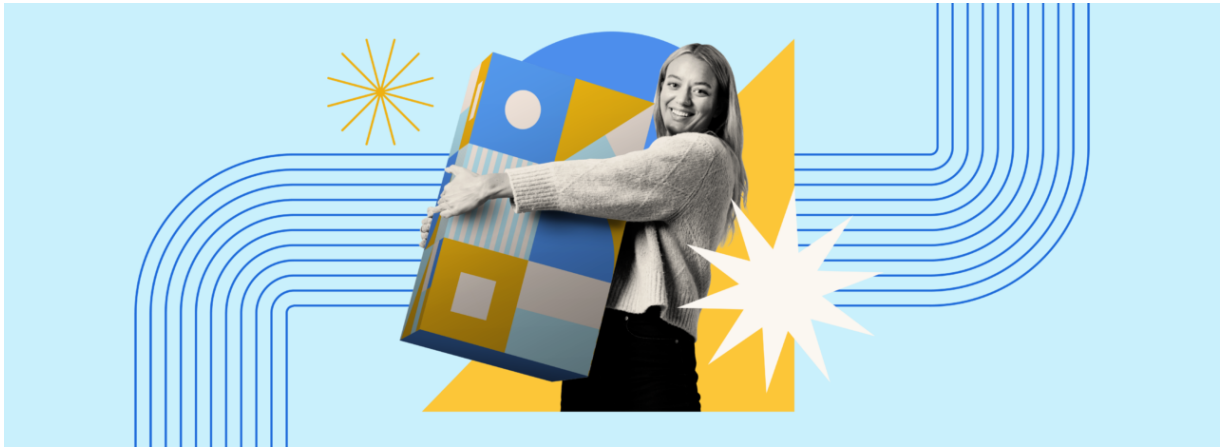


# Quick and Effective Ways to Increase Holiday Sales This Season



The **holiday shopping season** is the biggest time of year for companies of all sizes.

From **small businesses** to **enterprise powerhouses**, online stores rely on days like Black Friday and Cyber Monday to kick off the perfect sales season. The only problem is it's not just **your business** that relies on these shopping days. Your competitors do, too.

How can you ensure your ecommerce store comes out ahead? Follow these strategies for increasing your holiday online shopping sales.

# Optimize Your Ecommerce Website to Increase Conversion Rates

With a significant amount of holiday shopping happening online, your [ecommerce website](#) must be performing at its best. All throughout the year, you should be performing smaller tests on your site to ensure peak performance during the holidays.

Think of it like training. All year long you're working harder and harder to create a performance powerhouse that will ultimately payoff during the holiday season.

## Optimize for mobile.

According to eMarketer, mobile commerce sales alone accounted for \$360 billion in 2021. By 2025, that number is expected to almost double to \$710 billion.

With so many shoppers looking at your store on mobile devices, it's important to ensure your store is optimized for both desktop and mobile viewing.

Here are some tips for mobile optimization:

- Run a [Google Mobile-Friendly test](#) and make the suggested optimizations.
- Personalize shipping estimates/product availability based on the customer's location.
- Use above the fold area to highlight the sweetest deals.
- Enable dynamic page serving to improve website speed.
- Remove pop-ups and sidebars for mobile users as they add friction.
- Pre-fill customer details during check-out to avoid mistakes.
- Offer guest users to email their shopping list to finish shopping on the desktop.
- Add support for digital wallets to speed up the checkout.

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## Offer Buy Now Pay Later (BNPL).

A key tool this year for holiday retail sales: [Buy Now Pay Later](#) (BNPL) financing that allows consumers to pay later for their purchases in installments with no interest or fees, as long as they make their payments on time.

With innovative payment solutions like [Affirm](#), brands can reach a younger demographic who may have not been able to shop with traditional payment plans like credit cards, and the corresponding concerns about credit card interest, hidden fees and revolving credit. Therefore, as brands are looking to maximize on the holidays, offering BNPL tools is a must.

Not only do today's shoppers like the option to use [several different payment methods](#), retailers can also benefit from offering "as low as 0% APR promotions" with Affirm as a way to capture new business during the holidays.

Learn more how [Affirm can increase sales](#) for your business this holiday season.

## Optimize pop-ups, forms and website messaging.

Website micro-copy — button names, call-to-actions, forms, and pop-ups — often get overlooked during seasonal content re-optimization. But why? These small details that add an extra feeling of delight and prompt conversions.

Most ecommerce business owners can't run multiple [A/B tests](#) during the holiday campaigns to optimize every crevice of their website. So choose your priorities:

### On-site pop-ups and banners

Give your regular pop-ups a seasonal flair. Change the colors, messaging and value proposition to better match the seasonal promotion. However, don't get crazy and bury your standard brand voice under the seasonal promo madness or you risk putting off some consumers.

### Billing and shipping forms

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These two forms are the most error-prone and are often confusing for the customer. Make the job easier for everyone by:

- Pre-filling the details for repeat customers.
- Auto-checking shipping address for validity.
- Providing a drop-down list of street addresses based on zip code.
- Displaying service messages about shipping times and possible delays.
- Adding tooltips to form fields that may steer confusion.
- Placing extra microcopy to explain what data you need (e.g. shipping address must match credit card address).

## On-page CTAs

Call-to-actions are the trickiest to optimize. Try testing new variations several weeks before the campaign launch. To do that:

- Add a heatmap tool to your homepage and product pages to analyze which elements gain attention from visitors..
- Create several CTA variations for different elements. Craft more explanatory button texts like “request pricing” instead of “request quote”. Try changing product descriptions too. Add more product features, infuse more personality into your writing or test several new ecommerce copywriting formulas.
- Run a series of A/B tests to benchmark the performance of new elements versus the old ones. Scale what works. Ditch what doesn’t.

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## Sell Across Channels to Meet Customers Where They Shop

Omnichannel commerce is the cornerstone of any successful ecommerce business, especially when it comes to the holiday shopping season.

While omnichannel does technically mean “all” channels, you don’t need to be on every social platform or marketplace to succeed. In fact, trying to be everywhere all at once could hurt more than it could help.

Instead, evaluate your ideal customer profile and determine where exactly your customers are shopping. A niche boutique, for example, might do best to focus on online to offline interactions, or create a community of supporters/shoppers through social channels like [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), [TikTok](#) or [Pinterest](#).

A CPG, on the other hand, might do best focusing on DTC or wholesale marketplaces and social selling.

Interested in seeing where your business could succeed? We’ve got just the tool. [Take our quiz](#) to find your business’s omnichannel personality and get personalized recommendations from the experts at BigCommerce.

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# Quick and Effective Promotional Strategies to Increase Holiday Sales

Promotions are key to driving holiday sales. We've compiled a list of four promotional strategies for you to try on your own site.

## Run a giveaway.

The holiday season is all about sharing the joy. Giveaways play along nicely with that feeling of generosity. This year, however, you may want to put a socially-conscious twist on your promo strategies.

Show that your ecommerce brand stands by the same values as your customers by hosting a creative contest around a cause that they care about. For example:

- Offer to donate a % from each sale to a local charity.
- Match each customer entry with a \$1 donated to a good cause.
- Host a choose-what-you-pay contest, allowing customers to select a price tier for promo products.
- Encourage giveaway shares by matching referral entries with an extra donation.

You can set up a similar seasonal campaign using [ShoppingGives](#) — a donation service that seamlessly integrates with BigCommerce — or [PayPal's Giving Fund](#).

## Provide loyal customers with unique discounts.

Promos and discounts are among the top factors influencing holiday purchases. Play in line with that mood and treat your loyal customers with personalized coupon codes.

In fact, 49% already expect brands to always send personalized promotions in line with their preferences, according to [Deloitte](#).

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Try some of the following ecommerce incentives discount code ideas this holiday season:

- Send discounts for recently browsed, saved, or placed in the cart products.
- Personalize discounts based on loyalty status.
- Use location data to provide hyper-personalized local deals.
- Offer tiered discounts for each repeat purchase.
- Pitch a free personalized gift for different spending caps.

You could also offer special gift card promotions, like offering a free \$20 gift card with the purchase of \$100 or more. This is a great way to increase sales in the present, while also incentivizing sales in the future.

## Create a sense of urgency with discount countdowns.

Countdown timers trigger FOMO feelings among consumers. Also, they build up a sense of scarcity, forcing our brain to want the fleeing thing before it's gone.

[Researchers](#) found that a feeling of scarcity makes us auto-rate in-demand products as more attractive. And we rate luxury products more favorably if they are scarce due to limited supply.

Here's how you can put that bit of knowledge into action:

- **Use countdown timers** in email marketing to promote short-term discounts for high-value, signature products. Keeping these sales semi-private helps prevent brand dilution. At the same time, you can still get a boost in online sales.
- **Feature countdown banners** on your website for the most in-demand products—or ones you wish to position that way. Placing a timer next to every product reminds shoppers that the time is running out soon. That way they are more likely to proceed with checkout instead of hoarding products in the cart and e-window shopping. If a timer next to each product makes your website look messy, add a sticky header banner instead.

## Give first-time buyers a reason to return.

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Consumers are keen to discover new brands. If your company came on their radar during holidays, direct some extra effort at entertaining and retaining them.

So how can you entice new customers to return? Try this:

### **Get them on your loyalty program**

Loyalty programs help move customers up the buying ladder, increase repeat business and foster deeper emotional connections. Prompt subscription during check-out and sweeten the deal for first-time shoppers with a quick discount for second purchase.

### **Pitch a subscription offer**

Subscription boxes offer a recurring revenue stream for your business. But they also offer something to your customers, too: convenience. Offering a limited subscription box or allowing customers to automatically pay for and receive the same product every month makes buying easy and fun.

### **Excel the product delivery**

Test your [shipping strategy](#) before the holiday season to ensure that you can be there on time. Timely and positive delivery experience instills greater confidence in your brand and encourages repeat purchases.

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# Create the Best Possible Commerce Experience

Holiday shopping can be whimsically wonderful or miserably gruesome (especially when done at the last minute). Help your customers get the best out of their shopping spree(s) by testing the next five strategies.

## Create holiday gift guides.

The holiday season can be mentally taxing for some shoppers, struggling to find the right gift for an array of people on their list. Reduce their feeling of overwhelm by curating a series of holiday guides, featuring your products.

Get creative and think beyond the standard “For Him/For Her” categories. [Pinterest](#) found that last year holiday shoppers were increasingly looking for:

- Personalized gift ideas.
- Sustainable gift ideas.
- Self-care package gifts.
- Snail-mail gifts.
- Teacher Christmas gift ideas.
- Colleague Christmas gift ideas.

Use last year’s shopping customer data to determine which gift categories will work best for your customers. Then set up dedicated holiday landing pages for them and optimize them around relevant search queries.

Search-optimized holiday guides and [product landing pages](#) can drive extra search traffic to your website, plus street the returning customers in the right direction.

## Provide the best customer service.

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Proactive solving of your customers' issues during the holiday season is key to winning them for the long-term.

However, maintaining high service levels during the hectic holiday season is challenging. Between ensuring product stock, timely shipping and normal website operations, it's easy to miss some urgent customer queries.

So plan ahead and scale your customer service before the hottest part of the sales season kicks in. Here's how:

- **Create or update self-help pages**, offering a quick resolution to the most frequent customer issues.
- **Add a chatbot** to act as a first-line of help, guiding users towards the right answers, and providing basic help.
- **Hire extra people** for your CS team to take over online support — live chat, email queries, social media questions.

If you have extra budgets, consider adopting an AI-driven conversational platform to assist with online support. The newest-generation platforms can pre-write answers to the common customer questions, auto-serve relevant data to agents, and otherwise augment the speed and accuracy of their replies.

## Run a holiday social media campaign.

Social media has become an independent shopping avenue with the rise of things like Instagram Shopping, Facebook Marketplace and TikTok.

Consumers are hooked, especially younger ones. How do you bridge the gap between inspiration and purchase on social media without dropping too much cash on ads?

Start building your social media audience lists 1-2 months before the holiday season. This way when the holiday season kicks in, you won't be burning cash on generic ads marketing to disinterested consumers or people who are not familiar with your brand or rubbing elbows with a ton of other brands pitching similar deals.

Experiment with different types of social media posts and ad formats to determine engaged users and perhaps convert some to your email list. Direct most of your efforts to fill your sales funnel with brand-

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aware and interested prospects.

When November kicks in, get more hands-on, and convert those shoppers with:

- Offer ads on Facebook.
- Remarketing ads to visitors/past customers.
- Shoppable Instagram posts.
- Time-sensitive promo codes shared in Instagram stories.

## Work with micro-influencers.

**Influencer marketing** can help increase brand awareness during the pre-holiday season. Similar to social ads, you are likely to get the best returns if you:

- Invest early in early promos for the top of the funnel customers.
- Carefully select your pool of partnerships.
- Focus on increasing brand awareness/recall, rather than sales alone.

If you are on the cautious, but curious side, here's a good option for you — run a micro-influencer holiday campaign.

Micro-influencers (people with 1,000 to 10,000 followers on social media) usually have highly-engaged audiences around a certain interest group (e.g. skincare, home design, healthy eating, etc).

Want to give it a try? Hop on social media and look for conversation-starters in your industry or around your consumer interests. Pay attention to the number of comments and video views above the average number of likes per post to find truly active accounts. You can also sign up for an influencer marketing platform to get matched with pre-vetted influencers, suggested based on your criteria.

## Send creative cart abandonment emails.

During the holiday season, retailers can expect cart abandonment to rise as consumers hunt for deals, shop around, or altogether forget about their earlier intention to shop with your brand.

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Get back on their shopping radar by sending a quick email reminder to complete their purchase. And since it's the holiday season, sprinkle it with a little extra joy.

- Use humor to prompt shopper to complete their purchase.
- Add a small discount for products left in the card.
- Promise a coupon code for the second order with you.

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# Pitch or Ditch? How to Know Which Tactic Can Actually Increase Your Sales

Even though it's the holidays, you still need to be extra careful with your promo spending. After all, many marketing tricks don't bring the advertised clicks.

To line up the strongest marketing strategies for this year's campaign, evaluate each one by asking the next questions.

## Does it make sense for your target audience?

Throwing in extra cash in [TikTok marketing](#) won't make sense if your primary buyers are older Gen X or Boomers. Use your historical data to drive your decision for this year's campaign. Specifically, try to gauge:

- How price-sensitive and discount-driven is your primary audience?
- How well do they respond to various campaign types?
- What type of brand experience do they prioritize — faster shipping, free shipping, personalized offers, etc.?

A quick email survey can help you collect these nuggets before you go into active marketing mode.

## Have you tried it in the past?

Analyze the results of last year's campaign. Which channels brought it the highest ROI? Did you experience any particular types of complaints e.g. ineffective shipping? Identify several strategies that got you great results and pepper them up with 1-2 new tricks.

## Do you have the tools to implement it?

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Determine if new tech investments will pay-off. For instance, if your total influencer marketing budget is \$1,500, paying a \$250 fee to access an influencer marketplace may not be the best choice. However, if you are running a larger campaign with 10-15 participants, a comprehensive platform can save you a lot of time on managing campaigns, plus help ensure that you are partnering with the right peeps for your brand.

## Does the tactic cost you money?

While there's no such thing as absolutely free publicity, some marketing tactics cost you less to execute since you already have the tools, tech, and people to run them. Still, they won't be completely free if you are reallocating your time from other tasks.

Assess each tactic from the perspective of upfront investment vs possible ROI vs. ease of execution. Aim for:

1. High ROI and very easy to do.
2. Low upfront investment plus high ROI.

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## The Final Word

The holiday season can make or break your ecommerce business's year, so getting the most out of your holiday shoppers is imperative for success. How can you ensure your site and campaigns are ready to make the most out of the season? Start with the lowest hanging fruit—marketing strategies you've already tested and that are still relevant in the current shopping landscape.

Then move on to pre-holiday planning. Determine the discount strategy for different holidays, channels, and customer groups. Review your website and identify which areas need improvements, like product descriptions, banners, CTAs or other assets. You can also start working on your seasonal content.

Next, decide on your social media strategy for the holidays. Set your budgets, distribute them among different campaign types, like ads, influencer marketing, organic content creation. Start running pre-holiday promos to get some new leads to the top of your funnel.

Lastly, ensure that your customer service team is properly staffed and in hot-response mode. Reach out to your shipping partner to ask about the potential delays and organize back-up/alternative logistics. One bad experience can turn a customer away for life, so stay on your toes.

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