

Always-On & Out in Front

Achieving a winning promo plan for all seasons

A report from RTB House,
April 2024



Up, up, and away!

In recent years, ecommerce has risen into the stratosphere. Who among us doesn't now regularly buy online or delight in bagging a bargain? So much shopping is done from the comfort of our own homes, and finding and paying for goods has never been easier.

But the convenience and ease with which we shop disguise the fact that for brands, catching our attention with the perfect ad at the right time requires a lot of strategy, planning, and exceptional technology.

The year is brimming with promo periods, and brands are often already planning for one promo period while right in the middle of another. They can be updrafts that brands can ride to lift sales, but all of this plays out in the context of complexly evolving consumer behaviors: changes in wind direction, swirling eddies, and air currents that can knock you off-course or be ridden to new heights.

So, how can your brand boost its promo periods alongside rapidly shifting consumer trends in an increasingly competitive landscape and get out in front?

This report explores the art of building winning retargeting campaigns around promo periods and beyond by adopting an iterative 'always-on, always onwards' strategic mindset.

Welcome aboard.



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Evolving consumer behavior

The roots of advertising can be traced back to ancient Egypt when papyrus was used for sales messages. Fast-forward to the present day and advertising is ubiquitous, multi-faceted and incredibly sophisticated, disseminated through media channels the Pharaohs couldn't possibly have imagined. To them, the idea of advertising messages that can be personalized for each individual would have, no doubt, seemed like pure magic.

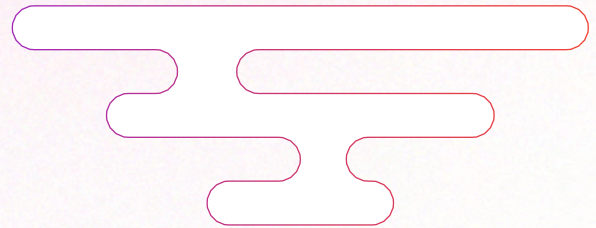
Every civilization the world has ever known has sought to unite its people and reinforce its culture through festivals and holidays. With many of these periods comes the idea of plenty, feasting, and gifting—increased spending during these periods is as old as commerce itself.



The rise and rise of promo periods

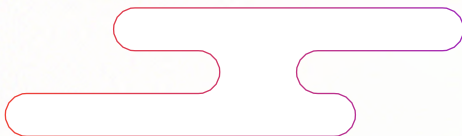
The fact that advertising has grown in sophistication—from word-of-mouth to print, to radio and television, and finally to the online space, is directly correlated to consumer willingness to splurge during these special periods.

For instance, Valentine's Day originated in the 14th century, but the commercial power of Valentine's Day didn't fully manifest until over two centuries later, in the 1700s, when cards were created as an anonymous way to declare one's affections. The world-famous heart-shaped chocolate box had its genesis in the 1860s in England, as an advertising tactic of Richard Cadbury to boost chocolate sales. Today, Valentine's Day is worth billions of dollars to brands. In 2023, in the U.S. alone, spending climbed to \$26 B for 14 February 2023, up from around \$24 B in the previous year.^[2]



10%

Easter chocolate sales make up 10% of Britain's annual spending on chocolate.^[1]



57%

57% of consumers buy Valentine's Day candy as a gift for their loved ones.^[4]

Look no further for evidence of the complex interplay of influence between commerce and promo periods than Coca-Cola—the widely-cherished image of Santa as a plump, bearded gentleman in a red robe was in large part popularized by festive campaigns run by Coca-Cola between 1931-1964.^[3]

We're now at a point at which no company can afford to ignore any of the year's promo periods, but not only that—they must cast the net more widely to encompass the holidays of other global communities.

Of course, this means that the year is packed with opportunities to lift sales. But to fully leverage the opportunities in a crowded, ultra-competitive environment, brands need to adopt an agile, all-year-round “always-on” outlook consisting of a constantly evolving strategy undergirded by best data analysis of consumer trends.

[1] Source: <https://www.gwp.co.uk/guides/easter-packaging/>

[2] Source: <https://eu.usatoday.com/story/graphics/2023/02/11/consumers-plan-to-increase-valentines-day-spending-nearly-26-billion/11227844002/>

[3] Source: <https://www.coca-colacompany.com/about-us/history/haddon-sundblom-and-the-coca-cola-santas>

[4] Source: <https://www.driverresearch.com/market-research-company-blog/valentines-day-statistics/>

The winds of change— shifting consumer behavior

The particular dates of the year's promo periods never change, but customer preferences and buying habits certainly do; from year-to-year; sometimes even from week-to-week.

Each of these periods requires a specific strategy with a long run-up in terms of planning. However, a plan that is most likely to bring promo success should always be responsive to quickly unfolding events and shifting trends in consumer behavior.

Changes in today's world happen at high speed. What worked in promotional periods yesterday may not be the best strategy for tomorrow. In order to build your year-round promo strategy, you need to understand your customers' evolving behaviors and changing expectations.

4.5x more

4.5 times more new users engage with brands during the Black November promotional season.^[5]



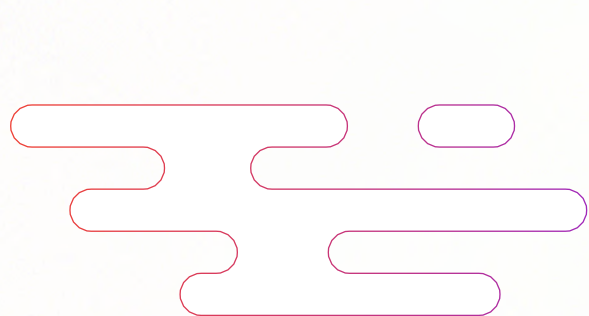
[5] Source: <https://www.thedrum.com/profile/rtb-house/news/how-to-optimize-advertising-campaigns-during-q4>

Physical vs. digital stores during promos

The global footfall for brick-and-mortar stores has been steadily increasing for the last two years, and according to a report by Numerator, in-store shopping is still the most preferred option for holidays, Christmas notwithstanding. ^[6]

So physical stores still hold great sway, as backed up by a recent report that suggests that they influence 60% of online orders. ^[7] This underlines the importance of omnichannel capabilities that accelerated during the pandemic and in which consumers clearly remain interested. McKinsey data shows that customers want and expect to interact with a brand seamlessly across ten or more channels. ^[8]

But it seems nothing can stop the continuing march of global ecommerce—it is forecast to reach 8.1 T by 2026, by Statista. ^[9] Mastercard's SpendingPulse backs this up by revealing that U.S. retail ecommerce sales on Black Friday are increasing 14% year-over-year (YoY). ^[10]



Economic headwinds

But this isn't to say that the economic pressures of the last couple of years can be ignored. Only 12% of U.S. consumers said that inflation would not impact their holiday celebrations in 2023, ^[11] and 67% of them stated that they planned to buy on-sale items to save money and stretch their budget. ^[12]

Consumers are more budget-conscious, and they are planning ahead for special times. In 2022, 42% more shoppers worldwide and 37% more in the U.S. started buying gifts earlier than previously—an already ongoing trend fueled by inflation. ^[13] It seems that after two years of experiencing problems such as extended delivery times and dwindling, unreplenished stocks, shoppers are planning ahead.

Other tactics consumers are deploying to stretch their budgets are switching to less expensive brands—six in ten people say that they would stop spending with their favorite brands if money is tight, being more alert for bargains, and spreading their spending over a longer period of time. ^[14] But this doesn't necessarily mean that they will spend less. In fact, a Deloitte survey found that people who start shopping earlier are expected to spend 23% more than those who start on or after the exact promo day. ^[15]

Although rising costs are an issue for consumers, they'll always embrace the holidays as a time to celebrate with their nearest and dearest. They still want the holidays to be special and will engage with retailers that evolve in step with their spending priorities.

[6] Source: <https://www.numerator.com/holiday-trends/consumer-survey>

[7] Source: <https://www.forrester.com/report/2022-digital-influenced-retail-sales-forecast-us/RES178197>

[8] Source: <https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/growth-marketing-and-sales/our-insights/the-new-b2b-growth-equation>

[9] Source: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/379046/worldwide-retail-e-commerce-sales/>

[10] Source: <https://www.mastercard.com/news/press/2023/november/mastercard-spendingpulse-u-s-black-friday-retail-sales-up-year-over-year/>

[11] Source: <https://www.numerator.com/holiday-trends/consumer-survey>

[12] Source: <https://www.numerator.com/holiday-trends/consumer-survey>

[13] Source: <https://www.cnn.com/2022/06/28/3-trends-to-watch-as-retailers-prep-for-back-to-school-holiday-shopping.html>

[14] Source: <https://www.marketingweek.com/consumer-priorities-inflation-brand-loyalty-interesting-stats/>

[15] Source: <https://www.marketingweek.com/consumer-priorities-inflation-brand-loyalty-interesting-stats/>



The shift from things to experiences

Consumers, inside and outside of promo periods, continued to shift their desire toward experiences and away from material things. In fact, a survey of 1000 U.S. respondents aged 18-65 found that 74% of Americans now prioritize experiences over products or things.^[17] This, of course, is welcome news for Travel and Food & Beverage—two already big priorities during most holidays—and special events and festivals. A recent report found that over half of consumers are ready to spend on travel and social events, motivated by reconnecting with friends and family.^[18]

Stats around two of the biggest global festivals attest to this: for Christmas, 50.44% (nearly 131 M American adults) planned to travel for Christmas 2023. This is up from 42.98% for Christmas 2022.^[19] And despite the fact that Ramadan is a fasting month, food bills actually increase by 50-100% and account for 15% of annual food expenditure in Muslim households.^[20] It seems that family and food are two things people aren't willing to skimp on.

41% more

Traveling for Christmas is preferred by 41% more American adults than Thanksgiving travel.^[16]

[16] Source: <https://thevacationer.com/holiday-travel-survey-2023/>

[17] Source: <https://www.luxurytraveladvisor.com/running-your-business/stats-74-percent-americans-prioritize-experiences-over-products>

[18] Source: <https://www.forbes.com/advisor/credit-cards/inflation-has-not-deflated-americas-travel-plans-2023/>

[19] Source: <https://thevacationer.com/holiday-travel-survey-2023/>

[20] Source: <https://www.hlb.global/the-economic-impact-of-ramadan-on-the-food-sector/>

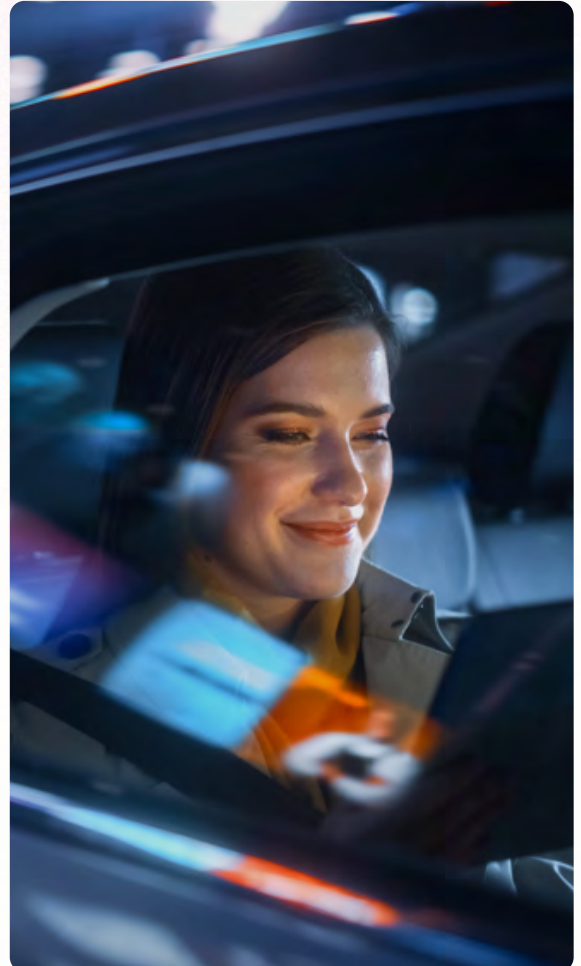
The rise in social commerce

In 2023, Hubspot's State of Marketing Report stated that 64.97% of web traffic comes via a mobile device vs. 32.86% via desktop and 2.16% via tablets.^[21] And according to Google, a mobile-optimized web experience can result in a better ranking.^[22] The rise in social media is a big part of mobile gaining the lion's share of web traffic. It's also one big reason why there's been such a rise in the abovementioned trend towards experiences.

The super shareable nature of exciting experiences, be it unusual activities in stunning vistas or delicious-looking dishes in coveted restaurants, is fueling this trend. Therefore, it's no surprise that marketers of all stripes are leveraging social media. Social commerce is predicted to grow three times as fast as traditional ecommerce, more than doubling from \$492 B worldwide in 2021 to \$1.2 T in 2025.^[24]

As trends for customer spending and engagement during promo periods emerge, brands must be primed to respond to them. Not only that, they have to be alert to unfolding world events that have the potential to disrupt by building a robust, year-round retargeting strategy for promo periods.

Now, let's launch into the next chapter for a view of all the world's promo periods that, with the right strategy, your brand can leverage to boost sales to the next level.



64%

Facebook was the most leveraged social media platform in 2022, used by 64% of marketers, followed by Instagram (58%), YouTube (57%), Twitter (43%), TikTok (42%), and LinkedIn (33%).^[23]

[21] Source: <https://www.hubspot.com/state-of-marketing>

[22] Source: <https://developers.google.com/search/docs/appearance/page-experience>

[23] Source: Hubspot, State Of Marketing Trends 2023

[24] Source: <https://www.insiderintelligence.com/insights/social-commerce-brand-trends-marketing-strategies/#:~:text=A%20new%20report%20from%20Accenture,via%20social%20media%20in%202021>

A world of opportunity

Culturally, it's an incredibly rich and diverse world we live in, and the calendar year is full of festivals and celebrations. Pick a week at random, and there's a good chance someone somewhere is planning to celebrate and is willing to spend money to do it. Let's take a trip around the globe to visit the promo periods that we're recommending as great opportunities for successful campaigns.



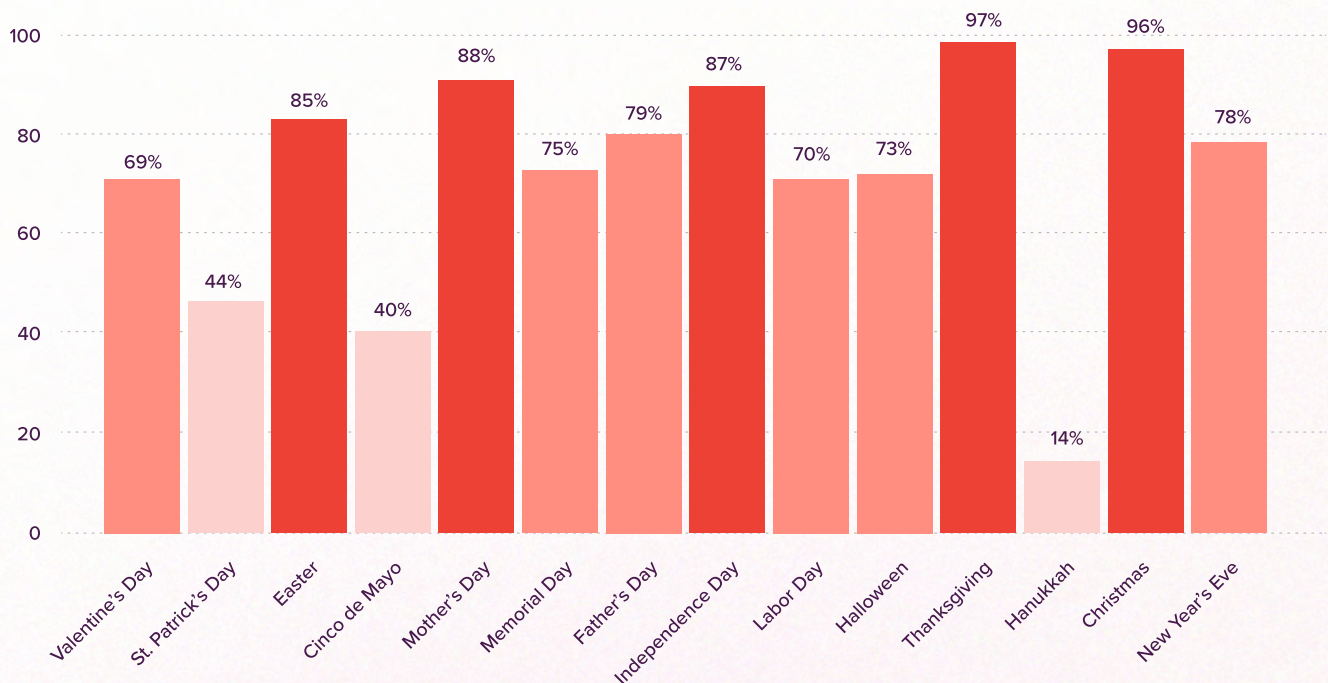
The U.S.

The United States has the most dominant economy in the world and a culture that travels well. Many special promotions that began in the U.S., such as Halloween and the promotional behemoth that is Black November, have been embraced and adopted by other regions around the world, including Europe and beyond. Likewise, The U.S. has also imported and amped up festivals from elsewhere, including Cinco de Mayo and St. Patrick's Day. So, the U.S. is as good a place as any to start our round-the-world journey.



Celebration Plans ^[25]

% of U.S. consumers planning to celebrate



It is interesting to see that Thanksgiving trumps Christmas in terms of intentions to celebrate. Even though it doesn't generate the kind of revenues that Christmas does across the board, Travel and Food & Beverage brands in the U.S. will be as busy or busier on Thanksgiving than during Christmas.

[25] Source: <https://www.numerator.com/holiday-trends-consumer-survey/>

Valentine's Day

14 February

🔥 BOOST FOR: TRAVEL • FASHION • FOOD & BEVERAGE

U.S. consumers always go big for the most romantic holiday of the year. Statista reveals that in 2023 shoppers spent an estimated \$25.9 B (8.37% more than in 2022) to woo their significant other with 134 M Americans making a Valentine's purchase. ^[26] Although more dollars were spent on jewelry than any other item (\$5.5 B), it is candy/chocolate that is the most popular gift, with 57% of consumers opting for sweet treats. ^[27]

It's true that Valentine's Day often sneaks up on many consumers, and last-minute purchases are commonplace. So, being top-of-mind when Valentine's Day comes around can be invaluable. This is where a strong campaign in the run-up to Valentine's Day can pay big dividends.



[26] Source: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/285028/us-valentine-s-day-sales/>

[27] Source: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/285028/us-valentine-s-day-sales/>

Mother’s Day

🔥 BOOST FOR: FOOD & BEVERAGE • FASHION • TRAVEL

As much of a great opportunity as Valentine’s Day is for retailers, Mother’s Day wins out. Estimated expenditure for Mother’s Day 2023 was \$35.7 B, almost \$10 B more than the Valentine’s Day of the previous year. [28] Mothers, for good reason, are cherished the world over. The exact date for honoring mothers worldwide may vary, but what doesn’t change is the enthusiasm of daughters and sons for expressing their heartfelt appreciation on this special day.



Mother's Day Worldwide

Most countries celebrate mothers in May or March.

● 71 COUNTRIES

May

- | | | |
|----------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Andorra | Dominican Republic | Liechtenstein |
| Australia | Estonia | Lithuania |
| Austria | Finland | Malta |
| Bahamas | France | Mauritius |
| Bangladesh | Gabon | Monaco |
| Barbados | Germany | Netherlands |
| Belgium | Ghana | New Zealand |
| Benin | Greece | Peru |
| Bermuda | Grenada | Poland |
| Botswana | Haiti | Portugal |
| Brazil | Honduras | Puerto Rico |
| Canada | Hong Kong | Republic of the Congo |
| Cape Verde | Hungary | Romania |
| Cayman Islands | Iceland | Senegal |
| Chad | India | Singapore |
| Colombia | Italy | Slovakia |
| Croatia | Jamaica | South Africa |
| Cuba | Japan | Spain |
| Czechia | Kenya | Sri Lanka |
| Denmark | Latvia | Sweden |

● 8 COUNTRIES

March

- Albania
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Bulgaria
- Gibraltar
- Ireland
- Nigeria
- North Macedonia
- United Kingdom

Source: timeanddate.com

[28] Source: <https://developers.google.com/search/docs/appearance/page-experience>

Father's Day

🔥 BOOST FOR: FASHION • HOME • ELECTRONICS

Although Father's Day trails Mother's Day in terms of intentions to celebrate in the U.S. (79% vs. 88% respectively) and in terms of expenditure (\$35.7 B vs. \$23 B) it's still a major event that can be the basis of seriously impactful promo campaigns. ^{[29][30]} Most often, dads will be treated to a special outing, perhaps in the form of lunch or some sort of sporting or hobby-related activity. ^[31] But Fashion always does well on Father's Day—in 2023 \$3.5 B was spent on clothing-related gifts—as does Electronics (\$2.6 B), and Home & Garden (inc. tools and appliances) (\$3.2 B). ^{[32][33][34]}

Like Mother's Day, Father's Day unfolds on different dates globally.



Father's Day Worldwide

Most countries celebrate fathers in June.

● 53 COUNTRIES

June

Albania	Georgia	Senegal
Austria	Ghana	Singapore
Bahamas	Gibraltar	Slovakia
Bangladesh	Greece	Slovenia
Barbados	Hong Kong	South Africa
Belgium	Hungary	Sri Lanka
Benin	India	Trinidad and Tobago
Bermuda	Ireland	Ukraine
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Jamaica	United Kingdom
Botswana	Malta	United States
Canada	Mauritius	U.S. Virgin Islands
Cape Verde	Mexico	Zambia
Cayman Islands	Monaco	Zimbabwe
Chad	Niger	
Colombia	Nigeria	
Costa Rica	Netherlands	
Czechia	Peru	
France	Poland	
Gabon	Puerto Rico	
	Republic of the Congo	

● 10 COUNTRIES

March

Andorra
Bolivia
Croatia
Honduras
Italy
Liechtenstein
Portugal
San Marino
Spain
Vatican City

● 5 COUNTRIES

November

Estonia
Finland
Iceland
Norway
Sweden

● 2 COUNTRIES

September

Latvia
North Macedonia

[29] [30] Source: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/289496/us-mother-s-day-expenditure/>

[31] Source: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/438078/us-father-s-day-expenditure-by-category/>

[32] [33] [34] Source: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/438078/us-father-s-day-expenditure-by-category/>

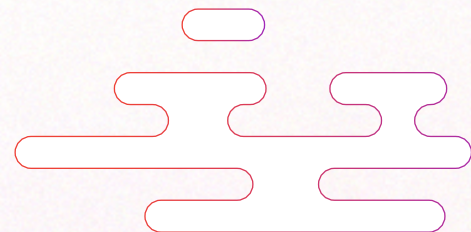
Hanukkah

🔥 BOOST FOR: FASHION • HOME • ELECTRONICS

The world's Jewish population is 15.7 M, and the U.S. has the second largest population after Israel with 6.3 M people (followed by France, Canada, then the U.K.).^[35] The major holiday in Judaism is Hanukkah, which is celebrated over eight nights and eight days and can fall anywhere between late November and late December. The date of Hanukkah is based on the Hebrew calendar, so it varies each year.

There's no doubt that Hanukkah has a bigger commercial impact when falling closer to Christmas—a late Hanukkah can even result in sales rising by 40 percent.^[36] Retailers usually start pushing Hanukkah products after Halloween, so a Hanukkah closer to Christmas gives brands a longer promotional run-up.

Despite overall Christmas revenues being much higher than those of Hanukkah, brands would be well-advised to embrace Hanukkah to boost their holiday results. There's a lot of gift-giving at Hanukkah—typically, one gift is given to a person for each of the eight days. Add to that the fact that American Jews are a relatively high-income group, with 44% making \$100,000 or more per year, and you have motive enough for companies to expand their Christmas holiday offering to cater to Hanukkah celebrations.^[37]



[35] Source: [https://www.i24news.tv/en/news/judaism/1694847188-rosh-hashana-2023-world-jewish-population-reaches-15-7-million#:~:text=After%20Israel%2C%20the%20United%20States,%20and%20Brazil%20\(90%2C000\)](https://www.i24news.tv/en/news/judaism/1694847188-rosh-hashana-2023-world-jewish-population-reaches-15-7-million#:~:text=After%20Israel%2C%20the%20United%20States,%20and%20Brazil%20(90%2C000))

[36] Source: <https://www.inc.com/jennifer-conrad/ali-donaldson/how-us-businesses-embrace-hanukkah-this-year.html>

[37] Source: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1416272/us-household-income-by-religious-affiliation/>



The Super Bowl

2nd Sunday of February

🔥 BOOST FOR: TRAVEL • SPORTS • FOOD & BEVERAGE

The fact that the average cost of a 30-second ad spot during the Super Bowl 2023 broadcast was estimated at \$7 M U.S. dollars is evidence enough that The Super Bowl is a massive cultural focal point for the U.S. and elsewhere.^[38] It is the single most profitable sporting event in the world.^[39]

The 2023 Super Bowl, which took place in Glendale, Arizona, generated \$1.3 B, with Arizona's Office of Tourism stating that visitors contributed \$221 M in direct spending, including \$91 M in revenue to hotels; a 184% increase over the same period in 2022.^[40]

48 M

After Thanksgiving, Super Bowl Sunday is the second most popular day to order takeout. Around one in seven Americans, or 48 M people, order takeout for the big game.^[41]



[38] Source: <https://www.statista.com/topics/1264/super-bowl/#:~:text=The%20advertising%20revenue%20from%20the,million%20U.S.%20dollars%20in%202023.>

[39] Source: <https://www.forbes.com/global/2010/0315/companies-olympics-superbowl-daytona-worlds-top-sports-events.html?sh=4017d7616c70>

[40] Source: <https://cronkitenews.azpbs.org/2023/10/04/super-bowl-arizona-economic-impact/>

[41] Source: <https://www.restaurantware.com/blog/post/fun-super-bowl-food-facts/>

Mexico

Hot Sale

Late May

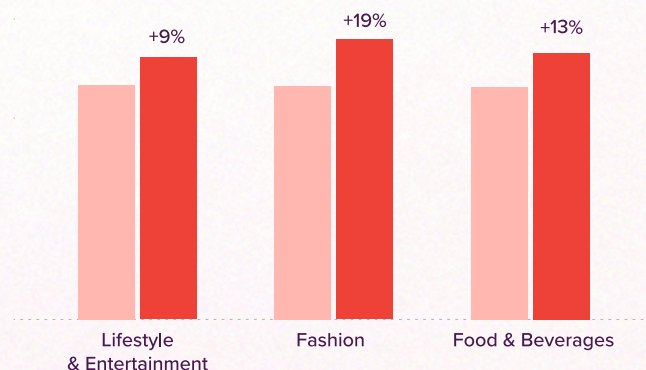
 BOOST FOR: TRAVEL • FASHION • ELECTRONICS

Since its inception in 2014, with the intention of invigorating Mexican ecommerce, Hot Sale has attracted over 18 M buyers who have collectively spent over 88 B pesos (\$5.2 B).^[42] In 2022, 670 companies participated in this primarily online event by offering special discounts and flexible payment options.^[43] According to a survey by AMVO, 46% of customers are interested in purchasing Fashion products, which is backed up by RTB House data (below) that shows a 19% increase of Fashion share in the LATAM region compared to the rest of the year.^[44]



Increase of vertical share in Hot Sales week vs. annual vertical share

RTB House internal data for the LATAM region in 2022 shows a marked increase in Hot Sale conversions, compared with the rest of the year, for the Fashion, Food & Beverage, and Lifestyle & Entertainment sectors.



[42] Source: <https://www.sdprnoticias.com/mexico/que-se-celebra-el-29-de-mayo-hoy-arranca-el-hot-sale-pero-en-estados-unidos-es-el-memorial-day/>

[43] Source: <https://mexicobusiness.news/ecommerce/news/kueski-pay-sponsor-hot-sale-second-consecutive-year>

[44] Source: <https://mexicobusiness.news/ecommerce/news/hot-sale-here-find-out-how-businesses-can-survive-it#:~:text=AMVO%20estimates%20that%20during%20the,than%201%2C800%20unique%20participating%20companies>



El Buen Fin

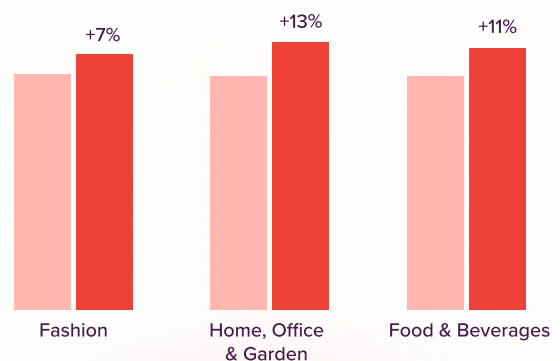
2nd weekend of November

 BOOST FOR: TRAVEL • FASHION • ELECTRONICS

Buen Fin kicks off on the weekend before Mexican Revolution Day. Retailers offer special promotions, extended opening hours, and permissive credit terms. It is one of the stand-out shopping events in Mexico that's been rising in popularity, seeing a sharp rise in sales in 2020, which generated 239 B pesos (\$14.08 B), 100% more than the previous year.^[45] However, the economic concerns of consumers became evident in 2022 when sales came in at a lower-than-expected 134 B pesos (\$7.9 B).^[46] During Buen Fin, ecommerce typically accounts for around 12% of all sales.^[47]

Increase of vertical share in El Buen Fin week vs. annual vertical share

RTB House data for the LATAM region in 2022 shows a significant increase in Buen Fin conversions, compared with the rest of the year, in the Home & Garden, Food & Beverage, and Fashion sectors.



[45] Source: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1049127/sales-revenue-buen-fin-mexico/#?text=In%202022%2C%20the%20generation%20of,only%20134%20billion%20Mexican%20pesos>

[46] Source: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1049127/sales-revenue-buen-fin-mexico/#?text=In%202022%2C%20the%20generation%20of,only%20134%20billion%20Mexican%20pesos>

[47] Source: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/821893/online-shopping-sales-revenue-buen-fin-mexico/>

[48] Source: <https://www.goldmansachs.com/intelligence/pages/gs-research/the-path-to-2075-slower-global-growth-but-convergence-remains-intact/report.pdf>

2050

Mexico's economy will be the world's 11th largest by 2050.^[48]

Europe

Let's fly across the Atlantic now and take a close look at some holidays and promo periods specific to certain European countries. If your brand operates in Europe or has ambitions to do so, some of these traditions provide great opportunities for sales.

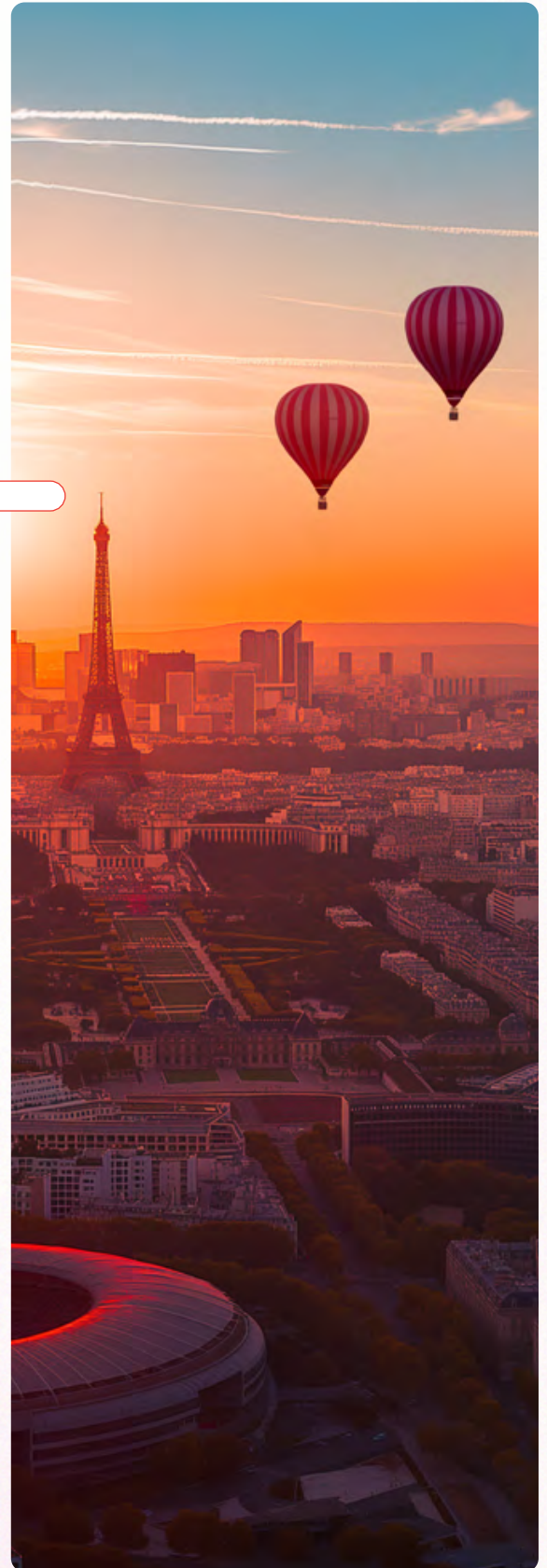
France

The 2024 Paris Olympics
26 July to 11 August

🔥 BOOST FOR: TRAVEL • SPORTS • FASHION

The world's foremost bonanza of sport regularly attracts global viewing figures of over 3 B people—that's over a third of the planet's population. ^[49] No surprise then that the two-week colossus of a sporting event in 2024 is expected to generate €10.7 B. ^[50] An uplift in tourism revenue is likely to be felt for years to come, making an already desirable city truly unmissable.

A research paper published in 2021 (Dechow et al.) analyzed data connected with the Olympic Games held in Sydney, Athens, Beijing, London, and Rio. ^[51] It determined that in addition to the stock market indices rising at the time of the announcement, Olympic stocks—those of industries contributing directly or indirectly to the Olympic experience—in the airline, construction, hospitality, media, and service industries, for example—saw a higher valuation, lasting long after the games concluded.



[49] Source: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/280502/total-number-of-tv-viewers-of-olympic-summer-games-worldwide/>

[50] Source: <https://www.paris2024.org/en/economic-impact-study-reveals-paris-2024-could-generate-eu107bn-economic-benefits-and-create/>

[51] Source: https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3881333

The U.K.

Boxing Day Sales

26 December

🔥 BOOST FOR: SPORTS • FASHION • ELECTRONICS

Even though many Brits go big for Christmas, it doesn't stop them from participating in the annual bargain-hunting stampede that is the Boxing Day Sale, when they aim to take advantage of sizable discounts.

Easter

🔥 BOOST FOR:
TRAVEL • FOOD & BEVERAGE • HOME & GARDEN

On this one day, Britain consumes 10% of its yearly chocolate intake. Therefore, the U.K.'s chocolatiers can stand or fall depending on their performance over Easter. ^[52]

Another big-spending country at Easter is the U.S.. Analysis from Numerator showed that 85% of consumers planned to celebrate Easter in 2023, ^[54] and the National Retail Federation (NRF), Easter projected spending to reach a record \$24 B, surpassing 2022's total by \$3.2 B. ^[55]

But unlike the U.K., Easter isn't the U.S.'s primary candy-purchasing holiday—the undisputed candy king is Halloween, with 80% of people buying candy. ^[56]



\$1.2 B

In 2023, Brits spent an estimated £960 M (\$1.2 B) over Easter. ^[53]

[52] Source: <https://www.gwp.co.uk/guides/easter-packaging/>

[53] Source: <https://www.finder.com/uk/easter-spending-statistics>

[54] Source: <https://storebrands.com/numerator-consumers-opt-beer-person-shopping-st-patricks-day>

[55] Source: National Retail Federation (NRF)

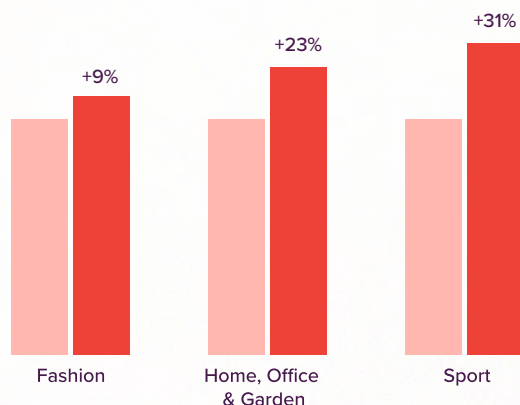
[56] Source: <https://www.numerator.com/press/61-of-consumers-plan-to-celebrate-halloween-80-plan-to-purchase-candy-numerator-reports/>

The Back to School Sales

 BOOST FOR: SPORTS • FASHION • PRICE COMPARISON

School uniforms are still worn by the vast majority of British pupils. This means that a significant financial burden is placed on the U.K.'s parents, who are challenged not only to buy textbooks and stationery but also to kit out their offspring in uniforms and sports gear that they'll no doubt quickly grow out of. So, this is one market primed for bargains.

Increase of vertical share in three peak weeks of Back To School Sales vs. annual vertical share



RTB House data for U.K. campaigns in 2022 shows a large increase in Back to School Sale conversions for the Sport, Home, Office & Garden sectors, and a more moderate increase for Fashion. This no doubt largely comprises purchases in preparation for the coming school year's physical education classes, and in the Home and Office category, reflecting the need to equip school kids with stationary and books.



In 2023, the web traffic of U.K. ecommerce sites rose by 64% year-on-year as consumers sought the best Back To School deals; website conversions of the same period also increased by 44.9% compared with the previous year. ^[57]

Despite continuing pressure on U.K. household budgets, consumers now spend £1.2 B (\$1.5 B) on Back To School items, ^[58] with retail giant Marks & Spencer reporting that Back to School is now its third biggest shopping event of the year, after Christmas and Easter. ^[59]

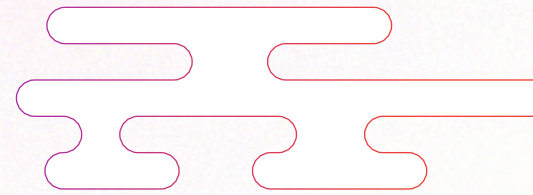
[57] Source: <https://www.retailconnections.co.uk/articles/back-to-school-boost-delivers-a-24-revenue-uptick-for-online-retailers/#:~:text=Web%20traffic%20across%20UK%20ecommerce,%2B44.9%25%20compared%20to%202022.>

[58] Source: <https://www.retailgazette.co.uk/blog/2022/08/retailers-back-to-school/>

[59] Source: <https://www.drapersonline.com/news/ms-protects-prices-of-school-uniforms>

China

China is the world's second-largest economy. In 2022, China's GDP was calculated at \$17.9 T—meaning that since 2012, over the space of just one decade, their GDP has more than doubled. ^[60]



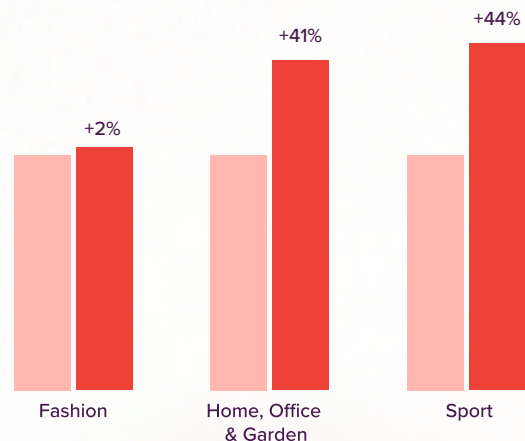
Singles' Day

11 November

 BOOST FOR: FOOD & BEVERAGE • FASHION • ELECTRONICS

Increase of vertical share in Singles' Day week vs. annual vertical share

RTB House data for Singles' Day shows a huge increase in conversions for the Sport and Food & Beverage sectors in the APAC region compared to the rest of the year. Fashion also saw a slight increase.



Originally called Bachelor's Day, Singles' Day is an unofficial holiday and shopping season that celebrates singlehood. It has become the largest physical retail and online shopping day in the entire world. ^[61] In 2021, Alibaba and JD.com reached a new combined Singles' Day sales record of \$139 B, ^[62] although the reluctance of both companies to release the corresponding figures for 2022 and 2023 suggests a downturn in performance with a consumer reluctance to spend on non-essential items. ^[64]

1,000,000%

In just 12 years, the gross merchandise value of Alibaba on Singles' Day has risen by over 1,000,000% ^[63]

[60] Source: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/263770/gross-domestic-product-gdp-of-china/#:~:text=In%202022%2C%20the%20gross%20domestic,reached%20around%2012%2C670%20U.S.%20dollars>

[61] Source: <https://www.statista.com/study/86827/ecommerce-shopping-days-largest-events-key-insights-and-global-trends/#:~:text=With%20a%20GMV%20of%20US,days%20in%20the%20Western%20world.>

[62] Source: <https://www.statista.com/study/86827/ecommerce-shopping-days-largest-events-key-insights-and-global-trends/#:~:text=With%20a%20GMV%20of%20US,days%20in%20the%20Western%20world.>

[63] Source: <https://queue-it.com/blog/singles-day-statistics/>

[64] Source: <https://ecommercedb.com/insights/singles-day-2023-stagnant-growth-or-surprising-sales-surge/4693>

Chinese New Year

End of January/start of February

🔥 BOOST FOR: TRAVEL • FOOD & BEVERAGE • FASHION

The Chinese New Year is the most important holiday in China, and for the Chinese diaspora around the world. It takes place on the first day of the first lunar month, which falls either at the end of January or the beginning of February, and is celebrated nationwide.

The New Year celebrations last for two weeks and are packed with feasts, fireworks, and parades. The 2023 Chinese New Year holidays saw 308 M domestic trips, generating almost ¥376 B (\$52.9 B) in revenue for tourism, which amounts to around 70% of pre-pandemic levels.^[65]



[65] Source: <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/travel-logistics-and-infrastructure/our-insights/outlook-for-china-tourism-2023-light-at-the-end-of-the-tunnel>



Double Seventh Festival

7 July

 **BOOST FOR:**
FOOD & BEVERAGE • FASHION • ELECTRONICS

The Double Seventh Festival takes place on 7 July and is the Chinese counterpart to Valentine's Day. It's an event when couples exchange gifts and flowers, and consumer spending surges during this romantic occasion.

Mid-Autumn Festival

Mid-September/early October

 **BOOST FOR:**
TRAVEL • FOOD & BEVERAGE • HOME & GARDEN

Prayers for a bountiful rice harvest underpin this Chinese equivalent of Thanksgiving Day. Similar to the Chinese New Year, the Mid-Autumn Festival inspires travel and gifting. According to Xinhua, in 2023, during the eight-day holiday, Chinese people made 826 M domestic tourist trips, which is an increase of 71.3% from 2022 and a rise of 4.1% from 2019.^[66]

[66] Source: <https://english.news.cn/20231006/416d6b5cbb1844608b599bfa5192de00/c.html>

India

According to the World GDP Ranking 2023 list, India is the fifth largest economy in the world. As such, it should be on the radar of every global brand. ^[67]

Diwali

Usually late October to November

 BOOST FOR: TRAVEL • FOOD & BEVERAGE • FASHION



The Hindu festival of lights is marked with family, food, and fireworks. In India, almost 80% of the population identifies as Hindu; that's over 966 M people. ^[68]

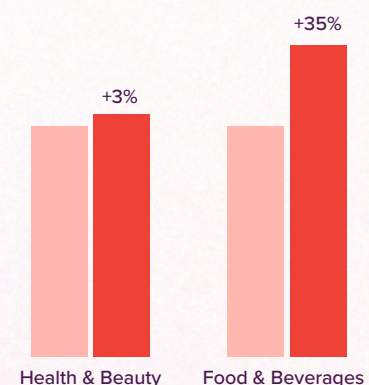
According to a survey by YouGov, Diwali spending continued its recovery in 2022 after reaching a low in the pandemic year of 2020. In the survey, 36% of respondents said that they were going to increase their Diwali spending in 2022. ^[69] In 2023, sales for Diwali continued their resurgence, coming in at a record \$0.45 T, according to the Confederation of Association of Traders (CAIT). ^[70]

400 tons

On Dhanteras—the first day of Diwali, 2023—about 41 tons of gold and about 400 tons of silver jewelry and coins were sold in India. ^[71]

Increase of vertical share in Diwali week vs. annual vertical share

RTB House data in 2022 shows a large increase in Food & Beverage-related conversions for Diwali compared with the rest of the year. A slight increase in Health & Beauty conversions for the same period was also seen.



[67] Source: World GDP Ranking 2023

[68] Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/Religious-communities-Census-2011-What-the-numbers-say/article60301790.ece>

[69] Source: <https://business.yougov.com/content/43451-yougovs-diwali-spending-index-shows-highest-ever-s>

[70] Source: <https://sundayguardianlive.com/business/diwali-sales-soared-to-rs-3-75-trillion-in-spite-of-economic-struggles#:~:text=This%20year's%20domestic%20figure%20at,almost%20like%20the%20last%20year.>

[71] Source: India Jewellers and Goldsmiths Federation



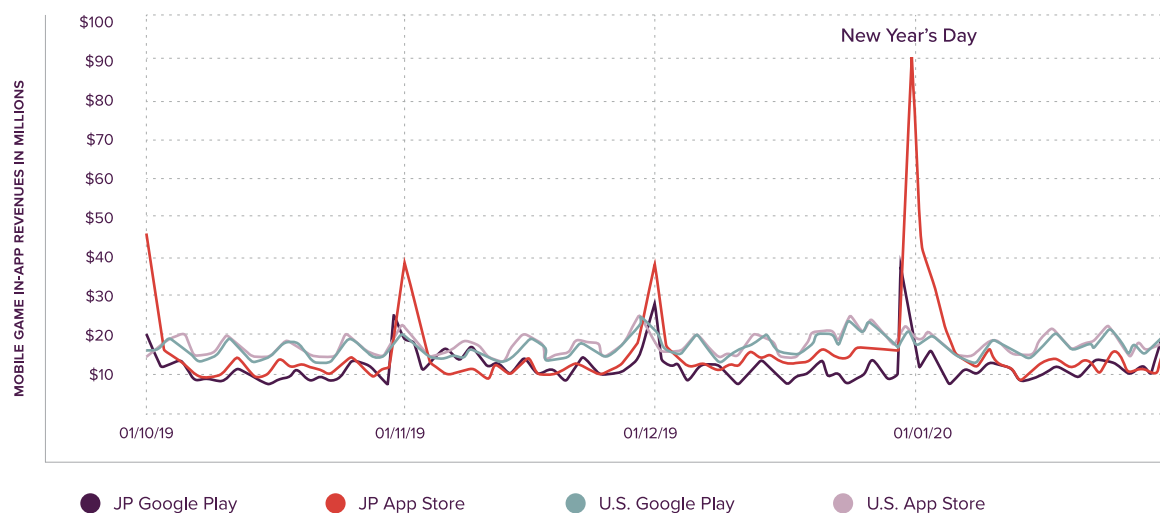
Japan

New Year 'Shogatsu' Celebrations

🔥 BOOST FOR: TRAVEL • FOOD & BEVERAGE • GAMING

Possibly the most important holiday in Japan, the arrival of the New Year on 1 January is celebrated with family and traditional food. Clearly, it's a big day for Tourism and Food & Beverage, but perhaps surprisingly, it's also a big day for mobile gaming. In Japan, the smartphone has become the most popular gaming device,^[72] and on 1 January, in-game revenues typically almost triple.^[73]

Mobile game in-app revenues in millions, in months leading up to and including Shogatsu celebrations.



\$1.33 B

The Japanese video game market is the third-biggest worldwide, predicted to reach JP¥1.93 T (\$1.33 B) by 2027.^[74]

[72] Source: <https://www.statista.com/topics/5679/mobile-gaming-in-japan/#topicOverview>

[73] Source: <https://www.gamesindustry.biz/maximizing-the-2020-holidays-for-mobile-user-acquisition>

[74] Source: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1024411/japan-gaming-market-size/>

Golden Week

29 April to 5 May

🔥 BOOST FOR: SPORTS • FASHION • ELECTRONICS

Golden Week contains multiple Japanese holidays and is also known as 'Haru no Ōgata Renkyū' (lit. 'long spring holiday series'). This week packed with holidays sees many leisure-based industries experiencing surges in their revenues. In fact, for 2023, JTB Corporation, the largest travel agency in Japan, forecast that 24.7 M travelers were expected to spend JP¥904 B (\$6.28 B). ^[75]



[75] Source: <https://www.travelvoice.jp/english/jtb-forecasts-24-5-million-domestic-travelers-in-japan-and-200-000-outbound-travelers-from-japan-during-this-year-s-golden-week-holidays>



The Middle East

Ramadan

🔥 BOOST FOR: TRAVEL • FOOD & BEVERAGE • FASHION

Observed by the world's Muslim contingent—24% of the world's population, and 1.8 B people,^[76] Ramadan is a time for fasting and other forms of abstinence during daylight hours over a period of around 30 days. It could, therefore, come as a surprise to some that food consumption actually increases during Ramadan. Not only that, sales in other verticals also rise.

A survey done in 2023 by YouGov indicated that the majority of consumers who observe Ramadan intended to purchase some fashion wear and accessories, personal care and cosmetics, food and drinks, and household appliances through online channels. 76% of those surveyed planned to buy at least some fashionwear (clothes, shoes, and other accessories) online, while 67% planned to buy at least some personal care products and cosmetics online;^[77] this is confirmed by RTB House data which shows a huge 108% increase in Health & Beauty revenues.

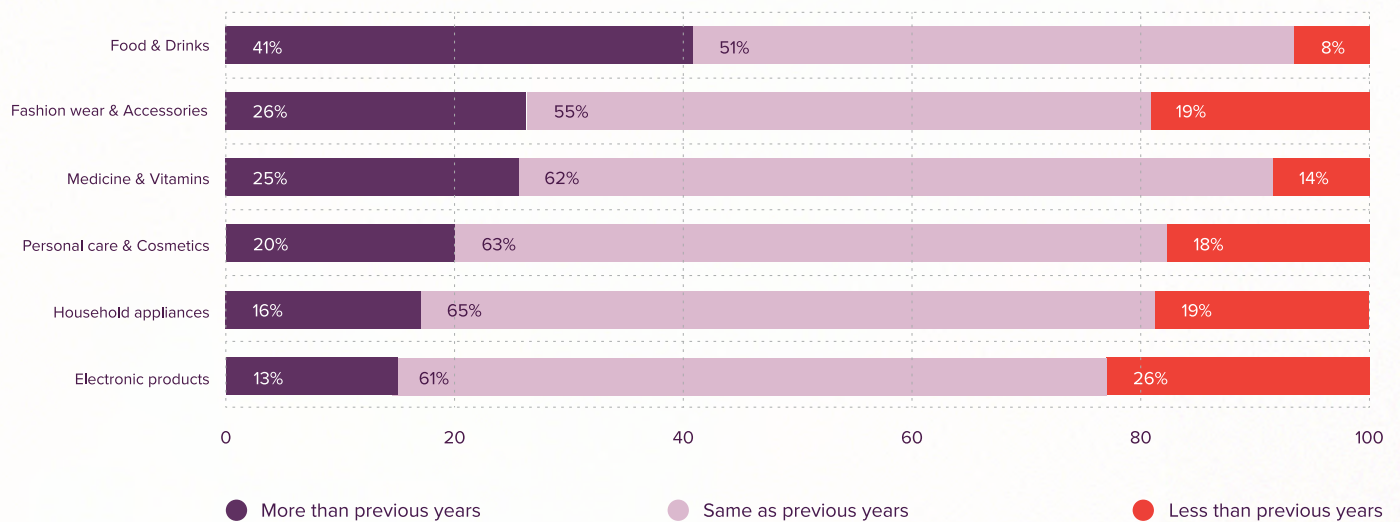
That being said, economic concerns also persisted for Ramadan 2023.

[76] Source: <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2017/08/09/muslims-and-islam-key-findings-in-the-u-s-and-around-the-world/>

[77] Source: https://business.yougov.com/content/46412-ramadan-2023-consumer-spending-online-offline?redirect_from=%2Fcontent%2F7986-ramadan-2023-consumer-spending-online-offline

Ramadan 2023: Proportion of Muslim consumers who intend to spend more vs. same/less on various goods this year.

Comparing your expected spending this Ramadan with previous years, which of the following statements best describe your expenditure for each category? (Showing responses from consumers who identify as Muslim only.)



Note: Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number and may not add up to 100.

Source: YouGov Surveys: March 2023

The two Eids—Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha

Ramadan culminates in Eid al-Fitr—which translates as "the festival of the breaking of the fast." Eid al-Adha, however, means "the feast of the sacrifice" and is celebrated about two months after Eid al-Fitr. It lasts four days and coincides with the end of the Hajj, the pilgrimage to Mecca. As festivals in Islam are based on the lunar calendar, the exact dates of Ramadan and both Eids change every year.

In many Muslim countries, both Eids are public holidays when people get together over large meals with friends and family. Typically, money and other gifts are given to children, with the value increasing with the child's age. There's also a surge in fashion spending, although wholesale clothing sales in 2023 dropped 30-40% and retail sales declined by 20-30%.^[79] Traders say people are cutting back on spending due to various reasons, including a rise in the price of daily essentials.

[78] Source: https://business.yougov.com/content/46412-ramadan-2023-consumer-spending-online-offline?redirect_from=%2Fcontent%2F7986-ramadan-2023-consumer-spending-online-offline

[79] Source: <https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/eid-clothing-sales-take-dip-amid-economic-strains-619278>

South Korea

Lunar New Year's Day and Thanksgiving Day

🔥 BOOST FOR: TRAVEL • FOOD & BEVERAGE • FASHION

These are the most important holidays for South Koreans, during which millions of people return to their hometowns to celebrate with their families. In 2023, 4,000 consumers aged 20 to 50 were surveyed about their Thanksgiving (Chuseok) holiday plans. 46% of the respondents said they planned to visit their hometowns, followed by 30% who planned to stay home and 22.4% who planned to travel elsewhere. ^[80]

According to the Hyundai Department Store, beauty products and luxury goods are the top gift choices for young consumers. ^[81] In fact, a survey by Pocketsurvey revealed that 51.5% of people have given or received luxury goods as gifts. ^[82]

Gifting during holidays through mobile apps is commonplace. In fact, the mobile gifting market, dominated by KakaoTalk Gift (90% of smartphone users across all ages use KakaoTalk ^[83]), is expected to reach \$7.38 B by 2027. ^[84]

But there's also a marked increase in the trend of self-gifting. According to the employment platform Career, ^[85] more than 80% ^[86] of office workers have self-gifted. The Korean ecommerce platform G-market ^[87] states that fashion products are the most popular choice for self-gifting, followed by hobby-related and electronic products.



[80] Source: <https://daxueconsulting.com/gift-giving-in-south-korea/>

[81] Source: <https://www.hankyung.com/economy/article/2021022496011>

[82] Source: <https://home.pocketsurvey.co.kr/> [83] Source: https://www.nasmedia.co.kr/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/1.nasreport-339-2023_NPR_%EC%9A%94%EC%95%BD%EB%B3%B4%EA%B3%A0%EC%84%9C.pdf

[84] Source: <http://www.dailypop.kr/news/articleView.html?idxno=67402>

[85] Source: <https://www.career.co.kr/#>

[86] Source: http://career-net.co.kr/prcenter/media_data_view.asp?rid=2973

[87] Source: https://www.gmarket.co.kr/?jaehuid=200011415&cosemkid=go16896720596496759&qclid=EAlaIqobChMlJMG1tbWzgQMV%5FQp7Bx3ZDweIEAAYASAAEgKBhfD%5FBwE&gate_id=E4NDI1WN-9GH3-9NGQ-VD4H-IR6S5FNDKTTY

co.kr/?jaehuid=200011415&cosemkid=go16896720596496759&qclid=EAlaIqobChMlJMG1tbWzgQMV%5FQp7Bx3ZDweIEAAYASAAEgKBhfD%5FBwE&gate_id=E4NDI1WN-9GH3-9NGQ-VD4H-IR6S5FNDKTTY



I ♥ Christmas

🔥 BOOST FOR: TRAVEL • FOOD & BEVERAGE • FASHION

Yes, Christmas in South Korea really is celebrated similarly to Valentine's Day. South Korea is the first Asian country to make Christmas an official holiday (and the only one in East Asia). This is in recognition of a growing Christian population—around 30% of South Koreans now identify as Christian.^[88] So, Christmas is celebrated by this contingent in a way that would be familiar to Western readers.

However, 25 December is seen by the majority of South Koreans as an opportunity for couples to date and/or celebrate their love for each other in a festive winter setting. A survey by Statista adds weight to this by finding that of the people aged between 20 and 30 years who are currently dating or in a relationship, 37.8% of men and 35.5% of women prefer to mark Christmas with a cozy date in an intimate atmosphere.^[89]

Throughout the year, Food & Beverage is the largest ecommerce market in South Korea, accounting for 25.5% of revenue. It is followed by Fashion with 20.4%, Electronics with 18.3%, Hobby & Leisure with 10.0%, Care Products with 9.3%, and Furniture & Homeware with 8.9%.^[90] Given the preferred way for couples to spend Christmas, expect a surge in food and beverage spending, and as couples often give each other sentimental presents, a spike in sales for perfumes, clothing, and other luxury goods.

It's worth noting for brands outside South Korea that online purchases from foreign retailers have increased (cross-border ecommerce reached \$4.7 B in 2022) and are down to South Koreans often being able to find lower prices on overseas platforms even after international shipping fees and import duties are factored in.^[91]

The most popular

The most popular foreign-sourced products from online retailers by Koreans in 2022 were health supplements (16%), electronics (13%), apparel (12%), food (10%), and footwear (6%)^[92]

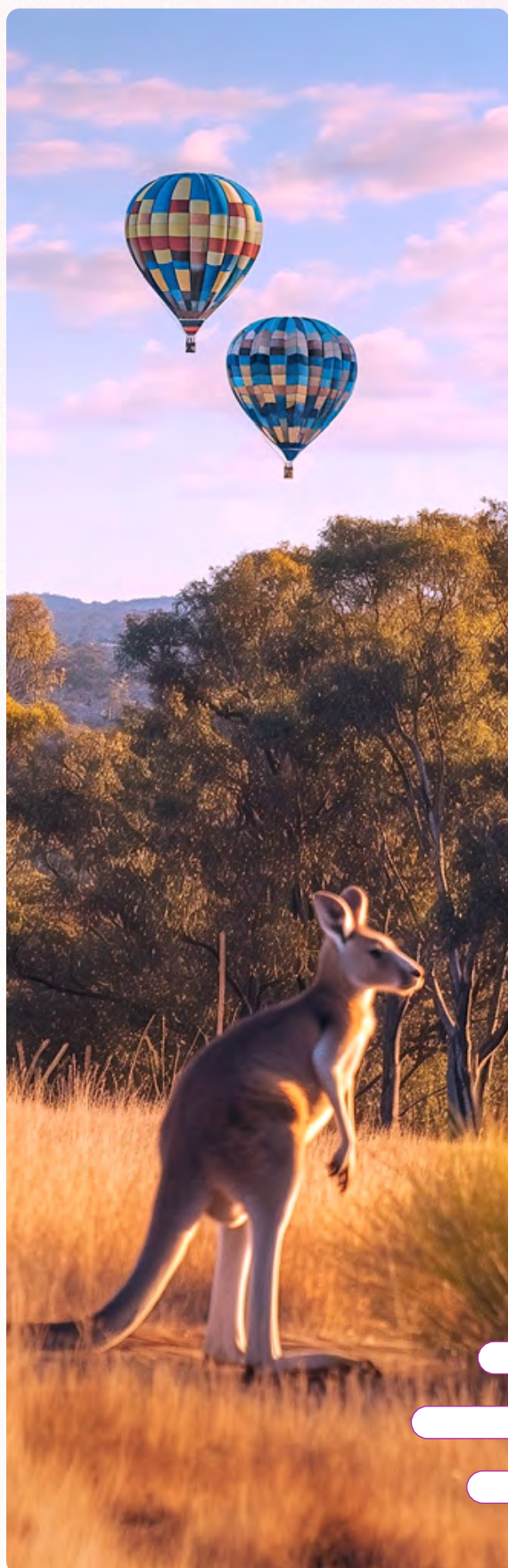
[88] Source: <https://travel-stained.com/do-koreans-celebrate-christmas-traditions/>

[89] Source: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/950522/south-korea-christmas-date-preference/>

[90] Source: <https://ecommercedb.com/markets/kr/all>

[91] Source: <https://www.trade.gov/country-commercial-guides/south-korea-ecommerce>

[92] Source: <https://www.trade.gov/country-commercial-guides/south-korea-ecommerce>



Australia

Afterpay Day Sale

🔥 BOOST FOR: SPORTS • FASHION • ELECTRONICS

The Afterpay Day Sale actually lasts for four days and usually occurs in March and again in August. ^[93]

The biggest brands operating in Australia offer huge in-store and online sales with discounts that can top 70%. Its popularity is largely due to the flexible payment options offered by the Afterpay platform.

End of Financial Year Sale

Last week in June

🔥 BOOST FOR: ELECTRONICS • AUTOMOTIVE •
• HOME & GARDEN

As the name suggests, the End of Financial Year Sale (EOFY Sale) happens as the Australian tax year draws to a close and involves retailers offering big discounts to appeal to business owners who can claim tax breaks on products. Opportunities abound for electronics, home and office, and automotive brands during this time.

Black Friday becomes Black November

🔥 BOOST FOR: SPORTS • FASHION • ELECTRONICS

For the vast majority of brands, Q4 is the undisputed king of sales volumes. This is due to the biggest online sales events—Black Friday, Cyber Monday, and Singles' Day—taking place, not to mention Diwali, Thanksgiving, and the run-up to Christmas.

For many ecommerce brands, November will be the busiest time of the year. This is certainly backed up by RTB House, with November bringing 20% more overall conversions than the second-highest peak in the year (in December) and 41.4% more than the quietest time of the year (April).

When we think of Black Friday, most of us imagine lines around the block or a mass of people sprinting across a store the moment the doors open. The excitement is the same, but the shopping fever is no longer packed into a single moment. Retailers no longer need to be ready for a single day; they need a strategy that covers a full quarter of opportunity.

Great products can win over consumers at any time, but the major spikes in customer interactions with brands are linked to major sales events in the last quarter of the year when shoppers are on the hunt for bargains.

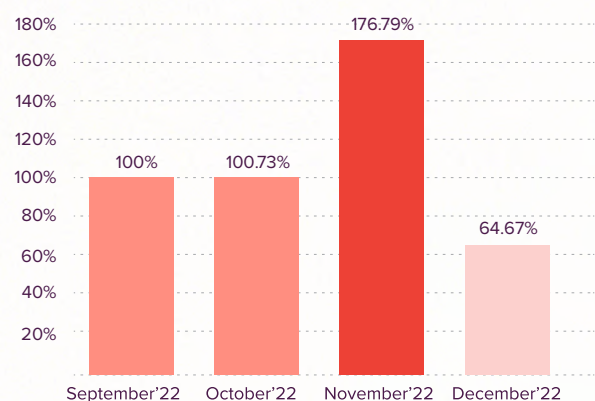


176%

RTB House data shows a 176% increase in comparative conversion value from September to November 2022.^[94]

[94] Source: RTB House internal data: Sept v Nov 2022

RTB House-generated conversion values, November vs. September



Countries: BR, DE, FR, UK, PL, U.S.

Verticals included: Fashion, Electronics, Health&Beauty, Home&Garden.

Comparison of relative conversion value (median).



BLACK FRIDAY

CYBER MONDAY

- Black Friday remains one of the year's biggest shopping events in the Americas and many European countries.

THANKSGIVING

- However, the idea of a single-day shopping event is dying out and being replaced by Black November, a full month of shopping opportunities.

11.11

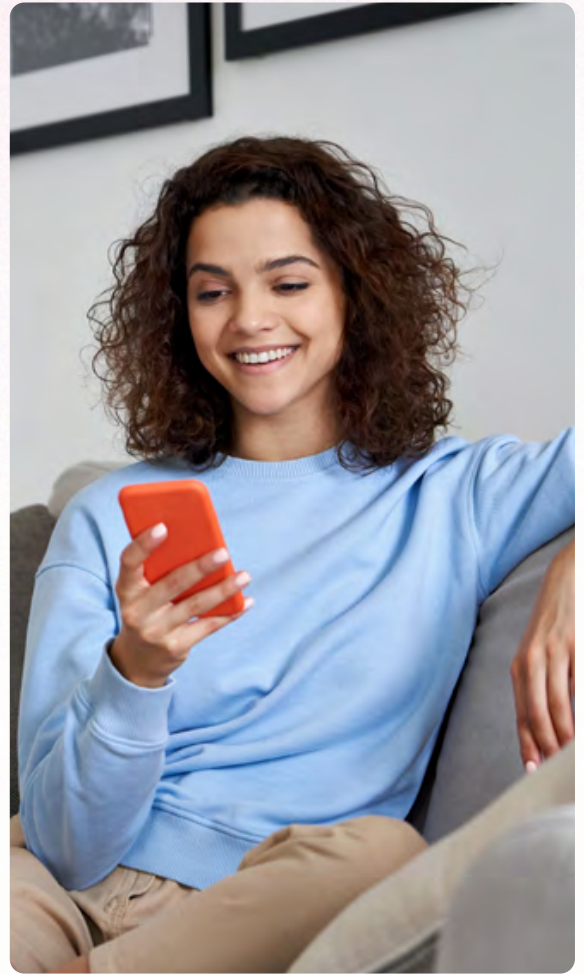
SINGLES' DAY

**Black
November**

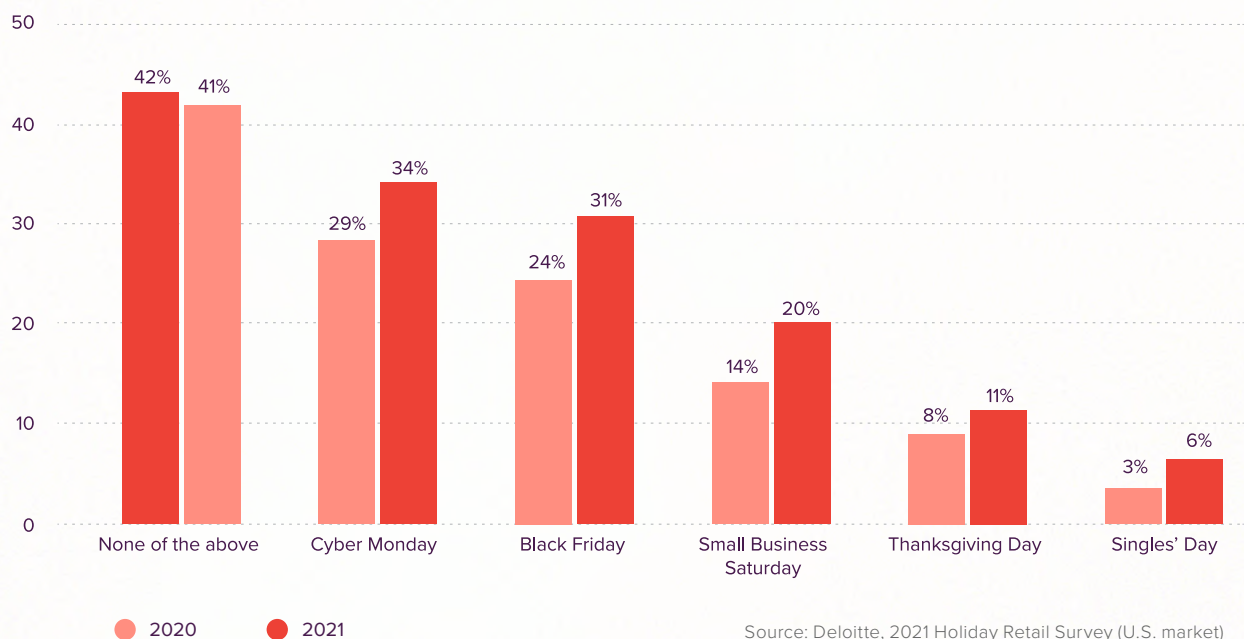
MULTIPLE
PRE-SALE
TEASERS

Increases across the board

In the past, stores and consumers in the West built up to one major event—Christmas—for months in advance. Nowadays, savvy consumers worldwide are more aware of the different opportunities to find bargains throughout Q4. In fact, just from 2020 to 2021, individual Q4 sales events saw a comparative 3% to 6% rise in shoppers. Black Friday is the loudest event, but Cyber Monday—which is a vital event for electronics brands—boasted 34% of holiday shoppers in the U.S. ^[95]



Share of holiday shoppers by shopping event day



[95] Source: Deloitte, 2021 Holiday Retail Survey (US market)

What brings people to stores in Black November?

Increased customer spending is driven by cut-price offers. According to Adobe research, customers could expect heavy discounts in different categories in 2022. ^[96]

Category	Peak Discount in Q4
Apparel	13.8%
Electronics	23.4%
Toys	31.8%



It's not just existing customers that are checking out offers. Studies have shown that:

4.5x

More new users engage with brands during the Black November promotional season. ^[97]

3.7x

More lapsed users who have not visited websites in the 30 days prior to campaign launches place orders during November promos. ^[98]

Your Black November checklist:

- Pitch your discounts at a price point that will match or beat those of other players in your category.
- Use sales events to engage new customers and bring back lapsed users, creating a positive effect on your business far beyond the Q4 promotional period.

[96] Source: <https://business.adobe.com/resources/holiday-shopping-report.html>

[97] Source: <https://www.thedrum.com/open-mic/how-to-optimize-advertising-campaigns-during-q4>

[98] Source: <https://www.thedrum.com/open-mic/how-to-optimize-advertising-campaigns-during-q4>

Think globally...

Black Friday was once just a U.S. phenomenon, but is now a truly global event.

+30%

Despite a harsh economic climate, spending over Black Friday week was up 30% in the Netherlands in 2022. ^[99]

67%

67% of Australians believe that Black Friday deals are worth the wait. ^[100]

63%

63% of Singaporeans feel the same. ^[101]



We also need to look at regional events in the Q4 period, which offer huge opportunities for retailers and are beloved by consumers. Diwali runs for five days, from 31 October to 4 November 2023, and is India's biggest shopping event. ^[102]

Shopping events for which adults in India plan to shop: ^[103]

Diwali	51%
Black Friday (and similar events)	31%
New Year	26%
Christmas	19%

Local relationships to the sales season can also be complex. In the APAC region, Black November doesn't actually outperform other months, whereas traditional December shopping is still a massive draw.

[99] Source: <https://www.reuters.com/markets/europe/german-pre-christmas-shopping-picks-up-over-black-friday-weekend-2022-11-28/>

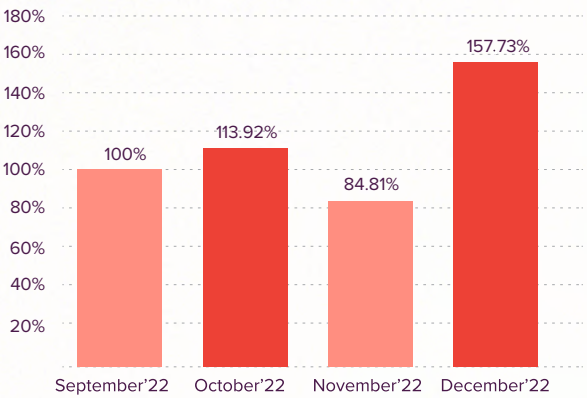
[100] Source: <https://business.yougov.com/content/43758-uncovering-black-friday-shoppers-australia-and-sin>

[101] Source: Deloitte, 2021 Holiday Retail Survey (US market)

[102] Source: <https://business.yougov.com/content/43669-diwali-urban-indians-favourite-shopping-occasion-f>

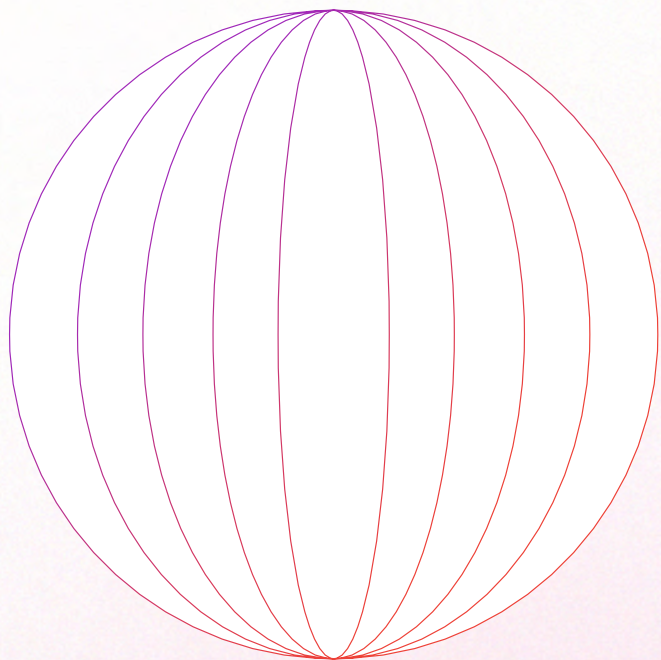
[103] Source: <https://business.yougov.com/content/43669-diwali-urban-indians-favourite-shopping-occasion-f>

RTB House-generated sales volume,
December vs. September (APAC)



Countries: JP, ID, MY, VN, TH, CN, HK, KR, PH, SG, TW.
Verticals included: Fashion, Electronics, Health&Beauty, Home&Garden.
Comparison of relative conversion (sum).

Q4 is the biggest time of the year across the globe,
but it is important to understand how sales data
varies across regions and then adapt accordingly.

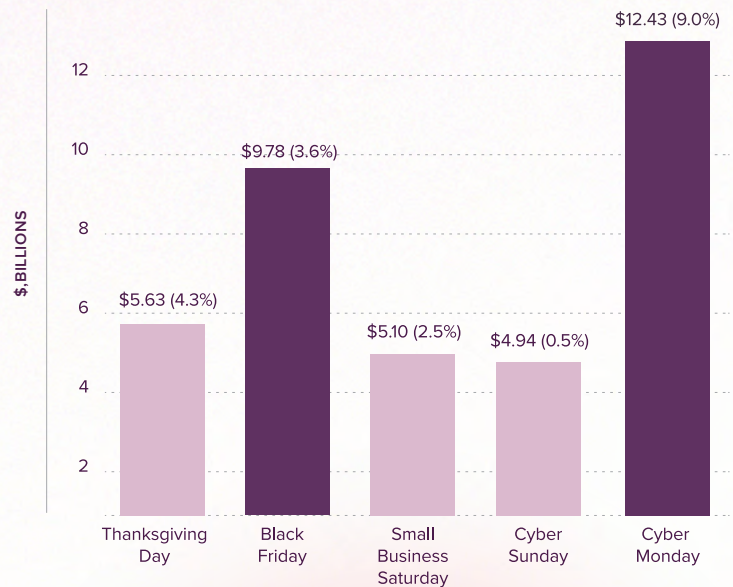


Cyber Monday is king

It started with Black Friday and became Black November, but the sleeper hit is Cyber Monday. In fact, according to stats published by eMarketer, Cyber Monday 2022 sales in the U.S. top those of Black Friday by nearly \$3 B. ^[104]

What's more, the year-on-year growth of Cyber Monday outstrips that of any of the other 'Cyber 5' shopping days.

U.S. Cyber Monday sales vs. those of the other 'Cyber 5' shopping days in 2022



Your checklist for success:

- Prepare for a cycle of promotions that can last up to two months, depending on your domain.
- Make the most of regional opportunities and special events outside of the typical Q4 promotions.
- Take into account how customer expectations and behavior differ for each particular shopping event. Customers are looking for different products on Black Friday, Cyber Monday, and Christmas and shop differently.

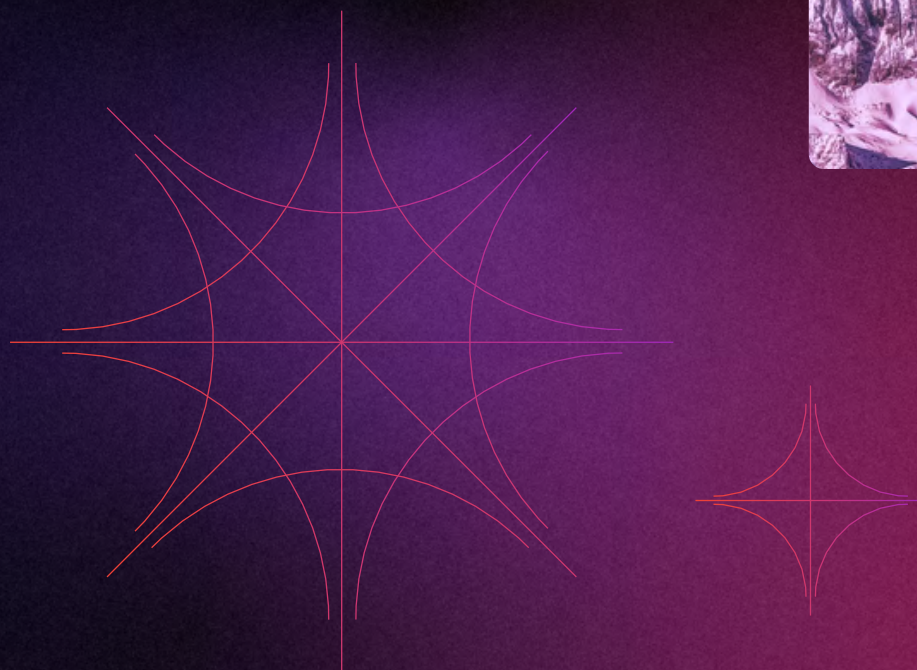
Winter Sales

7 January to 28 February

🔥 BOOST FOR: SPORTS • FASHION • ELECTRONICS • AUTOMOTIVE • HOME & GARDEN

Just as Q4 draws to a close, many retailers will already be gearing up for their Winter Sales runs. There was a time when these sales were all about clearing surplus stock left over from December in preparation for the upcoming year, but brands bring a much more nuanced approach these days. More often than not, January sales volumes push those of December in U.S. ecommerce, contradicting the view that the holiday shopping season starts with Thanksgiving and wraps up with Christmas.

Brands can reap big dividends by focusing their marketing budgets on January sales. It's a time when shoppers are more at ease and much less hurried than in the run-up to Christmas, and they are most likely approaching the new year with optimism. They have a clearer view of incomings and outgoings, and they know exactly what they can afford to spend. In the U.S., January retail sales for 2023 rose even by 3%, the biggest gain in two years. ^[105]



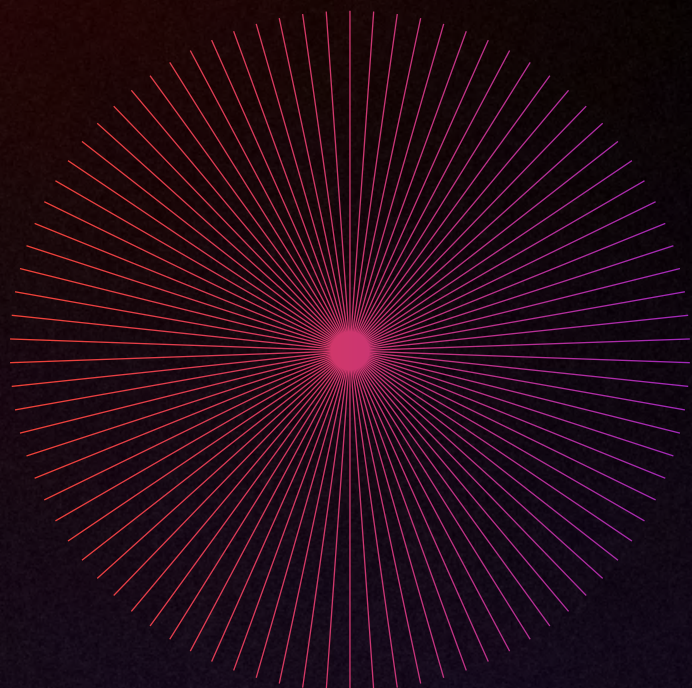
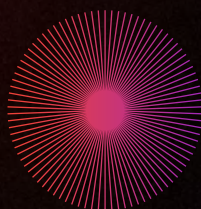
[105] Source: <https://edition.cnn.com/2023/02/15/economy/retail-sales-january/index.html>

Summer Sales

20 June

🔥 **BOOST FOR:** TRAVEL • SPORTS • FASHION • ELECTRONICS • AUTOMOTIVE • GAMING •
HOME & GARDEN • PRICE COMPARISON • CLASSIFIEDS

Summer is invariably a busy time for Travel brands as many people book last-minute getaways. Fashion and Sports brands also see more interest as shoppers freshen up their wardrobes and get kitted out for outdoor exercise. RTB House data, for example, shows a 16% increased share in the Sport category at the start of Summer Sales. But for other sectors, it can be a challenge to boost sales in the run-up to Q4. Here, social commerce can provide bountiful opportunities—with the summer vacation season in full swing, many people will be turning to their favorite social apps during quieter moments. While feeling relaxed and attentive, consumers could be in the mood to convert.



Firing up your strategy for new heights

As the previous chapter highlighted, each promo period of the year has its own unique requirements. But there are a number of universals that can help lift your promo campaigns no matter the time of year. By harmonizing all these key elements of a promotional campaign, it's possible to stand out from the crowd and reach new heights.

Building anticipation

We know that customer interest builds before sales events and drops off immediately after. We also know that price and opportunity is the most compelling purchase trigger. So, in an ideal scenario, you get in early and let existing (and potential) customers know about the great offers that you have coming soon. And then you remind them at significant moments, right up until the sale goes live and they make the purchase.

Here are six ways to ensure that people are both informed and excited about your promotional activities.

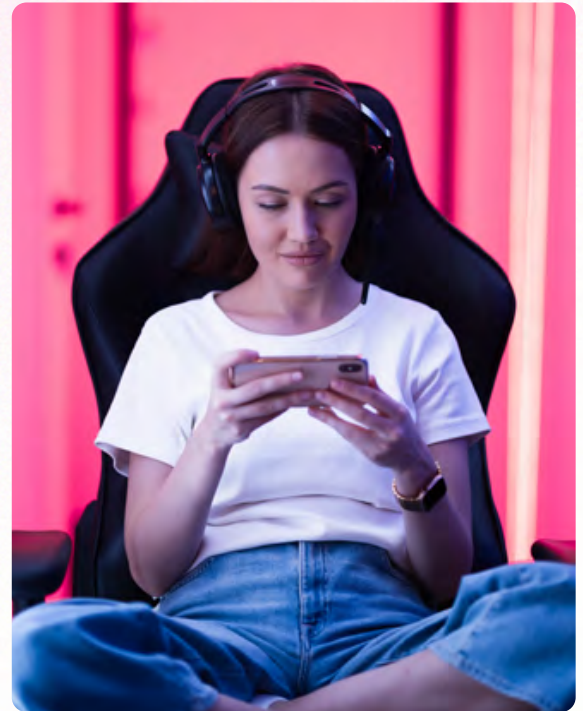


1. Exclusivity

Imagine your app users and most engaged followers as your biggest fans. Any promo period is a great opportunity for you to engage and re-engage users, but you should also make sure that your most ardent supporters get an even better experience than others. This is particularly important for younger buyers, as Millennials and Gen Zers value exclusive access to limited products and experiences nearly twice as much as Gen X and Baby Boomers. ^[106]

Before you go to the masses with your sales events, offer your app users and most engaged customers a chance to get their hands on goods before anyone else. You may even create tiers, with the most prestigious offers only available to people who have opened the app daily for a month prior to the event or made a certain amount of purchases.

This not only generates interest, but it also gives other people a reason to download your app or become brand advocates so that they will have a shot at the exclusive offers next time around.



+25.3%

Businesses that use gamification in their sales processes experience a 25.3% increase in sales conversion rates. ^[109]

2. Gamification

Competitions featuring coveted prizes get people talking; they're a great opportunity to get new and potential engagement. You can create buzz around your brand by turning your offer into a game itself.

Why not run a daily quiz in which only people with the correct answer on ten consecutive days get a chance to win the top prize? Or do you go big and create a treasure hunt that takes your users on a journey across your various media platforms, picking up clues and access codes along the way?

Gamification is hot right now, but it has been around for a while. Statistics from 2019 showed that 60% of consumers said they would be more likely to buy from a brand if they enjoyed playing a game with it. ^[107] This is particularly true for Gen Z users, who are becoming the biggest customer group, which is why 87% of online retailers planned to introduce some level of gamification in their customer interaction by 2024. ^[108]

[106] Source: <https://www.gwp.co.uk/guides/easter-packaging/>

[107] Source: <https://eu.usatoday.com/story/graphics/2023/02/11/consumers-plan-to-increase-valentines-day-spending-nearly-26-billion/11227844002/>

[108] Source: <https://www.coca-colacompany.com/about-us/history/haddon-sundblom-and-the-coca-cola-santas>

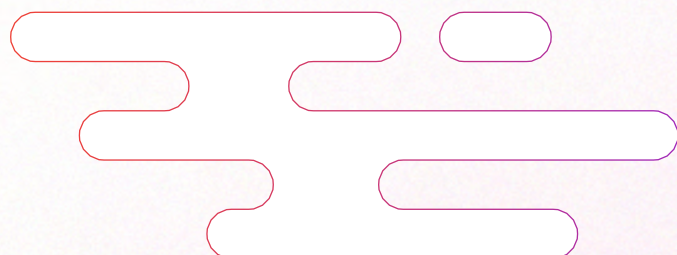
[109] Source: [https://www.globenewswire.com/news-release/2023/04/06/2642750/0/en/Gamification-Global-Market-Report-2023.html#:~:text=The%20global%20gamification%20market%20grew,\(CAGR\)%20of%2025.3%25.](https://www.globenewswire.com/news-release/2023/04/06/2642750/0/en/Gamification-Global-Market-Report-2023.html#:~:text=The%20global%20gamification%20market%20grew,(CAGR)%20of%2025.3%25.)

3. New customer outreach

With many people feeling the squeeze of inflation, some of your customers may inevitably be priced out of purchasing from your brand. They may still want your brand, but are making financial decisions that cut out certain spending. And your brand will fall into that category for some of your customers. They are just doing what they need to do in order to get through hard times.

However, as one door closes, a window of opportunity opens up. If you have compelling offers at an attractive price point, you now have more chance than ever to bring in customers who were previously loyal to competitors and may not have considered your store before.

In times of economic hardship, loyalty, for many consumers, is no longer a priority. Marketers must look at this as an opportunity and try to create as much buzz among new customers as possible before promo periods ramp up. Be loud and proud about your biggest discounts and run strong retargeting campaigns for users who visit your site. It also makes sense to add branding campaigns on top of these retargeting activities, making sure that prospective new customers are aware that you exist, because they will be shopping around more than ever right now. In fact, 85% of consumers said they would be on the lookout for cheaper alternatives when shopping.^[110]



[110] Source: <https://www.marketingweek.com/consumer-priorities-inflation-brand-loyalty-interesting-stats/>

4. Social media

Of course, your business is on social media. It's the number one way in which most retailers engage with customers and build a community around a brand. During the promo period, it is more important than ever to use your social media platforms to create buzz and communicate your offers. As you strategize, ask yourself the right questions.



Where are we and why?

Facebook, TikTok, Pinterest, Instagram, and YouTube are the biggest platforms for most Western retailers, but are you choosing the ones that best fit your products? For example, many Home & Garden retailers find that Pinterest is the best place to share inspirations, while Fashion and Beauty brands get the most engagement on Instagram or TikTok. Make sure you are putting your efforts into the right media.

How easy is the customer journey?

In an ideal scenario, customers will be able to buy your promo offers directly from social media platforms. If not, how easy is it for people to convert interest into purchases? You need to make sure it's one or two clicks from your social media feed to your checkout.

What more do people want from social media?

As you hype your upcoming promos, you will get people talking. And when people talk, they have questions. A key part of your social media strategy before campaigns is making sure that your social media feeds are constantly engaging with people on the public feed and on private chat. The level of your pre-sales support and communication will directly affect how people feel about your brand when they come to spend their money. Make sure you have the right chatbot or human customer service support on social media to field all the questions and turn that buzz into buyers.

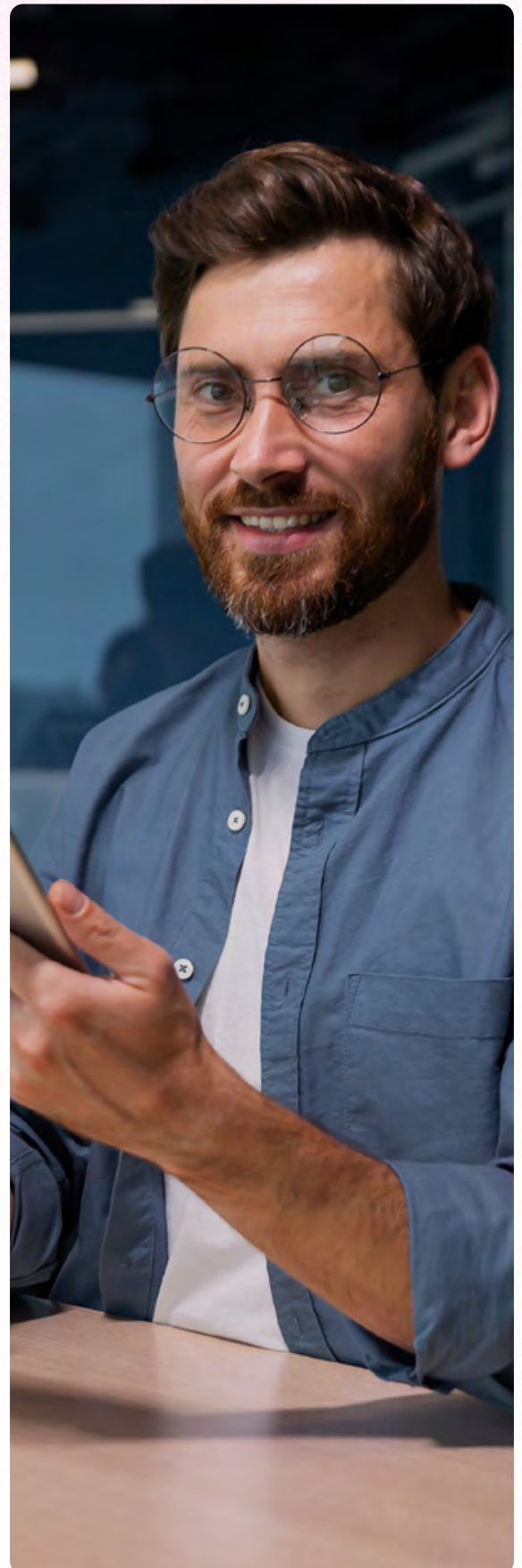
5. Social listening

Your planning for promo periods should start months in advance. For Q4, for example, planning will most likely start in the spring, but how do you know what people will really want in the autumn and winter? How do you accurately evaluate the optimum amount of each product, and what price point will be most tempting to customers while still benefiting your business?

Social listening is one of the most effective tools you can implement before a campaign. Rather than looking at wider trends and general statistics, you can monitor your social media and other online channels to analyze conversions about your brand. Using the right tools can give you a truer and more accurate picture of how people feel about your brand and what they want.

Two-thirds of marketers say that social listening is a useful way to gain insights about what products interest customers the most, how they feel about your brand, and where they encounter problems. ^[111]

It's a long-term investment but also one that takes a lot of the guesswork out of promotional campaigns. It ensures that you are creating buzz around the right products and giving your customers what they want.



[111] Source: <https://www.hootsuite.com/research/social-trends>



6. Email marketing and automation

Email is still alive and kicking. In fact, it has a lot of advantages over social media. While our feeds are constantly updating and offers can be missed, email requires some action from the user. Even if they choose to delete a mail, they have to take action to do so, and that involves some level of engagement and awareness.

Rather than manually composing emails to every customer, 55% of ecommerce marketers were already using email marketing or marketing automation software as long ago as 2019 and finding the results to be well worth the investment. ^[112]

However, for the most effective use in the build-up to your promo period, don't just automate and send out the same email blast to every subscriber on your mailing list. Just as the most effective retargeting ads are personalized to individual users, your emails should include some level of intimacy in the message that creates buzz and feels personal.

You can do this via trigger points that create different content based on site activity. And it's highly effective: stats have shown that triggered emails have a three times higher open rate than standard emails. ^[113]

For example, if a customer browsed a particular collection but didn't buy, let them know that those items are going to be on offer with great discounts. Or if a customer did make a purchase, let them know about complementary items that will be featured in upcoming promos.

Email automation, as well as app notifications, should not just let customers know that a sale is coming. Your communications should let customers know exactly what is coming in the sale that will fit their individual needs.

[112] Source: <https://moosend.com/blog/10-marketing-automation-statistics-need-know/>

[113] Source: <https://www.klaviyo.com/blog/abandoned-cart-email>

Data & Personalization

Data dominates ecommerce. Let's save ourselves time by assuming that anyone reading this report is already part of a data-driven business.

If that is our starting point, then the difference between success and failure is how you can use that data more effectively than competitors. You need to implement technology that can extrapolate the right meaning from data and suggest the right course of action. During promo periods, your goals should always be: more personalization and better segmentation.



Consumers actually want personalized content. In fact, 83% of customers are willing to share personal data if, in return, they get personalized experiences—especially offers that suit their needs and are rewarded with compelling discounts. ^[114]

What's more, targeting new users with personalized content during promo periods gives you a significant chance of keeping them as repeat customers when the sale ends.

76%

76% of consumers say they're more likely to purchase from brands that personalize. ^[115]

60%

60% of consumers say they'll become repeat customers after a personalized shopping experience. ^[116]

Up to

50%

Deep Learning can ensure up to 50% more efficient personalized retargeting. ^[117]



Your personalization checklist:

- Retargeting campaigns and personalized product recommendations are the most commonly sought-after personalized content by retail companies.
- Personalized is really a different way of saying relevant—and 70% of millennials are now frustrated by brands sending irrelevant offers. ^[118]
- The greater the level of personalization, the better the campaign performs. By utilizing Deep Learning, the most advanced form of AI, and more first-party data, you can display ads that feel truly tailor-made, showing the right size and price point and the cut and color that match user preferences.

[114] Source: <https://www.hubspot.com/state-of-marketing>

[115] Source: <https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/growth-marketing-and-sales/our-insights/the-value-of-getting-personalization-right-or-wrong-is-multiplying>

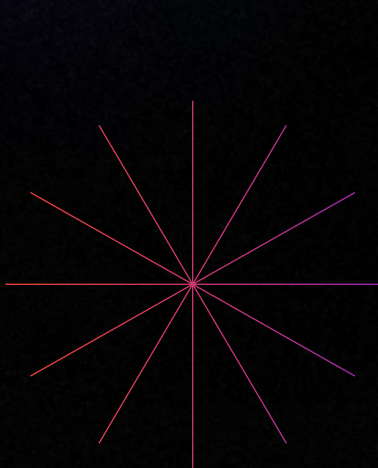
[116] Source: The State of Personalization 2021, Twilio Segment

[117] Source: RTB House internal data

[118] Source: <https://blog.salesmanago.com/marketing-and-business/top-10-mind-blowing-statistics-about-hyper-segmentation-you-have-to-know-in-2021/>

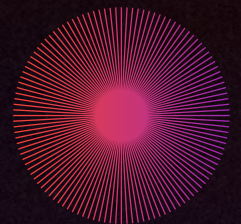
The power of segmentation underpinned by AI

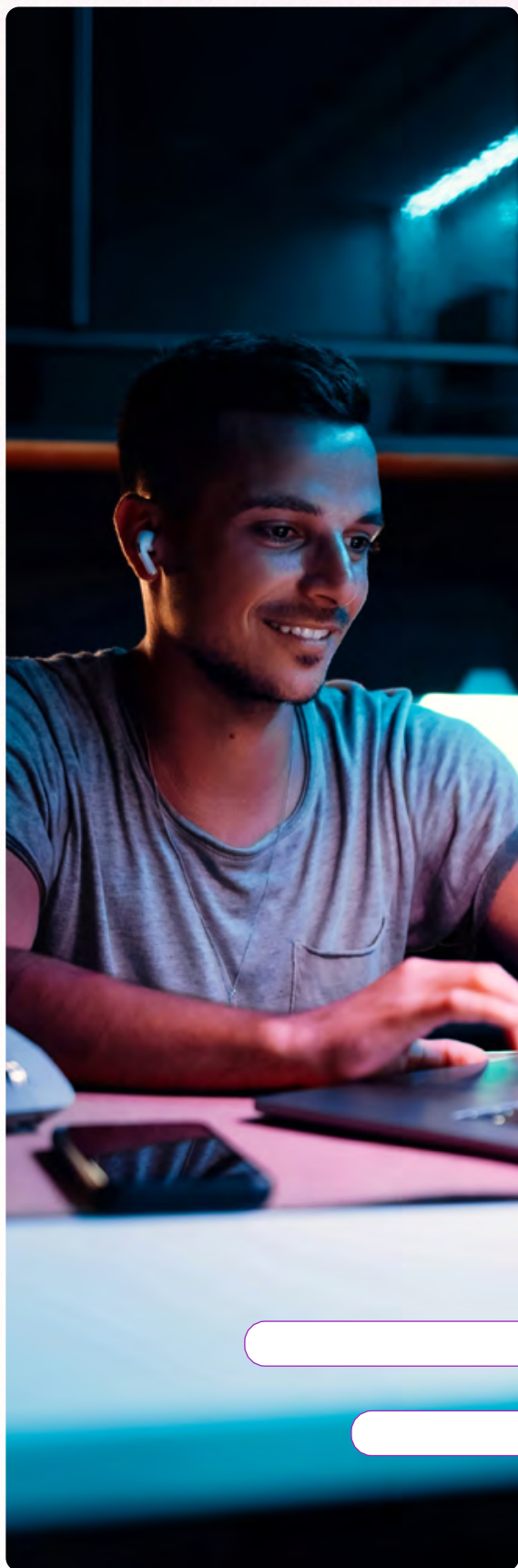
Effective segmentation is a mix of knowing your target audience and trusting your technology. You use your vast knowledge and experience to create customer groups and marketing tactics; however, you should avoid letting those assumptions become too inflexible. If you have technology that can analyze and interpret data as the campaign runs, then you can recalibrate over time and adapt segmentation on the fly.



77%

77% of marketing ROI comes from segmented, targeted, and triggered campaigns. ^[119]





Your segmentation checklist:

- Let your algorithms interpret actions and hard data as your promo runs—the most effective campaigns are built around online behavior.
- When shoppers visit your site, RTB House can identify and create custom segments for these users, such as a “Promo buyers” group for people who view discount products.
- Promo periods attract one-third more new users to stores. In non-promo months, around 15% of customers are new users, while the number rises to 20% in November.^[120]
- Identify loyal customers who made a purchase within the last 100 days and those who are new or dormant. Split these users into different segments and target each with the right content during sales periods.

[120] Source: RTB Internal data. Sept v Nov 2021

The superpower of Deep Learning

The level of personalization in ads and precision in segmentation directly correlates to the power of your data analysis engine. The more computational power you have at your disposal, the more data you will be able to analyze effectively. At RTB House, our Deep Learning-powered retargeting and branding ad campaigns are able to interpret unstructured data from multiple sources and then autonomously recalibrate to optimize results.



1st

RTB House was the first major DSP to implement Deep Learning across its entire solution stack.

Up to

41%

Deep Learning is proven to improve product recommendation efficiency by up to 41%. ^[121]

+29%

RTB House campaign results improved by 29% upon switching to Deep Learning solutions. ^[122]



Your technology checklist:

- As you plan for the promo periods, remember that competitors are doing the same. Don't take it lightly. Where can you find an advantage?
- Better technology is one of the only hard, measurable advantages you can gain over competitors. Running ad campaigns powered by superior Deep Learning algorithms is a potential difference-maker for your business at a time when all retailers are looking for an edge.

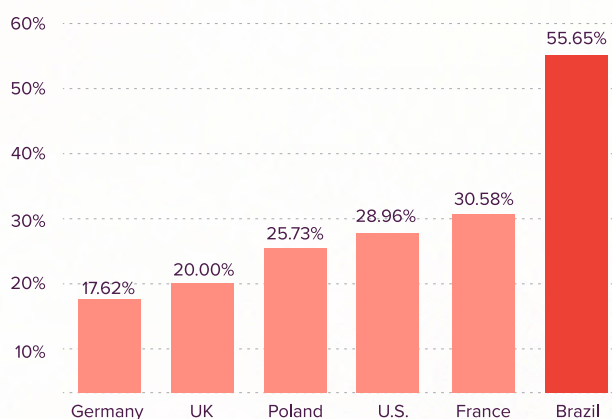
[121] Source: RTB House Internal data

[122] Source: RTB House Internal data

Campaigns

Strike while the iron is hot. Our internal Q4 data, for example, shows a 20% increase in sales volume in the U.K., over 25% in Poland, 30% in France, and over 55% in Brazil. ^[123]

Conversions attributed to RTB House, September vs. November 2022



Verticals included: Electronics, Fashion, Health&Beauty, Home&Garden
Comparison of number of conversions (sum).

Source: RTB House internal data

But as the competition becomes fierce during promo periods, advertisers are fighting for the best ad placements, and it can be a real “sellers’ market.” Regardless of your ad partners, the cost of a single impression may rise by up to 50%. ^[124] Therefore, you want to make the most of every ad, having the best content in the right placement and reaching the right audience.

With this in mind, it’s essential for businesses to understand that they will have a higher advertising outlay and to choose partners and solutions that will make the most of this investment. Make sure you plan your budget according to the realities of the holiday sales season.

[123] Source: RTB House Internal data

[124] Source: <https://adapex.io/cpm-trends-2019-2022/>

Retargeting campaigns drive conversion

Running effective online retargeting campaigns is one of the most important elements of an effective promotional strategy. It's how you share more of your offers with the world and convince people to convert interest into purchases.



+50%

Utilizing retargeting alongside other marketing activities increases the likelihood of a sale by at least 50%. ^[125]

38%

38% of customers like retargeting ads because they allow them to find better prices. ^[126]

+67%

Customers that return to a store via retargeting spend an average of 67% more on their next purchase. ^[127]

In a nutshell, retargeting is highly effective and is becoming more and more accepted by customers as the best way to find great deals.

This is ideal for promo periods in which customers are driven by price, such as Black Friday, and are making fast decisions to capture bargains while stocks last. Customers are actively looking for bargains and are open to retargeting ads that help them find the best offers.

The other big win for business is that customers who convert through retargeting are more likely to become regular users and will spend more on their next purchases. The value of your ads, therefore, lasts beyond the promo period.

[125] Source: <https://www.appsflyer.com/blog/trends-insights/app-remarketing-drives-revenue-uplift/>

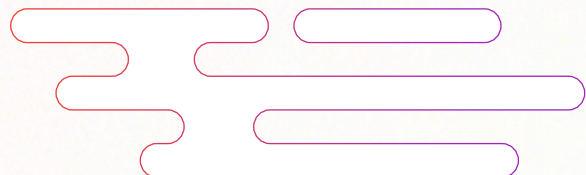
[126] Source: <https://financesonline.com/retargeting-statistics/>

[127] Source: <https://thrivemyway.com/retargeting-stats/>

In-app retargeting

Your app lets your most loyal customers put your entire retail store in their pocket. It's the shop window for your products and one of the most effective ways to reach people during promo periods.

People may have up to 60 apps on any mobile device but only regularly engage with a select few. If you want to be a part of that exclusive club and get users excited about your promotions, you need a separate strategy for app users.



In-app campaigns for promo periods should start by making sure that your most engaged users are continually checking in with your brand in the weeks before the promo drops. You can then start reaching out to dormant or new users, creating buzz, and getting people who haven't used the app for a while back into the fold.

Since your app's users have already made the decision to put your brand on their device, reward their engagement with early-bird promotions and exclusive offers that are not available on other channels. Once the main promos go live, make sure that your in-app retargeting is personalized with offers that are relevant to each customer and that they have quick and easy ways to convert.

35%

35% of app conversions result from retargeting. ^[128]

2.5 Kx

App campaigns run by RTB House create 2.5 K times more user operations leading to a purchase decision. ^[129]

10x

Conversion rates for remarketing campaigns are about ten times higher than user acquisition efforts, with the latter being up to 25 times more expensive than retaining existing users. ^[130]

2x

The Day-30 retention rate and share of paying users are two times higher among apps running retargeting than those that don't. ^[131]

[128] Source: <https://siteefy.com/retargeting-statistics/>

[129] Source: RTB House internal data

[130] Source: <https://www.appsflyer.com/blog/mobile-marketing/app-remarketing-recession-strategy/>

[131] Source: <https://www.appsflyer.com/resources/reports/app-remarketing-trends/>



Your retargeting checklist:

- Develop retargeting strategies for web and app users, treating each channel slightly differently.
- Segment campaigns further with strategies for new and existing customers.
- Focus on cart abandonment. If customers didn't complete their purchase the first time around, help them get it over the line.
- Work with a retargeter who can develop customer creatives that match your brand book while showcasing your offers.
- Use smart creatives. One banner size doesn't fit all devices, and different types of creatives perform differently. Adapt your ads to the most effective outcomes for your audience.

Master omnichannel

Omnichannel experiences are now so common that they are omnipresent in ecommerce. Should we perhaps start calling it 'omnicommerce'?!

There are currently so many different types of omnichannel experiences that we are running out of acronyms: BORIS, BOPIS, BODFS, ROPO, BOSS, OMO. Each is a slightly different mechanism within the greater concept, but we can simplify the most authentic version of omnichannel experiences into a single sentence:

"However you want to interact or transact with our brand, we'll be there."



89%

Businesses with strong omnichannel customer engagement strategies retain an average of 89% of their customers compared to 33% for companies with weak strategies. ^[132]

55%

55% of consumers want to watch product videos before they buy. ^[133]

74%

74% of retailers reported that shoppers bought at least one more product while in the store to pick up a purchase. ^[134]

[132] Source: <https://www.moengage.com/learn/omnichannel-ecommerce/>

[133] Source: <https://optiminder.com/55-of-consumers-use-videos-for-purchase-decisions/>

[134] Source: <https://risnews.com/future-state-bopis-and-curbside-pickup>

The split between online and offline is closer than ever, depending on the category. In food and groceries, just 10% of shoppers only shop online compared to 61% who shop in-store only. For toys and games, it's the opposite story, with more shoppers purchasing only online than in-store. In clothing and footwear, 40% now shop online, 33% only in-store, and 27% across both channels. ^[135]

Your omnichannel checklist:

- Adapt your ads to different formats—across the web, your app, and offline placements—but make sure that they look and feel the same, maintaining brand integrity.
- Add branding campaigns on top of your retargeting activities. The promo period is all about conversion, but you need to build awareness across all channels before your discounts go live.
- Get creative during promos. Why not offer app users or social media followers the chance to sign up for pre-sale in-store events? Perhaps 50 lucky customers who follow you across channels can get access to the store an hour before it opens its doors to the public, bagging the best offers before anyone else.
- Give in-store customers further discounts if they have your apps. And push your app to new in-store customers who are attracted by the sales event and shopping with you for the first time.



All-in-one guide to choosing and executing your promo period strategy

Once you've decided upon your strategy as a business, you can choose your mix of personalized retargeting and branding campaigns.

It's also worth thinking outside of the box. Rather than limiting your campaign to traditional activities, consider more advanced tactics that might fit your products and your business goals. Here are five types of campaigns that can be highly effective during promotions.



GO WITH THE FLOW

- Best for mature, competitive markets.
- Balances discounts and margins for stable return on investments.
- We provide expert flexibility on goal delivery (ROAS, CPS, CPA, Dynamic CPC).



GROW ABOVE THE MARKET

- A wide-ranging strategy to increase market share and get on top of minds.
- High risk, high reward strategy to put pressure on margins and supply chain for solid results.
- Should be bundled with large discounts to be really effective.



ACQUIRE NEW CUSTOMERS

- Many users wait months before making their first purchase.
- Convert them for the first time during promos to obtain future loyal customers.
- Prospecting scenarios can achieve these specific goals.

Five campaign strategies to try during sales events

Once you've decided upon your strategy as a business, you can choose your mix of personalized retargeting and branding campaigns.

It's also worth thinking outside of the box. Rather than limiting your campaign to traditional activities, consider more advanced tactics that might fit your products and your business goals. Here are five types of campaigns that can be highly effective during promotions.

1. Abandoned cart campaigns

Buyers make it all the way through your store to the checkout but don't complete a purchase for many reasons. Sometimes, shipping costs or the need to input personal data put them off. Other times, it's just cold feet.

However, there is good reason for optimism when approaching this group. Firstly, they were interested enough in your products to make it all the way to the checkout. What's more, stats show that this is simply the way that many people now shop, with 17% of people abandoning carts because they were just doing research and intended to come back later. ^[136] Identifying these people and creating campaign mechanisms that put your offers in front of them during promo periods is a valuable tactic for business.

On the other hand, retargeting campaigns can also reduce cart abandonment by an incredible 1100%. ^[137]



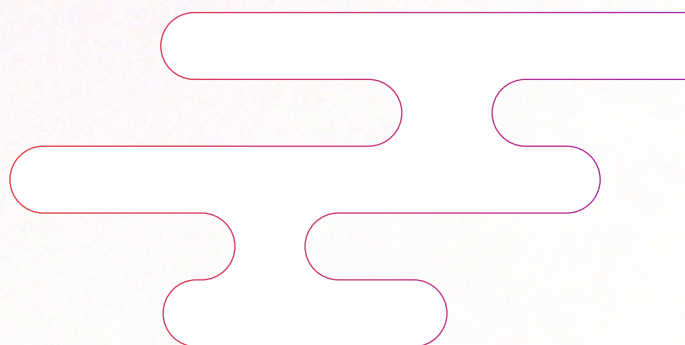
[136] Source: <https://www.barilliance.com/10-reasons-shopping-cart-abandonment/>

[137] Source: <https://thrivemyway.com/cart-abandonment-stats/>

2. Teaser Campaign

With this promo method, you can help people get ready for shopping events. Teaser Campaigns allow you to generate interest and excitement about forthcoming promotions or even product launches.

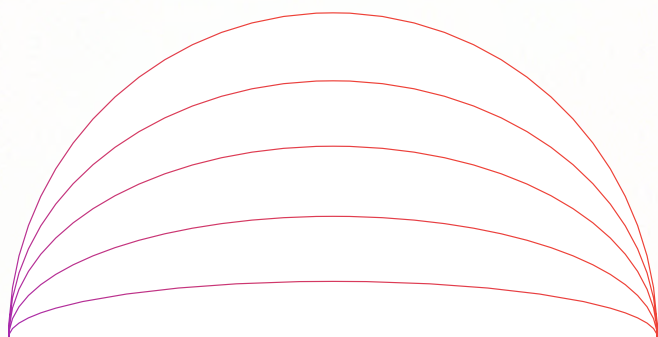
By promoting your services and products this way, you can be sure that consumers will be more positive about your brand when the moment comes to move to conversion. We recommend building a special landing page for this campaign that contains exciting, engaging, and shareable content.



3. Less Engaged Users Campaign

Window shoppers enjoy browsing and comparing products, but rarely make purchases. They usually start to feel more pressure to buy on special occasions such as Christmas. With the right promotion, you can turn some of these users into active customers.

These so-called 'Less Engaged Users' may not become frequent or high-volume buyers, but they will still bring sustained revenue to your brand if you can engage them over a longer period of time. Less Engaged User Campaigns can identify products and categories which are most frequently viewed by these users and find the right price point offer to turn them into buying customers.



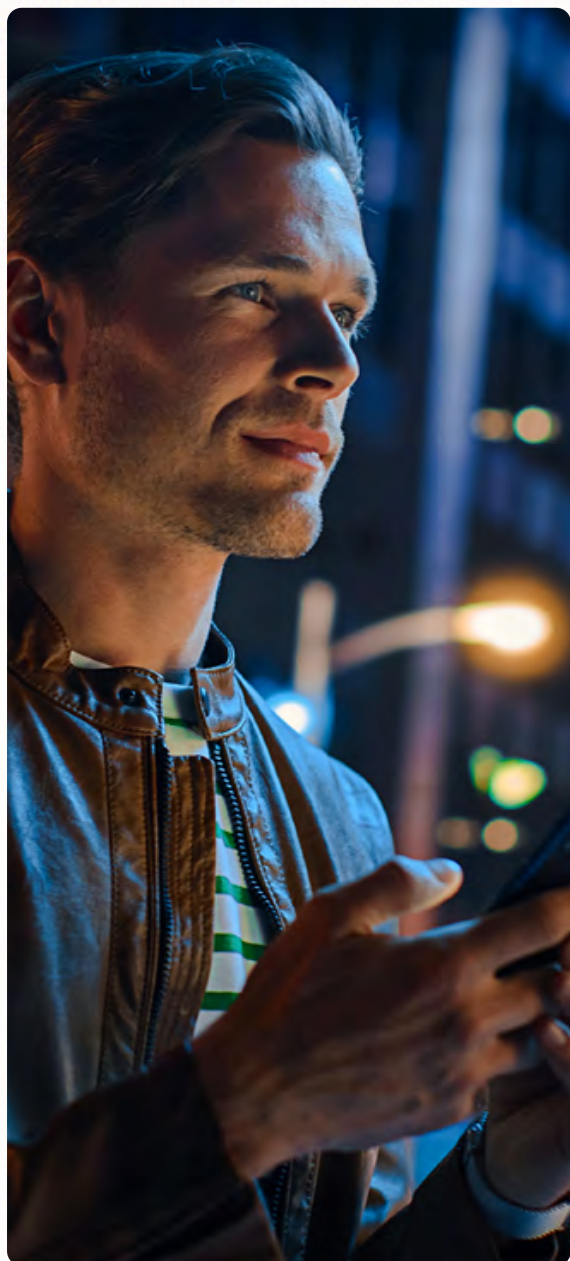
4. Omnichannel Campaigns

Brands, these days, have so many channels to leverage—in-store, web, in-app, social commerce, and CTV, to name but a few. It's a case of casting your net wider to increase your potential to catch more eyes and increase sales. But during promo periods, many users are browsing and bouncing around for the best deals, visiting so many different shopping destinations that they often forget where they have looked before.

When implementing the right kind of omnichannel campaign, make sure that it is seamlessly consistent across all of your marketing channels. Great-looking creatives that fully adhere to your brand book no matter the channel surely help, but your real differentiator will be the force underpinning the precisely tailored creatives—leading-edge Deep Learning.

5. Featured Category Campaign

A Featured Category Campaign allows you to bring more orders and revenue from chosen categories. You can analyze potential customers' activity and check what categories they are most interested in. With the right promotion, you can significantly improve your sales during the promo period. This type of campaign can bring value to the business in a number of ways. You can use it to push products that have a high margin, to promote categories that generate the highest volume of sales, and to shift stock from slow-moving categories which are in danger of becoming dead inventory.



About RTB House

We are a global company that provides state-of-the-art marketing technologies for top brands and agencies worldwide. Our proprietary ad-buying engine is the first in the world to be powered entirely by Deep Learning algorithms, enabling advertisers to generate outstanding results and reach their goals at every stage of the funnel.

Founded in 2012, the RTB House team comprises 1200+ specialists in over 30 locations around the globe. We serve more than 3,300 campaigns for clients across the EMEA, APAC, and Americas regions.

We partner with global retail brands, helping them to meet client needs during both sales opportunities and more challenging moments. We share our experience with promotional periods to help brands build custom strategies, focusing on the big picture and the small details, finding wins for business from sub-campaigns and each individual ad type.



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