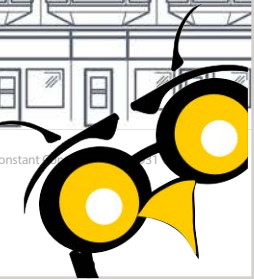


Simple tips to prepare your marketing for the holiday season

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There's nothing small about the holiday season when it comes to small businesses.

According to the National Retail Federation, 20 to 40 percent of yearly sales for small and mid-sized retailers take place within the last two months of the year.

It's the time of year when people spend big, and — if you've got the right plan in place — shop small.

That's why we created this guide!

The goal of this guide is to get you ready for the upcoming holiday season and offer simple strategies for making the most of this important time of year.



HERE'S WHAT WE'LL COVER:

How to Prepare Your Marketing for the Holidays	3
How to Build Holiday Momentum for Your Business	5
5 Ideas for Your Holiday Marketing Campaign.....	7
Additional Holiday Resources	9



Prepare Your Marketing for the Holidays

Hopefully you've already started thinking about how you're going to make this year's holiday season worth celebrating.

As you start your holiday planning, there are a few things you can do that are guaranteed to improve your results.

Let's take a look at some of the big things you'll need to keep in mind as you head into the holiday season.





1. Participate in the “Big” shopping days

Aside from the usual rush around traditional holidays, don't forget the big shopping days that kick off the season:(U.S. dates)

- Black Friday – November 28th
- Small Business Saturday – November 29th
- Cyber Monday – December 1st

2. Create a great holiday offer

With so much competition from the “big guys” and other local businesses, coming up with a compelling offer could be the secret to this year's holiday success.

Learn more: [Create the Perfect Offer: 4 Questions You Need to Ask First](#)

3. Leverage the channels that matter

The holidays are a busy time for you and your customers. That's why it's so important to leverage the right channels — like email and social media — to get your message in front of the right people, at the right time.

Learn more: [Create a Plan for Your Holiday Email Marketing](#)

4. Find out how people are finding you

Along with reading reviews and recommendations, consumers will also rely on search engines like Google or Bing, city guides like Citysearch, and mobile apps like Foursquare to discover new businesses throughout the holiday season.

Learn more: [Making an Inventory of All the Places Customers Find You Online](#)

5. Create a plan to stay connected

Encouraging new customers to join your email list will allow you to deliver results beyond the holiday season.

Learn more: [15 Ingredients to Cook Up a Delicious Email List from Scratch](#)




How to Build Momentum for the Holiday Season

Many of your biggest competitors have already started generating buzz for the holidays.

While you may not have a million dollar TV budget or a Grammy-worthy holiday jingle to do it, you do have the power of social media and email marketing.

Let's take a look at some actionable tips to help build momentum as you head into the holiday season.

*** Tip ***



Constant Contact has customizable email templates designed to save you time this holiday season.

[Click here for your free 60 day trial or call us to get started at 905-354-8273](#)





1. Develop a schedule to build momentum

Momentum will be crucial in determining whether or not this year's holiday season is one worth celebrating. But you can't build momentum without a plan for how you're going to do it.

Start by creating a schedule. Map out the weeks leading up to and through the holiday season with specific business goals for each of the big days. The specific holidays you plan to target may vary based on your business and your audience.

Learn more: [How to Create a Social Media Posting Schedule](#)

2. Pay attention to what people care about

Consider using a survey to collect customer feedback in the fall, before the holiday craze has started.

Use that customer feedback to improve the content and offers you're sending in your campaigns.

Learn more: [10 New Ways to Use a Survey to Engage Your Audience](#)

3. Be a resource; not just a sales pitch

Don't add to the holiday stress by overwhelming your contacts with salesy content and aggressive promotion.

Instead, provide them with resources they can actually use this holiday season. It can be something as simple as advice for preparing their shopping list, tips for throwing a dinner party, or even a special coupon for subscribers only.

Learn more: [How to Create Share-Worthy Email Content this Holiday Season](#)

4. Don't do too much, too soon

Make sure you're giving your customers the chance to ease into the holiday season. It can be helpful to think of things in terms of percentages — for example: in September post 20 percent holiday content, in October 30 percent holiday content, and in November 50 percent holiday content.

Learn more: [8 Tips for Getting Customers Ready for the Holidays](#)




Ideas for Your Holiday Marketing Campaign

Depending on your business, there are a number of different campaigns you could run during the holiday season.

The type of campaign you decide to run will depend on the products and services you offer, and the audience you're trying to reach. You will also need to consider the type of results you're looking for, and your overall goals for the upcoming season.

To help you get started, we've compiled a list of possible campaigns you can try out.

Tip



Once you decide what type of campaign you want to run, schedule your promotional messages in advance. You can schedule your emails within Constant Contact. [Facebook also allows you to schedule your updates in advance.](#)





1. Try a local deal

With a local deal, you can create a great offer, like a \$25 for \$50 voucher, that customers and potential customers can purchase and redeem at a later date. This is a great way to generate new revenue during the holiday season, and can help bring new customers into your store.

Learn more: [How to Maximize Holiday Sales with a Local Deal](#)

2. Offer an exclusive discount

The key to a great offer is that it's compelling enough to get people to act. It also needs to bridge the gap between your customer's needs and your success. With Constant Contact, you can easily add a coupon to any email that customers can print out or redeem from their mobile device.

Learn more: [The Evolution of Small Business Offers \(And What it Means for You\)](#)

3. Plan an event

Hosting a holiday event is the perfect way to thank employees and customers for their continued support all year long. It's also a great opportunity to bring customers into your store and provide a memorable holiday experience.

Learn more: [The Value of Hosting a Holiday Event](#)

4. Run a contest

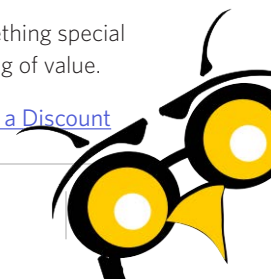
Contests are a great way to engage your audience, and can help generate buzz during the holiday season. With Constant Contact you can create a sweepstakes, hosted on your Facebook Page. Come up with a prize that your customers will love, and encourage them to enter by providing their email address.

Learn more: [How to Create a Holiday-Themed Facebook Promotion](#)

5. Add value

If running a promotion doesn't fit your business, you can still do something special for your customers by sending a thank you email or offering something of value.

Learn more: [How to Add Value this Holiday Season without Offering a Discount](#)

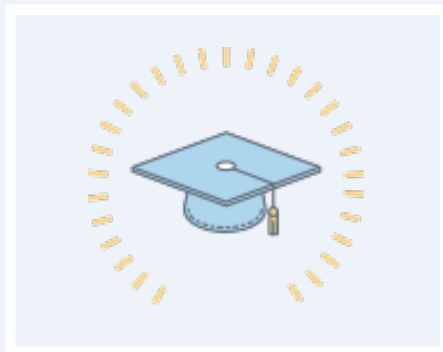


Are you ready for the holidays?

This fall we are hosting a free event, *Holiday Promotions, Planning, and Design*.

In this live webinar, we'll show you how to successfully engage your audience in the inbox and on social media so you can increase your sales this holiday season. You'll find out how to send the right message, at the right time, to the right audience.

Call us at 905-354-8273 for our next webinar date.



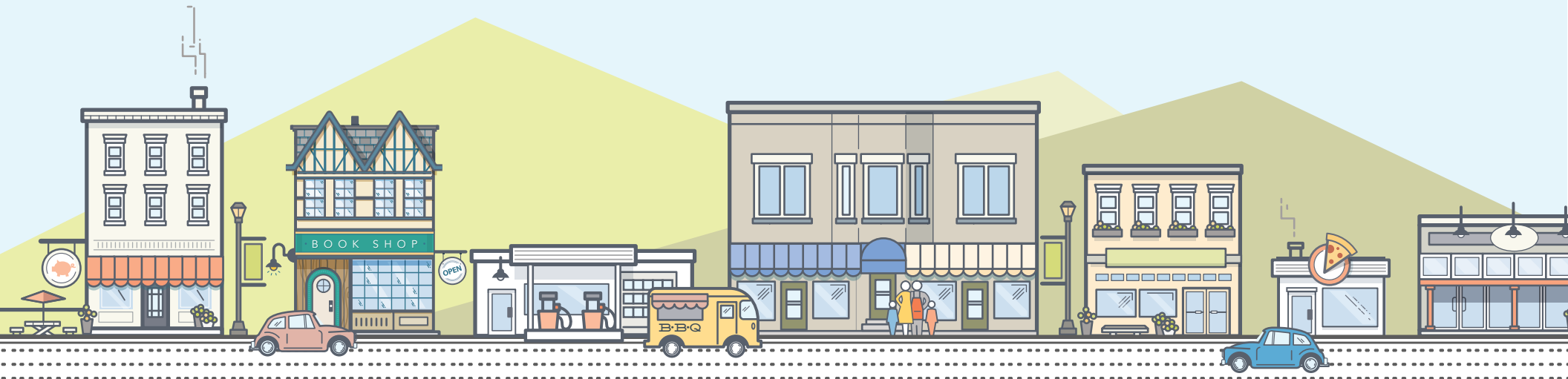
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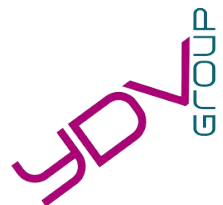


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