

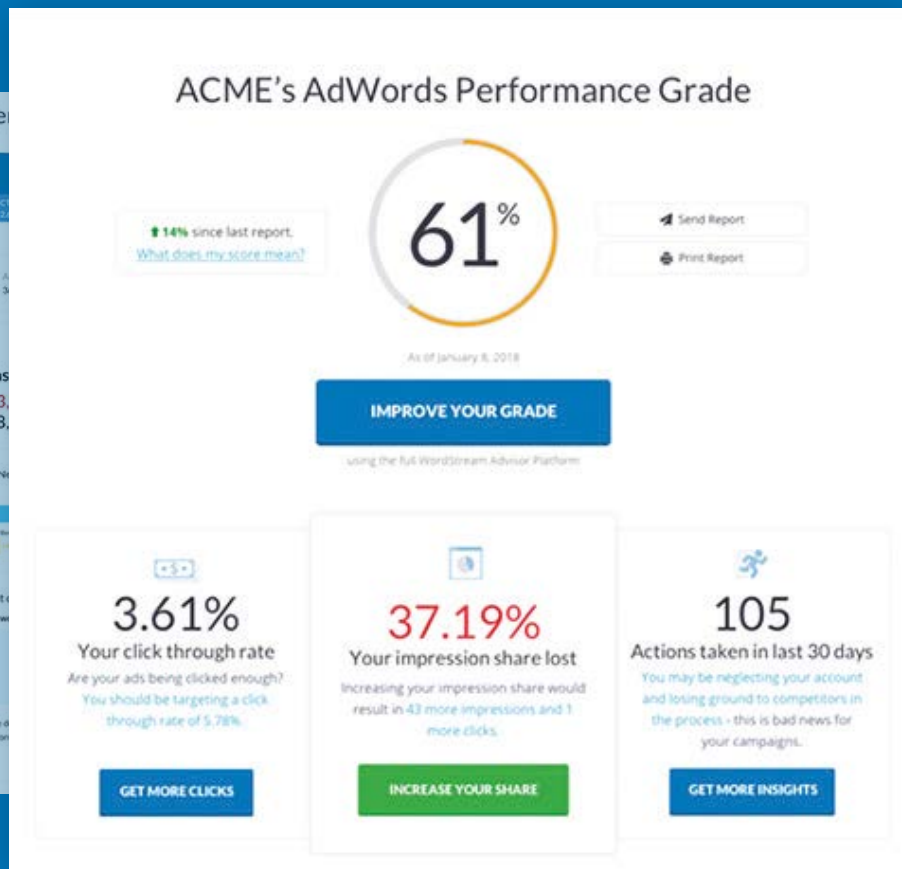
*A Complete Guide to*  
**Holiday  
Marketing**



**SEJ**  
EBOOK

# Prepare Your Google Ads Account for the Holiday Season

Get actionable advice on how to improve your account now with WordStream's **FREE Google Ads Performance Grader**.



**GRADE YOUR ACCOUNT**



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## Chapter 1

# SEO for the Holidays: 2019 Edition



Written By  
**Dave Davies**  
CEO, Beanstalk Internet  
Marketing, Inc.





# I hope you've enjoyed your summer because it's time to get ready for the holidays.

---

Those of you who have been at this SEO thing for a while will know, everything takes time and you even when you've done your job ... the engines still have theirs.

Crawl. Index. Rank. Tweak. Crawl. Index. Rank. Tweak.

You get the idea.

# In Some Ways... It's Already Too Late

Realistically it's already too late for some of you. At least ... to get done some of the bigger jobs.

If you wanted to have a new site rolled out but haven't started yet – unless you've got a fairly simple site or an incredible developer who either owes you a favor or who you're paying extremely well, it may be too late.

If you want to rank for some big terms and haven't been getting all the link building you need in place to support it ... it's almost certainly too late.



A photograph of Santa Claus sitting on a dark rooftop ledge. He is wearing his traditional red suit with white trim and a red hat with a white pom-pom. He has a long white beard and is wearing glasses. He is giving a thumbs-up with his right hand. Behind him is a large, brown, canvas-like sack, presumably for gifts. The background shows a snowy mountain range under a cloudy sky, with some buildings visible in the distance. Snow is falling around him.

# In Other Ways... It's Never Too Late

So, you might be wondering why this chapter is even being written. Thankfully there are always opportunities if you know where to look.

Things that can be done and have impact regardless of the time you have left.

Heck, there are things we'll talk about that you could do on the day before Black Friday and impact your sales on that day.

So why don't we jump right in. We're going to divide this piece into three further sections and each section will contain my favorite technique for short-and-mid-range traffic improvements.



## **We're going to talk about:**

- 1.** Getting Rankings
- 2.** Improving Your CTR
- 3.** Taking Advantage Of The SERPs

So, let's begin with...



ranking

# Getting Rankings

Getting rankings in the kind of timeframes we're talking about here starts with being realistic.

Understand what your site is capable of with the time you have, and target that.

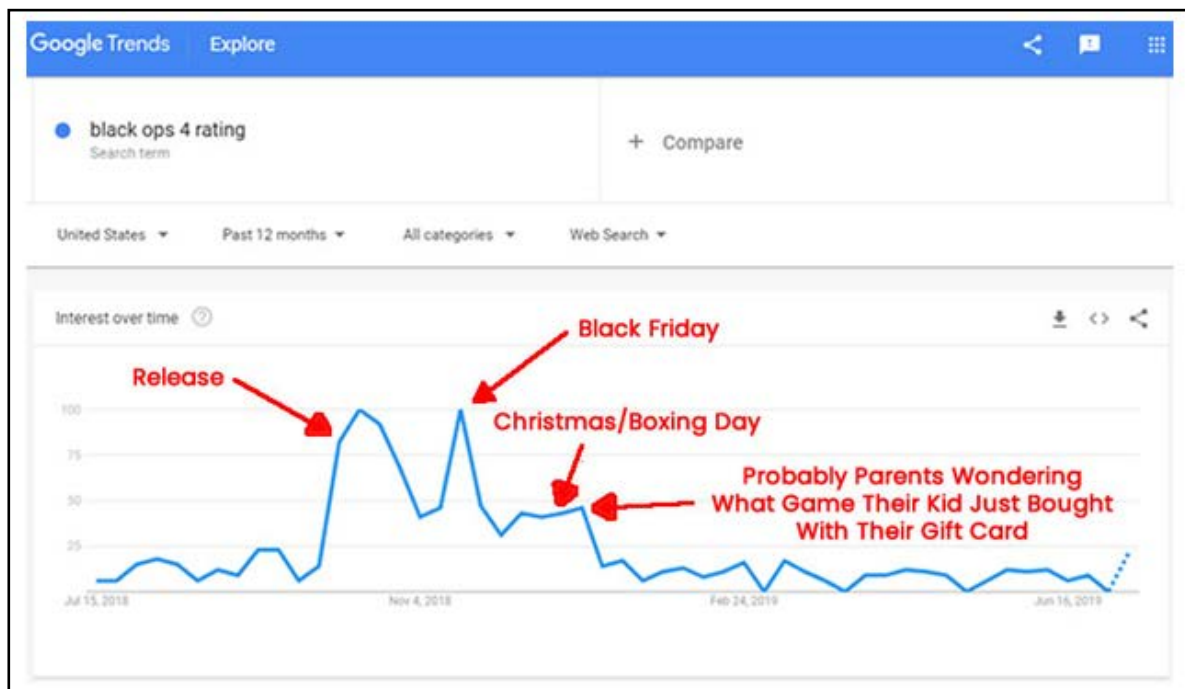
# Trends Are Friends

Ask not what your market would look for... ask what those giving them gifts would.

Understanding how parents, relatives, employers, etc. might search for a gift is very different than the person who receives it is critical.

Let's look at what I imagine the trends tell us about the release of the second-best-selling game last holiday season (and my personal favorite – thus making it the example I'm using) – Call Of Duty Black Ops 4.

Now, I'd just look for the game itself but then... I'm buying it, not thinking of it as a gift for my kids. When they asked for a game in their teens I was far more represented by this trend:



Of course, we're often in a spot where we don't know what the phrases are that would produce a trend like this. Enter Google's Keyword Planner or a tool that pulls trend data from it.

There is definitely some trial and error and you can use other tools like SEMrush or BuzzSumo to inspire ideas.

But a zero-cost solution is to simply start with your top level focus (video games in this case) and run the query in the planner and look for keywords that spike in December (many will have a lift in November for Black Friday).







We hopefully want to find ones that crash immediately afterward to reassure us that it is indeed gift-givers searching.

You can then take ones that are of interest and, after running your difficulty assessment, determine which to focus on.

Because the average monthly volume reported in Keyword Planner is lowered by the reduced interest though the rest of the year, I tend to find these terms are often less competitive in both organic and paid search than they are worth, provided that the content matches the intent.

If you remember who you are targeting and serve them the content they are looking for answering the query with content that answers questions like (in the example above) what is the rating, what does it mean and if they're not OK with their kid playing that ... what are some great alternatives that hit the mark on gameplay and type but would be suitable?

In this example, I'd visit some of the parent forums discussing games and read what they're saying, what they're asking and what suggestions they're making.

Do this and you've found some great keyword/content targets that are worth more than their difficulty would suggest.

I would also suggest running this query for popular products (bo4, red dead redemption 2, etc. in this example).

Collect a full pool of holiday queries and determine which, by competition, will make good SEO and PPC targets.

# Improving CTR

Why do you want to rank?

Do you like bragging to all your friends about all those page one rankings you have for obscure terms that nobody searches?

Or do you like cashing the checks that the rankings for the money phrases produce?

If you were going to make more money in position 21 than you would make from position 1... would you still target position 1?

Of course not.

# Capitalize on Your Capital

This may seem obvious, but I see it missed more than not in a “can’t see the forest through the trees” kind of way.

Those internet marketers who have even the slightest experience in PPC will know, subtle changes to titles and descriptions can have a dramatic impact.

Let’s just take a quick look at:

A screenshot of a Google Ads performance table. The table has columns for Ad, Status, Conversions, Impr., Clicks, Avg. CPC, Cost / conv., CTR, and Conv. rate. The first row is a header. The second row is a 'RESPONSIVE SEARCH AD' with a 'Recommended' tag. The third and fourth rows show individual ad performance. The CTR for the third row is 13.01%, which is circled in red. The fifth row shows the total for all enabled ads, and the sixth row shows the total for the ad group.

Ad	Status	Conversions	Impr.	Clicks	Avg. CPC	Cost / conv.	CTR	Conv. rate
RESPONSIVE SEARCH AD Recommended								
	Approved	17.25	2,844	370	\$0.88	\$18.82	13.01%	4.66%
	Approved	1.00	934	81	\$0.73	\$58.85	8.67%	1.23%
Total: All enabled ads		18.25	3,778	451	\$0.85	\$21.01	11.94%	4.05%
Total: Ad group		18.25	3,778	451	\$0.85	\$21.01	11.94%	4.05%



Unfortunately, I can't show the actual ads without violating trust, but I assure you, these two ads are very very similar.

But look at that CTR difference. Despite being extremely similar, one has a dramatically higher CTR and even more conversions.

This phenomenon obviously isn't restricted to PPC. People are drawn to click on specific words, ordered in specific ways, presented at a specific time.

So, start testing various title and description permutations. Very subtle differences can have a large impact, so you may need to rotate through a few to find great combinations.

I can't recommend enough – if you have the resource, deploy a paid search campaign to speed up the testing. Create an ad group for all the terms that the title and description you want to test would appear for and let the users tell you what works best.

Obviously, there are some formatting and position differences, but you can mine some gold very quickly.

And even if you don't have a paid search budget, paid search can be your friend.

In almost every sector there is at least one company that puts huge money into paid search and spends a lot of time on click and conversion optimization. Be inspired by them.

Look up their ads and if you can, use a tool like SEMrush or SpyFu to review ads they've used over periods of time (and thus are likely successful) and test your own take on it.

In the example above, the better performing ad has a 50.06% higher CTR and organically would deliver that much more traffic at the same price (free).

How long would it take you to increase your traffic by over 50% if you were focused just on rankings at your current clickthrough rate?

I'm betting a lot longer than running a few simple tests.



# Take Advantage of What You're Being Shown

The constant changes to the SERP layouts are a curse and a blessing.

## **We all complain because we're losing clicks but here are three simple facts:**

- It's happening and it's the engine's page so... yeah.
- If you're a publisher or need ad revenue, this is a genuine problem. If you're selling products, the user will generally visit a site for the final purchase and only use non-click info (think featured snippets) for research. So, it's branding and while you can't sell your products from the SERP itself (in most cases), you can get in front of the buyers.
- Someone must provide the non-click info. You can complain that you won't get the click and give the branding opportunity to your competitors, or focus on what you can have and move on.

If Beanstalk has a client in your space, I thank you if you pick the former option.

So, assuming you want to take advantage of all the SERP features the engines are making available to you, how do you do that?

I'm going to first note that there are all sorts of areas one can target and I covered them all in a different article [here](#).

What I want to stress here is the speed, and for perhaps the first time I'm not talking about your site.

After the launch of the HowTo and FAQ schema, I started toying around with different iterations to see how long they took to pick up and what their impact was on clickthroughs.

I had a client with a site ranking for an important ongoing event happening in their area. After adding the FAQ schema, the page almost doubled in traffic and received 14% more impressions.

For clarity, prior to adding the schema and having the info clearly available in the drop-downs on the SERP page the user would have had to click but now they could get the core info without leaving Google. But they did.

The trick is to use the structures themselves to your advantage but in a way that serves the user AND the engine.

I've seen featured snippet lists that start from 10 rather than 1 and list in descending order. The advantage is, #1 does not appear without clicking BUT the user will know if that list matches their



query and preferences. Google served, user served and click attained.

In the FAQ example I referenced above, we simply illustrate some critical answers to questions and via links coded into the FAQ schema itself as well as providing great information, we've drawn them to seeking more. Everyone served well.

The timeline for deployment is incredibly short.

When we built the schema into the FAQ page, we requested indexing via Search Console and within about 5 minutes the SERP changed to include the FAQ drop-downs.

This will, of course, vary by site, but it's fast.

## So Wait!

So, don't do it now.

I know... it's counter-intuitive.

I would suggest running some tests on the schema that applies to you on pages/queries with little traffic and off the radar.



Basically, make sure you know how the SERP element you're trying to work and the timelines to appear.

Next, you simply create all the code/videos/etc. that you're going to need and hold on to it.

Set a reminder for one week before you need it ranking to give you time to react if something doesn't work quite right and when that reminder goes off, deploy it all and if it's on your site – request indexing via Search Console.

Now – you're probably going to miss some things because you waited. A few elements that didn't work quite right. So why would you wait?

Because if you don't some jerk like me is going to be doing their research into competitors and how to outrank them, notice what you're doing and try to replace you.

So, don't give me/them time.

I do recommend running a quick test perhaps a week before you'll be deploying it and make sure your techniques still work and adjust accordingly.

You'll also be able to take advantage of knowing if there are new pages ranking on the first page of the results that make good candidates for the type of content you're deploying and that you may not have known about as you read this article now, and create the content for those.



# And Happy Holidays!

Now, it's time to get going.

Organic SEO isn't your only 'To Do' this holiday season. There's social, paid and ... oh right ... selling to your customers!

So get your organic ready now to leave flexibility to handle all the other things to come.

And keep reading SEJ so you're updated about more changes in schema, SERP layouts and the algorithm updates that occur between reading this and singing...

## *Chapter 2*

# Your Holiday Marketing Campaign Checklist: 6 Essentials



Written By  
**Sergey Grybniak**  
Founder, [Opportunity.com](http://Opportunity.com)





# Holiday shopping accounts for a significant share of retail sales in the United States.

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Americans spend billions of dollars on gifts, decorations and food for Valentine's Day, Christmas, Easter, and other holidays throughout the year.

To cash in on holiday spending, take some time to set up a well-planned holiday marketing campaign.

Do not miss your chance to attract new clients, skyrocket your sales, and gain high profits. Let's develop an efficient holiday marketing campaign together!



# What Is Holiday Marketing?

Developing a successful holiday marketing campaign involves tailoring your advertising channels, sales goals, and events to meet the temporary needs of shoppers looking for the perfect gift for friends and relatives.

You can expect to see an abundance of offers from competing brands, so it is crucial to develop bright and memorable advertising solutions that help you stand out from the crowd.



# Benefits of Holiday Marketing

**There are several key reasons to develop a strong holiday marketing campaign:**

- **Shopping is a holiday ritual observed by the masses.** Whatever happens, people spend money on gifts, decorations, and food during the holiday period. The challenge is to make them buy YOUR goods.
- **This is a great time to break your sales record.** Take advantage of the magical holiday atmosphere to attract new customers, boost sales and promote your brand.

- **Edge out your competition.** Without a holiday marketing campaign, you will find yourself overshadowed by your competitors. Most companies in your niche are sure to prepare for the holidays. Failure to join in the festivities with holiday fanfare will make your brand look dull by comparison, so pull out all the stops and make your brand a holiday must-have.
- **Enjoy mutual benefits.** Shoppers want to buy. You want to sell. Turn your online store into a platform where supply meets demand.
- **Get creative.** The holidays are your chance to use your creative talents to come up with emotional, original, relevant, and high-quality content. Think outside the box and come up with innovative ideas that set your brand apart.



# 6-Step Strategy for Developing a Win-Win Holiday Marketing Campaign

## 1. 'Holidize' Your Website

Setting a festive mood and tapping into holiday emotions are essential this time of year.

Visitors will stay longer on your website and explore it with greater enthusiasm if they sense the approaching holidays on each and every webpage.

Your holiday marketing campaign should be memorable, and not just in your ads and “special offer” sections.

Bring emotional context to all your website's elements, including footers, headers, CTAs, and other elements.

Decking your site with holiday cheer reinforces the connection users already have with your brand.

## **Holiday Discounts First**

If you offer holiday discounts, make sure they are the first things visitors see on your website. Keep in mind that the average visitor has a lot of holiday preparations to make in a very short period of time. Show shoppers what they really need as soon as they click on your site, to keep them engaged and stop them from shopping elsewhere.

## **2. Email Campaign**

A festive email is a must for every marketing campaign. Customers are eagerly waiting to receive special email offers and save money on pre-holiday discounts.

Use colorful designs, beautiful pictures, and numbers that prominently display discounts. No one wants to read large chunks of text, so keep it simple and to the point.

### **Keep Your Most Loyal Customers Closer**

You are probably planning to announce special holiday discounts and freebies, which is definitely a great idea. Consider expanding your offerings with a special email to your current clients.

Provide extra rewards to make them feel special and to encourage them to visit your website more often.



## Keep Cool & Be Helpful

Don't be too pushy, which could easily [turn people off](#). Remember, you are not the only business out there with festive Facebook posts and colorful campaigns.

Hundreds of brands put high hopes in the holiday season, and some remind their audience of special offers as often as four times a week.

However, if your strategy is well planned and your content is engaging, twice a week should be more than enough.

## 5 Email Ideas to Send Before the Holidays

Below are five ideas for your email campaign.

**Although they may seem somewhat cliché, keep in mind that some people wait to receive exclusive emails so they can shop with holiday discounts.**

- **Discounts for Early Birds:** Encourage shoppers [to purchase holiday gifts](#) early, offering attractive discounts for a limited period of time.
- **Special Prices for Online Orders Only:** Capture your customers' attention with a tempting offer of extra discounts when they purchase gifts without leaving home.

- **Exclusive Discount Code Inside:** Intrigue shoppers with an offer of exclusive bargains.
- **Last Chance for Any Online Order:** Create a sense of urgency and engage shoppers to order before it's too late. Let them know the last possible date they can safely expect a package to be delivered on time.
- **Greeting Card:** Send your final email on the eve of a holiday. Make it a simple message with a beautiful design.

### **The final holiday email serves two goals:**

- It builds lasting relationships with your customers.
- It encourages last-minute shoppers to choose your store.

### 3. Leverage the Power of Social Media

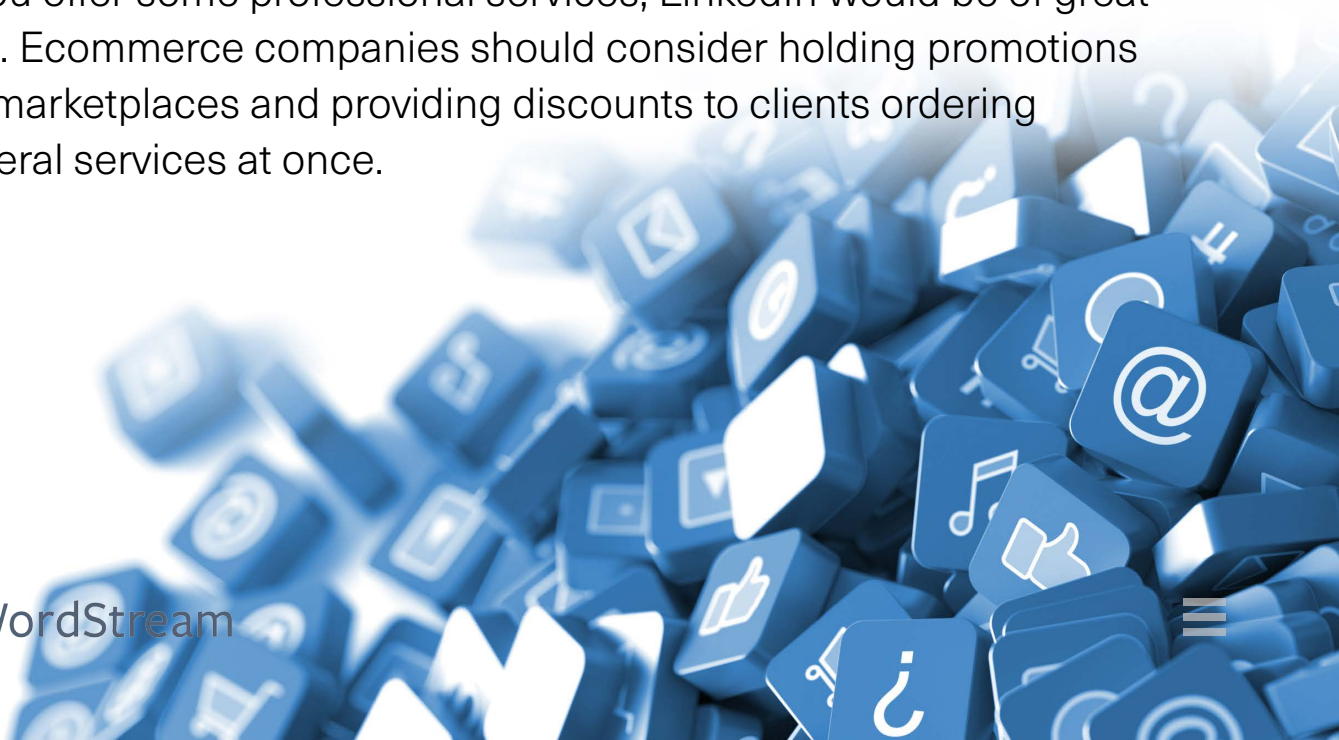
Utilize Facebook, Twitter, and similar social media platforms where your potential buyers are likely to rest, have fun, and communicate with close people.

Make enticing offers and create a warm holiday atmosphere to encourage web users to buy, share posts with bright pictures and inspiring phrases, come up with a special hashtag and provide gifts for mentioning it.

Also, pay attention to Instagram and **Pinterest**. Being visual is essential during the holiday season. People are searching for handmade gifts, inspiration, ideas for food and entertaining, greeting cards, and more.

Don't just sell your product. Create a montage that depicts it in full holiday splendor. And don't forget to link to your website!

If you offer some professional services, LinkedIn would be of great use. Ecommerce companies should consider holding promotions on marketplaces and providing discounts to clients ordering several services at once.



## 4. Organize a Contest

Contests are great social media tools, and the holidays offer an especially perfect opportunity to entertain your customers, since everyone is happy to get an extra gift.

If you sponsor a photo contest on your website, don't just limit it to one or two winners. Use the best photos to create a special blog post, or to create a complete webpage.

You can really get creative with this one, and people will be pleased to see their photos online, even if they don't win first place.

Festive contests bring more **traffic and engagement**, and **attract new subscribers**.

This approach works perfectly for both large brands and local companies.



## 5. Posts with Last Minute Gift Ideas

Everyone has certain friends and family members who are hard to shop for, even when they have a whole month to shop, and some people put off holiday shopping until the last minute. Reach out to procrastinators who still need a gift or two just days before the holidays.

By offering last-minute gift ideas, you provide a valuable service to your customers, and save late shoppers from the stress and embarrassment of not finding an appropriate gift.

Use phrases like “last minute gift ideas” in your posts as perfect triggers to get the attention of your audience.





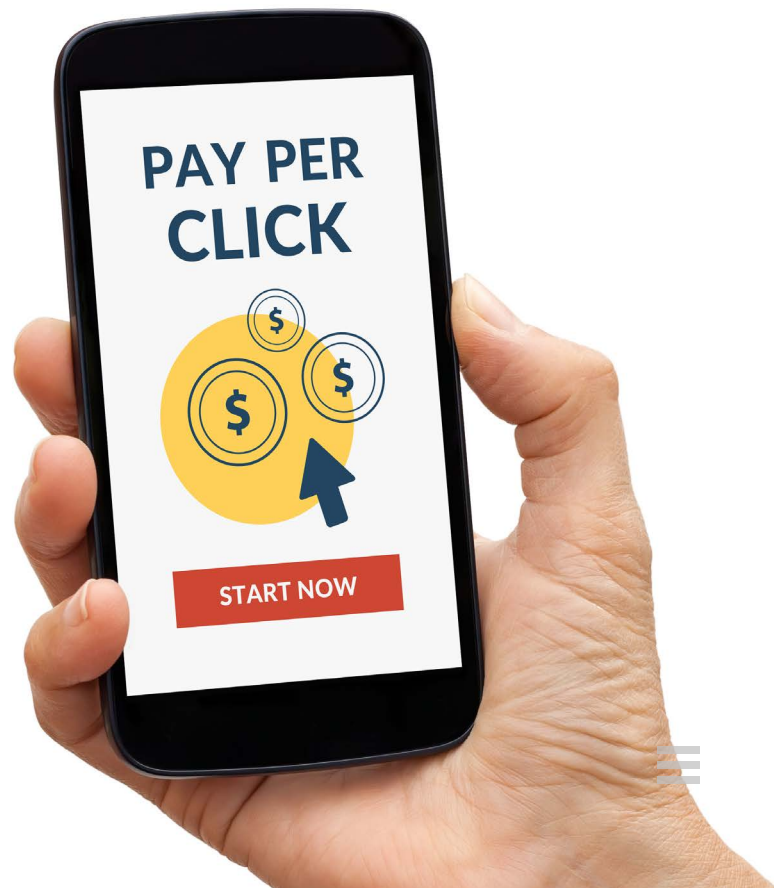
## 6. Launch Your Holiday PPC

Don't limit your campaign to your existing audience. Let new customers discover your business – and buy from you.

Advertise your brand to the right people in need of your services during the holiday season. Find your target audience in Google Ads, come up with catchy phrases, and expand your business.

There are no rules for when to start your **PPC campaign**. Launch it any time before the holidays, or use the classic Advent theme to offer new items each day. You can even change your entire holiday ad campaign daily, or every few days.

If you have an online store on [Amazon](#), this is a great place to realize your PPC strategy. This platform offers ready solutions (Sponsored Products vs. Sponsored Brands) so that you do not even have to struggle to come up with something new. Just take advantage of available resources.



## Summary

**Timeframe:** It is worth starting a marketing campaign at least one month before a holiday.

**Results detected:** With a thoughtful approach, your sales will grow from day one of your marketing campaign.

### Tools needed:

- Online store/website
- Pinterest
- Facebook
- Google Ads

**Benefits of holiday marketing:**

- Being at the right place at the right time, creating a platform where supply meets demand.
- Breaking your company's sales records.
- Staying competitive and keeping up with high marketing standards.
- Realizing the creative potential of your team, supplementing a traditional toolkit with unusual techniques and approaches, and evolving and adjusting to customer needs.

Hopefully you found this chapter helpful. Now go rethink your current marketing campaign and spread some holiday cheer for your business, brand, and clients!

## Chapter 3

# How to Optimize Local SEO During the Holidays

**SEJ**  
EBOOK

Written By  
**Kristopher B. Jones**  
Founder / CEO, LSEO.com





# We've all got our favorite holidays scattered throughout the year.

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I know plenty of people who begin planning their next Halloween costumes on November 1.

Others wait all year for Black Friday to roll around to mark the beginning of the Christmas shopping season.

When it comes to local SEO around the holidays, that word “season” is paramount.

**Y**ou know you want to boost your rankings, generate more online sales, and, most importantly, increase foot traffic in your brick-and-mortar for the holidays.

But you obviously can't expect much of that to happen if you start marketing the weekend before the holiday.

Many customers out there push themselves to complete all their holiday shopping well before the special days themselves, and you'd better be ready to receive them when they come calling!

Luckily, the holiday seasons do afford business owners enough time to optimize their local SEO before the mad rush begins, but there are smart ways to go about this.

In this chapter, I'm going to detail some common-sense local SEO tips that can really help you take full advantage of the marketing opportunities that are the holidays!

I call these tips "common sense" specifically because you don't have to be a digital-marketing guru to figure them out, but nonetheless, you may not have considered them before.

# 1. Ensure Your NAP Information Is Updated & Accurate

This one is a no-brainer, right?

Well, you might be surprised at how many local businesses I myself have searched online that didn't reflect accurate NAPs (names, addresses, and phone numbers) or business hours, including holiday hours!

**It is important to ensure this information is available and correct across all digital platforms, including:**

- Google My Business.
- Social media.
- Moz Local.
- Any other local-business directories you use.

While you're at it, make sure you also update any on-site landing pages that contain outdated company information.

**You can see the problems that may arise from any of your business's online information being wrong – customers:**

- Call an old phone number.
- Travel to a location you moved out of years ago.
- Show up when you've already closed for the day.

The trouble isn't only that none of these actions would convert to a sale.

You are actually in danger of losing those customers forever, as they may develop a negative image of your brand and see your business as unreliable.

Taking the time to update and correct your NAP, business hours, and any other relevant company information will go a long way toward getting yourself into a prime organic-search position.

## 2. Optimize On-Page Content for Holiday Keywords

Another local holiday SEO guideline is to optimize your on-page content for holiday keywords.

Use Google Analytics, Google Search Console, Google Keyword Planner, and SEMrush to see what keywords are driving users to your website, and what pages people are going to after they arrive.

It's always important to remember that SEO is not an evergreen product.

"Holiday window decals" may have been a top-performing keyword for you last year, but many things may have changed in the last 365 days.

Maybe holiday decoration trends have changed.

Maybe there's a brand new Easter decoration product out there that's become the new craze in springtime window adornments.



You must stay current on seasonal keywords from year to year, or you'll risk becoming stale, and users simply won't find your site.

The other element to keep in mind here is that typical holiday shoppers likely have some idea of what they're looking for.

Perhaps they've collected wish lists from their family members and are simply looking for a specific product from the company with the best price and most convenient location near them.

In that case, you may want to optimize your landing pages for a good mix of general holiday and brand-specific keywords that will lead organic searchers directly to your site.



### 3. Stand Out From the Crowd

As long as we are talking about standing out from your competitors, don't forget that unique content alone can't generate your holiday sales.

People will be more likely to bring their business to your website if the site itself is easy to use and appealing to look at.

Yes, you will need some solid, optimized content on your pages, but if the pages themselves are cluttered with flash material, ads, blocks of text, or problems with your JavaScript, it will neither load quickly nor look attractive.

And the data shows that problematic web pages tend to lead to higher bounce rates and, of course, reduced sales.

Instead, keep your web pages relatively simplistic, with visually striking images that do just about as much to communicate with your customers as your written content does.

The optimized content should be to-the-point and broken up visually to create a kind of hierarchy of images and words.

Users should immediately know where to look for the most relevant information, and each successive element should contrast with the element closest to it to make for a smooth flow of content segments.

A basic example: suppose your holiday decoration store is gearing up for the Fourth of July.

You may want to use a large image on your homepage that shows an assortment of picnic and patriotic items you offer for sale.

Then display some visually contrasting buttons that users can click on to access certain categories of decorations.

As an aside, remember to update your site with holiday-appropriate images and other visuals. Showing customers you are engaged with the current holiday season will make them feel good about buying from your store.

Keyword-optimized content near these visuals can use pleasant, succinct language to inform users of what is available and also link them to additional items in your inventory.

Just remember to keep things simple.

A novella-sized piece of content is neither needed nor wanted. Customers want to know what you have and why your website is the best place to buy it, be it for your large product selection or competitive prices.





## 4. Don't Forget the 'Local' Factor

Remember when I called these holiday-themed local SEO tips “common sense”?

Nowhere is that more applicable than in this final pointer: to remember that you are a local business trying to optimize your online presence for local SEO.

While it's important to make the online checkout process easy for internet users, you're also going to have a significant percentage of the population that actually prefers shopping in-store than online.

In March of 2019, Forbes contributor Greg Petro cited a First Insight study finding that 71% of survey respondents stated they tend to spend \$50 or more when shopping in a brick-and-mortar location, as compared to only 54% of respondents who said they usually spend \$50 or more online.



Petro goes on to say this is likely due to the simple fact of the brick-and-mortar offering more of a human element to the shopping experience. And it's hard to argue with that logic.

People like browsing in stores. You can see the latest products up close and personal. You can read their details and specs and hold them in your hands.

When you're in-store, you are better able to see yourself owning that product, and you may very well become emotionally attached to it.

Given this human psychological dynamic, it is of the utmost importance that any and all website users know that you do in fact have a physical location.

I mentioned in the first point that your NAP has to be updated and accurate across all directory platforms and on your web pages.

You may want to consider having a separate "Contact Us" or "About Us" page to call attention to your location, provide all your contact information, and show an image of your store.

As far as actual SEO goes for emphasizing your local presence, use Google Analytics, Search Console, Keyword Planner, and SEMrush to find high-volume, long-tail keywords such as "madison wisconsin christmas trees" or "father's day gifts carlsbad california."

Then, of course, optimize your on-page content with such keywords, and do this well in advance of the holiday to give search engines time to pick up on your freshly revamped SEO.

Try to drive customers into your physical store with incentives such as an in-store-only coupon discount, or a limited-edition item available only to the first 100 customers through the doors on a given day.

Feel free to get creative with this. You are a local business and proud of it! Run with this fact.





## Final Thoughts

As we've seen, there are numerous steps you can take to optimize your local SEO during holiday seasons.

The steps range from the administrative, such as adjusting incorrect NAP information and updating your website with holiday themes, to the more cerebral, such as devising ways to become more noticeable among your competitors and getting online shoppers to visit your store.

If you'd like, you can also do yourself a PR favor by quoting some positive Google reviews of your business on your website (with permission) and responding positively to any online criticism and negative feedback.

Ensure that everyone who comes into contact with your business knows that you appreciate praise and care about complaints.

Take all these tips into account when optimizing your business for local SEO. Like I said at the outset, there's no need to be a marketing mastermind.

Anyone can follow these steps, or at least understand them enough to request them of your digital marketing agency.

Just work hard at it, and you may see your holiday sales are better than they have ever been.

## *Chapter 4*

# Holiday PPC Strategy: 11 Steps to Drive Greater Profit in the Holiday Season

**SEJ**  
EBOOK

Written By  
**Amy Bishop**  
Owner & Marketing Consultant,  
Cultivative, LLC





# Winter is coming!

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You know what that means: holiday season is upon us.

If you haven't already planned your holiday strategy, now is the time!

Don't fret, we've got you covered with the steps that you need to take to ensure that you're ready to hit the ground running with your holiday efforts.

# 1. Review Last Year's Results

**Performing a post-mortem on last year's results can be a great place to start.**

- Which channels and campaign types worked that should be revisited?
- Which creative was most impactful?
- What audiences performed best?
- Which promotions drove the most purchases?
- Where did you outperform competitors? Where did they outperform you? (Customer service? Promos? Reliability? Experience?)
  - If you don't have this data from last year, it might be a little late to acquire it but a great time to start gathering intel on how competitors are performing now for present and future purposes.

If something worked really well last year, then there's no need to fix what isn't broke.

That said, it's still worth testing new tactics, in addition and in replacement of those things that didn't work.

# RESULTS





## 2. Choose Your Channels and Plan Some Tests

Although looking at last year's results is a great place to start, re-orchestrating the same plan over and over is sort of like jogging in place when all other retailers are running forward.

Every year, digital marketing grows and evolves very quickly.

While there are parts of last year's campaigns that you should keep (or grow and evolve), it would likely be a big mistake to rely solely on the success of things that have worked in the past.

I'd suggest allocating some small percentage of your budget (say 5-10%) on testing new platforms, channels, strategies, tools, or tactics.

You just might find something worth incorporating into your strategy year-round.





### 3. Plan Your Funnels

There's no time like the present to start preparing your campaign mix.

As you think about the campaigns that you'd like to run, consider how you'll move each prospect all the way through the funnel.

Since some of the folks that you might want to target may not be regular shoppers but rather gift-givers, and since the holidays are typically a huge opportunity to grab revenue; there will likely be a fair amount of prospecting.

With this, you'll want to consider how you can create funnels so that the prospecting campaigns will drive volume and build remarketing pools without losing your shirt as cold audiences are likely to have lower conversion rates.

For instance, with Facebook and Instagram ads, make sure you're thinking outside of the box with the ways that you **choose your campaign objectives** at each stage of the funnel in order to drive the highest ROAS possible.

I also highly recommend that you have a good methodology for connecting the dots between campaigns.

Re-engaging and warming new prospects is a critical piece to ensure your prospecting investment isn't wasted.

Audiences are a great way to connect the dots between campaigns and there are ample audiences and targeting options that can be used to create a multi-channel funnel.



## 4. Start Building Your Audiences

Think about the audiences that you already have – as well as the ones that you would like to build over the next few months.

### **Examples could include but are certainly not limited to:**

- Visitors that viewed a wishlist (and the subsequent content that they viewed, if you have a big enough pool to further segment).
- Visitors that viewed a gift guide (and the subsequent content that they viewed, if you have a big enough pool to further segment).
- Logins to loyalty programs.
- Past purchasers.
- Repeat purchasers.
- High-value customers.

- Recent visitors – potentially qualified by content viewed, time on site, or the number of recent visits.
- Wishlist creators, especially if you are able to connect that with data around whether or not their wishlist has been fulfilled or not.
- Friends of those that like your Facebook page.
- Those that engaged with content (on Facebook or Instagram). Lookalikes of any & all of the above.
- Combinations of any of the above.

Beyond building audiences, it's a good time to start thinking about how audiences will be leveraged across platforms and how to track that performance.

**Tip:** Check out the Audience report within Google Analytics to see how Google-Analytics audiences perform across your whole ecosystem – not just as part of your paid search campaigns.

Granted, this report only tracks audiences that have already visited and will not track all high funnel audiences for that reason, however, it does give great insight into the middle and bottom of the funnel.

This is a great way to see if your audiences are driving sales and, if not, to adjust your campaigns accordingly.



Audience	Acquisition			Behavior			Conversions eCommerce		
	Users	New Users	Sessions	Bounce Rate	Pages / Session	Avg. Session Duration	Transactions	Revenue	Ecommerce Conversion Rate
	389 % of Total: 9.19% (4,232)	359 % of Total: 10.35% (3,470)	596 % of Total: 11.10% (5,345)	36.24% Avg for View: 55.23% (-34.38%)	5.31 Avg for View: 2.45 (100.22%)	00:04:55 Avg for View: 00:01:31 (166.71%)	196 % of Total: 78.94% (254)	\$26,113.30 % of Total: 77.47% (\$32,706.34)	32.89% Avg for View: 4.79% (386.62%)
1. Quality 55-59 y/500	42 (10.82%)	22 (6.13%)	56 (9.40%)	16.07%	8.45	00:06:30	15 (7.65%)	\$1,545.62 (5.92%)	26.79%
2. Purchased 50years p/500	3 (0.82%)	1 (0.28%)	4 (0.67%)	0.00%	6.75	00:06:04	4 (2.04%)	\$1,413.22 (5.41%)	100.00%
3. Retire 50+ Campaigns	159 (41.65%)	145 (40.39%)	182 (30.54%)	63.19%	1.81	00:01:13	0 (0.00%)	\$0.00 (0.00%)	0.00%
4. Facebook	138 (35.45%)	114 (31.76%)	155 (26.01%)	50.97%	2.37	00:01:29	3 (1.53%)	\$394.15 (1.51%)	1.94%
5. Actual Session Quality 75-100	8 (2.06%)	3 (0.84%)	11 (1.85%)	18.18%	10.82	00:04:57	8 (4.08%)	\$636.12 (2.44%)	72.73%
6. Actual Session Quality 50-75	52 (13.63%)	27 (7.52%)	80 (13.42%)	11.25%	7.96	00:08:30	38 (19.39%)	\$5,388.96 (20.64%)	47.50%
7. Search purchased p/75	4 (1.02%)	3 (0.84%)	5 (0.84%)	0.00%	13.00	00:21:15	6 (3.06%)	\$364.96 (1.40%)	120.00%
8. Search purchased p/60	4 (1.02%)	3 (0.84%)	5 (0.84%)	0.00%	13.00	00:21:15	6 (3.06%)	\$364.96 (1.40%)	120.00%
9. Search purchased p/52	4 (1.02%)	3 (0.84%)	5 (0.84%)	0.00%	13.00	00:21:15	6 (3.06%)	\$364.96 (1.40%)	120.00%
10. 50years purchased p/500	3 (0.82%)	1 (0.28%)	4 (0.67%)	0.00%	6.75	00:06:04	4 (2.04%)	\$1,413.22 (5.41%)	100.00%

## 5. Re-engage Lists of Yore

Speaking of audiences, since the holidays bring in traffic and purchases from people that aren't typically in our target market, those people are less likely to become repeat purchasers and may fall into dormant lists.

Heading into the holiday season, it's a great time to dust off lists of people that purchased last year – even if they aren't frequent purchasers.

## 6. Get in Front of Gift-Givers

As you already know, when the holidays roll around, your targeting widens to also include those that might buy your target market gifts.

It can be daunting to think about reaching a new audience but there are a few ways that you can do that without completely losing your shirt on a high-funnel campaign.

**With the audiences that you've built**, you can expand your keyword lists into broader areas than you were likely previously targeting.

For instance, you could include relevant gift-oriented keywords that might not make your non-holiday keyword list and pair them with an audience that you've identified as gift-givers.

With social ads, you can target friends of page likes to effectively (but efficiently) extend your reach to your target market's friends and loved ones.

For example, you could promote a holiday-gift-oriented piece of UGC to friends of those that like your page.

Those that clicked through, could be added to a site-based audience while those that didn't click through but did engage could be remarketed with additional gifting options in order to get them to the site.

With third-party targeting options, you have additional options for reaching gift-givers. You could target in-market audiences that are relevant to the holidays or gift-giving.

For most retailers, these aren't specific enough to be a standalone basis for targeting but they could be added to search campaigns as observation-only as an indication that the person had recently been shopping holiday-related items and, therefore is in the mindset.

You could also create custom affinity audiences and pair those with demographics to target on the display network.





## 7. Drive Brand Engagement

With the holidays around the corner, it's a great time to start building some momentum around your brand.

### **There are two types of gift-givers:**

- Those that like to surprise recipients.
- Those that want a wishlist to purchase from.

Our challenge is to find ways to reach both types.



# Drive User Generated Content (UGC)

**UGC is a great way to drive buzz around your brand any time of the year but especially leading into the holiday season because it has numerous benefits including:**

- Capturing the attention of the content creator's friends that may have similar interests.
- And capturing the attention of those that are planning to purchase gifts for that group.

## Drive Wishlist Creation

Creating campaigns around wishlist creation can be a useful tool for supporting those gifters that prefer specific instructions.

Target your loyalists, which could include audiences built from repeat purchasers, loyalty program logins or email lists, and social media followers.

Propose items to add based upon their browsing and purchase habits and make it super simple for them to share.

Bonus points if you sweeten the deal with a promo for wishlist creators and wishlist-item purchasers.



## 8. Get Creative with Your Ads & Landing Pages

Ad creative is always important but it becomes especially important when you're attempting to convince someone who is unfamiliar with your brand and outside of your target market to purchase something for someone else.

If you play your cards right, there are some great opportunities for creative to help build trust in your brand.

For example, if you push UGC, then you build an arsenal of assets from actual customers.

For those folks that want to buy the perfect gift, but keep it a surprise, this type of creative can be both attractive and reassuring.

The content can be used across ad creative and landing pages.

Creative can be fun and clever – inviting the audience to drop hints by sharing the ad to signify that they'd like to receive your product as a gift.

To drive more traffic through these campaigns, you can also build engagement campaigns with the goal of driving engagement from loyalists, previous purchasers, and your target market.

Beyond initial audience targeting, building out gift guides creates an opportunity to distinguish gift-givers while also providing useful content for those that are relatively new to the brand.

**Last but certainly not least, you can customize search ads to improve engagement. You could customize the ads with:**

- Countdown information for promos, or shipping dates.
- Promotional information. For example, promos vary on Black Friday. You could use ad customizers to manage that.
- Audience data to help provide the most relevant information. For example, you could distinguish between your target market and gift-givers to ensure that you're delivering the best content for their interests.

24 OF NOVEMBER

**BLACK  
FRIDAY  
SALE**

TAKE UP TO 50 % OFF

**9.**

## **Start Thinking About Your Promo Strategy**

It's a good time to start thinking about how you'll compete with other retailers. Will you put on a promotion?

There are several different discount structures and strategies that can be applied but not all promotions require discounting items.

In fact, some are upsells!

Others offer a promise of reliability.

Understanding what your market cares about is key to determining which promotion type is preferable.

For example, there are people that love to save money and spend as little as possible – they are truly driven by cost savings.

There are others that don't mind spending money but want to receive as much as possible in return – they are driven not by cost savings but by perceived value.

### **Example promotions could include:**

- Time-stamped promotions such as early bird specials and doorbusters.
- A percentage off of the whole store, or certain items.
- A dollar amount off, which could be qualified by a spend threshold. (Example: get \$20 off when you spend \$50 or more.)
- A free gift, which could be promoted or kept as a surprise.
- An add-on gift. (Example: spend \$50 and be eligible to purchase a gift basket worth \$100 for \$20.)
- Free shipping.
- Shipping guaranteed by a certain date.
- A wider return window than usual. (In this case, the message is: go ahead and shop now – the recipient will still be able to return it if they don't like it.)
- Special deals for those that join or are part of a free loyalty member. (This is largely helpful for tracking purposes – we'll get to that!)





## 10. Simplify Gift Shopping

It's all fun and games until somebody gets frustrated.

A [2017 holiday recap](#) by Bain cited a clear drop in Net Promoter Score (NPS) throughout December from shoppers dissatisfied with their experience in physical stores.

Customers cited “limited selection” or that the store “didn’t have what I wanted” as reasons for the decrease in NPS.

The customers’ perception of the same stores’ websites remained flat for the same time period.

Despite that, 2018 in-store holiday sales increased, according to Bain’s [2018 holiday recap](#).

Bain credited this increase in online sales to many factors including (and not limited to) an increase in omnichannel strategies leading customers in-store.

The study notes that Adobe Analytics estimated that 2018 had a record number of in-store pickups.

Target reported a 60% increase in in-store pickups in 2018.

Although ecommerce has grown in sales – and last year was no exception – in-store sales accounted for over 70% of total holiday sales.

This means that there is still value in bringing people in-store.

**Businesses with brick-and-mortar locations should consider building site-to-store strategies, which might include incentives for in-store pickups, such as:**

- Free-site-to-store shipping.
- A coupon or shopping pass.
- A free gift.

Frustrations aren't exclusive to in-store shoppers, though.

A 2018 Pitney Bowes study showed that [56%](#) of online shoppers reported frustration with everything from shipping, to returns, to lost products and miscalculated duties and taxes.

There's ample opportunity to improve the shopping experience and reduce frustration in an already stressful time of year.

Here are some steps retailers can take to improve the holiday shopping experience.

## Inventory & Selection

One of the primary frustrations cited by the Bain study can be partially mitigated by making it easy for your customers to see your inventory.

This can be achieved through on-site item inventory checks, on-site purchase and same-day store pickup, and local inventory ads.

## Consistency

As a holiday shopper, I'm always a little surprised by the major differences in on-site vs. in-store experience.

Some of that is hard to control, what with large crowds of people in-store and all.

However, there are some things that can be controlled like the price of items online vs. in-store, promo strategies, and general ease of navigation and checkout.

Stores and sites both have their pros and cons as far as experience is concerned, but unless you're intentionally trying to incentivize a certain action, creating consistency tends to decrease confusion and less confusion usually means less frustration.

# Relieving Barriers to Purchase

Common objections to online shopping – reiterated by the Bain study – continue to revolve around shipping (cost, time, reliability) and the uncertainty of whether the product will be liked and, if not, the ease of returns.

Those concerns are likely amplified for gift-givers, as there's more pressure to ensure that the gift is liked or can be easily returned and to ensure that the package arrives on time.

Taking steps to ease concerns around shipping cost and speed, and ease of returns can boost conversion rates.





## 11. Sometimes Things Don't Go as Planned

No pressure, but according to the Pitney Bowes study referenced above, 36% of consumers will shop elsewhere after one poor experience and 60% of millennials share their bad post-purchase experience with others.

What does that mean for retailers?

Even with the best planning and the best of intention – some things likely will go wrong.

Create plans for how to handle customers that have had poor experiences.

Roughly 13% of people take to the web when they have a poor experience, with 9% of people leaving negative reviews and 4% posting on social media.

Plan to have staff prepared to monitor social media and review sites, ready to respond to and assist dissatisfied consumers.

Addressing issues in a quick and timely manner (bonus points for creative ways to go above and beyond to resolve issues) is a good way to curb negative reviews – and possibly even turn negative reviews into positive reviews.

# *Chapter 5* 10 Email Marketing Tips to Boost Holiday Sales

**SEJ**  
EBOOK

Written By  
**Mandi Moshay**  
Associate Director, CRM & Email,  
Tinuiti



# Adding email to your holiday marketing mix is a must.

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Email continues to generate the highest ROI of all digital channels, with some sources reporting averages as high as **\$44** for every dollar spent.

But competition for consumers' attention in the inbox is fierce year-round, and never more so than over the holidays.

With the promotional period kicking off earlier each year (cue the Christmas music in October), it's never too soon to start strategizing for holiday.



# 1. Review Past Years' Wins & Losses

Who better to tell you what resonates with your audience than your own audience?

Before looking ahead, look back at the last couple of years' worth of holiday engagement and conversion data to identify wins to replicate and areas of opportunity to course correct.

Key into trends in top-performing subject lines, calls to action, and promotions and use these learnings to make data-driven decisions for the upcoming season.



## 2. Conduct a Competitive Analysis

While looking at your own past performance is a great starting point, it's important to know what you're up against.

Identify your top competitors and review their holiday marketing strategies.

If you weren't subscribed to their mailing lists last year, tools like Milled or MailCharts can offer a comprehensive look back at your competitors' cadence and promotional strategy.

Consider how your plans compare and ratchet up your strategy as needed to lay claim to a greater share of wallet.

### 3. Run Pre-Holiday Testing

It's generally best to avoid testing during holiday as the volume, make-up, and intent of your audience isn't typical and can skew results.

Instead, utilize A/B tests in Q3 to glean actionable insights pre-holiday that can be carried through your holiday strategy.

#### **A few testing opportunities sure to yield good bang for the buck include:**

- **Subject Line:** Short vs. long, personalized vs. generic, offer vs. no offer. Don't forget to test on triggers like cart/browse abandon; these behavioral messages will see a spike in volume with increased traffic, representing a big opportunity to turn window shoppers into customers.
- **Promo Type:** \$ off vs. % off, buy-more-save-more, gift with purchase, free shipping, etc.

- **Timing/Logic for Triggers and Series:** Test time between behavior and first mailing, time between follow-ups, and how many touches are included.
- **Average Order Value:** Test the number of products, inclusion of dynamic recommendations, or promotion of complementary product to lift AOV.

## 4. Scrutinize Your Promotional Strategy

Black Friday/Cyber Monday no longer define the season.

With steep discounts and holiday messaging spanning 8 weeks or more, it's important to mix up promos and content to keep your audience engaged.

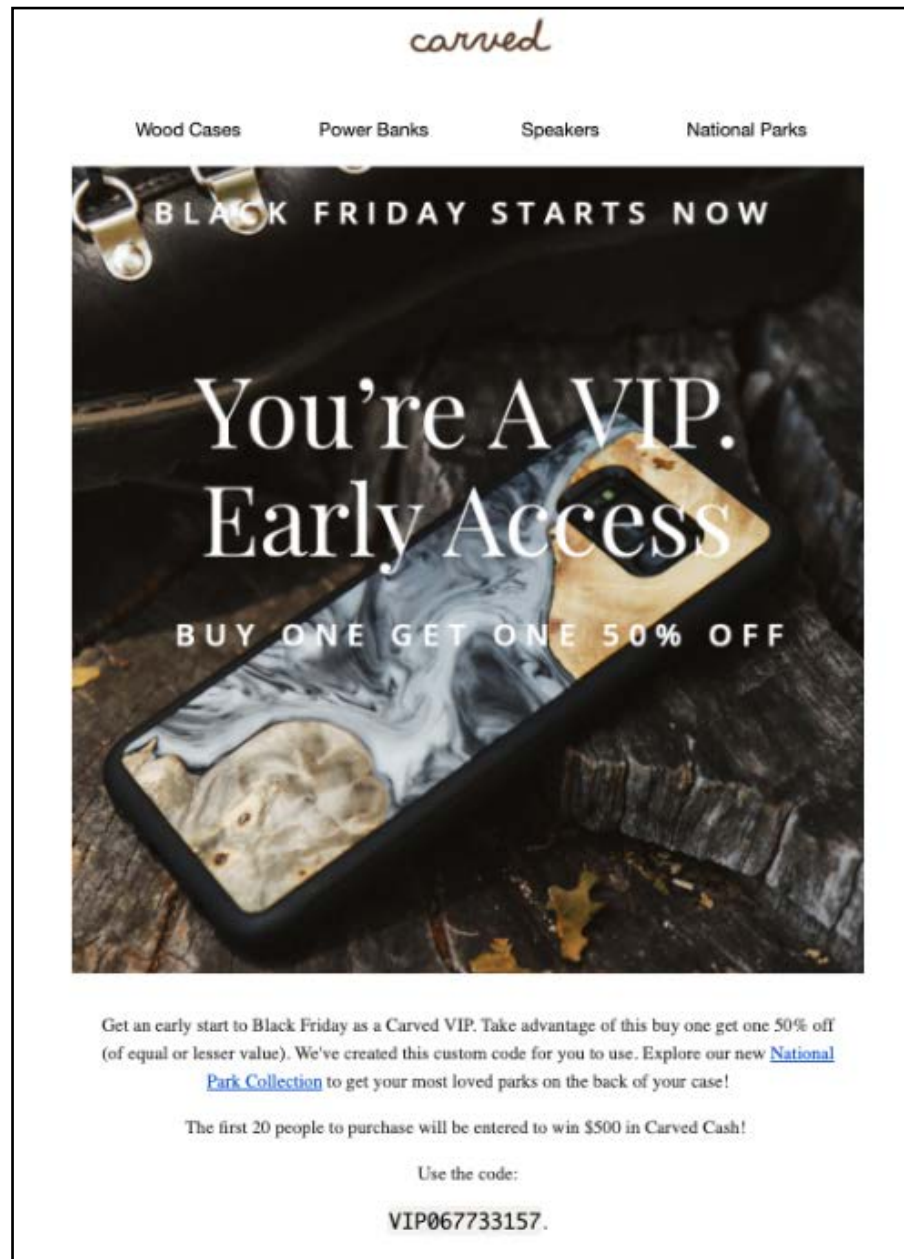
Your Black Friday/Cyber Monday offers should be outstanding; consumers are expecting deep discounts, so be cognizant of the offers you're running before these key dates to ensure major promos remain impactful.

Use the holiday season as an opportunity to treat your VIP customers to special promotions or early access to sales, prompting them to consider your brand first for gifting, or treating themselves.



Utilize VIP messaging to stand out in the inbox and offer an additional promo or gift with purchase during holiday sales to further build affinity amongst this already loyal group of customers.

Just look at this VIP Early Access email from Carved:







## 5. Hone Your Message

Make sure your emails capture attention and generate clicks by keeping creative simple and to-the-point.

Focus on one main story per message to help users process information quickly.

Utilize clear and prominent offers that catch the eye. In short, don't make your readers think too much.

Take a look at this clean, simple and outstanding Black Friday offer from J.Crew:



Above all, make sure your messages are timely and play up urgency.

Highlight sell-out risk, end of promotions, and shipping deadlines for holiday delivery to motivate consumers to complete transactions immediately rather than shopping around.

See this shipping deadline email:

WATCHES SUNGLASSES BRACELETS STRAPS BLOG

GET IT SHIPPED AND  
READY TO GIFT BY THE

# HOLIDAYS!

ORDER EVERYTHING ON YOUR LIST BY THE DATES  
BELOW, AND HAVE IT ALL WRAPPED UP JUST IN TIME!

START SHOPPING

DECEMBER 2018

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

LAST CHANCE FREE SHIPPING INTERNATIONAL 12/9

LAST CHANCE EXPEDITED SHIPPING INTERNATIONAL 12/16

LAST CHANCE FREE SHIPPING US 12/18

LAST CHANCE EXPEDITED SHIPPING US 12/19

## 6. Ramp Up Your Mailing Cadence

Email subscribers have a higher tolerance for an increased mailing cadence throughout the holiday.

If your brand typically mails a couple of times a week or less, up your cadence to keep your brand top-of-mind and allow for timely messages during every seasonal milestone.

In some cases, you'll want to send more than one email per day (Thanksgiving morning + after dinner when people are sitting around on their phones too stuffed to move, for instance).

Any increase in mailing should be approached thoughtfully to avoid upsetting subscribers, leading to contact loss or, worse yet, spam complaints that could impact [deliverability](#) for your entire program.



Get started with a steady ramp-up in late October, keeping a close eye on open and contact loss rates for a read on how your audience is reacting.

Plan to decrease cadence in early January to soften the expected spike in unsubscribes that follow holiday.





## 7. Audit Your Segmentation Strategy

To mitigate fatigue from an increased mailing cadence, review your segmentation strategy and limit how often you mail to your full list. Consider re-sends of the same promotion only to non-openers or non-converters.

As always, unengaged subscribers should be suppressed to prevent issues with deliverability, which could cripple your entire program during the busiest time of year.

On the other side of the segmentation coin, determine where it might be appropriate to lift suppressions.

If you normally suppress contacts in the welcome series, they might miss some of your best holiday offers.

Try lifting these types of suppressions over Black Friday/Cyber Monday, if not throughout the entirety of November and December.



## 8. Grow Your List with Increased Traffic

The increase in traffic from holiday shopping represents a great opportunity to build up your email list for retargeting throughout the year.

### Pre-Holiday

Tease sign up as a way to gain early access to sales or “VIP only” promotions. This can be carried through onsite capture points, transactional emails, and social campaigns.

## During Holiday

If you're running an incentive for email sign-up onsite, reassess the depth of the discount on offer.

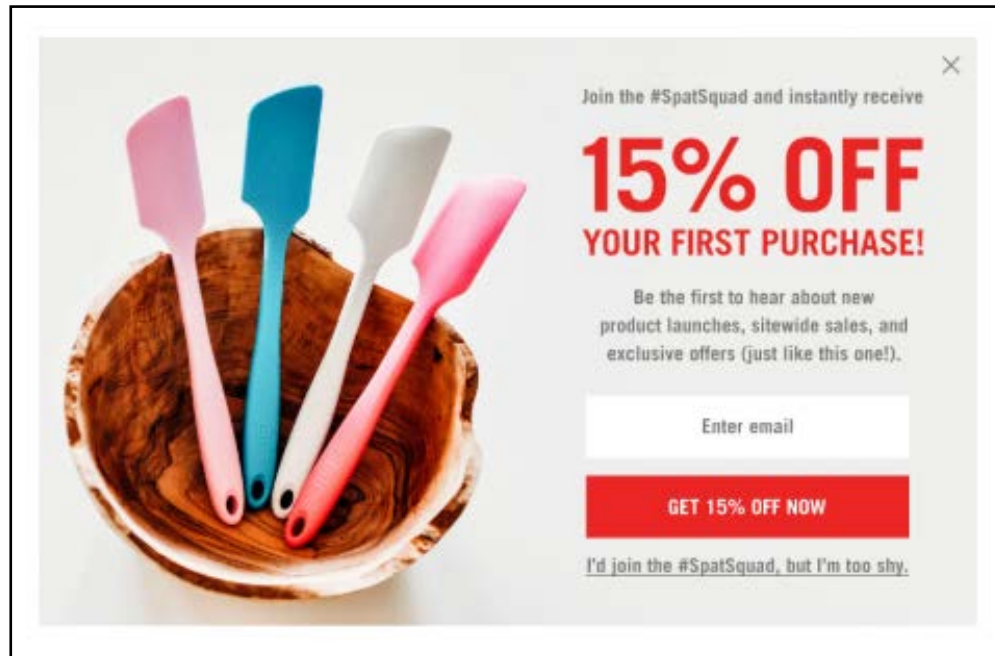
### **Consider sign-up promotions that sweeten the deal for new subscribers, like:**

- Free shipping or shipping upgrades.
- Gifts with purchase.
- An additional percentage off of already spectacular holiday savings.

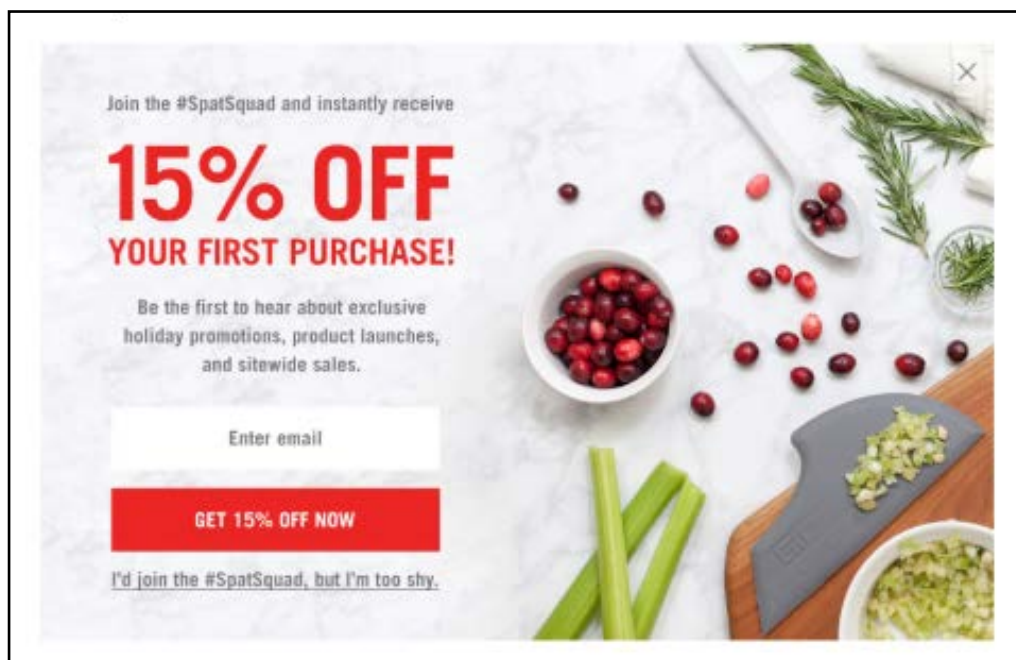
Update the imagery and messaging to speak to holiday to get shoppers in the holiday spirit, and keep gifting top of mind.

A few examples:

## Business as Usual Creative



## Holiday Creative





## 9. Don't Neglect Your Triggers

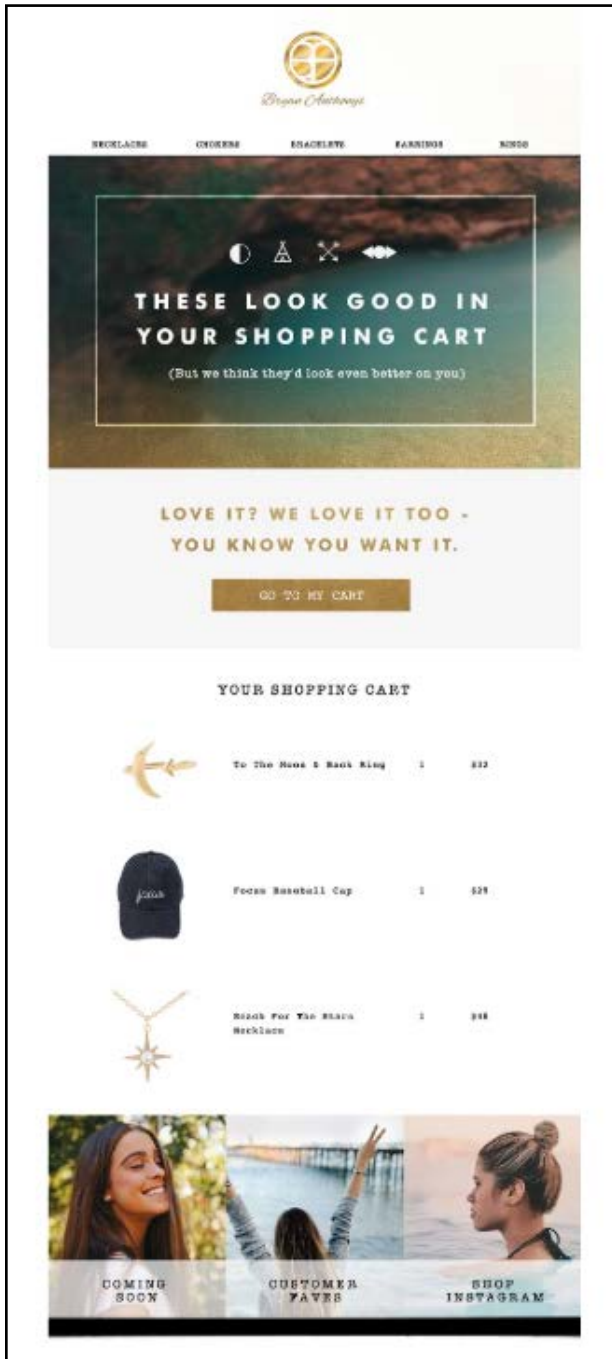
Some marketers tend to think of triggered messages as a set-it-and-forget-it.

**While there's a myriad of reasons to regularly revisit these messages, holiday is a crucial time of year to entertain changes to automation:**

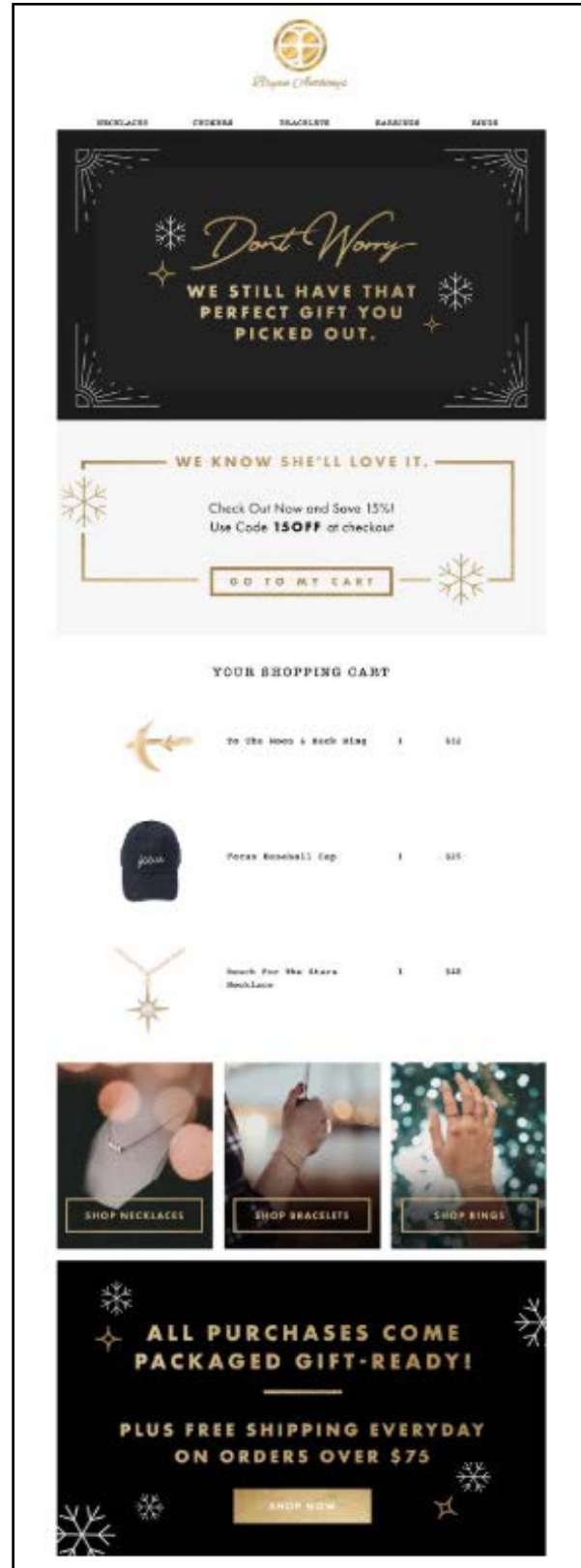
- Lift suppressions to ensure contacts are able to take advantage of the best deals possible, regardless of where they are in their subscriber journey.
- Update cart/browse abandon messaging to have holiday look and feel and speak to gifting others or yourself.
- Tighten up the timing (trigger earlier, decrease the duration between touches) to take a more aggressive approach.
- Launch re-engagement / win-back automation pre-holiday to stem the tide of unsubscribes likely to come in Q1.



Business as Usual Cart Abandon:



Holiday Cart Abandon:



## 10. Have a Contingency Plan

If you want to make the retail gods laugh, tell them your plans. But seriously, even the best-laid plans sometimes go awry.

It's in your best interest to plan for the worst by building out contingency plans for a few key scenarios:

### Your Offer Tanks

If your Black Friday/Cyber Monday campaigns don't perform as expected, it's helpful to have back-up campaigns at the ready.

Have a steeper discount, compelling add-on, or "offer extended" email in your back pocket and ready to deploy as needed.

## Your Offer Does Better Than Expected

This is a good problem to have, but you might want to give shoppers more time to take advantage.

Have an “offer extended” message ready to go to capitalize on surprise successes.

## You Send an Email with an Error / Have Site Issues

Take some time to map out the criteria for sending an “oops” email.

Only mail an apology if the issue prevented customers from shopping or caused a negative customer experience (site outage, wrong promo code, broken link).

If the issue is a typo, however cringe-worthy it might feel, you’re only going to annoy subscribers with a follow-up.

Have the bones of an apology email built out and ready to customize with specifics.

# Wrapping Up

There's no shortage of opportunities to optimize your email program for the holiday season, so don't feel like you have to do it all.

Pick out the strategies above that are relevant to your business and score them based on the level of effort and the potential return to guide prioritization of projects.

Get a holiday post-mortem on the books for January to review analytics, celebrate wins, identify opportunities to improve in future years, and streamline your planning efforts for holiday 2020 when we do it all over again...

Happy mailing!




# *Chapter 6* Top Holiday Social Media Campaign Ideas to Try

**SEJ**  
EBOOK

Written By  
**Jeremy Knauff**  
CEO, Spartan Media







**Social media is more competitive and noisy than ever, but the holidays offer a perfect opportunity to cut through the noise and gain an advantage over your competitors.**

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This is because people's emotions are actively engaged with a combination of excitement and nostalgia. If you can tap into that, then you can often multiply the effectiveness of your social media efforts.

Most people simply phone in their holiday marketing, though. Many will just slap some clip art together, offer a small promotional discount, post it to Facebook, and call it a day.

Then they'll wonder why they didn't get much traction.

**T**he key is to engage with your audience on an emotional level and get your message in front of enough people. This will typically also require some amount of paid ads.

The beauty is that there are so many holidays that you have a year-long stream of opportunities. Some holidays may be better suited for certain industries, but creative marketers in any industry should be able to leverage just about any holiday.

In this chapter, I'm going to outline several tactics you can use in your own social media marketing for the holidays, along with a number of specific examples of some of the content you might consider creating.

These examples aren't necessarily meant as a blueprint, but more of a spark to get your creativity flowing so you can come up with specific holiday-themed content that's relevant to your business.

Let's get started...

# Decorate Your Profile

This is the first and most obvious component of social media marketing for the holidays and it takes the least effort.

Simply update your cover photo and profile picture to reflect the holiday.

For your cover photo, this might mean replacing your normal photo with one of your staff wearing Halloween costumes in front of your building or maybe throwing candy from a Christmas float. Or you might just use a holiday-themed graphic.

How you handle your profile picture might depend on whether it's a headshot or a logo.

For example, if we're talking about a headshot, you might put on a Santa hat or reindeer antlers. If we're talking about a logo you might superimpose falling snow over your logo or drop some candy canes or holly in the corner of the image.



On some platforms, you might even use holiday-themed background colors in some of your posts leading up to a holiday. You could even include holiday-themed static images or animated gifs in your posts.







## Be Like Santa

Everyone loves getting gifts. Well, maybe except for those people with warrants who got lured into an arrest by police under the guise of a free prize.

But pretty much everyone else does.

This can make gift-giving a powerful way to generate exposure through social media. Some holidays may be better suited for this, such as Christmas or Valentine's Day.

But it can work for most holidays. And the beauty of this approach is that it's exactly the kind of thing that can get a lot of people talking about it and your company on social media.

Now when I talk about giving a gift, it's important to point out that it doesn't necessarily have to be expensive, but it does need to have some real value.

I'll give you an example of what not to do.

I worked with a photographer several years ago who sent me a Christmas "gift" that consisted of a cheap Christmas card with a note handwritten on the inside that said:

"I wanted to thank you for being a customer. As a Christmas gift to you, I'd like to offer you a 10% discount on any new photography projects between now and the end of the year."

That's not a gift.

It's a promotion. And not a very impressive one at that.

If you're going to give a gift, give an actual gift with no strings attached.



And that gift should be of sufficient value, relative to the price point of your products or services, but it doesn't need to be related to your business.

For example, you might send out a fancy box of Christmas chocolates to their top customers. In a tight-knit and tech-savvy industry like ours, many of the recipients of a gift like this would immediately hop on social media to post about their amazing gift, and they would usually tag the company that sent it.

Some may and some won't, but you should never ask anyone to post about their gift because that will make the gift seem insincere. They'll probably question your motives in giving it to them, and may even question how much you really value them as a customer.

**The keys to giving the kind of gifts that are more likely to get people talking on social media are to:**

- Give something of sufficient value. (When in doubt, more is better.)
- If possible, tailor the gift to their personality and interests.
- Don't ask them to post about it on social media. Not even subtly.

# Holiday-Themed Content

There are a virtually unlimited number of topics you can come up with to help promote your business around a particular holiday.

## **There are two paths you can take here:**

- 1.** Publish long-form content on your blog and then share it on social media
- 2.** Publish short-form content only on social media

So what kind of content is going to get people talking and encourage them to share it?



# Long-Form Content

While this content probably won't drive traffic from an organic search perspective in the short term, it can start to drive traffic from a social perspective immediately.

This is because it's exactly the type of content people are likely to share while a particular holiday is at the front of their mind.

Here are some ideas to get you started:

## Halloween

- The best horror movies. You could further refine this by creating a separate post for the scariest, funniest, or kid-friendly horror movies.
- A comprehensive list of local Halloween events.
- The origin of various Halloween traditions.
- Halloween decorating ideas
- Top horror movie villains.
- A list of Halloween treats for kids with food sensitivities.
- Scary short stories from local authors

## Christmas

- The best Christmas movies. You could further refine this by creating a separate post for kids, teen, and general Christmas movies.
- A list of gift ideas for a particular type of person (Digital marketers, journalists, construction workers, Marines, etc.)
- Stories shared from people about their worst or best
- Christmas memories.
- A comprehensive list of local Christmas events.
- The origin of various Christmas traditions.
- Christmas decorating ideas
- A list of bargain, luxury or gag Christmas gifts.

## Valentine's Day

- The best (or worst) Valentine or romantic movies.
- A list of gift ideas based on how long you've been in a relationship.
- A lot of unique Valentine's Day get aways.  
Stories shared from people about their worst or best Valentine's Day.
- A list of local romantic restaurants.
- A list of bargain, luxury or gag Valentine gifts.

# Short-Form Content

Polls, questions, and funny memes rule here. The idea is to generate quick engagement in the form of comments and shares.

This is a starting point, but to get significant traction, you'll need to find a way to connect holiday-themed topics to your business and/or industry.

## Halloween

- A poll of the best (or worst) horror villains
- Ask people to share their scariest Halloween experience.
- A poll of the best (or worst) candies.
- Ask people to comment on the plot holes in popular horror movies.
- A poll on trick or treating vs going to a Halloween party

## Christmas

- A poll of the best (or worst) Christmas movies. Bonus points if you can get people debating whether Die Hard is a Christmas movie or an action movie.
- Ask people to explain their theory of the science behind how Santa travels around the world, flies, carries all those toys, and gets in and out of homes undetected.
- A poll of people's favorite Christmas food.
- Ask people to comment on the best or worst gift they've received or given.
- Ask people to share their best Christmas memory.

## Valentine's Day

- A poll of the best (or worst) romantic movies.
- Ask people to comment on the best or worst gift they've received or given.
- Ask people to share their best Valentine memory.
- A poll on who they "love" most in your industry or what they love about your industry.
- Ask people to share how they fell in love or how they knew their partner was "the one."

**Note:** In cases where there are multiple options, each option should be its own post.





# Create a Holiday-Inspired Hashtag

Hashtags can be a great way to get a lot of people talking about a particular topic while making it easy for everyone to find those conversations.

All it takes, in some cases, is for a few people to use a particular hashtag in order for it to take off.

The key is to make it powerful, funny, or timely, or ideally, a combination of those elements.

Some ideas might include:

## Halloween

- #ScarySEOTactics
- #NightmareClientStories
- #RealEstateHorrorStories
- #TrickOrTreatIdeas
- #HorrorFilledBusinessIdeas

## Christmas

- #BestChristmasGiftEver
- #WorstChristmasGiftEver
- #ChristmasGiftsForHomeBuyers
- #MyDreamSecretSanta
- #AllIWantForChristmas

## Valentine's Day

- #BestGiftFromMyLove
- #WorstGiftFromMyEx
- #WhatILoveAboutSEO
- #HowIMetMetMyLove
- #CompaniesILove

I'm going to make a very important statement here – avoid tying politics in with your hashtags because that can go south really fast.

It's equally important to make sure the hashtag you want to use isn't already in use. The baked goods company, Entenmanns, learned this the hard way when they jumped on the #NotGuilty hashtag a few years ago.





## Elf of the Shelf

If you have kids, or know anyone who does, or have been at least somewhat conscious for the last several years, then you've probably seen the festive, yet creepy Elf on the Shelf toy.

If you haven't, well, first, welcome back from your coma. Next, I'll give you a quick explanation of what it is.

The short version is that it's a magical elf who has traveled down to your house on Santa's orders to monitor and report on your kid's behavior.

From the time your kid wakes up, well into the evening after they're asleep, these elves watch them. Then, after your kid has finally gone to sleep, the elf travels back to the North Pole to report to Santa.

This explains why the elf is in a different place each morning. Often doing something funny.

Why can't these elves just use email? Or FaceTime?

I don't know.

What I do know is that you can use this elf to promote your business.

"How can this creepy stalker elf help promote my business?" you ask?

In the same way that parents set these elves up doing funny things at home, you can set them up doing funny things in your business, and then posting them to social media each morning.

Ideally, your elf should do things closely related to your business. For example, a home builder might have an elf sitting atop a truss wearing a tiny helmet.

But you'll get even more traction if your elf has a habit of doing things that are funny or ridiculous.

That same home builder might have their elf sitting on a tiny front end loader, with an opened bag of cement in the background, dumping a tiny load of cement into a cup of coffee.




# *Chapter 7* **Creative Ideas to Work with Influencers this Holiday**



Written By  
**Ashley Ward**  
CEO and Digital Marketing Specialist,  
Madhouse Marketing





**Christmas time can be the most profitable time of year for some businesses, but with the influx of big marketing budgets, it can be challenging to compete with other campaigns.**

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Social media has become one of the most prevalent forms of interaction, news and information gathering, and sharing today.

So it comes as no surprise that social media marketing has rapidly grown to be one of the most operative tools for businesses, with **73%** of marketers believing it has been “somewhat effective” or “very effective” for their growth. This is especially impactful during the holiday season.

Influencers, particularly those on Instagram, have become invaluable to brands as they work to keep up with the trends.

Instagram influences **72%** of user purchase decisions, with the most purchased retail being clothing, makeup, shoes and jewelry. That's a lot of influence if you ask me!

Working with an influencer is an excellent way to (re)introduce your business to your target audience and stay top-of-mind when the holidays roll around, particularly if your goal is to reach millennials regardless of marketing budget size.



# Why Work with Influencers?

Influencer marketing is unique in that it allows consumers to see products in action - by real people.

Rather than hoping that your target customers will be able to visualize themselves wearing your new line of handbags, why not show them exactly how it looks on one of their favorite Instagram fashionistas?

Social media personalities (non-celebrities who are basically celebrities) have earned the trust of their followers, so when they recommend a product or service in their niche, their audience is more likely to convert to a new customer.

Utilizing an influential figure rather than dumping money into an expensive advertising campaign can help you avoid problematic social media algorithms and an upsurge in ad costs over the holidays.

Instead, let's increase your exposure to niche audiences who are more likely to spend their money using influencer holiday marketing.





# How Can You Work with Influencers This Holiday Season?

## Let the Influencer Take the Wheel

Influencer marketing is not about creating a new narrative; it's about how your business fits into the influencer's existing narrative. Their followers follow them for a reason.

Finding unique ways to apply sponsored content to their messaging is a powerful way to get your products in front of potential buyers, but let them do the messaging.

The best influencers are popular because they are creative. They know how to produce aesthetically pleasing photos, and they know how to integrate and promote products in a way that their audience will enjoy.

They know exactly who their audience is and what they like to see. And, they're usually way better at this than businesses are.

Rather than agonizing over how you're going to create a new holiday marketing campaign that stands out from the rest, simply give your influencer your product and a few message ideas, and they'll do the rest.

In fact, the fewer guidelines they have, the more creative they are likely to be when it comes to creating their content to their specific audience.

In return, your business will get an authentic message that promotes engagement and resonates with your future buyers. This is way less of an #ad feel and increases the chance for conversions.

## Choose Influencers that Embody Your Brand

An influencer marketing campaign is dropping a new set of wireless headphones on a beauty tutorial page.

While the influencer may reach some people who would be interested in the product, because hey, we all love music, it would be pretty limited.

This type of influencer is very niche and has a following largely consisting of people who want to learn makeup and skincare tips and tricks.

They aren't following this influencer for music advice, though they may listen, it's a stretch.

If the influencer suddenly posts a picture of themselves wearing these wireless headphones in a blatant #ad, it may be a bit off-putting and confusing.

There's no strategy there. What are they going to say about them?

"I love wearing these headphones while I wash my face?"

No.

On the contrary, dropping a new line of activewear on a popular yogi's social media page is the perfect way for a retailer to get the word out about their brand.

The influencer could talk about the quality of the materials, breathability, the selection, and the fit, helping their following understand if the clothing would work for them.

Those who practice yoga, or those who know someone who practices yoga, may think "What a cute workout set! This is the PERFECT Christmas present for so-and-so [or me]!"

As opposed to "why the hell is she promoting headphones? I came here to learn how to make my eyebrows on fleek. Unfollow."

Choosing personalities that already embody your brand is essential in influencer marketing. Otherwise, you'll be wasting your time and sponsored content dollars. But how can you find the right people?

Use explore tools to search hashtags that are relevant to your niche. Rather than browsing 'Recent,' select 'Top,' and you will dive into a wormhole of content posted by potential partners.

Because platforms like Instagram are visual engines, it should be easy to find someone who speaks to your brand and imaging.

You can even browse their content to see if they've done sponsored content before to get an idea of what you would be getting.

These days, followers are quite vocal when influencers become "sell-outs," and this is often when their content and messaging do not align with their existing narrative. Find the right influencer, and you will be more successful.

## Think Small

The best influencer(s) for your brand doesn't have to have a huge following (100,000+); micro-influencers (somewhere between 1,000 and 50,000 followers) are an excellent and more affordable way to reach the right people when you are just dipping your toes into influencer marketing, especially if you have a smaller budget.

Micro-influencers are the “average Joes or Janes” of social media; they are everyday people who don’t charge an arm and a leg for sponsored content. Plus, they tend to have a higher engagement rate than influencers with large followings.

They also often have a very specific audience, which is ideal for businesses looking to access a small niche group of people.

Because of the relevance and higher engagement rates, you could theoretically reach more people by working with several micro-influencers instead of working with just a couple of the big dogs. And it would cost you less, way less.

## Select a Focus for the Holiday Gift Guide

One of the biggest mistakes companies make is trying to promote all of their products at once.

We get it, you have a lot to offer! But the more you try to market, the more difficult it will be to sell in large quantities.

An effective influencer marketing campaign will focus on seasonal items or your best sellers. Put together a gift set or select a limited time product.

The more universal product selection, the better. This way, potential buyers don’t have to think too hard about which item to get. Instead, they know exactly what they want to get.



For example, if you sell skin care or beauty products, package up the top five customer favorites and sell them as a gift bundle.

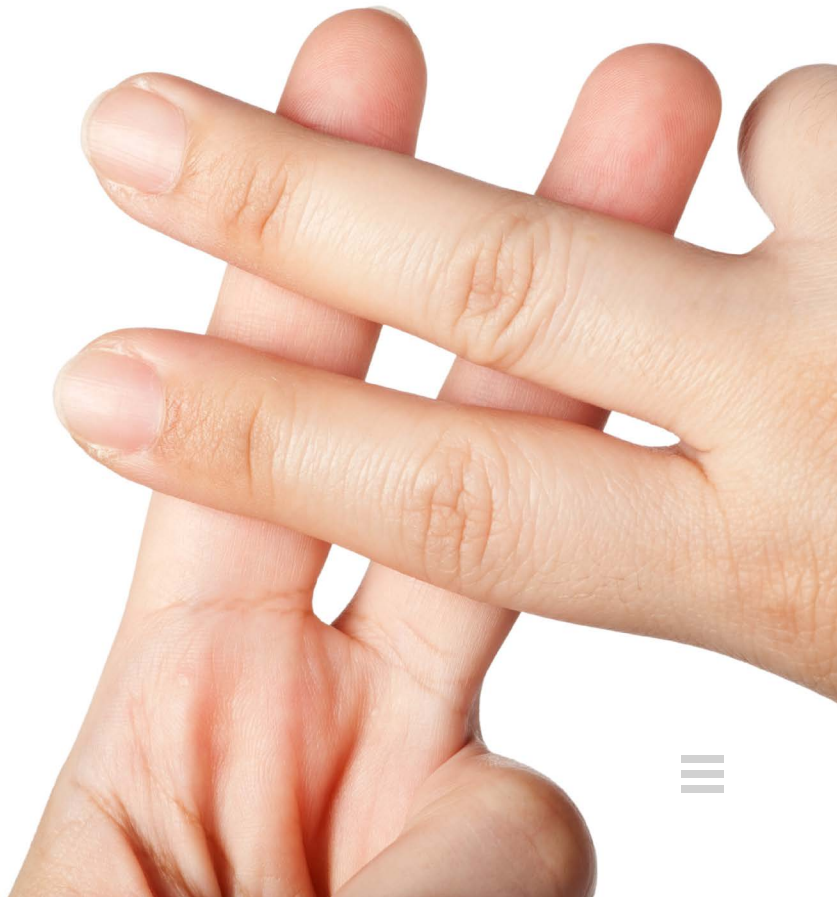
Find a selection of highly engaging beauty influencers and have them promote the set to their followers as the “**perfect gift**” for the beauty enthusiast.

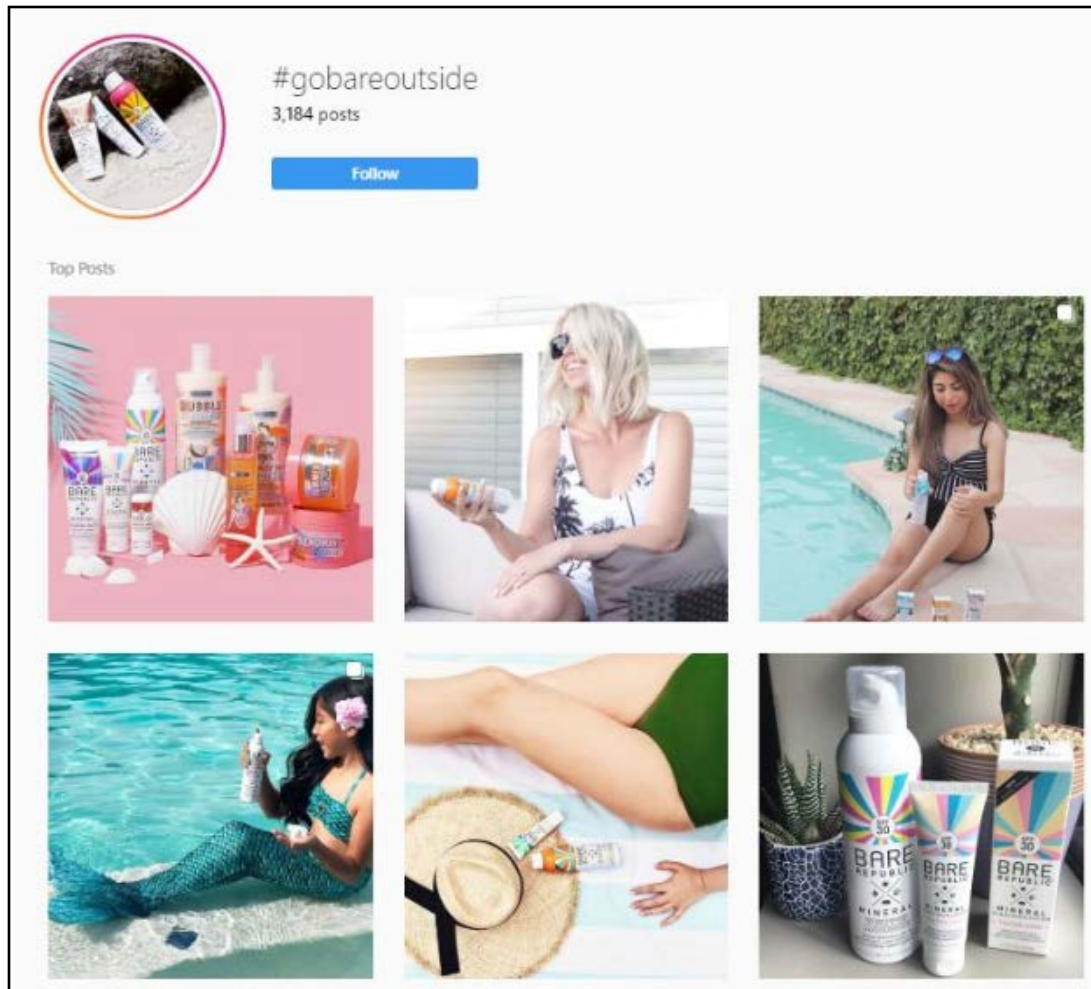
## Use Hashtags

Hashtags are one of the best ways for users to find new content that they know they will be interested in. In conjunction with your holiday campaign, create a unique, catchy, and relevant hashtags to be used by all involved influencers. This is usually just 1-2 hashtags, not 10.

For example, popular sunscreen brand Bare Republic uses their domain name as a hashtag for multiple purposes.

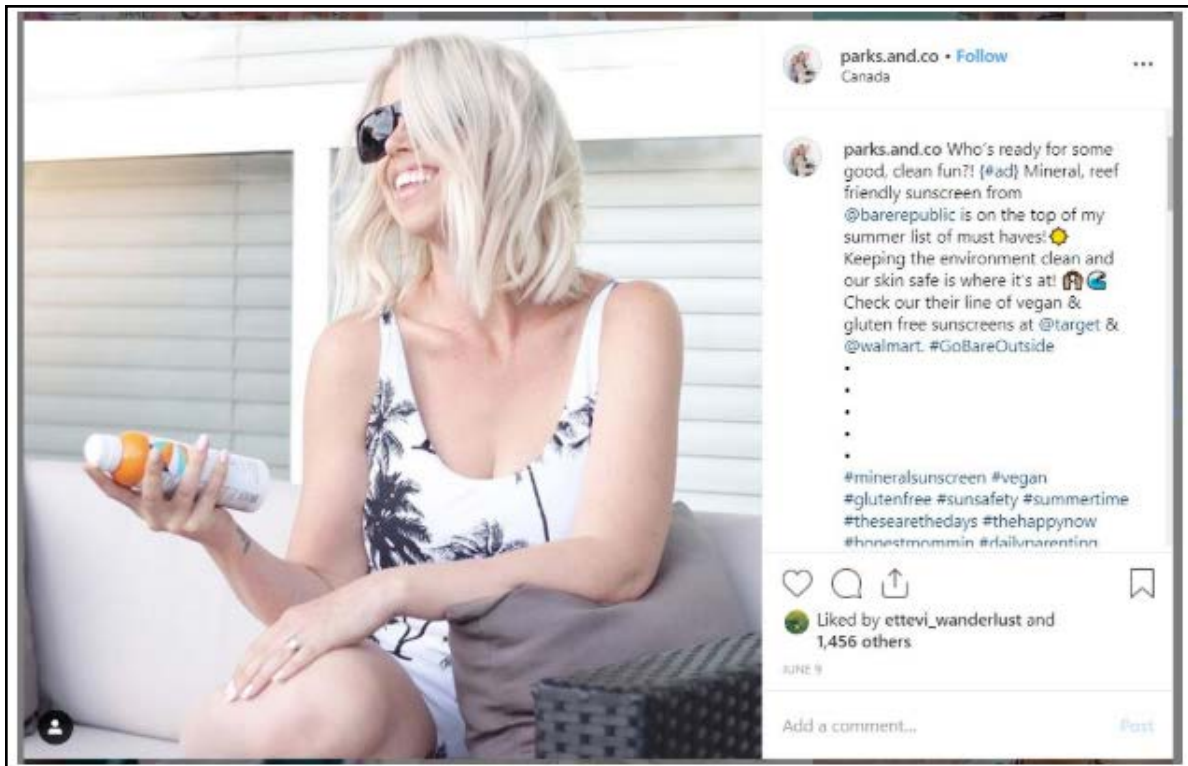
On Instagram, #GoBareOutside will show you several posts, all of which are directly associated with their branding.





Visiting any of these posts will tell you if the content was posted at an influencer's own free will, or if they were working in collaboration with a brand.

A [post](#) by @parks.and.co shows us that this influencer not only used #GoBareOutside, but also #ad, which indicates that they were paid to promote this product.



Bare Republic also uses this hashtag to gain permission to share other influencer's content on their own feed.

Here, Ulta Beauty made a [post](#) about Bare Republic being available in their store, and the brand liked the content enough that they wanted to post it, too. So, they asked Ulta to hashtag

#GoBareOutside.



Hashtags are an extremely useful way to batch up content related to your campaigns and direct potential buyers to more information related to your brand.

# Include an Urgent Call-to-Action

All holiday marketing campaigns should include a clear call-to-action, and sponsored influencer campaigns are no exception.

When it comes to the Instagram influencer, this can come in many forms. If they are promoting your content in their Instagram stories, they may prompt viewers to “swipe up” to visit your website or landing page.

If they are promoting a product in a post, they may say to “tap” the photo for shoppable products, or to “click the link in bio” to access more information.

They may even ask that followers participate in a holiday giveaway by following your brand’s page and engaging with a post.

No matter what you want your influencer to do, be sure to track any and all links to measure the effectiveness of your campaign. Some brands even use influencer-specific hashtags to help track the incoming traffic.

In short, one of the best ways to maximize your business profits this holiday season is by partnering with influencers.

What better way to target your preferred customer than by promoting your products or services through a popular social media figure?



## Chapter 8

# How to Create a Holiday Content Strategy

**SEJ**  
EBOOK

Written By  
**Jessica Foster**  
Founder and lead SEO Content Writer,  
Keys&Copy



**Between the eggnog, the turkey, and fruitcake cookies, you may be prepping to get stuffed full of holiday goodies and holiday spirit.**

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But is your content calendar just as stuffed full of holiday-ready content ideas?

Without proper planning, your business's holiday marketing may be about as effective as a lump of coal. It's never too early to start planning your holiday content.

**W**hether it's Black Friday or Christmas or New Year's Eve, every holiday presents an opportunity to stand out from your competitors and grab some of that holiday traffic.

Having a content game plan even months in advance ensures that you won't be stressing when the holidays come around.

Want to get a head start and create a content "advent" calendar of your own?

Here's how to plan out all of your holiday marketing content while still having time to enjoy the festivities.

# Anticipate the Trends

The holidays come around every year, so whether you have been in business for a while or are just starting out, it's likely that you're aware of some [yearly trends](#). If not, it's worth a Google search to pull up studies that have the stats from previous holiday seasons.

For example, one study found that [mobile app usage](#) and mobile shopping go up during the holidays – likely because people are trying to avoid the crowds and the inconvenience of making multiple shopping trips.

At the same time, marketing trends show that more consumers are [on the prowl for deals](#) during this time of year, trying to strike a bargain to save some cash.

What does this mean for your content strategy?



Well, by staying in tune with the trends, you can better anticipate what type of content will strike a chord with your audience.

Do you need more articles optimized for mobile search?

Need to launch some sweet discounts?

Are users searching for holiday gift guides?

With the numbers in front of you, you can create content that you know people will be looking for.





# Ask Your Audience

Can't find data regarding holiday trends in your industry? Ask your audience what they want.

Many marketers and content creators skip the market research step even when it comes to regular content planning, thinking that they already know what their target audience wants.

The truth is, the best way to know is to ask them directly.

Prior to creating your holiday content strategy, send your audience surveys regarding what kind of content they are hoping to see during the holidays.

**They may not tell you outright, but you can brainstorm some of your own ideas based on their answers to questions like:**

- What's your #1 concern going into this holiday season?
- How are you planning for the holidays this year?
- What are you most looking forward to during the holidays this year?
- How could [your brand] help your holidays run smoother?
- What's your best holiday memory?

The list of questions can go on and on, but the goal is to get a better idea about their goals/concerns/struggles/interests going into the holidays. With this information, you can plan out content that is of interest to your audience.

Further, sharing a survey is a great opportunity to tell them, "Hey! Look out for our great holiday content coming out soon!"

# Audit Your Existing Content

Before you create any new content, you need to audit your existing content to assess what you already have, what content could be updated, and what new content should be created.

If you have been in business for a while and have published holiday-related content before, it may be possible to update your content for the new season. Or, it may make sense to start from scratch.

Ultimately, it depends on whether the content is current enough to be relevant for the upcoming holidays and whether there is ample traffic potential.

For example, with holiday content, often users are looking for tips, gifts, news, and trends for the current year. They may be searching for “2019 holiday guide” or “best new years party ideas 2019”.

Your 2018 guides may be chock-full of last year's keywords. The tips or products on the list could be outdated. You should decide whether you should optimize it for the current year, or write a completely new piece of content.

You should also factor in existing content for internal linking purposes to help drive traffic to additional pages on your website.





# Activate Creative Content Planning

Once you have some past holiday data on-hand and some tip-offs from your existing audience, you can dive into the fun part of content planning.

Now's your chance to think outside the box and brainstorm content ideas that are relevant to the holidays.

Using organic keyword research is a great place to start.

You can play around with holiday-related terms and identify keywords that are work creating content around for your site. If your marketing strategy involves search engine optimization, this is the way to go.

However, you may want to create content for other marketing channels as well. Google Ads, Facebook Ads, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, and email marketing are all channels to consider.



Have a brainstorming session and see what you can come up with.





## Align Topics with Your Goals

Of course, not every content idea is going to be gold. After generating an exhaustive list of ideas, it's time to narrow it down. It helps to start by identifying which content ideas most closely align with your business goals.

For instance, if your goal is to generate more organic traffic, sending gift boxes to Instagram influencers may not be the way to go.

Similarly, if you are hoping to create a buzz on social media, pouring all of your energy into a 30 Days of Holiday Deals email campaign likely won't get you there.

**Pick out the content ideas that:**

- Align with your existing business goals.
- You know you can execute successfully.

Diving into new waters during the thick of the holiday season could result in a dire sink or swim situation for your content marketing.



# Arrange Topics by Timeliness & Priority

On theme with the point above, your holiday content needs to “make sense” for your business.

In other words, it should be strategic, planned out, purposeful, and on-brand. Simply creating content for the sake of being festive won’t do much for your marketing.

That’s why it’s recommended to also consider arranging your content in terms of timeliness and priority.

Not only should the content be ready for launch prior to the actual holiday, but if you are creating multiple pieces for a single holiday, the content should make sense in progression.

For example, a “Complete Guide to Getting More Holiday Traffic” would naturally come before the “Ultimate Guide to Converting Holiday Traffic into Leads”.

Assuming your audience will encounter multiple pieces of content from your brand, it’s best that your content is organized in a sensical and strategic way.





# Add Seasonal Photos

The holidays are full of feel-good smells, sights, and sounds. Tap into that nostalgia and the holiday spirit by adding seasonal images to your content.

[Images](#) have been found to make content more engaging, and one of the best ways to snag some of that holiday traffic is to engage users with some festive, attention-grabbing images.

If your budget allows, ditch the stock photos and capture some high-quality images of your own.

Or, hire a graphic designer to make some on-season images for your blog posts, social media posts, and ad campaigns.

You can then repurpose this content across platforms, saving you time and money on your holiday content marketing.

# Advertise Your Content Across Platforms

When it comes to content creation, I'm not a big fan of the "post and pray" method myself.

Why rely on one platform when you could generate traffic from multiple channels with a single piece of content?

### **Some platforms worth sharing your content on include:**

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Your blog
- YouTube
- Email
- LinkedIn
- Instagram
- Paid ads
- Reddit
- Pinterest
- Guest blogs

Map out a content plan and schedule that includes when and how you plan on posting your content across multiple platforms.

With tools like Buffer and Hootsuite, you can even write your captions and set the featured images in advance.

Simply schedule it out ahead of time and you won't be scrambling to post content during the holidays.



# Analyze Results

To truly make the most of your holiday content marketing, it's best to monitor progress and adjust your content accordingly.

While it may be tempting to simply publish and put up your feet, it's likely that readers will have questions, and inquiries will come flooding in.

You should be prepared to handle an influx of new leads and traffic.

On the other hand, you may find that your content doesn't go viral and that you need to tweak things to give it a boost.

You or someone on your team should be available to respond to readers' comments, fix technical issues, further optimize content, and put out any fires that may come up.

Information is power, and having the data at your fingertips will give you the power to make major improvements in your content and learn valuable content planning lessons for the future.





# Apply Past Lessons to Future Content

If creating a holiday content strategy isn't your first rodeo, it's likely you have a few tips and tricks that you have picked up from previous years.

If so, it's best to avoid making the same mistakes twice. Some risks just don't pay off, especially when paired with the stress of the holidays.

On the other hand, maybe your content strategy has always gone off without a hitch, or you are diving into the world of holiday content planning for the very first time.

Even so, be sure to align your content with your business goals, create content that your audience is interested in, and add that special, festive touch for the holiday season.

## *Chapter 9*

# The Ultimate Holiday Marketing Calendar for 2020 [Template]

**SEJ**  
EBOOK

Written By  
**Anna Crowe**  
Assistant Editor, Search Engine Journal



# It's almost the season to be jolly.

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And, what could possibly be jollier than opening up your marketing budget, commandeering an office space, and settling in for a 2020 marketing calendar marathon?

With 2019 almost behind us, it's time to set your sights on next year's marketing campaigns. That means a lot of **#CatDad photos**, "New Year, new you" messaging, and pumpkin spice lattes.

**C**onsider this your ultimate holiday marketing calendar for 2020. Many of the holidays listed here are classics; some are feel-good holidays, and some are made up by brand themselves.

Trust me, you'll want to bookmark this.

If you'd like to gain more inspiration, [take a look at the 2019 and 2018 holiday marketing calendars.](#)

If you would like me to add more holidays, topics, or just have feedback please fill out [this form](#). I review all the feedback and comments before building 2021 marketing calendar. Thank you!



# 2020 Free Marketing Calendar Templates

Whether you're the kind of marketer who starts feeling festive in July or you're the wait-until-Christmas-break type, there's no doubt that prepping your 2020 holiday marketing comes with a cornucopia of stressors.

The good news is that I've started the planning process for you.

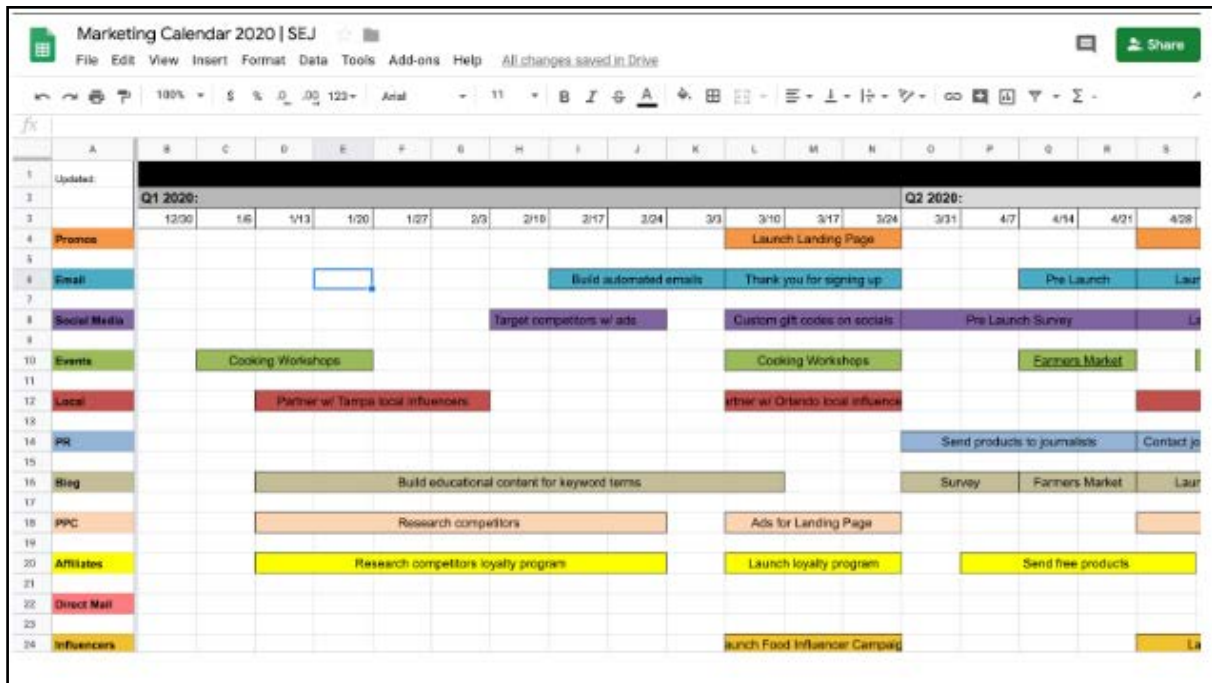
Ahead, I've shared my two holiday marketing calendar templates for 2020 including a Google calendar and spreadsheet. That will help you get through the season like a boss.

Yep – these holiday marketing calendar templates may be the best gift you've ever received.



# 2020 Marketing Calendar

[Here is the marketing calendar for 2020.](#)



The tab titled “All Holidays + Google Calendar” can be used to upload to Google Calendar.

Your 2020 marketing calendar is going to be above and beyond—all with a seasonal twist. Let’s keep it going with a breakdown of all the holidays, big events, and inspiration campaigns.



# Your 2020 Holiday Marketing Calendar

I've separated this calendar by month, so you can jump to a certain month with one click below:

[January](#)  
[February](#)  
[March](#)  
[April](#)  
[May](#)  
[June](#)  
[July](#)  
[August](#)  
[September](#)  
[October](#)  
[November](#)  
[December](#)

# January

Right now, there's a good chance that your target audience is getting bombarded by winter sales and gym workouts on Instagram.

The thing is, January is the time to experience a refresh. Along with this rejuvenation, comes college football games, SAG awards, and Elvis's birthday.

If you're not sure where to begin when crafting your January marketing campaigns, ahead are holidays, sporting events, birthdays, and more to celebrate in January.

## **Monthly Observances**

Weight Loss Awareness Month  
National Blood Donor Month  
National Thank You Month  
National Hobby Month  
National Tea Month  
Girl Scout Cookie Season Begins

## **Weekly Observances**

January 1-7 – Diet Resolution Week  
January 14-20 – Hunt For Happiness Week  
January 15-19 – Sugar Awareness Week  
January 22-26 – Clean Out Your Inbox Week  
January 22-26 – National School Choice Week  
January 28-February 2 – Meat Week

## Days

January 1 – New Year's Day  
January 1 – National Hangover Day  
January 1 – Outback Bowl  
January 1 – Rose Bowl  
January 1 – NHL Winter Classic  
January 1-5 – PGA Tournament of Champions  
January 2 – Science Fiction Day  
January 3 – Festival of Sleep Day  
January 4 – Trivia Day  
January 5 – Golden Globes  
January 5 – National Bird Day  
January 6 – National Bean Day  
January 6 – Cuddle Up Day  
January 8 – Elvis's Birthday  
January 9 – National Take the Stairs Day  
January 10 – Girl Scout Cookie Pre-Sales Begin  
January 10 – National Bittersweet Chocolate Day  
January 10 – Houseplant Appreciation Day  
January 11 – National Human Trafficking Awareness Day  
January 13 – College Football Playoff National Championship  
January 13 – Oscar nominations announced  
January 13 – National Sticker Day  
January 14 – Dress Up Your Pet Day  
January 14 – National Clean Off Your Desk Day  
January 15 – National Hat Day  
January 17 – Ditch New Year's Resolutions Day  
January 17 – Get To Know Your Customer's Day  
January 18 – Winnie the Pooh Day (Author A.A. Milne's birthday)  
January 19 – National Popcorn Day



January 20 – Penguin Awareness Day  
January 20 – National Cheese Lover's Day  
January 21 – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day  
January 21 – National Hugging Day  
January 23 – Sundance Film Festival begins  
January 23-26 – Winter X Games  
January 23 – National Pie Day  
January 24 – Compliment Day  
January 24 – National Peanut Butter Day  
January 25 – Opposite Day  
January 25 – Chinese New Year  
January 26 – SAG Awards  
January 26 – Grammy's  
January 26 – Spouse's Day  
January 26 – National Hockey League All-Star Game  
January 27 – Chocolate Cake Day  
January 28 – Fun at Work Day  
January 28 – Community Manager Appreciation Day #CMAD  
January 28 – Data Privacy Day  
January 29 – National Puzzle Day  
January 31 – Backward Day

### **Popular hashtags for January:**

[#NewYearsDay](#)

[#ScienceFictionDay](#)

[#NationalTriviaDay](#)

[#NationalBirdDay](#)

[#HumanTraffickingDay](#)

[#NationalStickerDay](#)

[#CleanOffYourDeskDay](#)

[#NationalHatDay](#)  
[#GetToKnowYourCustomersDay](#)  
[#CheeseLoversDay](#)  
[#MLKDay](#)  
[#NationalHuggingDay](#)  
[#PieDay](#)  
[#NationalComplimentDay](#)  
[#OppositeDay](#)  
[#CMAD](#)  
[#PrivacyAware](#)

## Examples of January holiday marketing campaigns for brands:

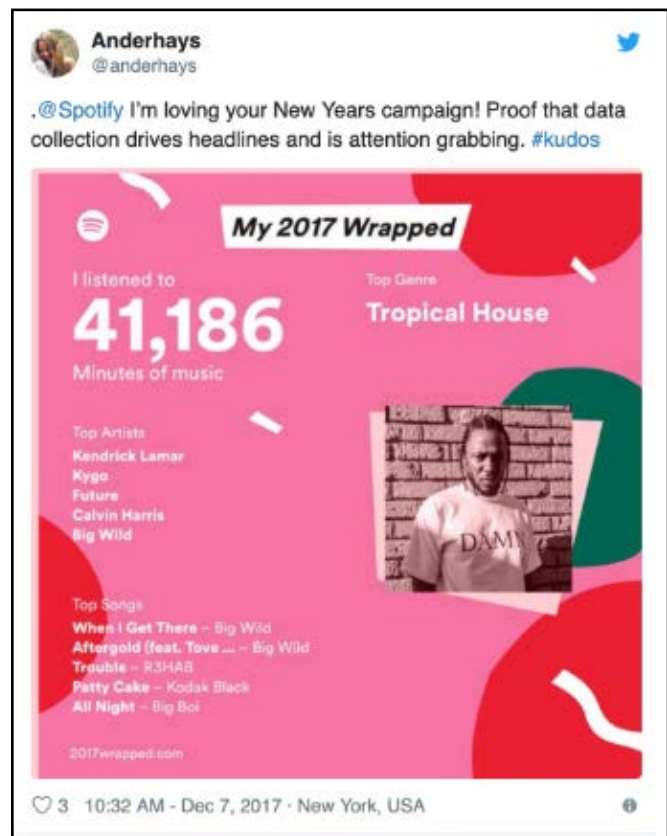


<https://twitter.com/BurgerKing/status/956166686054408192>



<https://twitter.com/Refugees/status/1089477617978228736>

<https://twitter.com/anderhays/status/938778212171165697>





<https://twitter.com/Refugees/status/1089477617978228736>

# February

February is extra special this year. It's not all about Valentine's Day, Fashion Week, or Super Bowl Sunday (okay, maybe it is).

This year, February packs a punch with an extra day because it's a leap year. February 29 happens every four years to keep us aligned with orbit around the sun.

So, what's a marketer to do in February to target the right audience?

First, wish for spring to begin. And, second, keep scrolling for all the inspiration you need to make February a high-performing month for your business.

## Monthly Observances

Black History Month  
American Heart Month  
National Heart Month  
National Weddings Month  
National Cherry Month

## Weekly Observances

February 1-7 Eating Disorder Awareness Week  
February 6-13 – New York Fashion Week  
February 10-16 – Freelance Writers Appreciation Week  
February 13-19 – International Flirting Week  
February 14-21 – Condom Week



February 14-20 – Random Acts of Kindness Week  
February 14-18 – London Fashion Week  
February 18-24 – Milan Fashion Week  
February 24-March 4 – Paris Fashion Week

## **Days**

February 1 – National Freedom Day  
February 2 – Groundhog Day  
February 2 – Bubble Gum Day  
February 2 – Super Bowl Sunday  
February 3-9 – AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am  
February 4 – World Cancer Day  
February 5 – World Nutella Day  
February 5 – National Weatherperson's Day  
February 6 – National Chopsticks Day  
February 7 – Wear Red Day  
February 7 – Give Kids a Smile Day  
February 7 – Send a Card to a Friend Day  
#SendACardToAFriendDay  
February 8 – Boy Scout's Day  
February 9 – National Pizza Day  
February 9 – Oscars Ceremony  
February 10 – Umbrella Day  
February 11 – Make a Friend Day  
February 12 – Lincoln's Birthday  
February 14 – Valentine's Day  
February 15 – Susan B. Anthony's Birthday  
February 15 – Singles Awareness Day  
February 17 – Random Acts of Kindness Day  
February 18 – Drink Wine Day

February 18 – Presidents Day  
February 20 – Love Your Pet Day  
February 22 – Washington’s Birthday  
February 22 – Margarita Day  
February 22 – Walk Your Dog Day  
February 24 – National Tortilla Chip Day  
February 25 – Mardi Gras/Fat Tuesday  
February 26 – National Pistachio Day  
February 26 – Ash Wednesday  
February 28 – Floral Design Day  
February 28 – Girl Scout Cookie Booth Sales Begin

**Popular hashtags for February:**

[#GroundhogDay](#)

[#WorldCancerDay](#)

[#NationalWeatherpersonsDay](#)

[#SendACardToAFriendDay](#)

[#BoyScoutsDay](#)

[#NationalPizzaDay](#)

[#ValentinesDay](#)

[#RandomActsOfKindnessDay](#)

[#PresidentsDay](#)

[#LoveYourPetDay](#)

**Examples of February holiday marketing campaigns for brands:**



<https://twitter.com/jtimberlake/status/960965962483736577>

Field Notes Brand

## TODAY IS WEDNESDAY (AND VALENTINE'S DAY TOO)

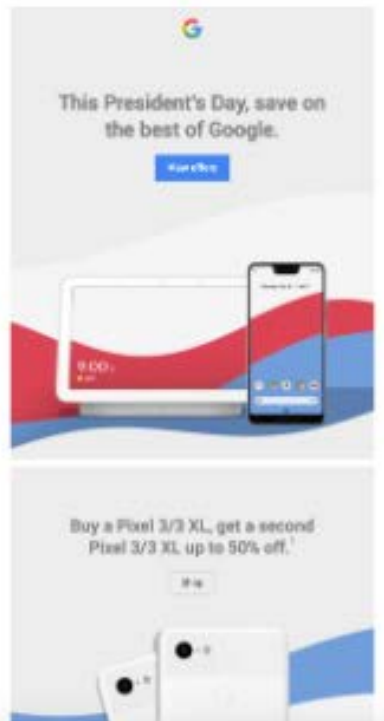
Wednesday, February 14th, 2018  
[View in your browser](#)

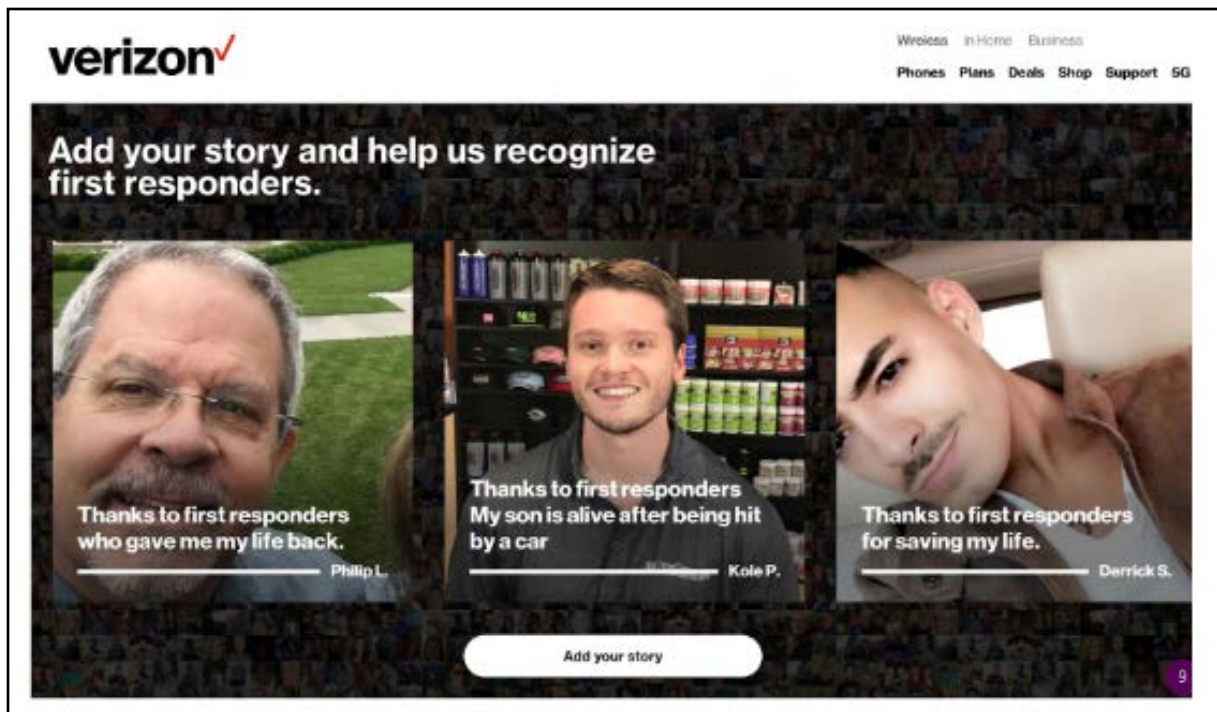
Simplest. Offer. Ever. **Today only, buy anything and get a special Field Notes "Heartbeat" 2-Pack free.** No coupon codes. No minimums. No bull. Heck, you don't even need to be aware of the deal. If you buy something today, you're in. But get moving, as we expect Thursday to roll in sometime later tonight.

We might make this offer again in the future. But, if you're going to wait, keep in mind that the next time Valentine's Day falls on a Wednesday will be in 2024.



Free "Heartbeat" 2-Pack. One for you. One for your boo.





<https://allourthanks.com/>



<https://www.target.com/c/celebrate-black-history-month/-/N-4utaz?Nao=0>

# March

Just when you are finally out of your holiday winter slump, Daylight Saving Time catches us all longing for a nap.

Although there's no amount of coffee that can help you prepare for the upcoming month, I did share a few marketing campaign ideas below to get you started.

From the World Wildlife Day to International Women's Day, March has a lot to offer.

## **Monthly Observances**

Women's History Month

Nutrition Month

Peanut Month

Music in Our Schools Month

Craft Month

Irish Heritage Month

American Red Cross Month

March for Meals

The Great American Cleanup

## **Weekly Observances**

March 23-28 – National Sleep Awareness Week

March 12-17 – Girl Scout Week

March 12-17 – Campfire Birthday Week

March 26-31 – National Cleaning Week



## Days

March 1 – Employee Appreciation Day  
March 1 – Peanut Butter Lover’s Day  
March 2 – National Read Across America Day (Dr. Seuss Day)  
March 2-8 – Arnold Palmer Invitational PGA  
March 3 – Day of Unplugging  
March 3 – World Wildlife Day  
March 4 – Grammar Day  
March 6 – Dentist’s Day  
March 6 – Oreo Day  
March 6 – Shaq’s Birthday  
March 7 – Cereal Day  
March 8 – Popcorn Lover’s Day  
March 8 – Girl Scout Day  
March 8 – International Women’s Day  
March 8 – Daylight Savings  
March 10-15 – The Players Championship PGA  
March 11 – Napping Day  
March 13 – Jewel Day  
March 14 – Pi Day  
March 15 – The Ides of March  
March 16-22 – SXSW  
March 16 – World Sleep Day  
March 17 – St. Patrick’s Day  
March 18 –Awkward Moments Day  
March 19 – First Day of Spring  
March 20 – Agriculture Day  
March 20 – World Down Syndrome Day  
March 21 – International Day for the Elimination of Racial  
Discrimination  
March 22 – World Water Day

March 23 – Puppy Day  
March 24 – American Diabetes Association Alert Day  
March 26 – Purple Day for Epilepsy Awareness  
March 26 – Baseball Opening Day  
March 29 – Mom & Pop Business Owners Day  
March 30 – National Doctor's Day  
March 30 – Earth Hour Day  
March 31 – Crayon Day  
March 31 – Transgender Day of Visibility

**Popular hashtags for March:**

[#PeanutButterLoversDay](#)  
[#EmployeeAppreciationDay](#)  
[#ReadAcrossAmerica](#)  
[#DrSeuss](#)  
[#WorldWildlifeDay](#)  
[#NationalGrammarDay](#)  
[#BeBoldForChange](#)  
[#DaylightSavings](#)  
[#PiDay](#)  
[#StPatricksDay](#)  
[#FirstDayofSpring](#)  
[#RacialDiscriminationDay](#)  
[#WorldWaterDay](#)  
[#NationalPuppyDay](#)  
[#PurpleDay](#)  
[#AmericanDiabetesAssociationAlertDay](#)  
[#NationalDoctorsDay](#)  
[#EarthHour](#)  
[#TDOV](#)

## Examples of March holiday marketing campaigns for brands:



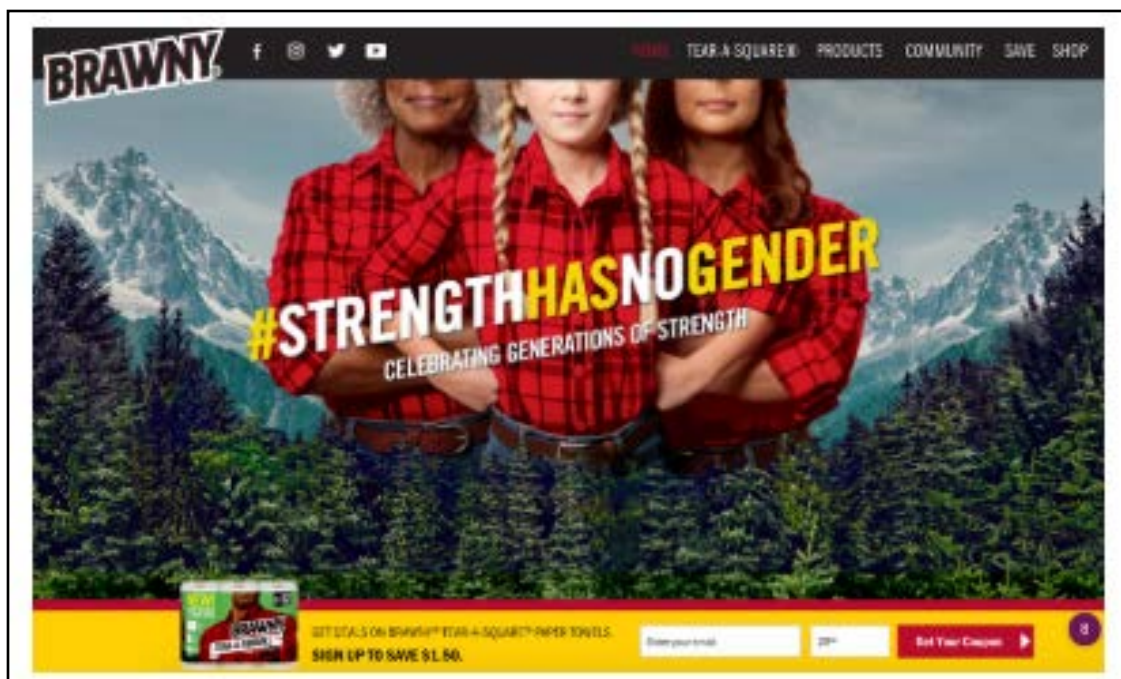
<https://www.instagram.com/p/Bv9MAdclOmP/>



<https://youtu.be/U3aXwogrFrY>



<https://twitter.com/corbysw/status/842776052002967552>



<https://www.brawny.com/strengthhasnogender>

# April

## Monthly Observances

Earth Month

National Volunteer Month

National Autism Awareness Month

Keep America Beautiful Month

National Garden Month

Stress Awareness Month

National Poetry Month

## Weekly Observances

April 15-22 – National Volunteer Week

April 16-22- Animal Cruelty/Human Violence Awareness Week

April 23-29 – Administrative Professionals Week

April 22-28 – Every Kid Healthy Week

April 22-28 – National Princess Week

## Days

April 1 – April Fool's Day

April 2 – World Autism Awareness Day

April 2 – National Peanut Butter and Jelly Day

April 3 – Don't Go To Work Unless it's Fun Day

April 3 – Find a Rainbow Day

April 3 – National Walking Day

April 4 – School Librarian Day

April 5 – Palm Sunday

April 6-12 – Masters Tournament PGA

April 7 – World Health Day

April 7 – National Beer Day



April 9 – Winston Churchill Day  
April 9 – Equal Pay Day  
April 10 – Good Friday  
April 10 – Free Cone Day (Ben & Jerry's)  
April 10 – Golfer's Day  
April 10-19 – Coachella Music Festival  
April 11 – National Pet Day  
April 12 – Easter Sunday  
April 12 – National Grilled Cheese Day  
April 15 – National Titanic Remembrance Day  
April 15 – Tax Day  
April 15 – National High-Five Day  
April 20 – Lookalike Day  
April 20 – Boston Marathon  
April 22 – Earth Day  
April 22 – Administrative Professionals Day  
April 23 – Take Your Daughter and/or Son to Work Day  
April 24 – Denim Day  
April 27 – Arbor Day  
April 28 – National Superhero Day  
April 30 – National Honesty Day  
April 30 – National Adopt a Shelter Pet Day

### **Popular hashtags for April:**

[#AprilFools](#)

[#WAAD](#)

[#FindARainbowDay](#)

[#NationalWalkingDay](#)

[#LetsTalk](#)

[#EqualPayDay](#)

[#TaxDay](#)

[#NH5D](#)

[#NationalLookAlikeDay](#)

[#AdministrativeProfessionalsDay](#)

[#DenimDay](#)

[#EndMalariaForGood](#)

[#COUNTONME](#)

[#ArborDay](#)

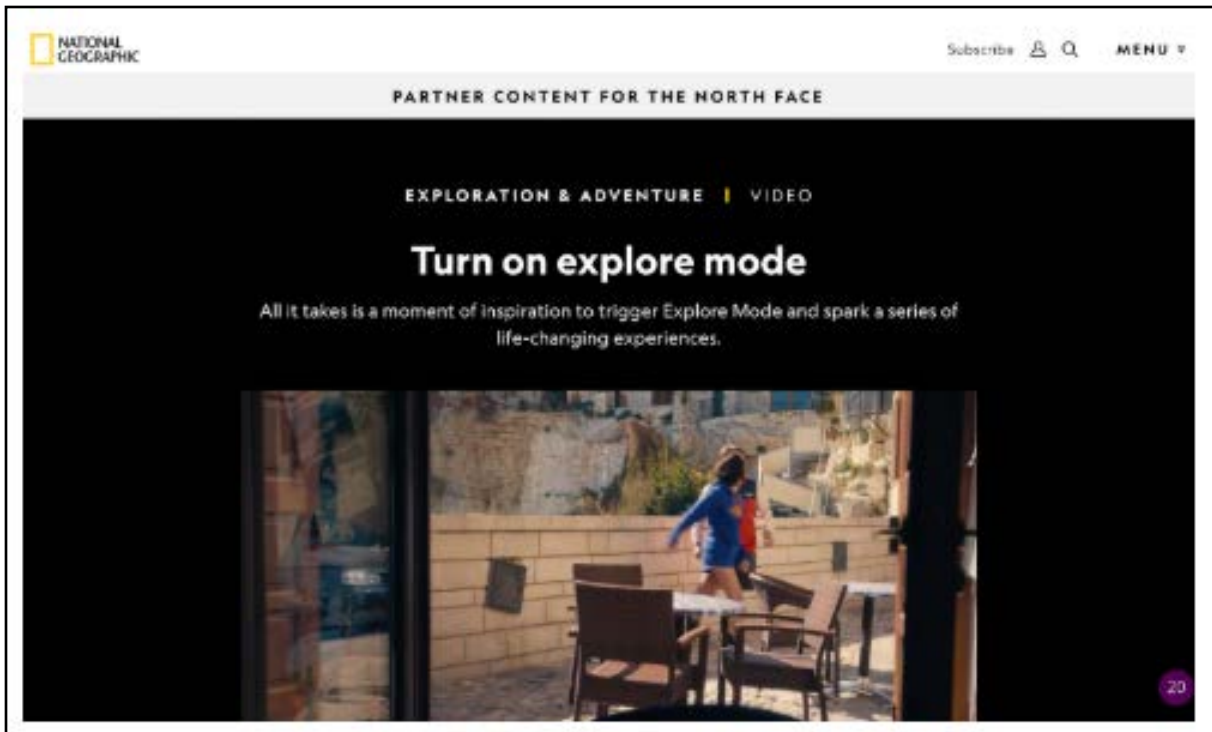
[#NationalHonestyDay](#)

[#AdoptAShelterPetDay](#)

### **Examples of April holiday marketing campaigns for brands:**

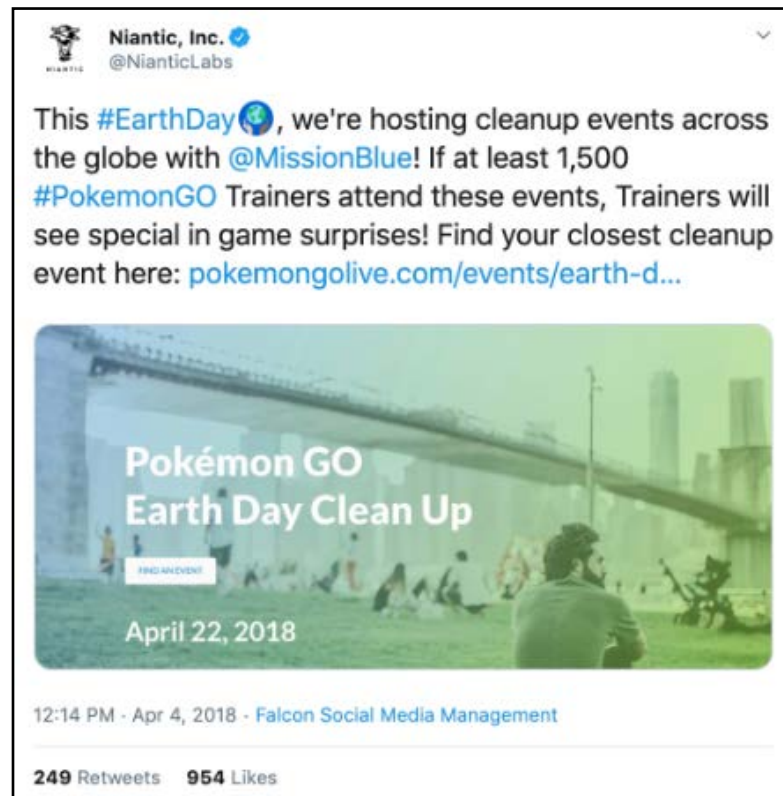
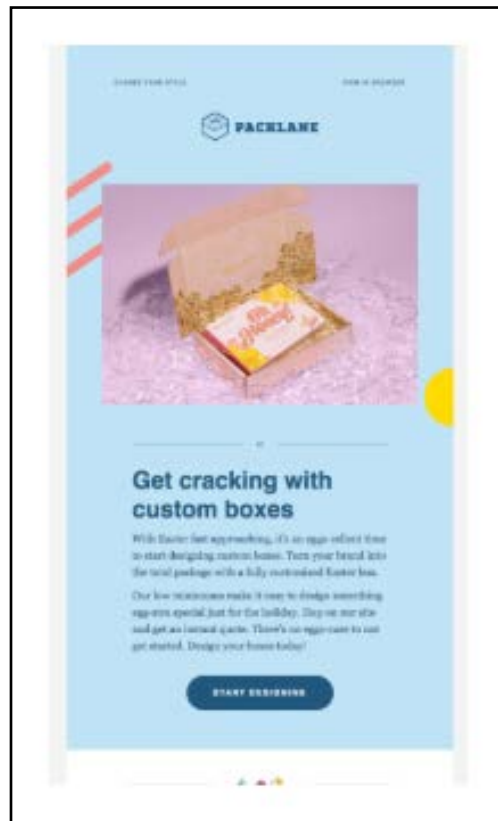


<https://youtu.be/dT583En6-28>



<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/adventure/2019/04/partner-content-exploring-adventures/>





<https://twitter.com/nianticlabs/status/981565580636508162?lang=en>

# May

May is here which means the nights are only getting hotter and longer.

That also means that it's time for #MayThe4thBeWithYou hashtags, tequila, big hats, and BBQ.

May doesn't just celebrate the start of summer with a day OOO, it also kicks off our summer marketing campaigns.

## Monthly Observances

ALS Awareness

Asthma Awareness

National Celiac Disease Awareness Month

Clean Air Month

Global Employee Health and Fitness Month

National Barbecue Month

National Bike Month

National Hamburger Month

National Salad Month

National Photograph Month

Gifts from the Garden Month

Lupus Awareness Month

Military Family Appreciation Month

## Weekly Observances

Food Allergy Awareness Week (second full week of May)

April 30-May 4 – National Tourism Week

April 30-May 4 – Drinking Water Week



April 30-May 4 – National Pet Week  
May 7-11 – Teacher Appreciation Week  
May 6- 12 – Nurse's Week

## **Days**

May 1 – Red Nose Day (date for 2020 not announced yet)  
May 1 – May Day  
May 1 – Mother Goose Day  
May 2 – World Password Day  
May 2 – Kentucky Derby  
May 2 – Thank A Teacher Day  
May 4 – Star Wars Day  
May 4 – International Firefighters Day  
May 5 – Cinco De Mayo  
May 6 – National Nurses Day  
May 8 – World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day  
May 8 – National Teacher's Day  
May 9 – National Receptionists Day  
May 10 – Military Spouse Appreciation Day  
May 11 – Eat What You Want Day  
May 12 – World Fair Trade Day  
May 12 – Mother's Day  
May 14-17 – PGA Championship  
May 15 – National Chocolate Chip Day  
May 16 – Love a Tree Day  
May 18 – Armed Forces Day  
May 18 – National Bike to Work Day  
May 18 – NASCAR Day  
May 18-Jun 7 – French Open  
May 19 – Armed Forces Day  
May 22 – Indianapolis 500

May 20 – Be a Millionaire Day  
May 24 – Victoria Day (Canada)  
May 25 – Memorial Day  
May 25 – Geek Pride Day  
May 25 – National Wine Day  
May 26 – Sally Ride Day  
May 31 – World No-Tobacco Day

### Popular hashtags for May:

[#RedNoseDay](#)

[#MayDay](#)

[#WorldPasswordDay](#)

[#StarWarsDay](#) & [#Maythe4thBeWithYou](#)

[#InternationalFirefightersDay](#)

[#CincoDeMayo](#)

[#MothersDay](#)

[#BTWD](#)

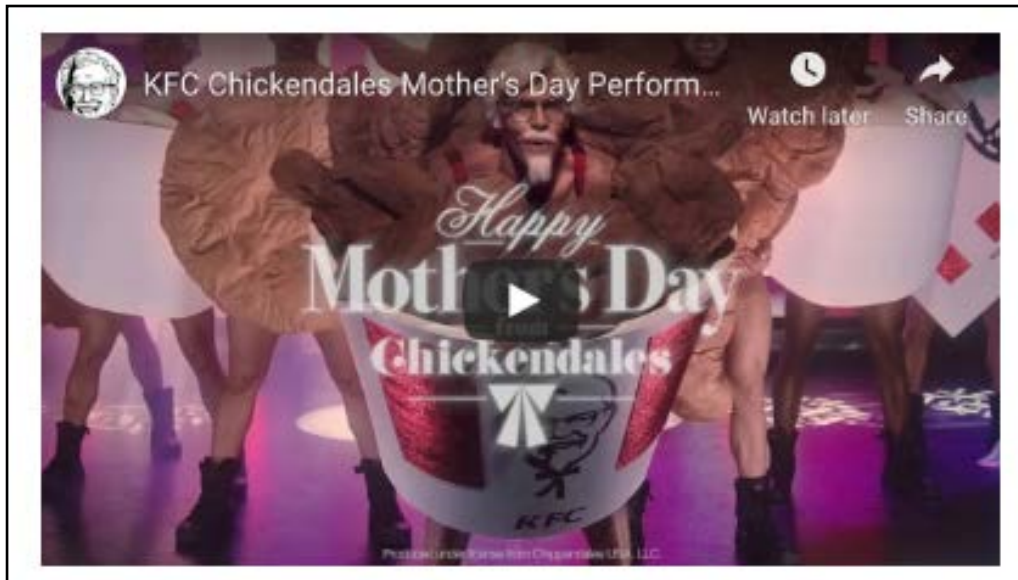
[#MemorialDay](#) [#MDW](#)

[#NoTobacco](#)

### Examples of May holiday marketing for brands:



<https://youtu.be/8VytXc9rZS8>



<https://youtu.be/8VytXc9rZS8>



<https://youtu.be/J5pDFxWpm8U>



## Cinco de Mayo and Guac: #NoGuacNoCinco #gno Twitter Party

#gno information! • #gno featured

by Nikki Abad on April 24th, 2019 : 8 Comments -

Get some Avocados From Mexico, make guacamole, and get your patio ready because it's that time of the year - Cinco de Mayo!



No Cinco de Mayo is complete without a toast to Mexico, its people, and Avocados From Mexico. Make guacamole, anytime, anywhere! Whether you're joining the festivities on the streets, with friends at a bar, or unfortunately got stuck in an elevator or on a deserted island, you have a Cinco de Mayo party if there's guac around!

Don't forget to mark your calendar and join us on Tuesday, April 30 as we share some great ideas for Cinco Mayo celebrations with lots of guac with @AvosFromMexico!

### Party Topic:

Join @AvosFromMexico and Mom It Forward as we kick off the Cinco de Mayo celebration. The party will be held on April 30, 2019, from 8:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. ET (7 CT, 6 MT, 5 PT). See giveaway info [here](#).

<http://momitforward.com/cinco-de-mayo-and-guac-noguacnocinco-gno-twitter-party/>



<https://twitter.com/tacobell/status/728343571619680256>



<https://youtu.be/6AoXDSRwAvU>



# June

Brace yourself, we're half way through the year. That means heat waves, #RadDadsSquad pics, rainbow flags in shop windows, and summer getaways.

So while you're dusting off the BBQ or hitting the links, now is the time to create shareable marketing campaigns like the ALS ice bucket challenge or the IHOP's IHOb campaign.

Because if you don't share it on social, did it really happen?

## Monthly Observances

Men's Health Month  
National Safety Month  
Acne Awareness Month  
LGBTQ Pride Month  
National Adopt a Cat Month  
Aquarium Month  
Candy Month

## Weekly Observances

June 4-10 – Pet Appreciation Week  
June 12-18 – Men's Health Week

## Days

June 1 – National Donut Day  
June 2 – National Rocky Road Day  
June 4 – Hug Your Cat Day  
June 4 – National Cheese Day

June 5 – World Environment Day  
June 7 – National Chocolate Ice Cream Day  
June 8 – World Oceans Day  
June 8 – National Best Friends Day  
June 9 – Donald Duck Day  
June 10 – Iced Tea Day  
June 11-14 – Bonnaroo Music Festival  
June 13 – National Weed Your Garden Day  
June 14 – Flag Day  
June 16 – Father's Day  
June 16 – World Juggler's Day  
June 18 – National Splurge Day  
June 18-21 – U.S. Open PGA  
June 19 – National Kissing Day  
June 20 – First Day of Summer / Summer Solstice  
June 21 – National Selfie Day  
June 22 – National Take a Dog to Work Day  
June 27 – National Handshake Day  
June 27-July 19 – Tour de France  
June 29 – Camera Day  
July 29-July 5 – World Golf Championships-FedEx St. Jude Invitational  
June 29-July 12 – Wimbledon  
June 30 – Social Media Day

### **Popular hashtags for June:**

[#NationalDonutDay](#)

[#FathersDay](#)

[#NationalSelfieDay](#)

[#TakeYourDogToWorkDay](#)

[#HandshakeDay](#)

[#SMDay](#)

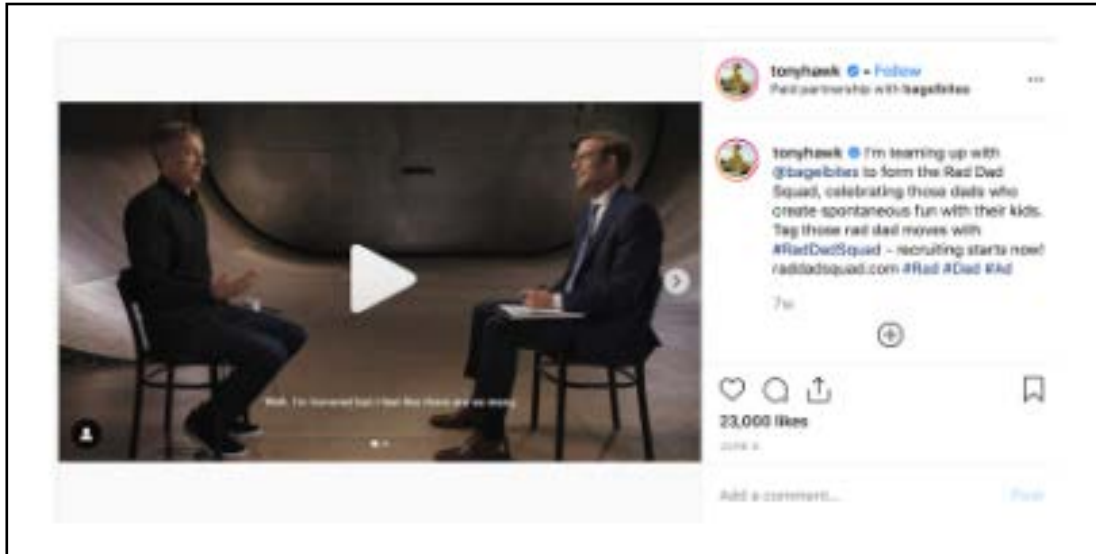
## Examples of June holiday marketing for brands:



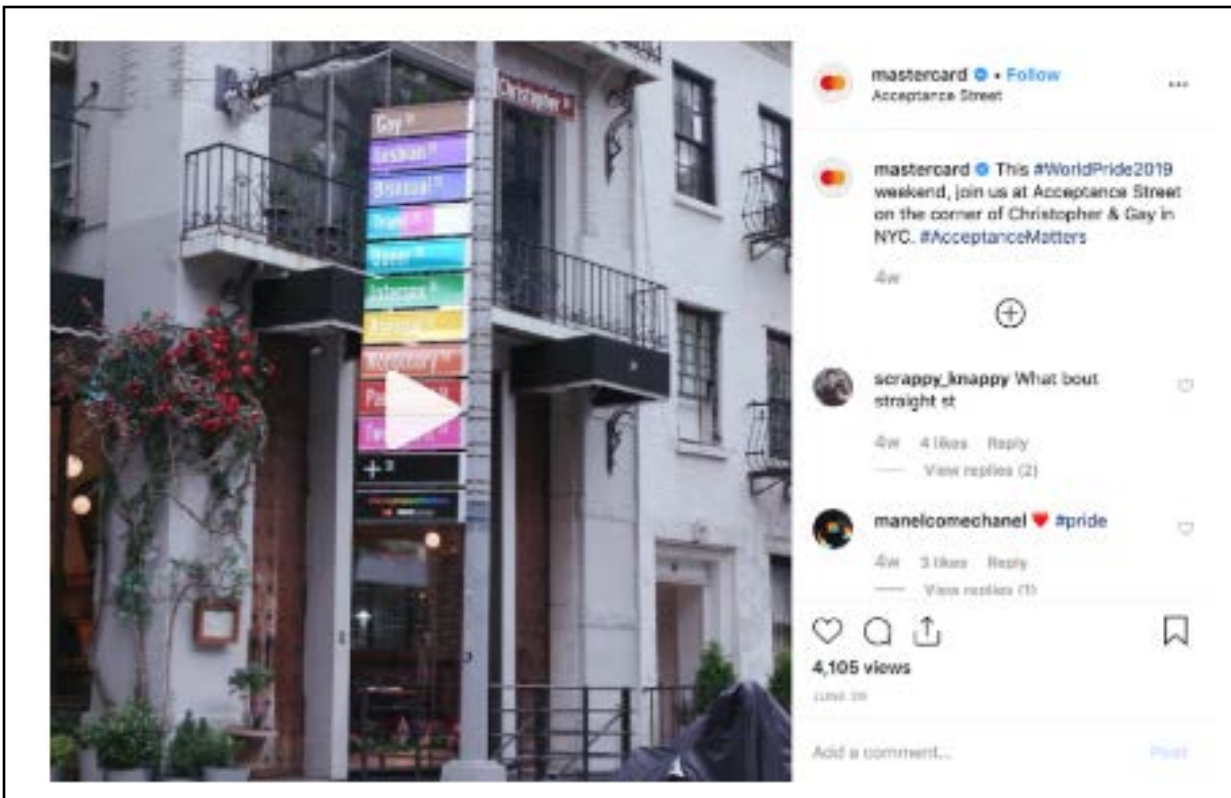
<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1716557238393803>



<https://twitter.com/jurassicworld/status/1003000322707476480?lang=en>



<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1716557238393803>



<https://www.instagram.com/p/BzTL1zNhsbe/>

# July

July is more than just another summer month. It's also a chance to celebrate America's independence, order too much stuff on Prime Day, share your favorite emojis, and watch golf.

When it comes to marketing in July, there are tons of opportunities to engage with your customers – from pet safety tips during the 4th of July to free shipping.

## Monthly Observances

Ice Cream Month  
National Grilling Month  
National Picnic Month  
National Independent Retailer Month  
National Blueberry Month

## Weekly Observances

July 15-21 – Capture the Sunset Week  
July 16-22 – Independent Retailers Week

## Days

July 1 – National Postal Worker Day  
July 1 – International Joke Day  
July 2 – World UFO Day  
July 4 – Independence Day  
July 4 – Nathan's Hot Dog Eating Contest  
July 5 – National Bikini Day  
July 7 – Chocolate Day  
July 8 – Video Games Day



July 11 – National 7-Eleven Day  
July 12 – Pecan Pie Day  
July 13 – Rock Worldwide Day  
July 13 – French Fry Day  
July 15 – National Ice Cream Day  
July 16 – World Snake Day  
July 16-19 – Summer X Games  
July 17 – World Emoji Day  
July 18 – World Hepatitis Day  
July 18 – Hot Dog Day  
July 18 – Amazon Prime Day  
July 19 – National Daiquiri Day  
July 20 – National Moon Day  
July 21 – #NoMakeUp Day  
July 24 – Amelia Earhart Day  
July 26 – Aunt and Uncle Day  
July 28 – Parents' Day  
July 30 – Father-in-Law Day  
July 30 – International Day of Friendship

**Popular hashtags for July:**

[#NationalPostalWorkerDay](#)

[#WorldUFODay](#)

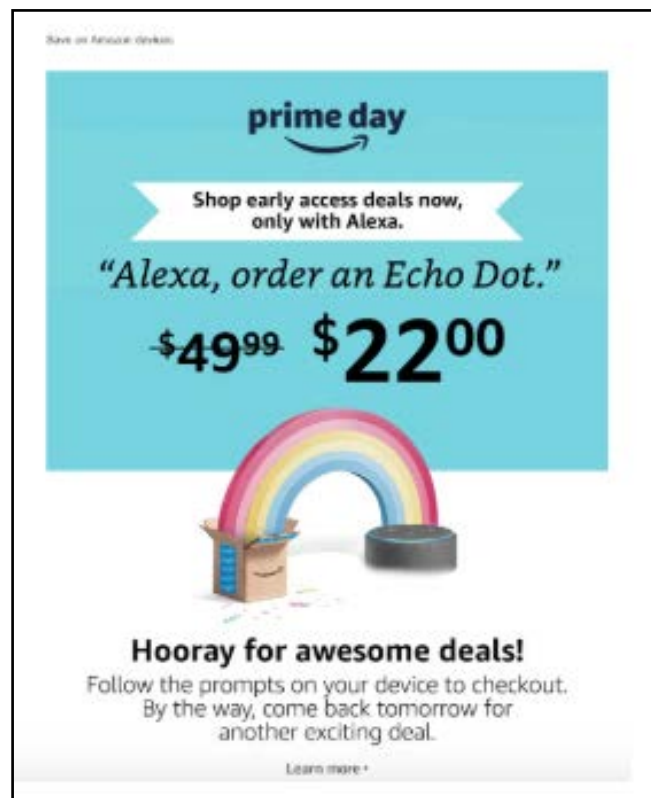
[#WorldEmojiDay](#)

[#DayOfFriendship](#)

## Examples of July holiday marketing for brands:



<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1716557238393803>





<https://twitter.com/JimBeam/status/1150799148259663873>



<https://twitter.com/WorldEmojiDay/status/1151386755783962624>

# August

Let's be honest: The reality is that August signals that summer will be over before we know it. It's back-to-school season and every girl has a PSL on their Instagram feed.

So, whether your audience is heading off to experience dorm life for the first time, kicking back with a cold one for NFL preseason, or just Netflix and chill with your dog, August has something for every brand.

## Monthly Observances

Back to School Month  
National Golf Month  
National Breastfeeding Month  
Family Fun Month  
Peach Month

## Weekly Observances

August 6-12 – National Farmers' Market Week  
August 13-19 – National Motorcycle Week  
August 13-19 – Feeding Pets of the Homeless Week

## Days

August 1 – World Lumberjack Championships (2020 date TBD)  
August 1 – NFL Preseason begins (2020 date TBD)  
August 1 – National Girlfriends Day  
August 2 – International Beer Day  
August 2 – National Ice Cream Sandwich Day  
August 5 – International Friendship Day

August 8 – International Cat Day  
August 9 – Book Lover’s Day  
August 10 – National S’mores Day  
August 12 – Middle Child’s Day (Go Jan Brady!)  
August 13 – Left-hander’s Day  
August 16 – National Tell a Joke Day  
August 18 – Bad Poetry Day  
August 19 – World Photo Day  
August 19 – World Humanitarian Day  
August 20 – National Lemonade Day  
August 21 – Senior Citizens Day  
August 26 – National Dog Day  
August 26 – Women’s Equality Day  
August 30 – Frankenstein Day  
August 31 – National Trail Mix Day

**Popular hashtags for August:**

[#InternationalCatDay](#)

[#NationalBookLoversDay](#)

[#WorldElephantDay](#)

[#LefthandersDay](#)

[#WorldPhotoDay](#)

[#WorldHumanitarianDay](#)

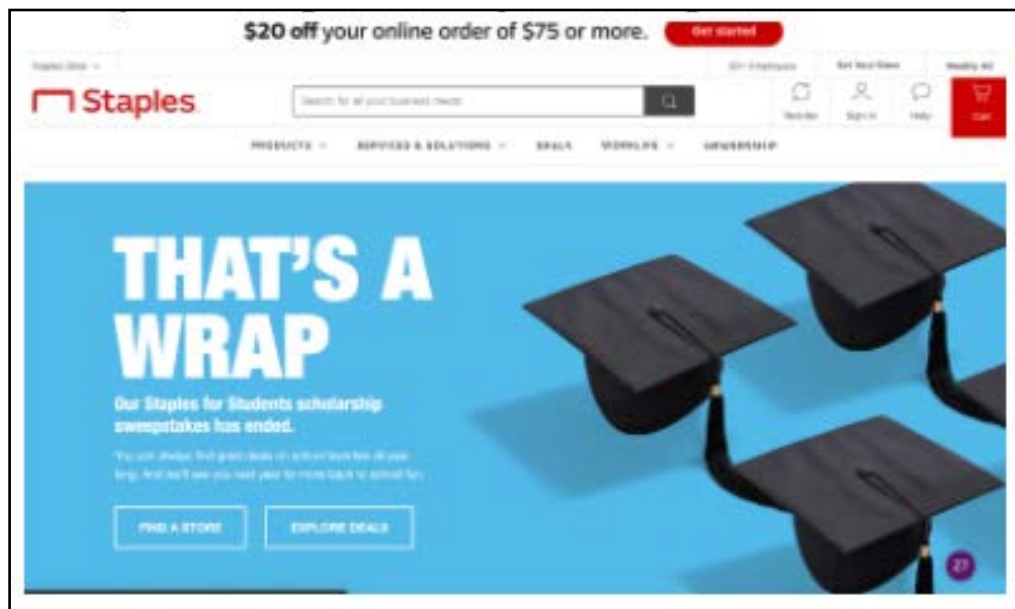
[#NationalLemonadeDay](#)

[#NationalDogDay](#)

[#WomensEqualityDay](#)



## Examples of August holiday marketing for brands:



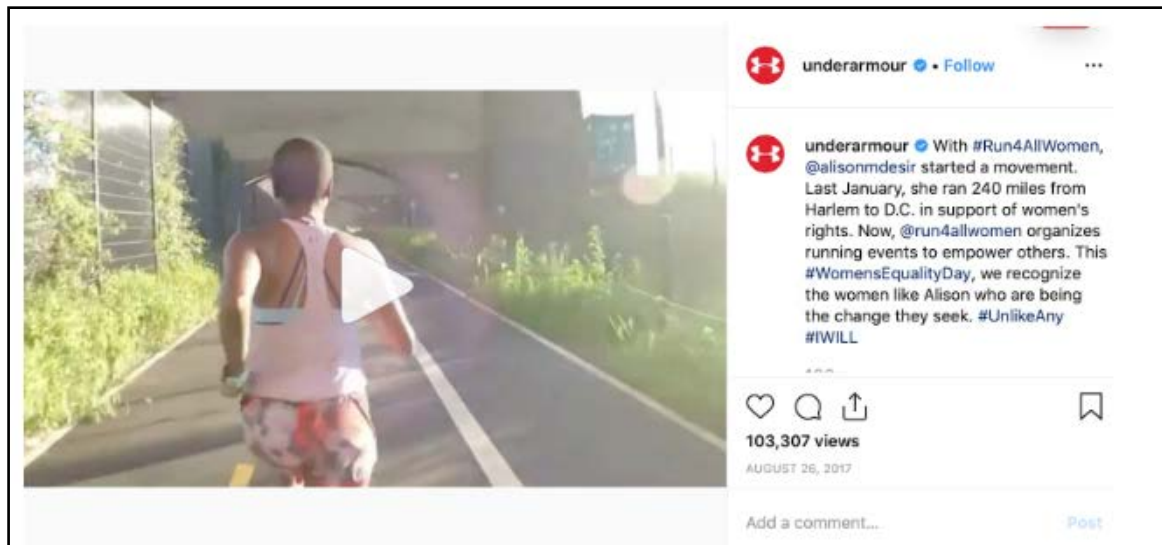
<https://www.staples.com/sbd/cre/marketing/staples-for-students/>



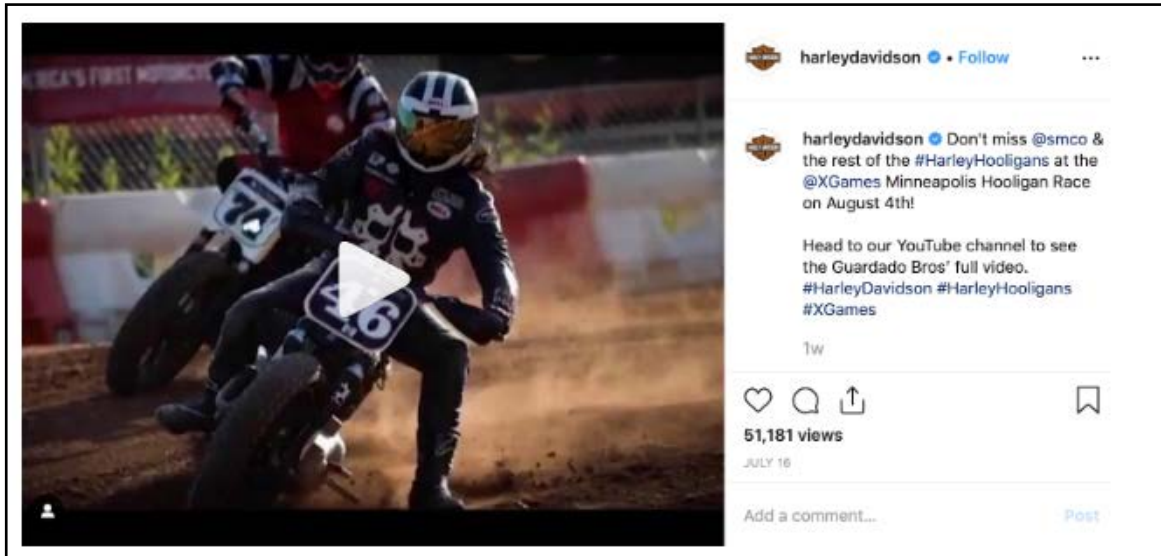
<https://www.facebook.com/Newegg/photos/a.116040769167/10156624407959168/?type=3&theater>



<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=10156752295328120>



<https://www.instagram.com/p/BYQuRxFB7pL/>



[https://www.instagram.com/p/Bz\\_YwBEBcJI/](https://www.instagram.com/p/Bz_YwBEBcJI/)

# September

Break out those bathing suits and sunglasses one last time as September brings the first signs of fall.

I'm the kind of marketer who overplans. So, to help keep things on track, I have to narrow in on what the brands I work with really need.

With this list of popular holidays in September, you can decide if you want to skip Talk Like A Pirate Day (but, I mean, why would you?), or maybe you're ready to cheers to the start of Oktoberfest.

Everything about September should be easy and breezy – your marketing budget included.

## Monthly Observances

Wilderness Month

National Preparedness Month

National Food Safety Education Month

Fruit and Veggies—More Matters Month

National Yoga Awareness Month

Whole Grains Month

Hispanic Heritage Month

Little League Month

Better Breakfast Month

## Weekly Observances

September 9-15 – National Suicide Prevention Week

September 18-24 – Pollution Prevention Week

September 17-23 – National Indoor Plant Week

September 24-30 – National Dog Week

## **Days**

September 1 – International Bacon Day

September 2 – Labor Day

September 5 – Cheese Pizza Day

September 5 – International Day of Charity

September 6 – Read a Book Day

September 8 – Grandparents Day

September 11 – 9/11

September 11 – Patriot's Day

September 12 – National Video Games Day

September 13 – Uncle Sam Day

September 15 – Greenpeace Day

September 16 – Wife Appreciation Day

September 15 – Boys' and Girls' Club Day for Kids

September 17 – Constitution Day

September 17 – Citizenship Day

September 18 – Rosh Hashanah

September 19 – International Talk Like a Pirate

September 19 – Oktoberfest Begins

September 21 – International Day of Peace

September 22 – First Day of Fall

September 22 – Car-free Day

September 23 – Checkers Day

September 25– National Voter Registration Day

September 27 – World Tourism Day

September 27-28 – Yom Kippur

September 28 – Native American Day

September 28 – World Rabies Day



September 28 – National Good Neighbor Day

September 29 – Coffee Day

September 29 – World Heart Day

September 30 – International Podcast Day

### **Popular hashtags for September:**

[#LaborDay](#)

[#NationalWildlifeDay](#)

[#CharityDay](#)

[#ReadABookDay](#)

[#911Day](#)

[#NationalVideoGamesDay](#)

[#TalkLikeAPirateDay](#)

[#PeaceDay](#)

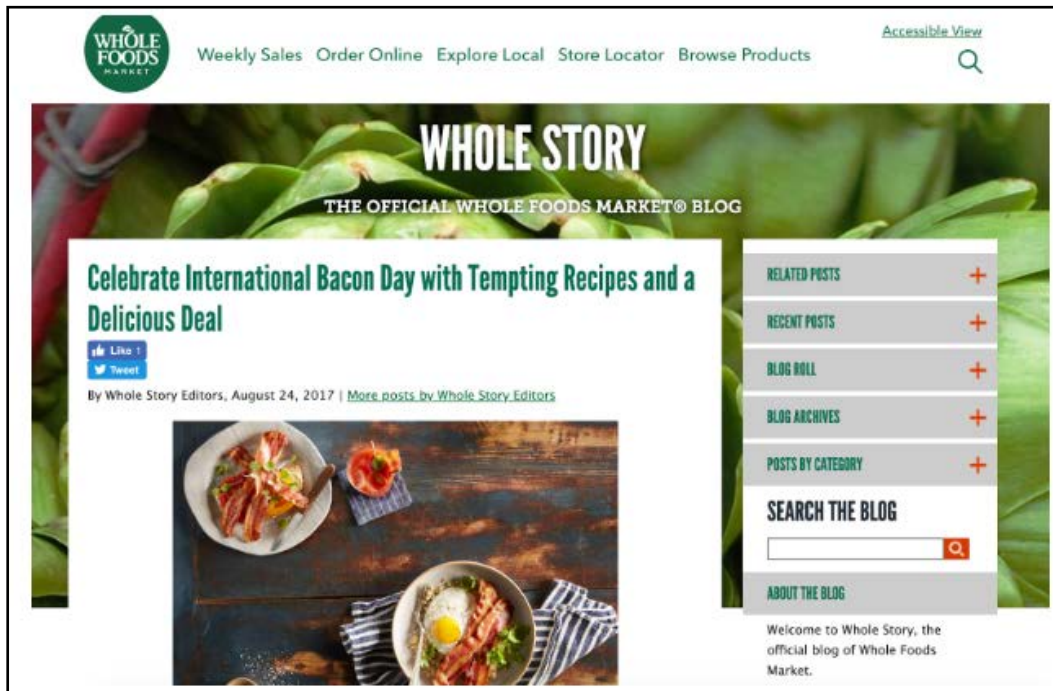
[#CarFreeDay](#)

[#WorldRabiesDay](#)

[#GoodNeighborDay](#)

[#InternationalPodcastDay](#)

## Examples of September holiday marketing for brands



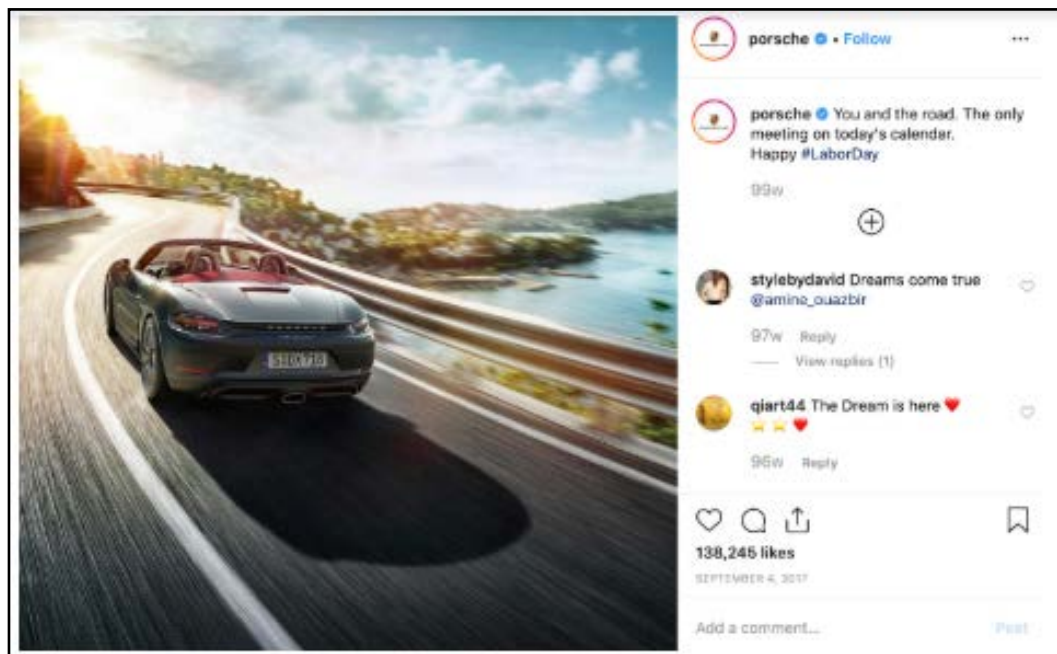
<https://www.wholefoodsmarket.com/blog/celebrate-national-bacon-day-recipes-and-delicious-deal>



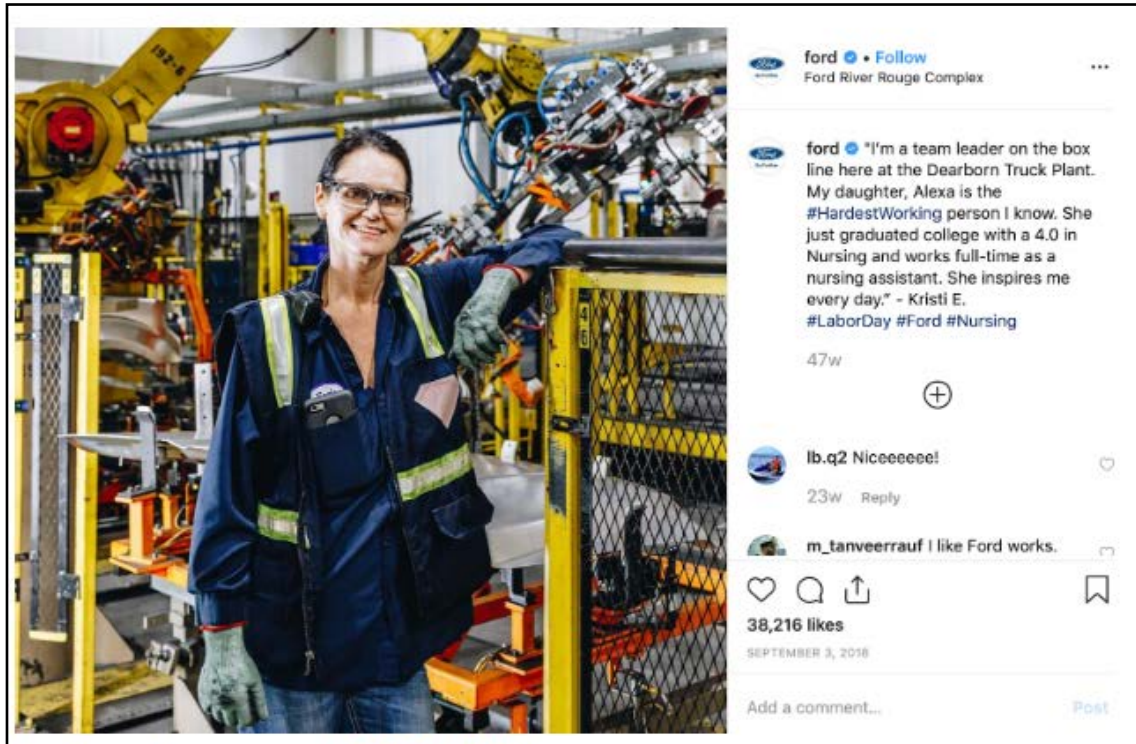
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<https://www.instagram.com/p/BnP4PspATF8/>



<https://www.instagram.com/p/BYoE3OMBdtko/>



[https://www.instagram.com/p/BnRR5\\_LBeXV/](https://www.instagram.com/p/BnRR5_LBeXV/)

# October

For some, October is about watching Hocus Pocus on repeat, pumpkin beer, and orange-stuff Oreos. Then, there are those of us marketers who see October a chance to promote your brand like the Dunkin Dress Up Contest, or Lush's Halloween Collection.

If you're planning to work overtime to deliver a scary good marketing campaign for October 2020, this list of October holidays will help you climb uphill to holiday marketing domination. Unpleasant dreams!

## Monthly Observances

Breast Cancer Awareness Month  
AIDS Awareness Month  
Bully Prevention Month  
Adopt a Shelter Dog Month  
Celiac Disease Awareness Month  
Financial Planning Month  
National Pizza Month  
Allergy Appreciation Month

## Weekly Observances

October 1-7 – Great Books Week  
October 1-7 – National Work From Home Week  
October 15-21 – Mediation Week  
October 15-21 – National Business Women's Week  
October 22-28 – National Red Ribbon Week



## Days

October 1 – MLB World Series begins (date TBD)  
October 1 – World Vegetarian Day  
October 2 – Name Your Car Day  
October 2 – Brow Day  
October 3 – National Techies Day  
October 3 – National Boyfriends Day  
October 4 – National Taco Day  
October 4 – Oktoberfest Ends  
October 4 – National Kale Day  
October 5 – World Teacher's Day  
October 6 – World Smile Day  
October 9 – Columbus Day  
October 9 – Leif Erikson Day  
October 10 – World Mental Health Day  
October 11 – It's My Party Day  
October 14 – Columbus Day  
October 13 – World Egg Day  
October 16 – World Food Day  
October 16 – Boss's Day  
October 18 – Spirit Day (anti-bullying)  
October 19 – Sweetest Day  
October 24 – United Nations Day  
October 27 – Make a Difference Day  
October 30 – Mischief Night  
October 30 – Checklist Day  
October 31 – Day of the Dead Begins  
October 31 – Halloween

## Popular hashtags for October:

[#InternationalCoffeeDay](#)

[#TechiesDay](#)

[#NationalTacoDay](#)

[#WorldSmileDay](#)

[#WorldTeachersDay](#)

[#WorldHabitatDay](#)

[#WorldMentalHeathDay](#)

[#BossesDay](#)

[#UNDay](#)

[#ChecklistDay](#)

[#Halloween](#)

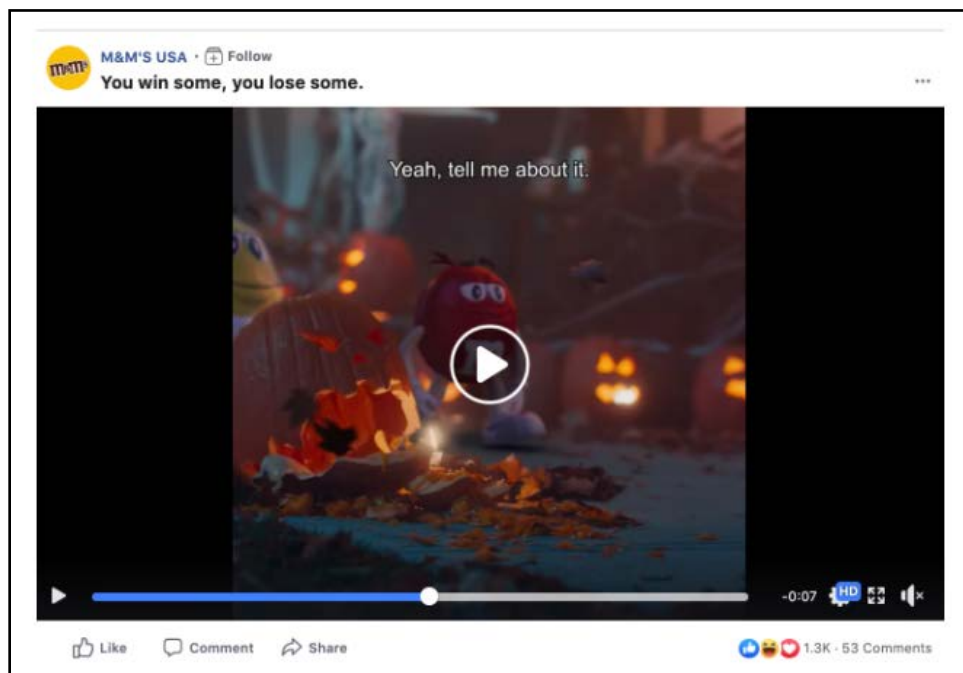
## Examples of October holiday marketing for brands:

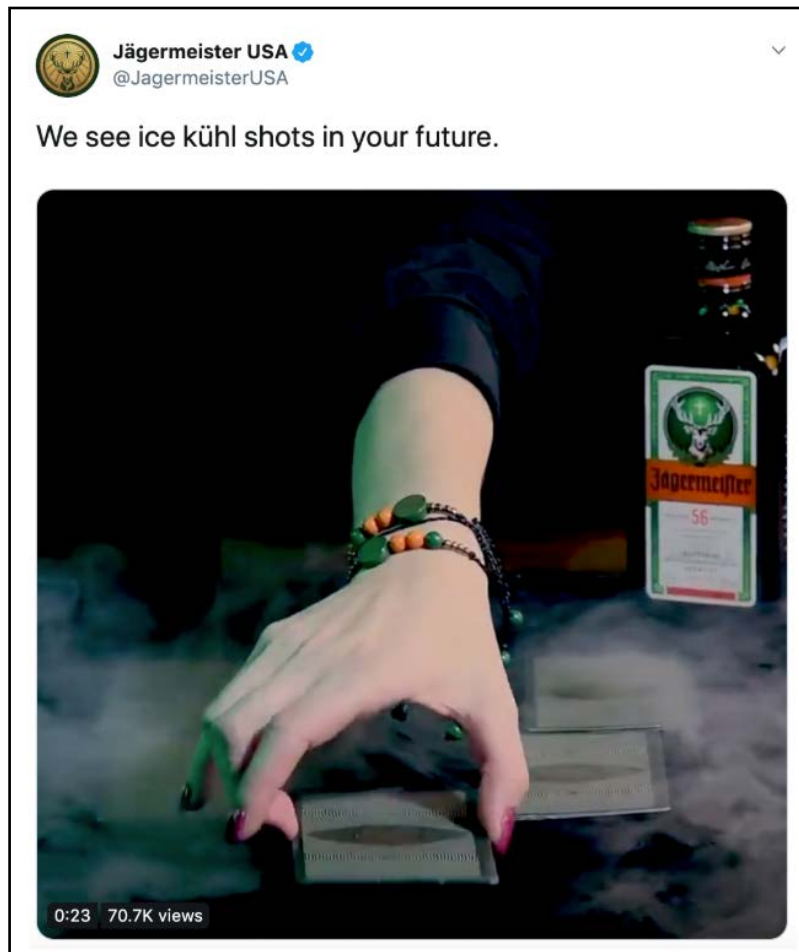


<https://www.instagram.com/p/BpX-JPaH7br/>



<https://www.instagram.com/p/BpX-JPaH7br/>





<https://twitter.com/JagermeisterUSA/status/1048632496433324032>

# November

November sparks the fact that the year is almost over. November creeps its way into our marketing campaigns with the official introduction of the holiday season.

And, that means holiday-themed marketing campaigns like HotelTonight's humorous holiday ads or Oreo's #colorfilled packaging.

So, in honor of those marketing comrades-in-arms who are planning their 2020 marketing calendar with you, I've shared some memorable holidays to make your calendar even more palatable than last year's old dried-out turkey.

## Monthly Observances

Movember

National Healthy Skin Month

Gluten-Free Diet Awareness Month

National Adoption Month

National Gratitude Month

Peanut Butter Lovers' Month

National Diabetes Awareness Month

## Weekly Observances

November 13-19 – World Kindness Week

November 13-17 – American Education Week



## Days

November 1 – All Saint's Day  
November 1 – Daylight Savings Time ends  
November 1 – World Vegan Day  
November 2 – Day of the Dead Ends  
November 3 – Sandwich Day  
November 3 – King Tut Day  
November 8 – Cappuccino Day  
November 8 – Science, Technology, Engineering, and Medicine (STEM) Day  
November 10 – Marine Corp Birthday  
November 11 – Veterans Day  
November 12 – Chicken Soup for the Soul Day  
November 13 – World Kindness Day  
November 13 – Sadie Hawkins Day  
November 14 – World Diabetes Day  
November 15 – America Recycles Day  
November 16 – International Tolerance Day  
November 17 – Homemade Bread Day  
November 19 – National Entrepreneurs Day  
November 26 – Thanksgiving Day  
November 27 – Black Friday  
November 28 – Small Business Saturday  
November 30 – Cyber Monday

## Popular hashtags for November:

[#WorldVeganDay](#)

[#NationalSandwichDay](#)

[#DaylightSavings](#)

[#CappuccinoDay](#)

[#STEMDay](#)  
[#VeteransDay](#)  
[#WKD](#)  
[#WDD](#)  
[#BeRecycled](#)  
[#EntrepreneursDay](#)  
[#Thanksgiving](#)  
[#ShopSmall](#)

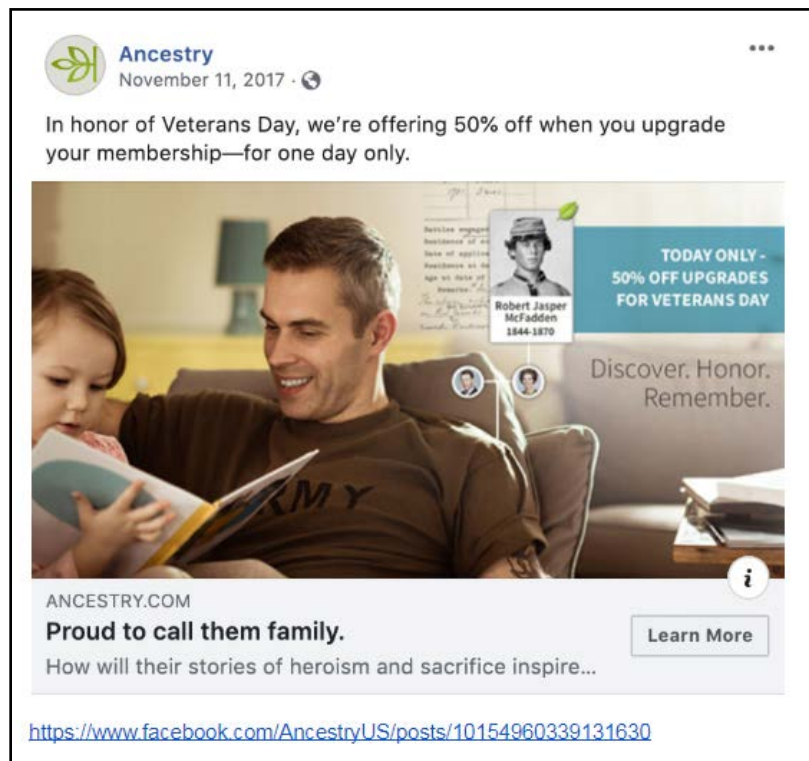
### Examples of November holiday marketing for brands:



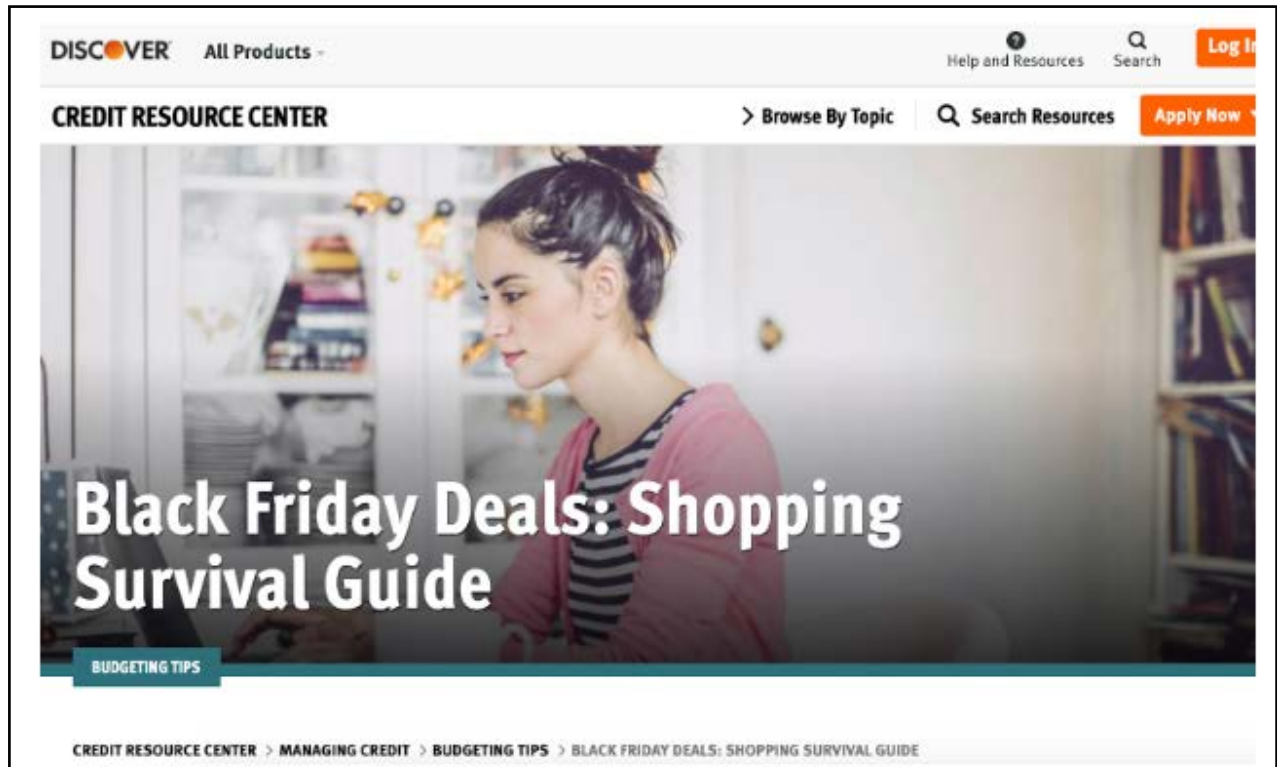
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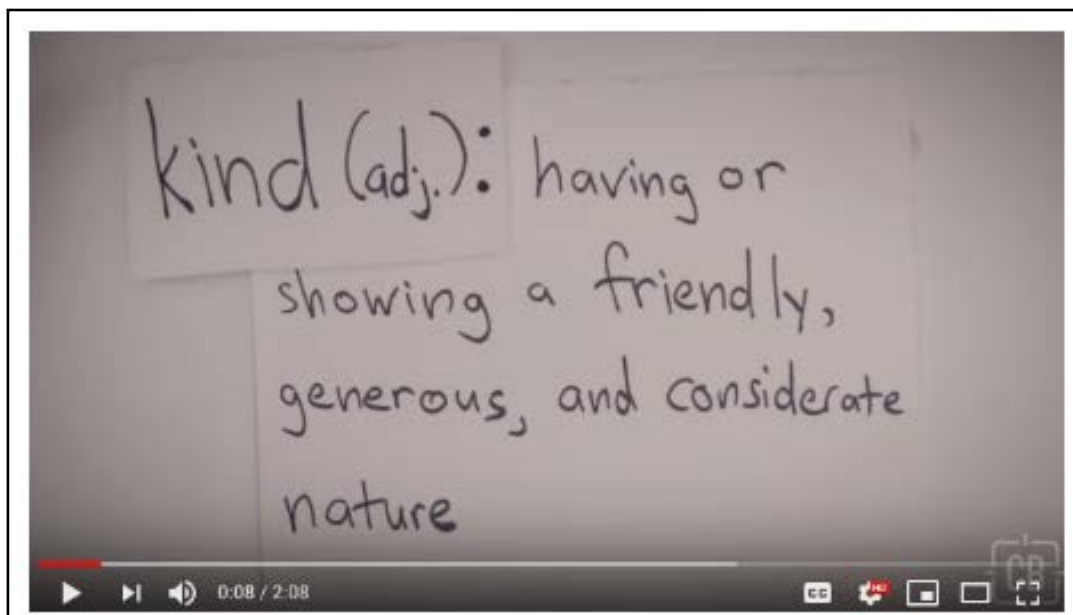
<https://twitter.com/MovemberUK/status/1057890005593546752>



<https://www.facebook.com/AncestryUS/posts/10154960339131630>



<https://www.discover.com/credit-cards/resources/black-friday-deals-survival-guide/>



<https://youtu.be/NSFUEWLBHSg>

# December

For some, December can be one of the merriest times of the year. For us marketers, it can be the busiest time of year.

From Google's Santa Tracker and Office Depot's Elf Yourself to Starbucks Give Good campaign and REI's #OptOutside push, there's something in it for every marketer and brand.

So, marketers, this list is for you to make the holidays a little merrier.

## Monthly Observances

National Human Rights Month  
Operation Santa Paws  
Bingo Month

## Weekly Observances

December 2-10 – Chanukah  
December 26-January 1 – Kwanzaa

## Days

December 1 – Presidents Cup PGA (Dates TBD)  
December 1 – World AIDS Day  
December 1 – Rosa Parks Day  
December 1 – Giving Tuesday  
December 3 – International Day of Persons with Disabilities  
December 4 – Cookie Day  
December 6 – St. Nicholas Day  
December 7 – Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day  
December 9 – Christmas Card Day



December 10 – Nobel Prize Day  
December 12 – Poinsettia Day  
December 14 – Roast Chestnuts Day  
December 15 – Bill of Rights Day  
December 15 – Free Shipping Day  
December 18 – Bake Cookies Day  
December 19 – National Ugly Christmas Sweater Day  
December 20 – Go Caroling Day  
December 21 – First Day of Winter / Winter Solstice  
December 23-30 – Chanukah/Hanukkah begins  
December 23 – Festivus  
December 24 – Christmas Eve  
December 25 – Christmas Day  
December 26 – Kwanzaa  
December 26 – Boxing Day  
December 27 – National Fruitcake Day  
December 31 – New Year's Eve

### **Popular hashtags for December:**

[#WAD2020](#)

[#IDPWD](#)

[#NationalCookieDay](#)

[#NobelPrize](#)

[#WinterSolstice](#)

[#NYE](#)

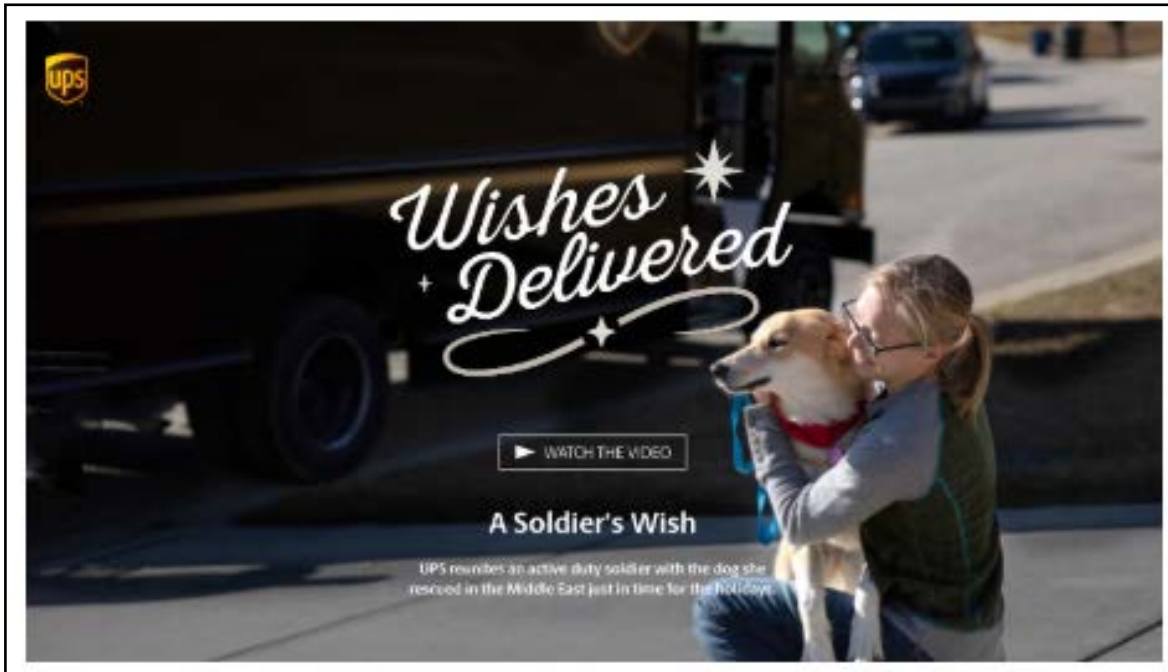
## Examples of December holiday marketing for brands:



[https://youtu.be/mNbSgMEZ\\_Tw](https://youtu.be/mNbSgMEZ_Tw)



<https://food52.com/p/cookies-of-the-world>



<https://wishesdelivered.ups.com/>



<https://www.cardsagainsthumanitysavesamerica.com/>

**leesa** SEE OUR IMPACT

**Your purchase helps make a world of difference.**  
Not just for you, but for someone else who needs a safe place to rest.



Through Leesa's One-Ten commitment, we donate one mattress for every ten we sell to those seeking refuge from homelessness, domestic risk and human trafficking.


So your choice to buy from Leesa means that someone else now has a safe, comfortable place to rest. We also plant one tree for every mattress we sell and give time and resources in our communities. Not just on Giving Tuesday, but every single day.

SEE OUR IMPACT





**postable**


**Have some thanking to do?**  
Get anything amazing this year? Get 20% off holiday thank you cards with code BIGTHANKS.

See the cards



As always, the code can only be used once. It expires Sunday January 7th and it can't be used in conjunction with site credit.



**llbean** • Follow

**llbean** • #12DaysofPuppies is back! This December we'll be counting down our 12 Days of Puppies with the most adorable dogs in the world - yours! Share your puppy photos by December 2 with the hashtag #LLBeanPuppyContest for the chance to be featured and win a \$50 L.L.Bean Gift Card. Rules: <http://www.llbean.com/contest> (@mikehosier)

11,111 likes  
NOVEMBER 19, 2018

Add a comment... Post

<https://www.instagram.com/p/BqXaLF-hkaQ/>

# What's in Your Marketing Strategy for 2020?

What are your marketing goals for 2020? And, what marketing campaigns do you have planned?

I'd love to hear about your marketing goals for 2020. And, any campaigns you loved from 2019. Tweet us at [@sejournal](https://twitter.com/sejournal) or [@annaleacrowe](https://twitter.com/annaleacrowe) to share your thoughts!