

STELLAR  
**MARKETING  
STRATEGIES**  
FOR A **SUCCESSFUL HOLIDAY SEASON**





# STELLAR MARKETING STRATEGIES

## FOR A **SUCCESSFUL HOLIDAY SEASON**

Amidst the seasonal shopping frenzy, retailers are increasingly looking to differentiate themselves. Whether you offer the most seamless mobile shopping experience or build personalized, triggered emails to boost your revenue, you want to deploy techniques that help you stand out.

As you barrel toward Black Friday and Cyber Monday, here is a quick peek at the topics that we will explore more fully in this paper.

### Use Your Personalization Tools

It's important to show subscribers you really get them. Tweak those preference forms, segment using order history, incorporate browse recovery and recommendations, and tune up your cart recovery program. A recent survey of our customers showed **98%** consider cart recovery an effective marketing tactic.

### Adopt a Mobile- Friendly Approach

Don't lose a sale to a clunky mobile experience. Build responsive emails, encourage customers to set up online accounts and smooth out the rough spots in your checkout process. Why? Because **\$12.7 billion** of the **\$70 billion** spent on online shopping last year was done via a smartphone or tablet, up a staggering **59%** from a year ago, according to comScore.

### Think Beyond the Holiday Season

You spend plenty to bring customers to your website. How can you capitalize on their interest year-round? Or at the very least, have a means to directly market to them next holiday season? Look at how you encourage email subscriptions and retain those subscribers once they sign up.

# Personalization Instead of Promotion

The pressure to discount has never been higher. As a result, BOGOs and percent discounts are being rolled out well before Black Friday. Free shipping was so common in 2015 that you're at a disadvantage if you don't offer it.

If the promotional approach has its limits, the obvious solution is to craft more personal messages that resonate with the shopper and provide value beyond a promotion. Think of how harried you are during this season and what makes it easier for shoppers to buy from you.

## Here are four techniques that are very relevant for this time of year:

- **Ask subscribers for more information.** If you keep your request short and sweet, many consumers will provide this information at sign-up. Only request information that can help you serve the customer and give you a return on investment.
- **Use customer order history.** A customer's order history provides valuable clues to what they might want next. Do they only buy aquamarine jewelry? Do they visit your site for a fruit basket every December? Use history to create segments, or if your tools allow it, customized recommendations.
- **Capture browse behavior.** Can you capture a shopper's browsing behavior and trigger messages related to their product of interest? This is the next logical step in personalization. Use your customer's browse data to send triggered messages, further segment, and provide more relevant product recommendations in your emails.
- **Tweak your cart recovery.** Shoppers commonly use carts as wishlists and to store products for comparison shopping. And sometimes, they just get distracted before they buy. Look at your timing on cart reminder emails and be bold – some retailers have reported revenue boosts on even a third cart recovery email.



## Make it Easy to Shop From a Mobile Device

Reaching the mobile holiday shopper is essential. Be sure you have a mobile-friendly website, including checkout, and a responsive design for your emails. Our recent survey, “How Consumers Across the Globe Use Multiple Devices to Shop and Buy,” shows that 38% of US residents, 37% of UK residents and 30% of Aussies purchase products from their smartphones.

But perhaps this is even more telling: According to Google, 60% of all shopping begins on a mobile phone. Our takeaway: Don't make it difficult to buy your product from a smartphone. If a shopper starts browsing while waiting at the dentist's office, commuting on a train or watching their kid's soccer game, you don't want them to have to wait to make the purchase until they get to a desktop. A conversion that's dependent on another device gives would-be purchasers the opportunity to shop elsewhere.

**Here are three ways to prioritize the mobile experience:**

- **Make emails mobile-friendly and your message clear.** Keep the text to a minimum, and consider a single hero image. Lengthy messages can be hard to read on mobile phones, and attention spans are short. If you can't convey your message in three seconds or less, your contact will probably swipe away.
- **Focus on site experience and the checkout process.** Can people easily navigate your site, save items and check out? Have your staff shop your site from their mobile devices to get the authentic user experience. Look for areas of high friction and improve them.
- **Encourage online accounts.** Add a message to your welcome series inviting new subscribers to create an online account. It makes entering payment and shipping information easier during checkout, since that's often a major obstacle on smaller devices.

## Don't Have Browse or Cart Recovery? Start Segmenting

If you don't have browse or cart recovery solutions, experiment with segmentation. Hudson Shoes found that campaigns segmented by gender had 5x the conversion rate of messages sent to the entire list. Highly segmented advertising typically results in improved engagement, which is measured by open and click-through rates. Your ability to follow up with highly targeted cart recovery and retargeting campaigns should only improve your chance of converting customers.



*A single image with one clear call to action is great for Black Friday/Cyber Monday, flash sales, promotion expiration emails and intros to web-based gift-giving guides.*

## Build the Relationship Beyond the Holidays

You've invested in a sweepstakes to increase sign-ups, retooled your pop-up, clamped down on coupon code abuse – all in an effort to plump that subscriber list in time for Black Friday and Cyber Monday. But what happens after the holidays are over? Actions you take today will keep you from having to re-acquire those customers next year.

- **Roll out the welcome mat.** Welcome series are an excellent way to introduce customers to your brand, social media outlets, hassle-free return policy and in-store pickups. Many companies suppress at least some promotional emails when the series is running. Around the holidays, that takes some thought. You don't want customers in the welcome series workflow to miss out on the best deals.
- **Set up a preference center.** After the welcome series, guide customers to an online form where they can tell you more about themselves, including how often they'd like to hear from you. It'll help later with segmentation.
- **Study refill/replenish opportunities.** Do you sell products that need to be replenished? Craft a triggered email. PetShop.co.uk asks customers about their pet's breed and calculates when the furry friend will need more food. Shar Music does it for instrument strings. Brooks Sports asks runners how many miles they log in a week to calculate when to send a "time for new running shoes" email. Customers might not even realize you offer replenishment products – or a service to deliver them on a scheduled basis.



## The Omnichannel Challenge: Merging Online With In-Store

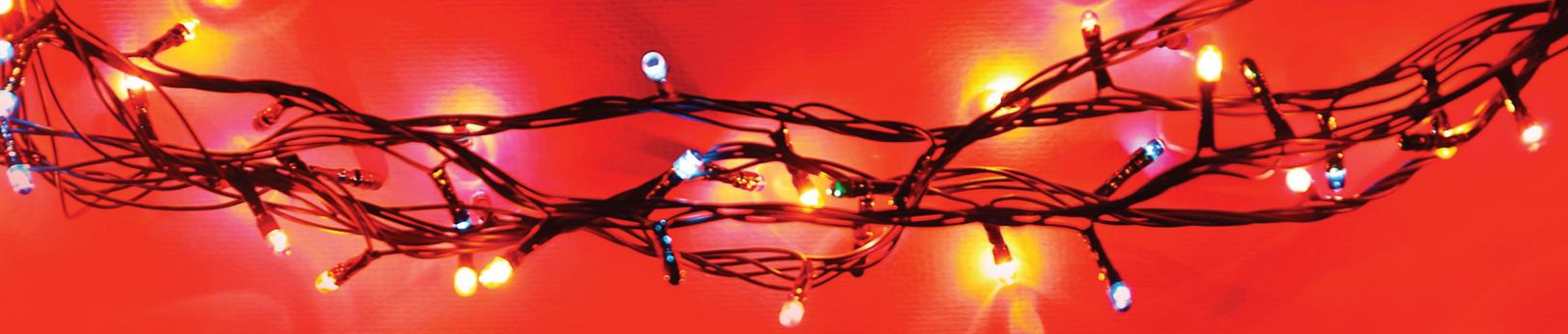
Last year, nearly one-third of shoppers opted to buy products online and pick them up at the store, according to the International Council of Shopping Centers' (ICSC) Holiday Consumer Purchasing Trends Study. Making that news merrier: According to the ICSC, 69% of shoppers who used click-and-collect last holiday season purchased additional items while picking up in-store. Turn those store visits into sales throughout the year by starting a text-to-join campaign that requests an email address via text with the promise of a promotion.



## Need more holiday ideas?

Check out Bronto's Holiday Marketing Academy, which offers lookbooks, templates and email critiques, as well as best practices for sending and tips to cure deliverability woes.

[resources.bronto.com/holiday](https://resources.bronto.com/holiday)



## About Bronto

Bronto Software, a NetSuite (NYSE: N) company, provides a cloud-based commerce marketing automation platform to mid-market and enterprise organizations worldwide. Bronto is the number one ranked email marketing provider to the Internet Retailer Top 1000, with a client roster of leading brands, including Vince Camuto, Lucky Brand, Theory, Björn Borg, Ashley Homestore and Christopher & Banks. The Bronto Marketing Platform is deeply integrated with commerce platforms, such as NetSuite, Magento, Demandware and Kibo. The company is headquartered in Durham, NC, with additional offices in London, Sydney, New York and Los Angeles. For more information, visit [bronto.com](http://bronto.com).

