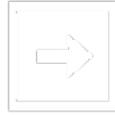


Key Dates for 2015 Christmas Marketing



September 3, 2015 / By [Gregor Schmidt](#)

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Time to Think About 2015 Christmas Marketing!

I can hear the groaning among you! Summer is not even over, and here I am talking about 2015 Christmas marketing. But I am not kidding, folks. If you wait until November to start thinking about your holiday marketing you might as well forget it. Most small retail businesses need a successful holiday season to survive the year. Therefore it is essential to carefully plan your 2015 Christmas marketing campaign now!



I may have mentioned this before, but I will say it again: It takes time to develop an effective marketing strategy and campaign. This is especially true for holiday marketing. During the highly competitive holiday season business owners have no time to think about their 2015 Christmas marketing strategy. At the same time consumers are totally overwhelmed with advertising. Your marketing strategy and messaging really has to stand out just to get noticed!

So what can small business owners do to ensure their 2015 Christmas marketing campaign is effective? I recommend the following: start early, carefully target your audience, and time your marketing for maximum effectiveness. If your head is spinning now, don't worry. This is much simpler than you think. Simply focus on a few important dates for your 2015 Christmas marketing and fill in the rest depending on your specific circumstances.

Key 2015 Christmas Marketing Dates



October 12 – Columbus Day

The official start (if there is one) to the holiday marketing season. This is not a bad time to start your email marketing campaign. Remind your customers of the benefits of shopping early, especially if they have any special orders.

October 20 – Gift Guide Day

This is a great way to send out specifically targeted emails as part of your 2015 Christmas marketing campaign. For starters, you can send out recommendations or suggestions for the perfect gift for boys and girls, seniors and juniors, parents and siblings. Just think of all the possibilities!

October 27 – Invite to Social Day

Start adding your social media channels to your 2015 Christmas marketing strategy. Simply invite your social fans, circles, and followers to participate in a contest, raffle or other giveaway. Don't forget to email your lists to invite them as well, and make sure to prominently display that info in all of your store locations!



November 2 – Facebook Custom Audience

Your 2015 Christmas marketing strategy needs to have at least some budget for paid social advertising. To get the most bang out of your bucks be sure to upload the email addresses of your customers to Facebook and use them to target your ad campaign.

November 11 – Veterans Day

Also known as **Early Black Friday**, this is a major day for starting the holiday sales cycle. Use this holiday to your advantage and start promoting your holiday sales. It never hurts to beat your competition and get your sales pitch in front of your audience early.

November 17 – Invite to Social Day

People are busy during this time of the year. It is OK to remind them about contests or holiday promotions that you currently run on your social channels. This is also a good time to check how your social campaigns are doing. End those that are ineffective, and promote those that are showing better results.

November 26 – Thanksgiving Day

Some retailers, especially bigger ones, make special Thanksgiving sales part of their 2015 Christmas marketing strategy. This is where Thanksgiving has become **Gray Thursday**. And for some stores this is quite successful, at a cost. I should note that personally I am not in favor of any business opening on Thanksgiving. Turkey Day should be for overeating with family and friends only. And many other small business owners feel the same way.

November 27 – Black Friday

Easily the most insane shopping day of the year! This is the day when normally timid people become raging monsters. There is no point in doing any marketing that day if you are a small business owner. Most likely you will be too busy dealing with all the customers in your store.

November 28 – Small Business Saturday

Score! Small businesses get their own day to strut their stuff. So be sure to get in on the fun and use a hashtag like #smallbizsaturday to get more traction on your social channels. Many consumers have become wary of big retailers and prefer to support local small businesses instead. Even better for you, they are even willing to spend more to do so.

November 30 – Cyber Monday

This is Black Friday, online! Cyber Monday is the busiest single day for online shopping. If you are doing e-commerce you definitely want to get your message out on every possible channel. And here is an extra tip for you: make sure your e-commerce site is fully charged and loaded. This is not the day to have any problems.



December 1 – Giving Tuesday

Make Giving Tuesday part of your 2015 Christmas marketing strategy. Simply ask your real and online customers to support your charitable efforts by making a purchase that day. A portion of the proceeds will be donated to a local charity. Here is a hint: find out if any local charities with similar fundraising plans, and join them. The name recognition will benefit your sales as well.

December 7 – Green Monday

This is generally one of the biggest shopping days in December. Be sure to stay on top of your customers minds through targeted social and email campaigns. This is also a good general reminder for folks that Christmas is just over two weeks away. It may spur some procrastinators into action!

December 14 – Ground Shipping Day

This is the last day you can **ship packages by ground** and have them arrive by Christmas Eve, or sooner. This is a great reminder for your customers, so be sure to let them know ahead of time.

December 16 – FREE Shipping Day

Many retailers offer free **UPS** or **FedEx** shipping for any purchase made on this day. This works out well for many people; procrastinators have until that day to start shopping, and store owners get the extra sales. This could be a deciding factor for some, so be sure to let them know.

December 19 – Super Saturday

This is another crazy day, the last Saturday before Christmas. Target any last-minute shoppers with special offers. Email and social marketing are especially effective for your mobile consumers.

December 23 – e-Gift Card Day

OK, procrastinators, this is your final (boarding) call! Businesses interested in catching the last of the Christmas shoppers can offer e-gift cards. Once payment is processed cards can be emailed to the buyer. If you do send out an email blast to any known stragglers on your list.

December 26 – Coupon Day

The final piece in your 2015 Christmas marketing strategy should be the After-Christmas sale! Not everyone will be happy with their presents. Smart business owners can entice them with coupon codes and other special offers.

January 1 – New Years Day

Congratulations, you survived the 2015 Christmas marketing season. If you followed at least some of the above you should have survived tired, but more or less intact, and possibly richer. You may now celebrate with (your choice): an ice bag on your head, a double shot of espresso, any leftovers in the fridge, yoga, or a brisk walk. Enjoy!



Starting Your 2015 Christmas Marketing

Now you have the key dates for the upcoming holiday season. Use them to plan and implement your own 2015 Christmas marketing strategy and campaigns. Your own holiday marketing will depend on your particular business, industry, and location, so feel free to adjust as necessary.

Here are a few things that will help you create an effective 2015 Christmas marketing plan:

- Don't wait until the last minute. Get started now!
- Take a look at last year. What worked, and what didn't?
- Research your competitors, and survey your customers.
- Ask your team for input. How can they help?
- Consider bringing in outside help if you need it.
- Create as much content as you can ahead of time.
- Determine a budget, and stick to it!
- Be yourself, and have fun!

Here are some tools that will make things easier for you:

- Email Service Providers: [MailChimp](#), [Constant Contact](#)
- Social Media Tools: [SproutSocial](#), [HootSuite](#), [Filament](#)

If you need more help to create your own 2015 Christmas marketing strategy check out these posts on our Coffee Grounds Blog:

- [*Common Email Marketing Mistakes to Avoid*](#)
- [*10 Tips for Writing the Perfect Email Newsletter*](#)
- [*30 Creative Ideas for Your Holiday Email Marketing*](#)
- [*Creating Effective Social Media Marketing Strategies*](#)
- [*Using Paid Social Advertising for Lead Generation*](#)

Of course, some of you just don't have time to handle your own 2015 Christmas marketing. Many small business owners are simply too busy. If that is the case I recommend that you hire an outside agency or professional to give you a hand.

Need Help With Your 2015 Christmas Marketing?

Here at Studio 5 Innovation, we offer a full range of marketing services, including [*digital marketing*](#), [*content strategy and creation*](#), [*organic social media strategies*](#), and [*community management*](#).

[*Contact us*](#) to learn more about our digital marketing services, and how our team can help you create 2015 Christmas marketing strategies for your business.

Do you have anything to add to our tips for creating 2015 Christmas marketing strategies? Please leave your comments below so our audience can benefit as well, and grab our [*feed*](#) so you don't miss our next post! And give your audience a happy holiday season by sharing our tips for creating 2015 Christmas marketing strategies with them!

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