

# Holiday Marketing Guide 2020

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# Introduction

The holiday season is a special time that's warm, comforting and familiar. Well-known songs and movies, wrapping paper, tinsel and twinkle lights – they're all part of traditions of a season that brings joy to millions around the world, year after year. While some traditions will stay the same, many will change. With millions of people around the world adapting to a new normal and businesses adjusting to lockdowns and restrictions, we know Holiday 2020 will be very different compared to Holiday 2019. Despite all the uncertainty, we believe that the spirit of the holiday season will be stronger than ever. People will want to connect with each other, physically or virtually, and celebrate the holidays together.

Holiday traditions and gift-giving may look very different this year, so marketers need to ensure that they're adding value to consumers' lives and helping them stay connected to who and what they care about most. Keeping consumers' needs at the core of their planning will help businesses identify and share their unique value during the holidays.

Last year, holiday season sales for retail and e-commerce surpassed the [trillion-dollar](#)<sup>1</sup> mark for the first time ever. Although the holiday season this year will be different due to the unprecedented pandemic, with the right strategy in place, you can still grow your sales and earn profits. Forrester expects e-commerce sales to grow by [18.5%](#)<sup>2</sup> this year.

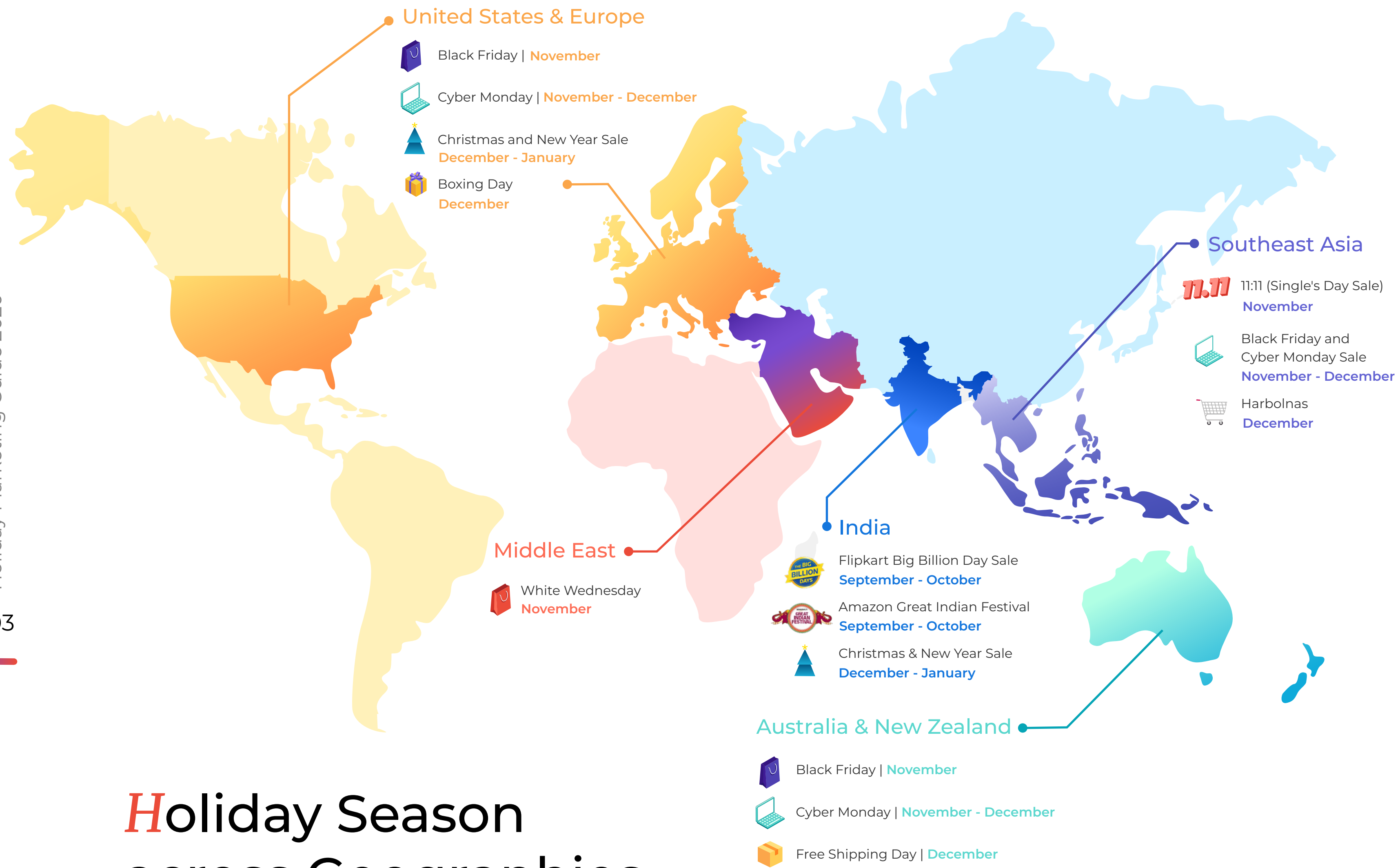
1.Source: eMarketer

2.Source: Forrester



In this e-book, we bring you some of the best holiday marketing strategies that have worked around the world, illustrations of consumer behavior in different geographies, examples of successful holiday marketing campaigns, and pointers to how you can prepare for the 2020 holiday season. So, get ready for value-packed insights to improve your 2020 holiday sales!





# Holiday Season across Geographies

# Holiday Season across Geographies

## United States and Europe

Brands begin campaigns from late October, around Halloween. Although Black Friday and Cyber Monday originated in the United States, they are widely popular in Europe too.

### Black Friday (November)

Held on the day after Thanksgiving, it's one of the most awaited shopping days in the year with unbelievable offers. With [93.2 million<sup>1</sup>](#) buyers shopping online, Black Friday sales hit the \$7.4 billion mark in the United States in 2019. There are lots of amazing deals offered by mobile games and video game during Cyber Monday

### Cyber Monday (November - December)

Brands such as Walmart, Amazon and Target offer numerous deals on iPads, GoPros, televisions etc. An Adobe Analytics study shows that Cyber Monday sales in the United States grew by 19% to [\\$9.4 billion in 2019 from \\$7.9 in 2018.<sup>2</sup>](#)

### Christmas and New Year Sale (December - January)

Overall holiday retail sales were up by [3.4%<sup>3</sup>](#) in the United States, while e-commerce sales increased by 18.8% as compared to 2018. The United Kingdom witnessed a 0.4% drop in overall sales owing to the political/economic uncertainty around Brexit, coupled with harsh weather and dampened Christmas spirits.

### Boxing day (December)

This largest post-Christmas shopping event of the year presents an opportunity for retailers to clear inventory. Although on a decline due to the rising popularity of Black Friday and Cyber Monday, brick and mortar stores such as John Lewis and Marks & Spencer have witnessed an increase in traffic.

## India

Traditionally, India's offline sales have always peaked during Dussehra and Diwali.

According to a Mastercard report in 2019 overall retail sales grew by [3.4%<sup>4</sup>](#) year-on-year, while online sales increased by 18.8%!



### Flipkart's Big Billion Day Sale (September - October)

With flash sales, new deals every 8 hours, an array of huge discounts on beauty, apparel, electronics and large appliances, Flipkart reported a [2x sales growth<sup>5</sup>](#) on the first day of sale in 2019 as compared to the opening day of sale in 2018.



### Amazon's Great Indian Festival Sale (September - October)

Big discounts and exclusive deals on mobile phones, home appliances, gadgets, accessories, fashion and footwear. During the sales in 2019, Amazon claimed that they [recorded the highest share of transitioning customers and purchases in India.<sup>6</sup>](#)

### Christmas and New Year Sale (December - January)

Travel & hospitality, and e-commerce/retail industries have their own online and offline sales at the end of the year, with brands like H&M, Nykaa, IndiGo leading the play.

1.Source: SpendMeNot | 2.Source: Adobe Analytics | 3.Source: Mastercard Report

4.Source: Mastercard Report | 5.Source: NDTV Gadgets 360 | 6.Source: Financial Express

# Holiday Season across Geographies

## Middle East

Burgeoning e-commerce brands, powered by digitization and key acquisitions such as that of Souq by Amazon, have changed the landscape in the Middle East, reinventing the way people shop.

According to a Bain prediction, e-commerce in the region is expected to be worth \$28.5 billion by 2022.

### White Wednesday (November)

Draws huge crowds through buy-one-get-one offers and attractive discounts. Consumers in Saudi Arabia and Egypt are major drivers, contributing a [30-35%](#)<sup>7</sup> spike in sales every year.

## Southeast Asia

Nearly [40%](#)<sup>8</sup> of online sales in Southeast Asia occur between October and December. Shoppers are open to purchasing from multiple brands and platforms.

### 11:11 [Single's Day Sale] (November)

Started by Alibaba in November 2009, this 24-hour shopping event has become a global phenomenon recording a revenue of [\\$38.4 billion](#)<sup>9</sup> in 2019, a 26% jump over 2018!

### Black Friday and Cyber Monday Sale (November - December)

Generated a lot of buzz, dominating social media chatter across Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia. 2017 reports by Meltwater indicate [88%](#)<sup>10</sup> conversations centered around Black Friday and Cyber Monday compared to 22% for Single's Day!

### Harbolnas (December)

Analogous to Black Friday and Cyber Monday sales in the west, Harbolnas (Hari Belanja Online Nasional) or National Online Shopping Day, held in December every year, is Indonesia's single biggest annual shopping event.

## Australia & New Zealand

Actual holiday sales in Australia hit [\\$7 billion](#)<sup>11</sup> for the first time in 2019.

Shoppers in New Zealand have been warming up to Black Friday spending. NZ Online Shopper Survey of 2018 revealed that [44%](#)<sup>12</sup> of shoppers admitted to shopping more than what they normally would, resulting in a [10.4% increase](#)<sup>13</sup> year-on-year in retail spends on Black Friday.

### Black Friday (November)

Always bigger and better each year, research in 2019 has shown that Australians will spend [\\$3.9 billion](#)<sup>14</sup> during this sale. In New Zealand, sales reached [\\$253 million](#)<sup>15</sup> in 2019, overtaking the Boxing Day sales.

### Cyber Monday Sale (November - December)

Great value offers across fashion, electronics and gadgets, travel and more are the highlights of this sale.. According to Adobe Analytics, Cyber Monday sales were bigger than Black Friday, with [\\$11.7 billion](#)<sup>16</sup> worth of transactions in 2018.

### Free Shipping Day (December)

Held on December 14, all products are shipped without any additional charges. Free Shipping Day generated [\\$764 million](#)<sup>17</sup> in online sales in its first year in 2008.

7.Source: Gulf News | 8.Source: aCommerce | 9.Source: Practical Ecommerce | 10.Source: Digital Market Asia | 11.Source: Radio New Zealand | 12.Source: New Zealand Post  
13.Source: The Register | 14.Source: Finder | 15.Source: TechRadar | 16.Source: Adobe Analytics | 17.Source: National Today

# Trends In The Unusual Holiday Season 2020

Despite the palpable excitement in the air, holiday seasons seem to be damp this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Here are some critical challenges confronting marketers:

## Economic uncertainty

According to the World Health Organization, nearly half of the global workforce<sup>1</sup> runs the risk of losing their livelihood due to COVID-19. The looming prospect of unemployment will make consumers more cautious about spending on gifts. They would prefer to save money for the future instead.

## Buyers are more value-conscious

COVID-19 has transformed millennials from swipers to savers. COVID-19 seems to have changed the spending habits of consumers not just in the United States but also in developing countries like India. Consumers will be more value-conscious and less impulsive while shopping. As Chris Farrell, the Marketplace Senior Economics Correspondent, puts it, "More people are embracing frugality or thrift."

## Reluctance to shop in-store

A holiday season seems incomplete without the images of people lining up outside retail stores as early as midnight to buy their favorite products. However, this year is going to be completely different. Social distancing norms have led more consumers to shop online as compared to in-store. A new global study shows that 36%<sup>2</sup> of shoppers now prefer weekly online shopping as compared to the 28% who chose the option pre-COVID-19. This is particularly challenging for brick and mortar shops that have relied mainly on in-store sales during the holiday season.

## Supply chain delivery issues

The disruption in supply chains due to the pandemic badly impacted the retail industry. In April, the retail sales in the United States plunged by 16.4%<sup>3</sup> due to supply chain issues. Problems such as labour shortages, transportation restriction and border closures, have added stress on the retail supply chain and led to artificial shortages.

1.Source: Livemint | 2.Source: Digital Commerce 360 | 3.Source: RangeMe



# 13 Lessons To Learn From Successful Holiday Marketing Campaigns

Holidays invariably evoke emotions. According to a study by the United Kingdom - based Institute of Practitioners in Advertising, campaigns with emotional content performed twice as well as those with only rational content (31% vs. 16%). Purely emotional content also did better than a mix of emotions and rationality (31% vs. 26%). As a marketer, ensure that your campaigns focus on emotions such as joy, merriness and togetherness. Here are some successful marketing campaigns to inspire you.

1.Source: Campaign Monitor | 2.Source: Adestra

## 1. Presale buzz and strategic discounts to rake in profits during

A close look at Amazon's strategy will show you that they do not have major discounts on the actual holidays. Their strategy is to generate a buzz in advance. For example, they create a holiday season-like frenzy on Amazon Prime Days with exciting deals and offers on a wide array of products. This has helped Amazon earn profits worth [\\$7.16 billion](#)<sup>1</sup> in the United States. In 2018, customers purchased thrice as many products during the Christmas in July campaign as compared to Black Friday.



## 2. Creating hype and building anticipation through suspenseful email campaigns

For Halloween 2018, Serious Sports created an air of mystery by sending out emails to its users in the United Kingdom prompting them to click on a link to unveil their mystery offer. This promotion [increased Serious Sports' revenue by 131% year-on-year](#)<sup>2</sup>. Even their Black Friday strategy, which consisted of a four phase email campaign to create anticipation among consumers, earned them a 35% year-on-year increase in revenue.

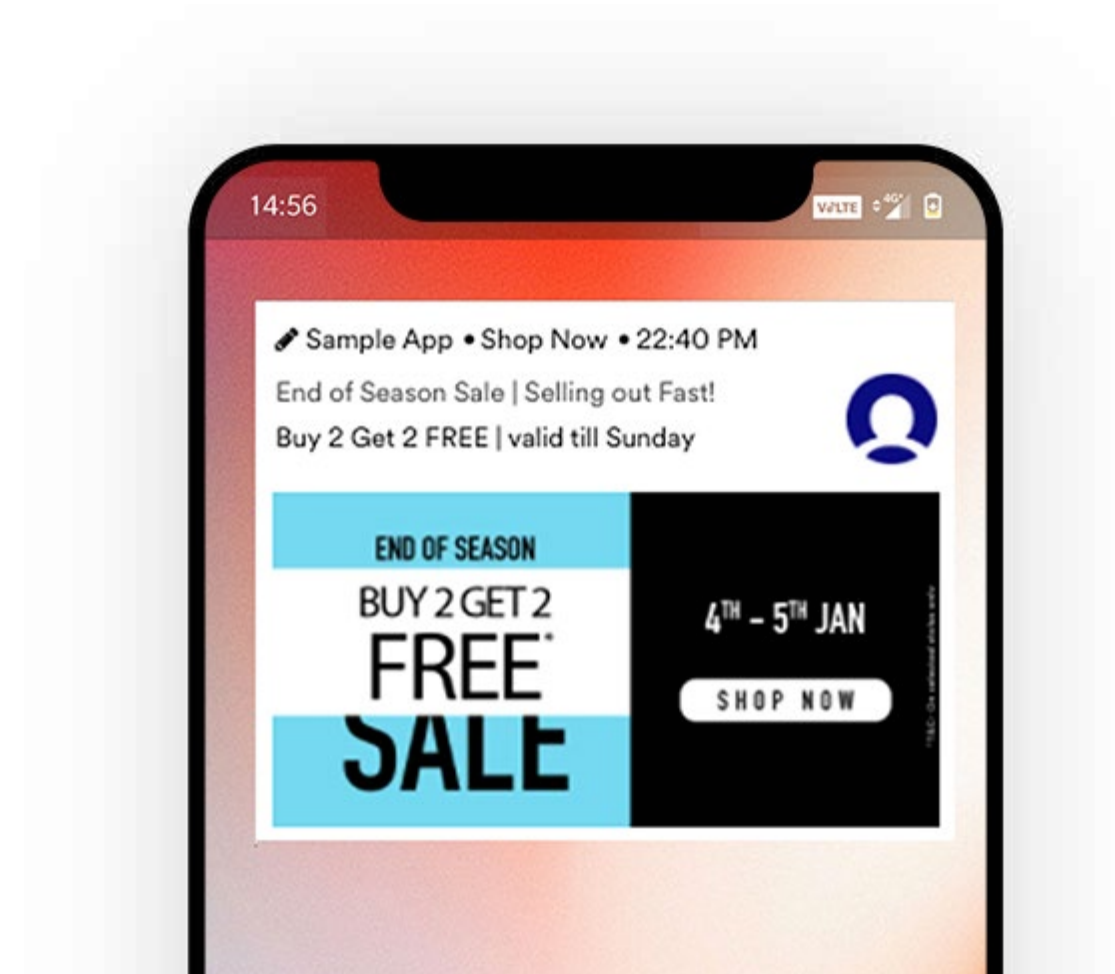


# 13 Lessons To Learn From Successful Holiday Marketing Campaigns

## 3. Optimal utilization of push notifications in communicating deals

One of India's leading retailers that operates in multiple retail formats serving both value and lifestyle needs of the country's consumer market, Future Retail utilizes push notifications to communicate lucrative offers and discounts and target users. In 2019, the brand experienced an increase in average CTR from 2.47% before the sale period to 3.27% during the campaigns.

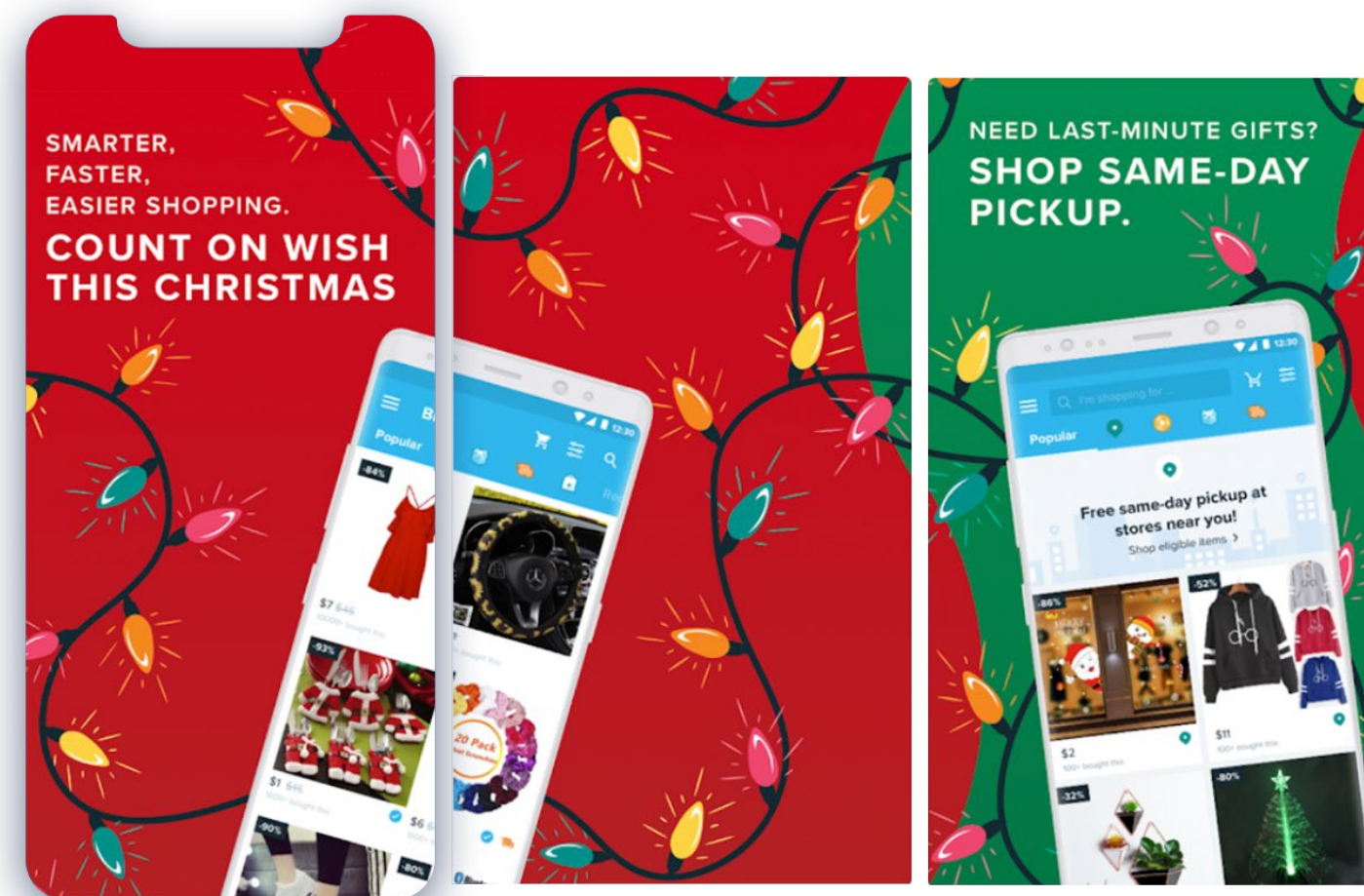
[Skip to strategies](#) ➔



## 4. Adaptation of current assets in the apps

Just like storefronts display seasonal decorations like pumpkins, cobwebs, and Christmas wreaths, Apple's App Store & Google Play spin in a colorful showcase of orange pumpkins and witches for Halloween, and red caps and snow for Christmas. Many publishers try to capitalize on their users' holiday sentiments and adapt their products to the mood.

Adaption is perhaps the most common tactic used by brands to make changes related to the holidays.. The Christmas graphic for the "Wish" app is a good example





# 13 Lessons To Learn From Successful Holiday Marketing Campaigns

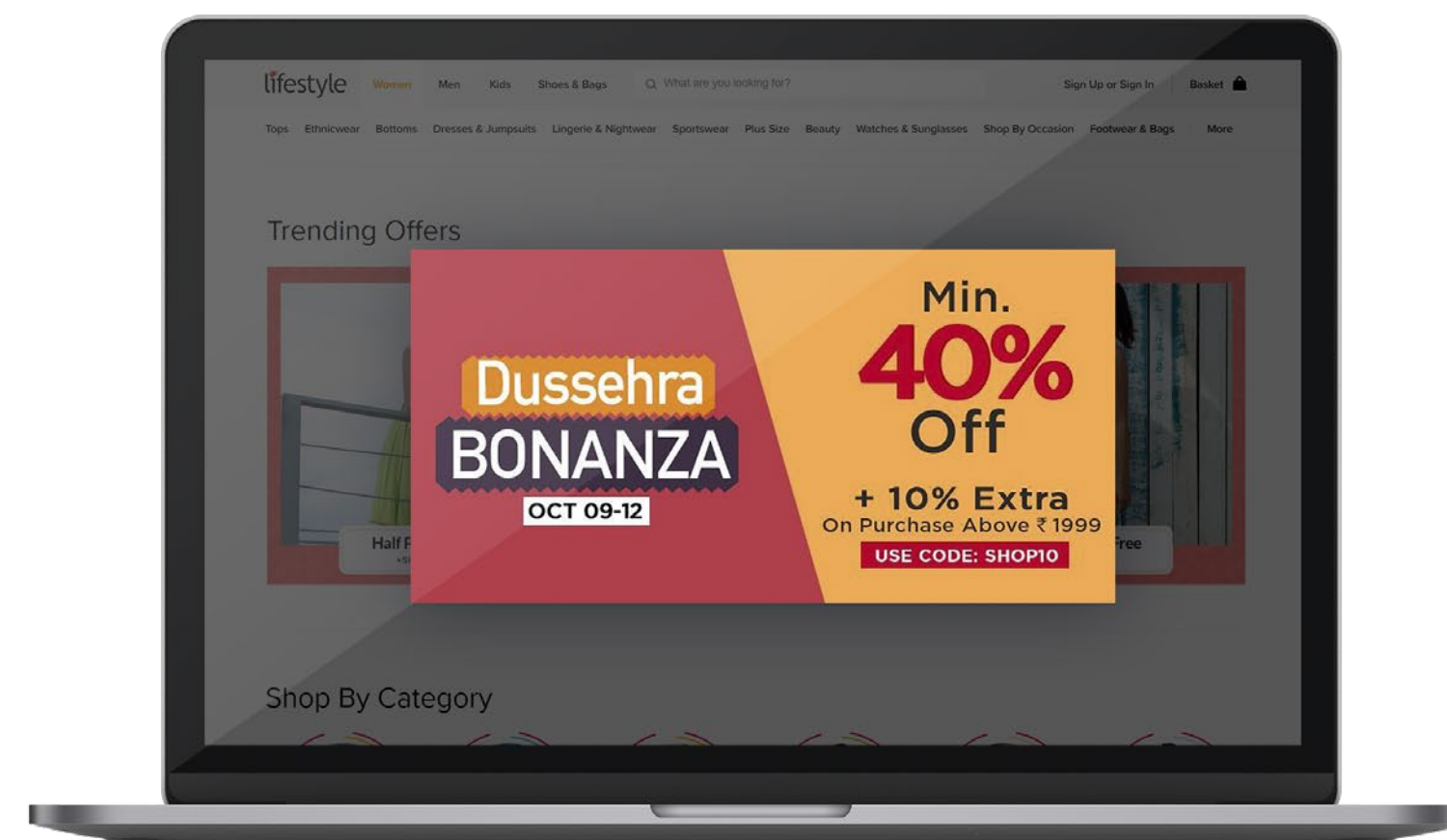
'Resort Hotel' game is another example.

Notice how the app developer dressed up the main character in Halloween costumes and turned the game's world into a Halloween party



## 5. Communicate percentage discounts according to categories

The leading Indian retail fashion brand, Future Retail has planned festive, promotional and special offer campaigns for year-end 2020 with 'Buy 1 Get 1' and category-wise sales across Women's wear, Men's wear, Kids, Beauty, and more. They aim to communicate these sales using messaging around special coupons, Buy 1 Get 1 offer or a flat 40-50% off via push notifications differing according to specific categories. The brand has also been forced to change its holiday marketing strategy to focus more on online marketing as compared to 2019, due to an increase in MAUs (monthly active users) and DAUs (daily active users). Compared to 2019 holiday sales, the chain expects 2X growth this year, though tech issues could blunt the numbers.



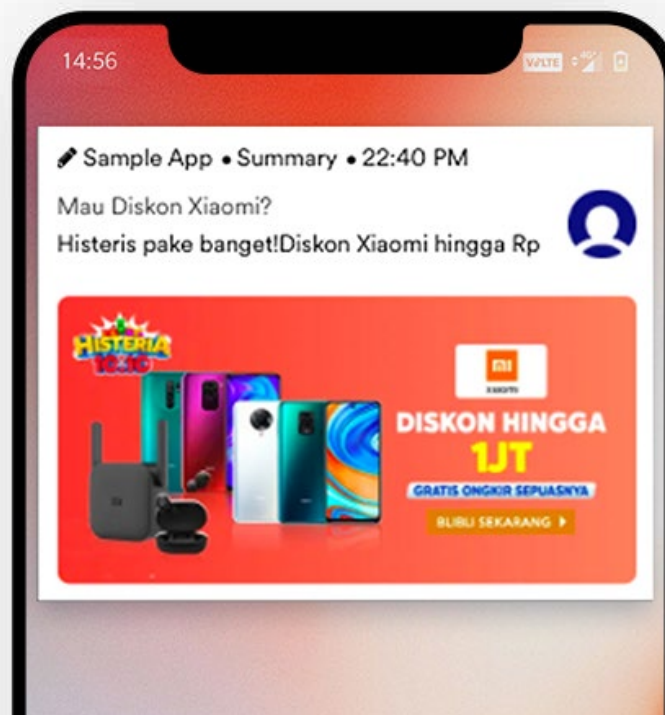
Lifestyle Dussehra Bonanza Sale



## 13 Lessons To Learn From Successful Holiday Marketing Campaigns

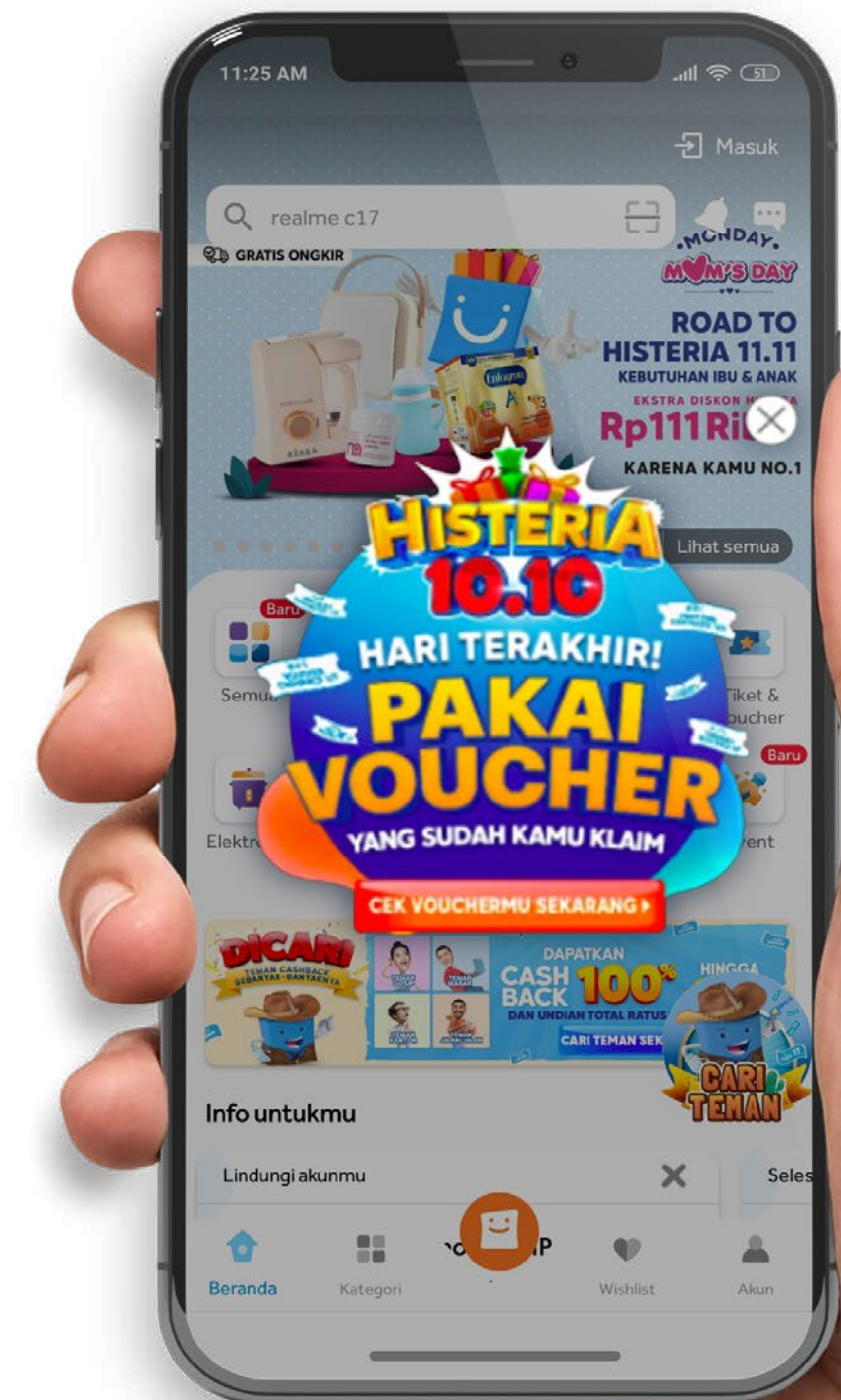
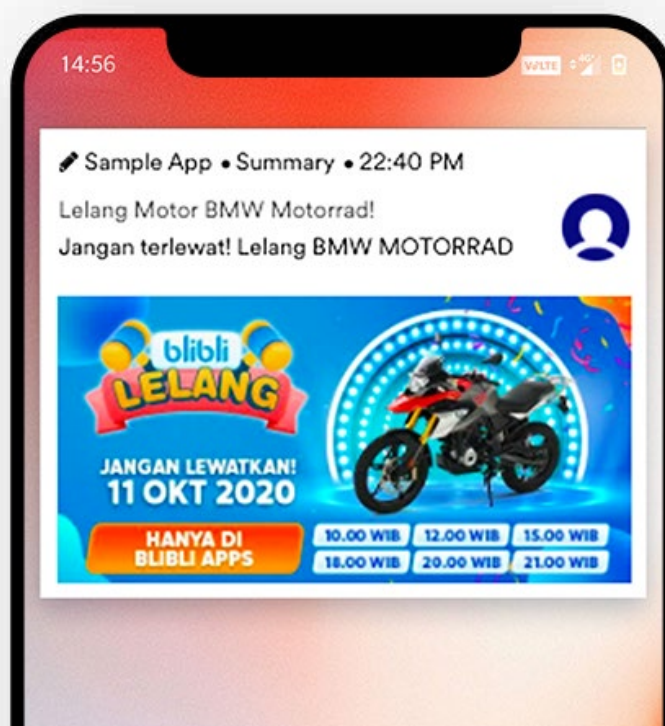
### 6. Past purchase behavior-based targeting and running in-app voucher campaigns

The Indonesian e-commerce platform ran campaigns promoting products during the 10/10 sale in 2020, by targeting users based on their historical touchpoints with them. The brand reached out to users through push notifications, in-app messages and emails.



Blibli leveraged their payment partnerships during the sale to offer discounts to their users and also promoted flash sales via their email campaigns.

Blibli also used in-app campaigns for their sale to drive engagement and to give users vouchers which they could then use to complete purchases.





## 13 Lessons To Learn From Successful Holiday Marketing Campaigns

### 7. Changing icons and graphics based on the biggest local festival

As mentioned already, various regions have differing holiday and shopping events spread across the last quarter of the year. Be active in changing your app icon and graphics based on the biggest event in your region.

For example, in Russia, New Year's Eve is a bigger holiday than Christmas, so apps like Ozon, one of the largest e-commerce companies in the country, added Santa Claus to the App Store icon just before announcing New Year discounts.



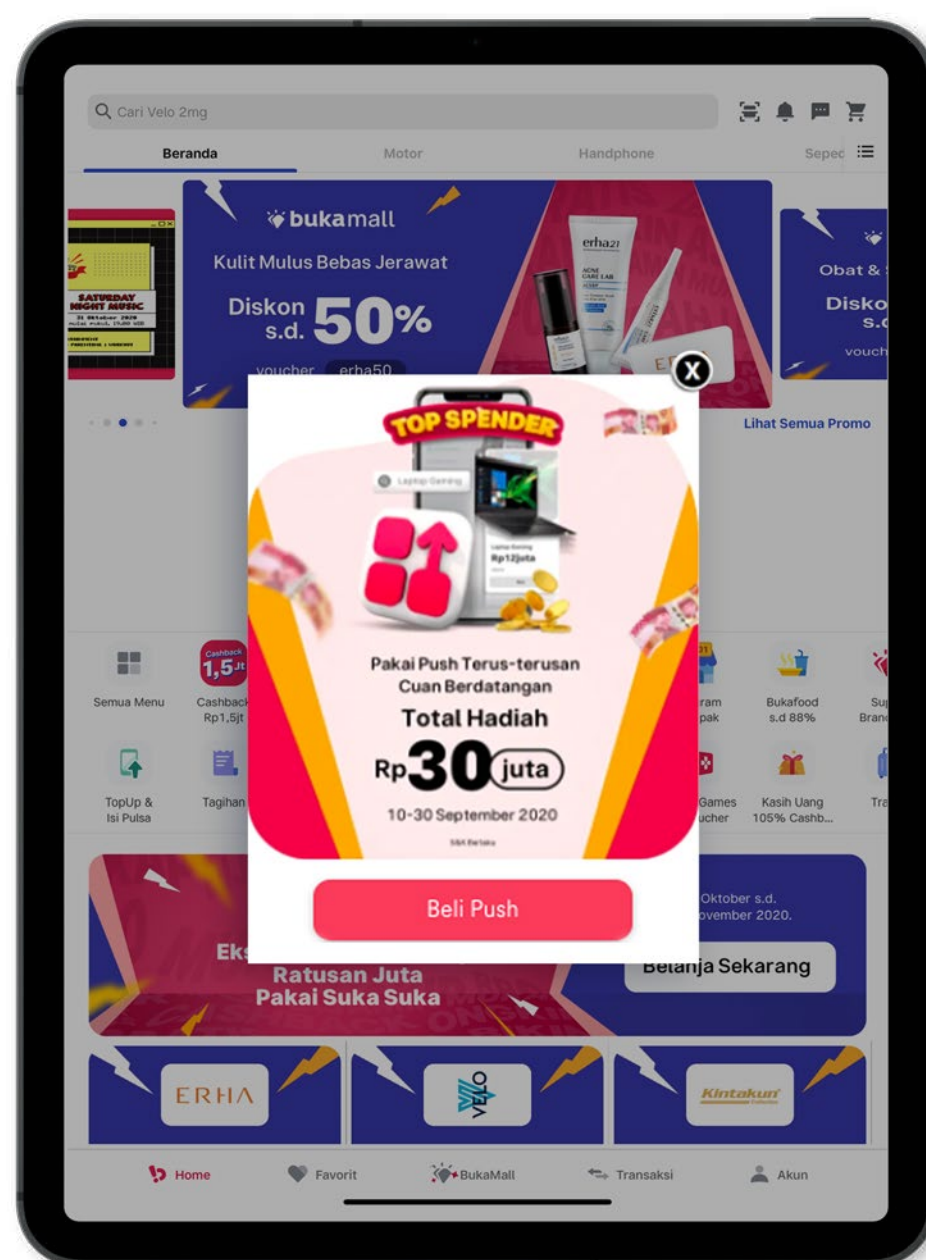
The Chinese shopping season starts on November 11. It's an unofficial holiday for bachelors. The holiday has become the largest offline and online shopping day in the world. The biggest shopping apps like Aliexpress are actively promoting this holiday on their app pages



# 13 Lessons To Learn From Successful Holiday Marketing Campaigns

## 8. Running top spender campaigns to drive more repeat purchases

One of the largest e-commerce companies in Indonesia, Bukalapak ran a top spender campaign in 2020 and leveraged in-app messages to communicate information related to deals.



Top spender campaign to drive repeat purchase

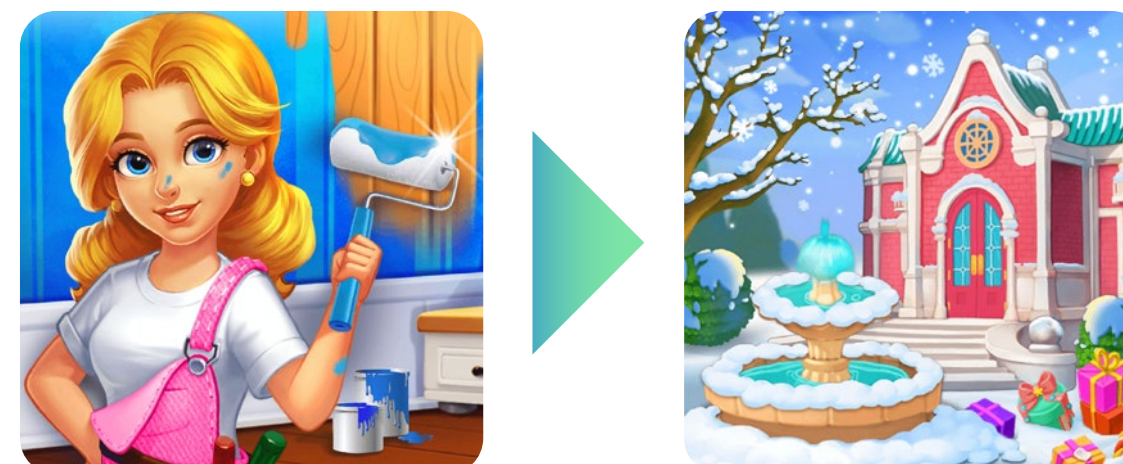
## 9. Optimizing the apps with new graphics for the season

Some games prefer creating brand new icons and screenshots for Halloween, Christmas and other holidays

### Empires & Puzzles - Play Store



### Matchington Mansion - App Store



Skip to strategies >



## 13 Lessons To Learn From Successful Holiday Marketing Campaigns

### 10. Using gamification, loyalty programs and lucky draws to attract users

Indonesia's leading lifestyle retailer is gearing up for end of year sales with 10.10 and Harbolnas (Hari Belanja Online Nasional or National Online Shopping Day), both due in the final quarter of 2020. Participating brands include the likes of Planet Sports, Marks & Spencer, SOGO, Brikenstock, Mango among others.

The brand actively uses referrals and gamification to attract audiences. In addition, they also run the MAPCLUB program which provides loyalty points that can be redeemed to win exciting prizes such as iWatch, Samsung A50, iPhone SE etc. through lucky-draws during the sale period.

MAP uses smart segmentation to decide on the frequency of communication. By leveraging RFM, one of MAP's business units, Mapemall, identifies segments of customers such as loyal, close to conversion, price-sensitive and inactive, to send as many as 5 emails/day across brands.

[Skip to strategies](#) >

### 11. Create special product events inside the apps

"Harry Potter: Hogwarts Mystery" by Jam City is a great example of special seasonal events.

Every year, the users get additional seasonal quests and cool features that keep them hooked on and interested in the game.



### 12. Gamify shopping experience to drive repeat purchases

Dubai-headquartered 6thStreet.com, the e-commerce arm of The Apparel Group, one of the largest retailers in the world, registered a significant growth in sales during the 2018 Black Friday season. This encouraged the brand to increase repeat purchases the following year. By gamifying the shopping experience and rewarding shoppers who completed five purchases, they increased repeat purchases by 24% during Black Friday 2019!

To achieve these spectacular results, the brand used automated workflows which got activated on completion of the first purchase - a trigger email was then sent to the shopper, highlighting their progress towards the 'goal' of five purchases and nudging them to buy more.



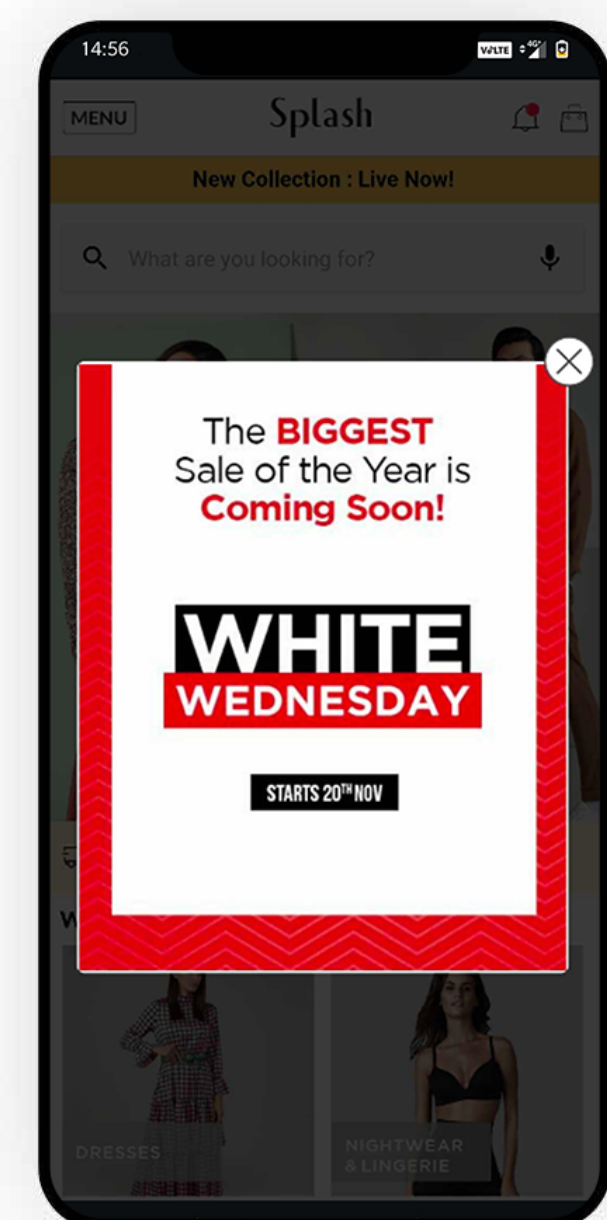
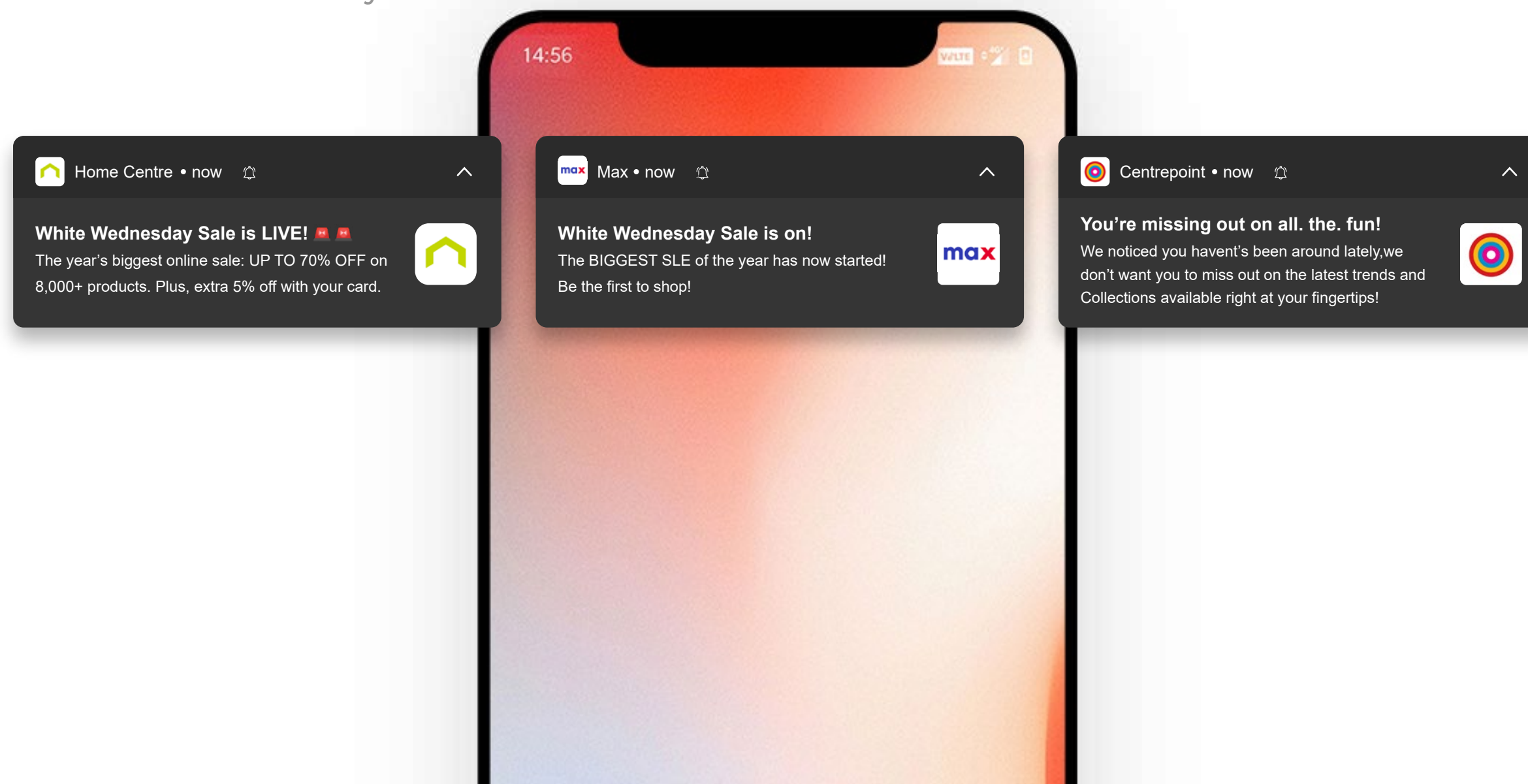
# 13 Lessons To Learn From Successful Holiday Marketing Campaigns

## 13. Segment users based on real-time triggers and target using segment-specific campaigns

Landmark Group is one of the largest retail and e-commerce businesses across the Middle East, Africa and India. During White Wednesday 2019, Landmark Group used segmented campaigns based on real-time event triggers, amplified push notifications, seamless customer journeys and personalized messages to encourage maximum usage of discounts and offers, and improve app purchases and conversions.

The strategy was to encourage existing app users to opt-in for push notifications and prompt inactive customers to engage with the app through attractive offers. Inactive customers who were already opted in were sent compelling communication to make use of offers instantly. The brand prompted the wishlist functionality within the app, slashed pricing and gifting options for active customers.

Communication strategy  
for Landmark Group's  
White Wednesday Sale



# 20 Strategies For Holiday Marketing 2020

Traditionally, the starting point for marketers to plan the current year's holiday campaign has been to look at the previous year's playbook. But 2020 is different - this year, recalling historical trends is meaningless.



## 1. Growing importance of the click and collect model

According to a study by National Retail Federation (NRF), [84.2 million people shopped in stores on Black Friday in 2019 and 37.8 million people did the same on Thanksgiving Day<sup>1</sup>](#) in the United States. These numbers confirm the importance of in-store shopping for retailers. However, due to COVID-19, shoppers have to follow safe distancing norms inside stores this year. Click and collect is one way to solve this problem. It offers customers the convenience of purchasing items online and picking them up from a centralized location whenever they're free, without waiting in long lines.

## 2. Increased relevance of curbside pick ups

With the potential of providing contactless delivery, curbside pick ups are going to be huge this holiday season. According to a survey conducted by [blackfriday.com](#), 50% of respondents in the United States are likely to use curbside pick more than they did in 2019 and 36% say that they will use it as much as they did last year. Another [survey by Google<sup>2</sup>](#) confirmed these intentions.

1.Source: National Retail Federation | 2.Source: Google Survey

## 20 Strategies For Holiday Marketing 2020

Among all the people who will shop during the holidays this season, 63% plan to do so at stores that offer contactless shopping and 39% said that they prefer to buy online but collect their purchases in store or by using curbside pickup.

### 3. Focus on mobile marketing - automated, smart, targeted messaging

According to [Adobe's 2019 Holiday Recap](#)<sup>3</sup>, 84% of e-commerce growth accounted for in the holiday season in the United States was carried out through smartphones. During Black Friday, smartphone users spent \$2.9 billion. For Christmas, 67% of total visits and 48% of revenue came through smartphones. The study also stated that 36% of online revenue (up 21% YoY) and 58% of traffic ((up 14% YoY) to retail sites from November through December was through smartphones.

### 4. Go heavy on mobile acquisition and omnichannel engagement

Mobile phones provide instant access to potential customers because 91% of people use mobile phones all day long. To boost engagement and retain users across multiple channels on mobile phones, remember to personalize notifications. This is worth the effort since 70% of users allow push notifications.

With mobile advertising being so rampant, it is important to really differentiate your brand to the user. This is where omnichannel comes in. Research suggests that when a customer is approached through two or more channels, levels of engagement are 166% higher than single-channel and 642% higher than receiving no messages. It is possible to achieve this level of effectiveness only when the entire cross-channel experience is seamless for the user.

### 5. Build onboarding and lifecycle marketing programs

Customers need to see value throughout the lifecycle of their journey with your brand. As a marketer, you need to create that value to retain and engage users. According to [Anthony Nygren](#) from EMI Strategic Marketing, "Lifecycle marketing isn't just about sending messages customers might like — it's about positively influencing their behavior." With about [20% of marketing professionals](#)<sup>4</sup> planning for the holiday season three months in advance, it is important to have a seamless experience throughout the funnel to get conversions. Studies show that lifecycle emails get [624% higher conversions](#)<sup>5</sup> than bulk or generic emails.

<sup>3</sup>.Source: Adobe | <sup>4</sup>.Source: Disruptive Advertising | <sup>5</sup>.Source: Blueshift study



## 20 Strategies For Holiday Marketing 2020



It is also important to remember that acquiring a new customer can cost 5 to 25 times more than to retain an old one; that there is a 60% to 70% chance of selling to an existing customer; and that a repeat customer spends 67% more than a new one. In order to achieve a better RoI on your efforts, take a long-term view of your relationship with the consumer.

### 6. Be empathetic in communication

Emotions and holidays go hand in hand. This is the one time of the year when most people are with their families and especially joyful. But amidst Covid-19, merry holidays also come with their share of pain. So, avoid in-the-face marketing and be subtle. Campaigns that express solidarity with people and resonate with their emotions in these difficult times are necessary to build trust as a brand. Hence, this holiday season, remember to empathize with your consumers when you start your holiday marketing campaign.

## 7. Focus on digitization

Online retail sales were higher in June compared to the pre-pandemic average in February.

Research from Signifyd shows that BOPIS (buy online pick up in-store) orders more than doubled globally:



**88%**

of consumers plan to continue purchasing gifts online and sending them to recipients



**64%**

miss going to physical stores



**65%**

are already or will be comfortable shopping in malls by mid-October

Source: Signifyd research

These are great signs for the end-of-year peak shopping season. As our research shows, by the time Black Friday rolls up in the fall, most consumers in the United States may be ready to shop in stores. Increased e-commerce sales during the coronavirus outbreak also indicate that more consumers than ever are familiar with new e-commerce websites and will likely visit them again for holiday shopping.

If you're a brand, think about how to get in front of Black Friday shoppers where they're already searching for deals (for example, on retailer websites). If you have physical locations, consider displaying discounts online for buying in-store to drive holiday footfalls. During the highly unusual holiday season 2020, marketers need to connect customer data across channels to provide consistent, relevant, and personalized experiences across stores, websites, or apps.



## 8. Build long term relationships and loyalty

Users purchase behavior has changed and some of those who discovered new brands or shopped from small merchants will continue purchasing from them. It goes on to show how building loyalty is need of the hour in the post-COVID world. Change brand creatives, messaging to reflect the user's current mood and communicate with shoppers who visited recently by serving offers relevant to the holiday season. Communicate clearly what your brand is doing to ensure their safety.

## 9. Optimize apps for holiday season

Shopping app revenues have increased since lockdowns began in mid-march (App Annie report). Other non-gaming apps, including those related to food delivery, finance and lifestyle, have also seen significant revenue spikes. Consumers have:

- Downloaded at least one shopping app during the coronavirus outbreak
- Heard about an app from family, friends or co-workers
- Used one or more of their newly downloaded shopping apps multiple times per week

The most downloaded apps in the past six months were in the categories of retail shopping, gaming and streaming.

Users say they don't mind watching or seeing in-app ads if they get free content in exchange.



# 20 Strategies For Holiday Marketing 2020

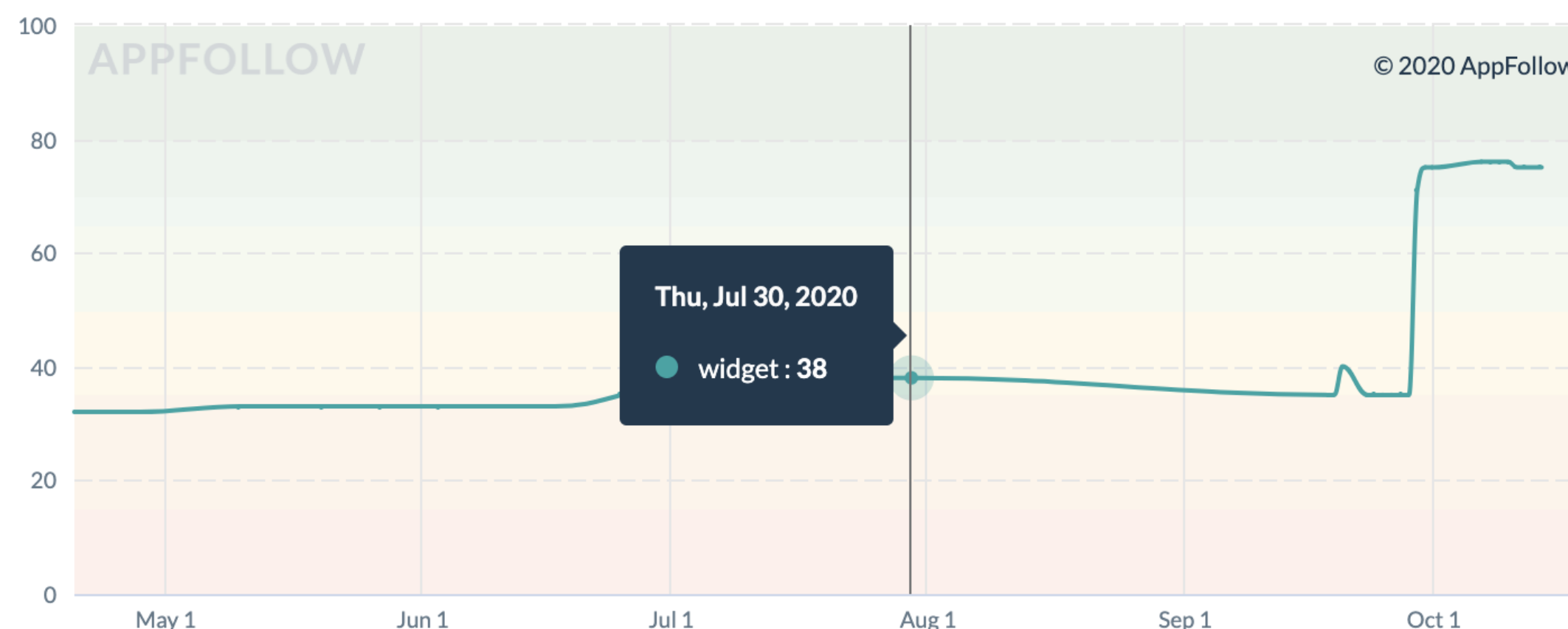
App marketers should prioritize creating seamless experiences for holiday shoppers. Targeting users across devices and using dynamic creatives to serve relevant messaging ensures that consumers only see ads for the gifts they're looking for. Adding a feature that allows shoppers to continue from where they left off across devices will make their check-out experience with your brand faster and simpler.

The holiday season is a great time to think about building a new user base for your app as well as bringing old users back. App retargeting re-engages users who may have abandoned the app.

You might have seen app stores aglow in orange now. The creatives of many apps and games are already filled with images of cobwebs and witches. From a creative perspective (in terms of graphic assets), classic ideas travel from year to year. The new trends for the holiday season 2020 are not different in this regard. We definitely cannot ignore some newly released features in the market.

## So, what are the trends this year?

After the iOS 14 release, widgets became more popular. If your application supports them, using seasonal widget designs is a good way to please your users. Still wondering whether you need to have one? Take a look at the 'widget' keyword trend:



Keyword Popularity Trend, source: AppFollow

# 20 Strategies For Holiday Marketing 2020

App Clips is another new feature offered by Apple. With App Clips, you can offer users a unique experience with the key benefits of your app adjusted for the holiday season. For example, e-commerce app clips can help users to quickly receive holiday discounts and bonus cards or easily find seasonal products.

There is a new wave of COVID-19 related restrictions in many countries around the world, with some of them re-introducing complete lockdowns.

So, many people are likely to celebrate this holiday season at home. Take this into account while designing seasonal content for your audience.

## 10. Cater to the new lifestyle

The pandemic has led to the emergence of a new lifestyle, with changing behaviors, habits and attitude. Users have switched to different practices such as:

- Working from home
- Spending free time at home
- Exercising at home
- Cooking at home

Target the new personas that the new lifestyles are giving rise to by using relevant products. Study what your audiences have been browsing, adding to the cart and buying. Consider audience targeting to connect with your best shoppers and use data-driven product insights to drive your holiday deals and campaigns.



# 20 Strategies For Holiday Marketing 2020

## 11. Keep up with travel habits

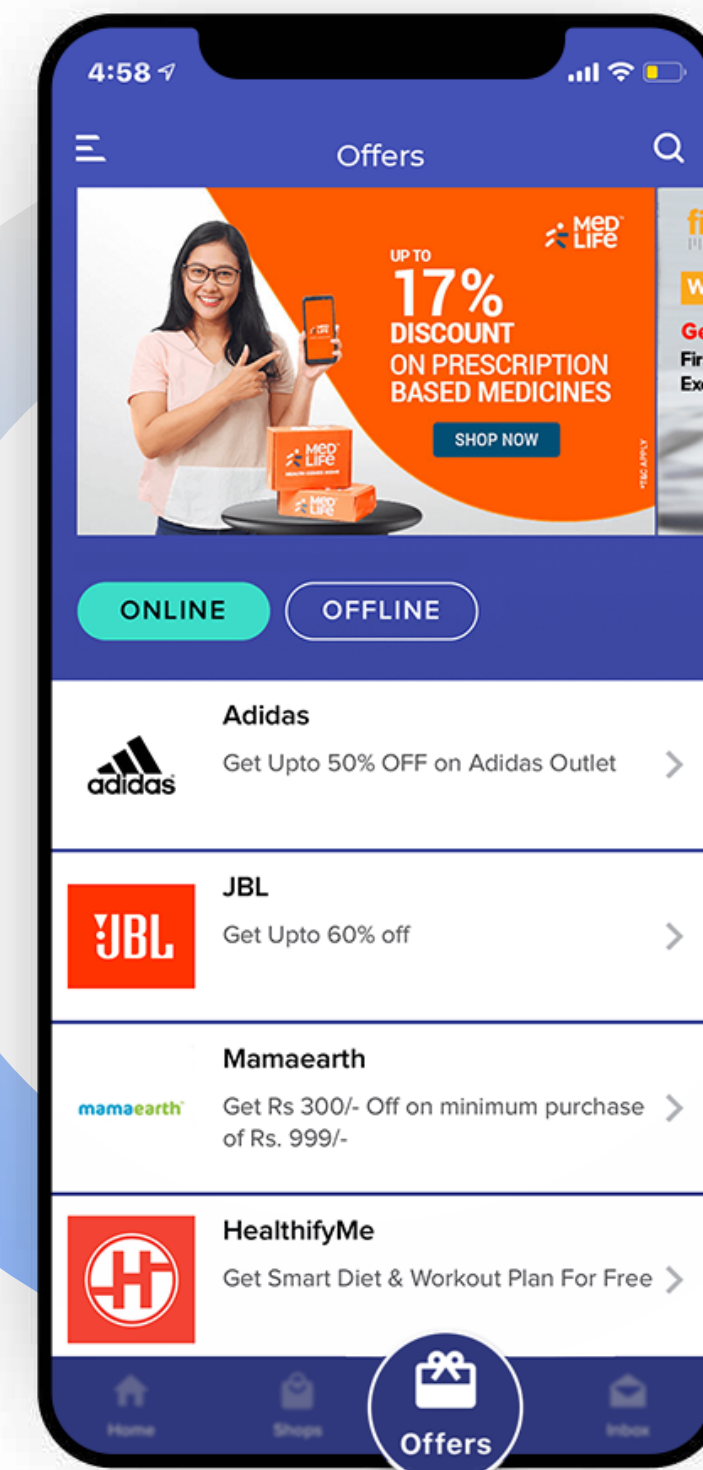
Expect travel expectations to rise as time goes by, but this holiday season, people are more likely to take short trips. Long-haul flights will tick up sometime in 2021. This could have an impact on how people visit family during the holiday season, too. Here are some possible trends:

- Families could get away together to spend a portion of the holidays at a place other than their home, creating a positive end-of-year effect for hotels and rentals, activities, restaurants and other tourism-related industries
- Users could be looking forward to traveling again
- Users will be wary of planes and trains for some time
- Users could be searching for 'summer travel', 'airlines' in the hope that things will get better soon
- Comfort levels for flight and train travel will vary for people

## 12. Attract users by setting up in-app offer zones

Showcase the exciting offers and amazing deals you're providing during the holiday season by setting up an offer zone inside your app. You can engage your customers with relevant offers and promotions, especially the ones who opted out of Push Notifications, Emails or SMSes!

Set up 'offer zone' inside your app



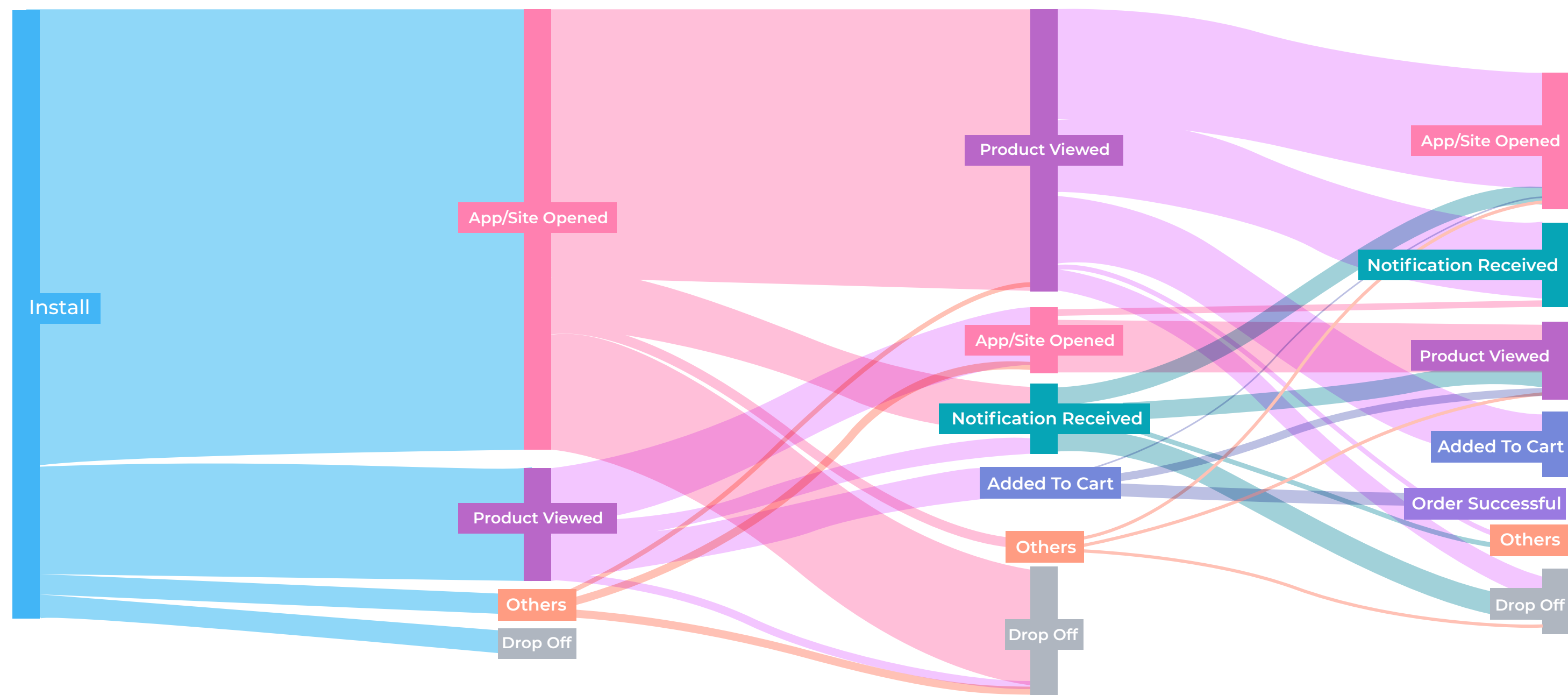
MoEngage Cards enable you to persistently communicate with your customers by sending personalised offers, recommendations and more straight to the customers' inbox or news feed within your app, without interrupting their browsing behaviour. What's even better is unlike in-app or push notifications that can be dismissed, MoEngage Cards ensure your messages stick around in a non-pushy way so that your customers can interact any time they'd like.



### 13. Understand user journey, identify drop offs and target users better

Visualize the paths your customers take while navigating your app or website. Find out the best paths and improve user experience, increase conversion, and reduce churn this Holiday Season.

User Paths functionality of MoEngage uses Sankey Analysis to help you identify the most popular paths users take and any bottlenecks or friction points in the user experience which can then be eliminated.



MoEngage User Paths help you understand exactly why customers churn and improve conversion

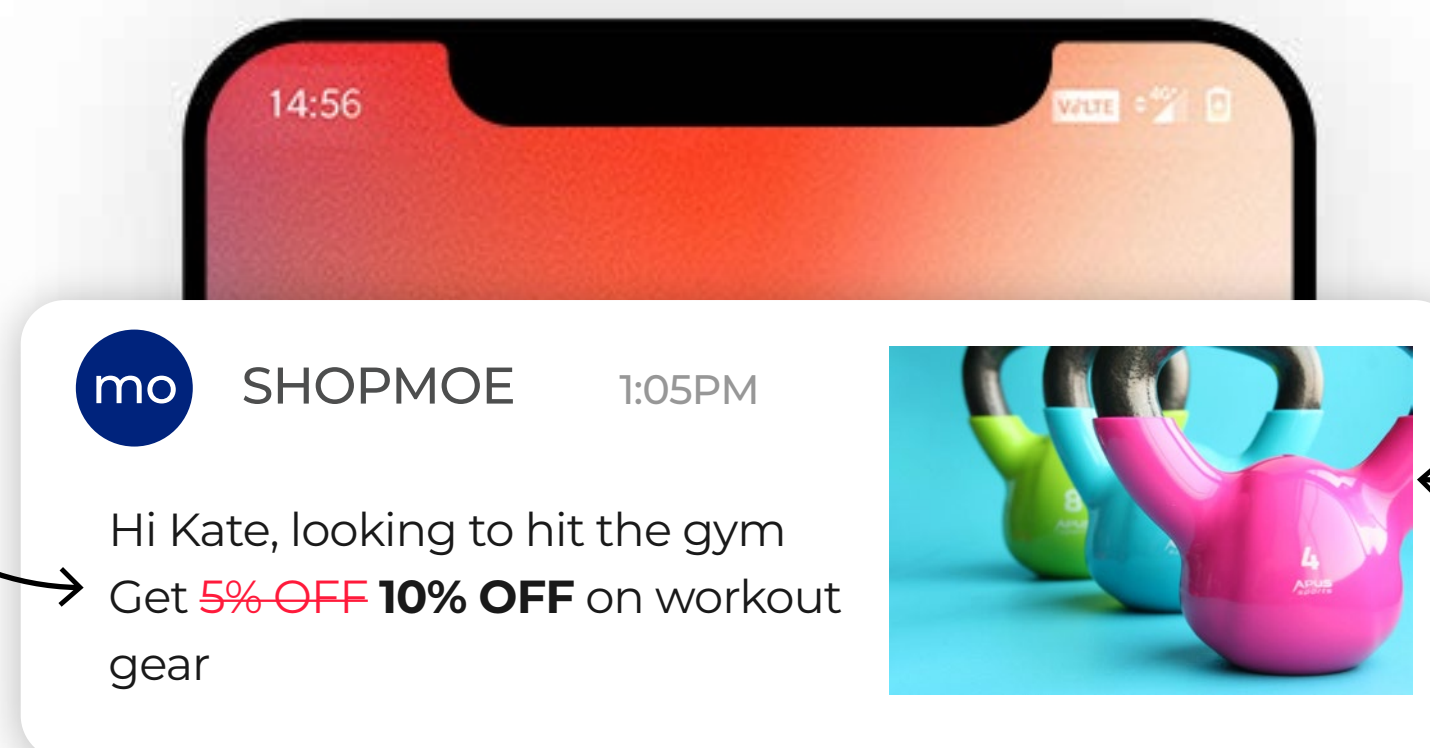
## 14. Reach users with creative, intuitive & personalized push notifications

The average user receives over 65 notifications in a day – which translates to roughly about one notification every 15 minutes during the user's waking hours! This number will only go up during the holiday season with all brands vying for user's mindshare. This holiday season you have to up your game to win the battle of notifications.

Don't let your notifications get lost in the notification tray, stand out with rich & personalized notifications that are hard to miss. Active, adorable, adventurous, whatever your brand style, extend it to your notifications. Craft rich-looking notifications using colors & rich text that instantly connect with users.

Be it brand communication or exciting holiday offers, make notifications non-intrusive with thin banners to improve user engagement.

Your rich  
text here

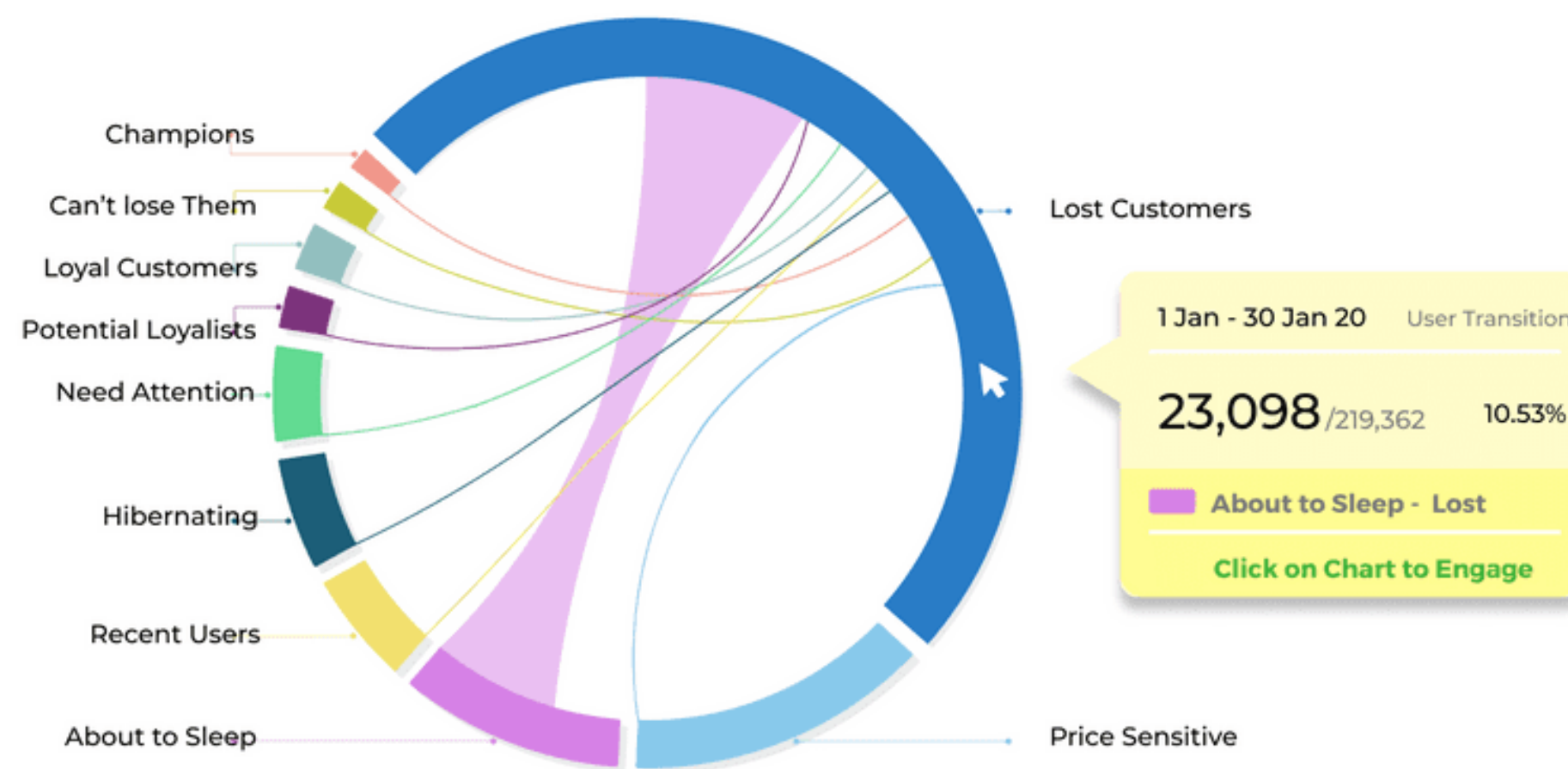


Your brand  
colour here



## 15. Better target users by leveraging predictive segmentation

If you send offer related communication to dissatisfied users, chances are they'll churn. Therefore, it is very important to know which segment of your users are at risk of churn. Using predictive algorithms, you can segment customers based on recency [R], frequency [F] and monetary [M] value of interactions with your brand. You can either use R,F, and M parameters or any combination of RF, RM, and FM to accurately group your customers into 'churn risk', 'loyal', and 'price sensitive' to run appropriate campaigns.



Using RFM analysis Identify how many customers have moved across segments

## 16. Leverage geofencing to target users where they are

During the holiday season, take your marketing initiatives to the next level by geofencing potential customers within a specific geographic radius. This is particularly effective while targeting users who might be traveling home or elsewhere during the holiday season. Create a simple geofence to surround your store's physical location and communicate location-triggered deals via push notifications. For example, sending promotions prior to the start of the holidays and showcasing limited time-offers.

You can also use geofencing to target loyal shoppers such as the store's highest-valued visitors and drive repeat purchases. Craft unique and personalized messages to drive cross-sell or up-sell opportunities.

Another way to use geofencing is to target consumers with buy-one-get-one deals on products similar to the ones they might have browsed at a competitor. You can also create custom audience segments based on competitor locations and frequency and time of consumer visits

## 20 Strategies For Holiday Marketing 2020

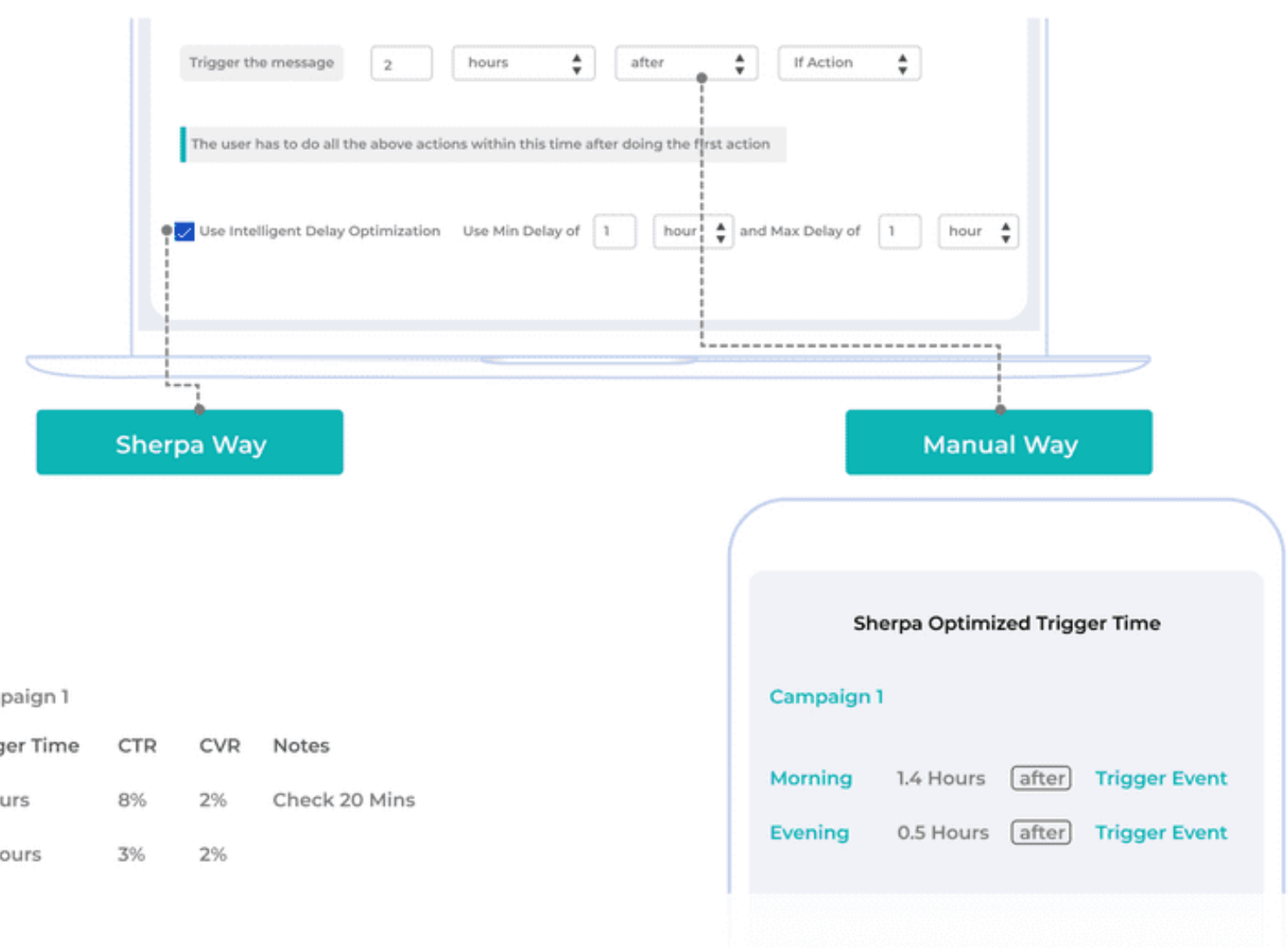
Consumer data such as demographic information, likes and dislikes can be collected and stored to personalize offers throughout the holiday season and send relevant communication based on location.

In the aftermath of COVID-19, users are hesitant to step out, resulting in low footfall inside shopping malls. To combat this, brands like Levi's Strauss, Pepe Jeans, Max Fashion and Bata have been setting up pop up stores in retail trucks in residential colonies.

The response to these 'stores on wheels' has been great from users across age groups. Some brands, such as Bata, have also launched chatshops which enable digital users to buy from local stores via WhatsApp.

### 17. Send the right message at the right time

This holiday season, stop guessing and let the machine figure out the right time and the right message variant to target users. MoEngage's proprietary AI engine analyzes the performance of different message variations to automatically pick and show the top-performing content to customers in real-time.



Send messages at a time when customers are most likely to view and interact.

### 18. Improve push notification deliverability

Between 40% - 70% of Android customers do not receive your push notifications due to device and network restrictions. Chinese OEMs restrict or 'kill' background processes that affect push notification delivery. During the holiday season, you want to ensure that your push notifications reach all of your users without missing out on any. MoEngage's Push Amplification+ helps you overcome these restrictions and get a 50% uplift in delivery for 30-day active customers and 40% uplift for inactive customers.



## 19. Testing ads and keeping multiple ad formats ready

Make sure to test each of the different formats and sizes of creatives for all the various channels you're using. Generally, people limit their creatives to the most popular format, which is both good and bad. The good news is that creatives in the popular format get the majority of the impressions. The bad news is that's where most of the other advertisers are also focused, resulting in higher competition for such inventories along with higher priced CPM/CPI. When you use creatives in all the different formats, including the least popular sizes, you can get additional exposure at a much lower price. Keep testing to find out which are the most relevant ads coming in from different channels. For example audiences for Google ads, Facebook ads and other channels will have different kinds of expectations. Differentiating through dedicated ad formats for each channel is all the more important in 2020 as the online ad space is likely to get very crowded in the holiday season. Many brands who went slow on advertising during the pandemic's peak earlier in the year and those who have recently moved from offline to online will go heavy on ads.

## 20. Be agile in changing festival creatives as soon as they become irrelevant

One of the most common advertising blunders that brands make is retaining holiday themes such as Halloween icons on their apps well into February. This reflects poorly on the brand for not being up-to-date and provides no benefits. Be disciplined about changing sequences and do not keep ads running beyond the relevant period. Most people are challenged by insufficient bandwidth or resources to change or rotate ads. Get the right technology platform that not only enables you to schedule creatives ahead of time but also lets you test them, at the same time eliminating manual work through automation.

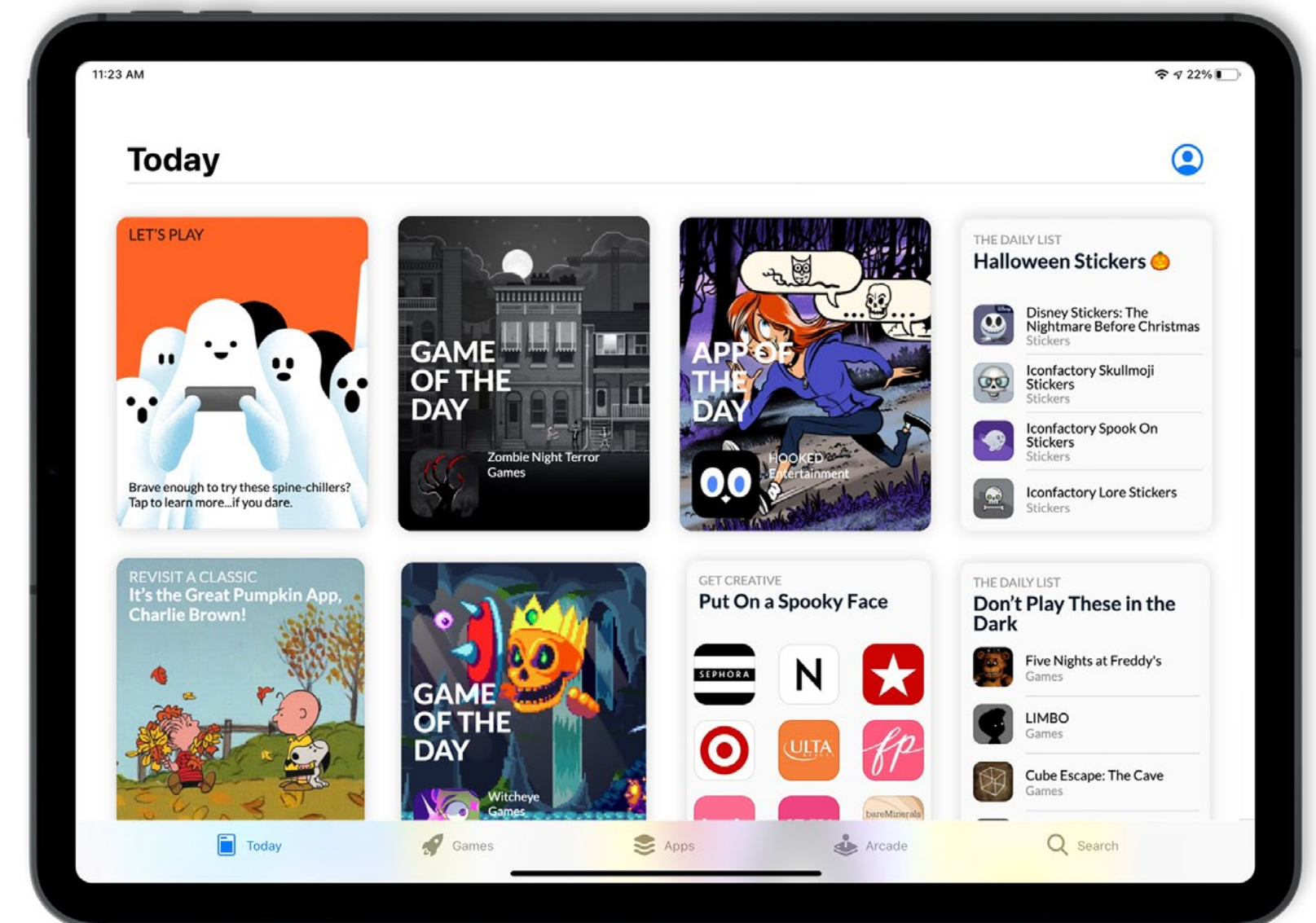
# Holiday Marketing Campaigns Do's For 2020

- Focus on emotion-driven messaging and build extremely relevant campaigns around offers/deals
- Support a cause which makes your customers feel better about your brand
- Simplify clutter, reduce option fatigue and improve customer experience by providing curated gift ideas
- Optimize mobile marketing strategy and adopt an omnichannel strategy if you already haven't
- Improve navigation on your website
- Partner with influencers to maximize engagement
- Bundle offers to attract more customers
- Create a sense of urgency through your communication
- Leverage the power of email marketing
- Use web push notifications to remind customers about discounts
- Ensure GDPR compliance while setting up marketing campaigns



## ○ Holiday Marketing Campaign Do's For 2020

- Leverage avenues like gift cards, referral discounts, price reductions etc
- Create loyalty solutions/programs
- Take into account local details viz. Cultures, customs and traditions. Don't try to promote Christmas in Arab countries or Ramadan in Israel. Always consider the specifics of your key markets
- Cater to the season featuring. Games are predictably featured the most on the App Store during the holiday season. The next popular category is holiday stickers. Messengers, recipes and shopping list apps were also featured in the last few years
- Getting featured in the App Store and Google Play can greatly boost your browse traffic. We recommend sending featuring requests a few weeks before the start of the holiday season. Having holiday-themed app pages or in-app events would increase the probability of getting featured.
- Start your holiday activities early. Make sure to prepare the holiday app page and in-app events at least a month in advance. This gives



Featured today in US App Store, source: AppFollow

you enough time to run A/B tests in Google Play and check the metrics after updating graphics in the App Store.

- Create separate tests for each metadata field - icon, screenshots, short description. So you'll know the impact of each item. If your app has enough users in different countries, also run country tests because the results can vary depending on cultural differences in each region.

# Holiday Marketing Campaigns Don't's For 2020



Test sequential number of deals ranging from 10% unto 50%, broken down into 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, so on. You don't need to give everybody a general deal and you can convert equally effectively using some of the smaller denominations of the deals which ends up giving you more profitability.

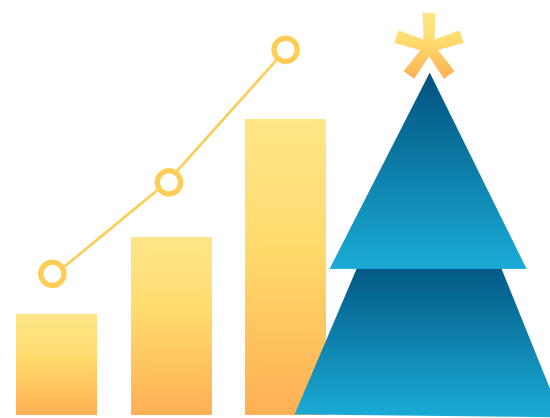
- Not planning for the influx of orders.
- Lack of live chat and support.
- Not investing in paid advertising.
- Lack of an email marketing strategy.
- Not optimizing for mobile sales.
- Poor checkout experience.
- Not leveraging YouTube and social media.
- Waiting till the last minute to run your campaign.
- Focusing on just one channel.
- Being lazy and going with one blanket deal viz. 50% off across the board.
- Ignoring personalization and remarketing.
- Do not be obvious by using the same attributes like Christmas candies, red hats etc. Try to come up with something different and see how you can make your ideas relevant to your product.
- Do not make too many drastic changes and do not update anything for the sake of updating. Optimize wisely.



# Conclusion

While working on this guide, we spoke to marketing experts from top global brands, across several verticals, about their holiday campaign strategies. We have then distilled our findings into:

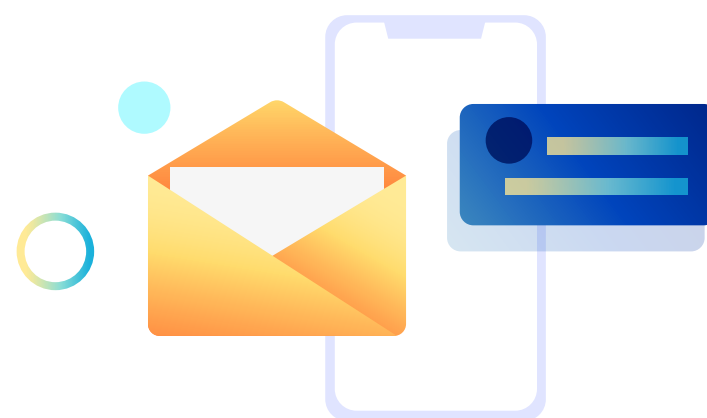
We hope the content that we assembled in this guide will help you frame a winning holiday marketing strategy, leading to increased engagement, conversions, and revenue this holiday season. **Happy Holidays!**



Key data points across the holiday seasons of the past



Challenges and trends for the unique holiday season 2020



Use cases and examples of campaigns from top global brand



Strategies and key takeaways to focus on while framing holiday campaigns

# Blast From The Past

Holiday season 2020 is unlike any other owing to the pandemic and the ensuing crisis. However, to give you an idea of what to expect, here's a brief overview of holiday marketing campaign numbers in the past along with key data points and trends:

## Look Back At Sale Period Performance by Geography and Category

In India, online shopping searches peak [2-3 weeks](#)<sup>1</sup> before Diwali with sites witnessing a 30% increase in their traffic during the holiday season. Interestingly, non-metro consumers are participating more enthusiastically in online shopping. [Apparels, accessories and mobile phones](#) are leading products purchased by consumers.

According to Google's Consumer Barometer stats of 2017, 41% of Singaporean shoppers research online but shop offline. Offline retailers thus launch more in-store only discounts and offers to attract online shoppers.

In the Philippines, online shopping searches have increased by 57% in 2018 over 2017.

[Apparel, footwear, food and personal care](#) are the leading categories for shopping. The shoppers are more focused on gifts that have utility and provide value for money.

In Indonesia, although Ramadan is considered the biggest festival, marketers have been using the upcoming holiday season as an opportunity to grow sales. [Apparels and accessories](#) feature among the top searches during the holiday season.

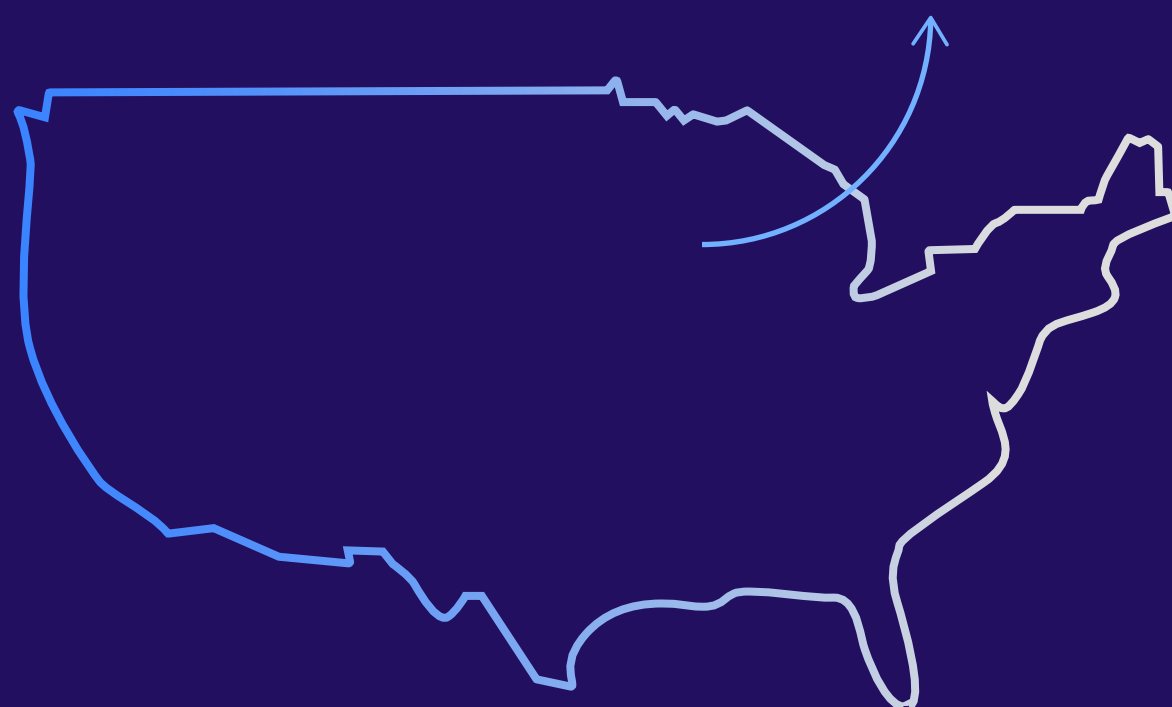


<sup>1</sup>.Source: Google study



## Blast From The Past

In the US, 30% of all retail sales occur between Black Friday and Christmas. Black Friday witnessed a surge in sales, with [93.2 million buyers](#)<sup>2</sup> in 2019, 50.4% of whom were women, with millennials spending the most.



An average adult plans to spend around \$400 during this sale.

Here's a breakdown in spending plans by generation

- 94% of millennials planned to spend a combined \$11 billion
- 90% of Gen Xers, a combined \$31.8 billion, on electronics
- Baby boomers planned to spend a combined \$12.2 billion on travel

According to a forecast by Deloitte, two-thirds of shoppers suggested that they would research online and buy gifts in-store. However, this does not mean that online shopping is not the preferred platform. There has been an 11% increase in holiday purchases on smartphones since 2017.

A comparison between the United States and Europe showed:

- Gen Xers were the highest spenders during the holiday season, with an average spend of \$782 in the United States and £425 in the United Kingdom.
- Millennials were the second most active buyers, with an average spend of \$609 in the United States and £350 in the United Kingdom.
- Baby boomers spent the least - \$576 on average in the United States and £350 in the United Kingdom.

In Europe, Christmas retail was most extravagant in the [United Kingdom and Germany](#)<sup>3</sup> with an average Christmas budget amounting to €461. The United Kingdom, Spain and Germany were the biggest spenders with a year-on-year increase in online retail sales with apparel, consumer electronics, toys and games as popular products.



2.Source: SpendMeNot

3.Source: Statista

## Blast From The Past



Over the last decade, the Middle East has shown a steady increase in shopping around Christmas and New Year. A 2019 Salesforce report showed that 76% of shoppers in UAE made holiday purchases from online marketplaces and 48% used Instagram as their main source of inspiration. Offline sales continue to remain relevant with 56% of shoppers purchasing products online but preferring in-store pickup.

According to the Inside Australian Online Shopping Industry Report, the holiday season accounted for 15% of all e-commerce transactions in 2018. Fashion, health and beauty, and homeware and appliances are among the leading products purchased online.



In New Zealand, nearly 60% of consumers planned to shop online for Christmas in 2019. A survey by PayPal revealed that discounts are a key attraction for shoppers in Australia. The survey also showed that seven out of ten Australians actively sought online discounts, while 50% waited till the item they wished to purchase was sold at a discounted price.



## Holiday Marketing and Social Media Trends of Yesteryears

- As compared to 2018, there was a [2x sales growth](#)<sup>1</sup> in 2019 on the first day of Flipkart's Big Billion Days in India.
- With the [highest share of customers and purchases in India](#)<sup>2</sup> in 2019, Amazon's Great Indian Festival clocked record sales of 7.5 billion rupees in the premium smartphone category.
- Over 7 billion rupees were spent on OnePlus phones alone.
- In 2019, the holiday season spends in the Indian market touched [\\$46 billion](#)<sup>3</sup>.
- In Southeast Asia, Alibaba's Singles Day Sale recorded revenues of [\\$38.4 billion](#)<sup>4</sup> in 2019.
- [Black Friday sales hit the \\$7.4 billion mark](#)<sup>5</sup> in 2019 in the United States.
- In 2019, Cyber Monday recorded a sale of [\\$9.4 Billion](#)<sup>6</sup> in the United States.
- Boxing Day shopping in the United Kingdom saw a reduced traffic of [31 million](#)<sup>7</sup> visits on retail sites in 2019 as compared to 34.9 million in 2018.
- Estimated revenues of [\\$3.9 billion](#)<sup>8</sup> were generated from Black Friday sales in Australia in 2019.
- [Sales worth \\$7.9 billion](#)<sup>9</sup> were recorded on Cyber Monday in Australia in 2019.
- 64% of holiday revenues generated through social media in 2019 in the United States came from smartphone users. Marketers allocated 25% of their holiday marketing budget to social media marketing in 2018.
- [116.5 million](#)<sup>10</sup> emails were sent on Black Friday in the United States in 2017 with highest opens and CTRs.
- 106 million emails were sent on Cyber Monday with 95 million emails sent on Thanksgiving.
- Consumers who purchase products through email are 138% more likely to purchase products than those who did not receive any email.

1.Source: NDTV | 2.Source: Financial Express | 3.Source: Cloudways | 4.Source: Practical Ecommerce | 5.Source: SpendMeNot | 6.Source: Forbes  
7.Source: Similarweb | 8.Source: Finder | 9.Source: news.com.au | 10.Source: Campaign Monitor





- There was a 245% year-on-year increase from 2017 to 2018 in the number of push notifications sent in the two weeks just before Christmas.
- With around 3.6 billion people worldwide using social media in 2020, it is imperative to make social media a key platform for marketing. In India alone, an estimated 330 million users were active on social media in 2019.
- Brands with better customer experience command up to a 25% premium over their competitors.
- According to Accenture, 75% of customers are more likely to buy from brands that know their name, purchase history, provide them with customized recommendations etc.



## About APPFOLLOW

AppFollow is a single platform that benefits everyone involved in running a mobile app: customer support, marketing, product and analytics teams. Its range of tools and services allow you to drive organic downloads, analyze and respond to user reviews, increase app rating, and research competitors to stay ahead of the game.

## About moengage

MoEngage is an intelligent Customer Engagement Platform built for the mobile-first world. With AI-powered automation, optimization capabilities and in-built analytics, MoEngage enables hyper-personalization at scale across multiple channels such as mobile push, email, in-app, web push, on-site messages and SMS. Fortune 500 brands across 35+ countries such as McAfee, Samsung and Vodafone use MoEngage to orchestrate their omnichannel campaigns. MoEngage has been featured on Gartner's Magic Quadrant for two consecutive years and is the youngest company on the list. MoEngage has recently been recognized as Mobile Marketing and Analytics Industry Leader in G2 Fall 2020 Grid® Reports.



# Further Reading

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Customer Engagement Playbook During a Crisis

Insights and strategies gathered from

PhonePe | ASUS | ixigo | Zinnov | LANDMARK GROUP

Customer Engagement Playbook During a Crisis

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Omnichannel Approach for Retail Marketing

Offline to Online Retailing

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Global Mobile Consumer Trends 2020

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# Holiday Marketing Guide 2020

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To learn how we can help you frame a winning holiday marketing strategy, visit:

[www.moengage.com](http://www.moengage.com)

For any questions related to the e-book, please reach out to

[content@moengage.com](mailto:content@moengage.com)