

# Are you Prepared for the Holiday Season?

## 30 Things you can do to Boost Christmas Sales – A Checklist for eCommerce Teams



Ginger cookies in the grocery stores and retailers having preparation stress: These are the unmistakable signs of the beginning of the Christmas season.

We developed a checklist to help you, and your team, go all out to achieve sales success and still keep an eye on the big picture.

Simply print this checklist, distribute tasks to your team and tick them off as you go.

Let's start!





## Customers

**Key issue:** On which customers should your marketing focus?

Customer reactivation and acquisition are expensive undertakings that do not always bear fruit as desired. Stay efficient: During reactivation, focus on the potential of strong existing customer segments and, during acquisition of new customers, pay attention to ensuring a healthy relation between costs and results.



### Identify especially loyal customers

Your customer base is your capital: Brand loyalty and trust have been established already. Analyze product preferences and buying incentives that were successful in the past – with the right offers you can reach a high reactivation level.

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### Identify promising new customers

Above-average strong new customers often have high sales potential and ideally still remember your shop as a pleasant new discovery. Use this advantageous starting position and invest in reactivation measures for this customer segment.

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### Identify strong acquisition channels for new customers

Based on the past, you know your strongest acquisition channels. Analyze these channels in relation to your targets for Christmas sales (numbers/sales/profitability/lifetime value of new customers) and build up your channel portfolio.

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### CLV/CPNC-Ratio: Define targets and adapt acquisition costs

To work cost-effectively, you should be clear about the Customer Lifetime Value (CLV) potential of your new customers and put it in a healthy ratio with acquisition costs (CPNC, Cost per New Customer).

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## Products

**Key issue:** What are the top sellers for your Christmas season?

The question of which products you focus on during Christmas sales is essential for a variety of reasons. Not only does the likelihood of high sales depend on the products you choose, but also, they absorb a significant amount of purchasing and/or manufacturing capital. Make the right decisions – through intense preparation.



### Identify hot sellers

Undoubtedly, your shop sells products that show consistently high sales over a long period of time. Identify these products and, from them, select the ones that should also be well suited for the Christmas season – based on data from past years and current trends.

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### Identify strong newcomers

Leverage positive trends in your product portfolio by identifying strong newcomers and strengthening their sales growth through targeted marketing.

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### Research seasonal trends

The Internet offers a variety of possibilities to detect current trends: Use platforms like Pinterest or Instagram where people find inspiration for gift ideas, and research other communities that are relevant to your business.

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### Check and adjust product presentations

As soon as you have identified your top products, it is necessary to optimize their presentation in your shop. Polish the product pages, improve text and images, implement a zoom function and in particular: Ensure the technical functionality of all landing pages.

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### Draw up the promotional concept

Additionally, the advertisement measures in your web shop should target products that you are focusing on. Develop a presentation concept around them, e.g. for your shop home page, the on-site search and the buy recommendations.

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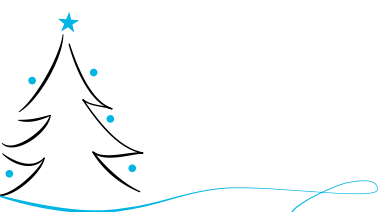


### Check and secure inventory and availability for subsequent delivery

Delivery problems can quickly ruin safe sales you were counting on. So invest enough time in stocking up thoroughly as well as arranging with suppliers and/or manufacturers to secure subsequent deliveries if necessary.

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## Marketing

**Key issue:** How should your campaign portfolio be designed?

Smart marketing is the strongest lever for your growth – especially during weeks that are crucial to success, such as the Christmas season. Reflect on your strengths and opportunities and get the most out of your marketing budget.



### Analyze past years' data and expand on your strengths

Your past years' data tells you which channels and campaigns did especially well. Profit from these learning experiences and further expand your strengths during this year's Christmas sales season.

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### Identify current trends and implement them in the keyword portfolio

To allow your products to be found online, you should use current trends for the preparation of your keyword portfolio for SEA and SEO. What are customers searching for this year at Google & Co, when they are looking for Christmas presents for their loved ones?

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### Draw up a newsletter strategy

Newsletters were, and still are, the medium through which you reach your customers in the most direct way. Use this opportunity carefully and take enough time to plan a newsletter strategy. A customer segment analysis answers the central question: Which customers should be provided with which products at which time, combined with which buying incentive?

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### Develop social media campaigns

Social media is a great tool to multiply your marketing efforts directly through the customer. Develop appropriate campaigns like special deals for social sharing and, if necessary, use performance data from last year to do this.

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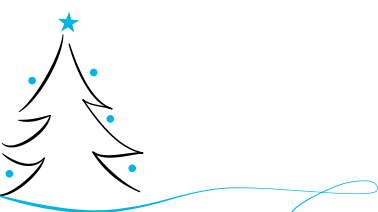


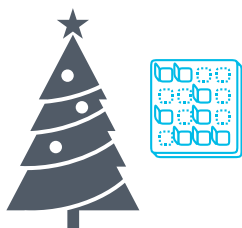
### Build a ratings portfolio

Similar to social media campaigns, customer ratings also help with the sales of your products. It can be helpful to gather ratings for your top Christmas products in the short term – e.g. through an incentivized newsletter campaign to your most loyal customers.

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## Web shop campaigns

**Key issue:** With which web shop campaigns can you achieve a competitive advantage?

Web shop campaigns during the Christmas season not only increase your sales opportunities, but also, they are an excellent tool to proactively distinguish your web shop from your competitions and strengthen your own brand. Combine calculations with creativity and stay in front of the competition.



### Check the competition, identify points of attack

Find out what the competition is doing and identify possible points of attack. Few competitors offer free shipping or inspiration for gift ideas? Perhaps you have an idea for a new kind of advent calendar, witty gift packaging or including flyers in parcels? Let's start!

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### Analyze buying incentives that work best

Your data will tell you which buying incentives work best for your customers. Who is persuaded by exclusive offers? Who likes discounts? Who gets motivated to purchase through free giveaways in parcels or special shipping conditions? Use the knowledge you already possess about your customers to maximize buying likelihood.

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### Calculate discount potentials

Discounts are often a great buying incentive – but they can also be dangerous. Calculate carefully how much discount you can offer for which products without damaging your margins too much. Maybe there is overstocked inventory that you can use for discount deals?

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### Calculate the opportunities for free-of-charge services

Additional services like free shipping, free returns or a Christmas package wrapping service are an opportunity to positively distinguish yourself from the competition. Take some time and carefully calculate if such free-of-charge services are worth considering.

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## Checkout & methods of payment

**Key issue:** How do you pave the way for your customers to have a successful checkout?

Your Christmas marketing and category management can function as well as possible – but if the checkout process is the problem then a lot of your investment can be ruined in a hurry. Take enough time to deal with this most sensitive point in the buying process of your customers.



### Test your checkout process

Regular tests are crucial for a well-designed checkout – not just regarding the technical functionality, but also, the user-friendliness. That's how you guarantee a smooth procedure.

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### Optimize process & usability

It is now possible to optimize based on test results: One-Page- or Multi-Page-Checkout? Where should the voucher field be placed? Should you provide the ability to perform guest purchases? Can you save cancelled shopping carts? What should happen after checkout? In particular, pay attention to a good presentation, clear guidance and precise wording.

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### Analyze methods of payment and optimize the portfolio

Your portfolio of payment methods should also be subject to regular checks. There is a lot of movement in terms of the offers of payment providers as well as customer preferences and habits – always keep your eye on the ball and readjust if necessary.

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### Consider purchase on invoice – at least for loyal customers

In particular during Christmas sales, many customers ask for the ability to buy on invoice – so if the presents don't appeal they can be sent back without the need to keep an eye on a lot of account activity. If you have had bad experiences with this, at least consider purchase on invoice for loyal customers.

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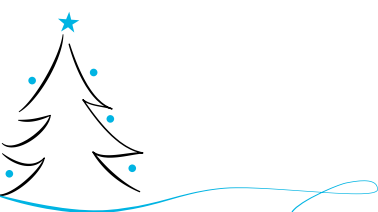


### Playing the “Add“-recommendations card

During pre-Christmas season, many customers are surfing the Internet for a variety of presents for their loved ones. Therefore, after checkout, offer an “add“ service: As long as the package for the customer is still prepared, products can be added without any additional shipping fees.

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## Logistics & Services

**Key issue:** How can you prepare your logistics and services for the additional load before Christmas?

During Christmas sales the load on logistics and service can increase significantly – be prepared for the boom so that you don't miss out on sales just when your target is in sight.



### Examine capacity in logistics and return management and upgrade if necessary

Examine your logistical setup in terms of whether you have sufficient capacity, not only in the order processing, packaging and shipping, but also, in return management – customers might expect particularly fast and flexible service during the Christmas season.

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### Consider additional shipping options

Maybe you are already thinking about the implementation of more flexible shipping options? If yes, now is the right time to become active: During Christmas, sales possibilities like desired delivery date or express delivery, as well as in-store pick up, are particularly important for customers.

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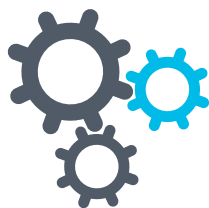
### Ensure sufficient customer service capacity

How is your customer service organized during Christmas time? Despite being holiday season, do you have enough staff? The weeks before Christmas are often not only for you, but also for your customers, a stressful time; so customers depend on fast reactions and comprehensive support. Contribute to brand loyalty by fulfilling service requirements.

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## Technical Prerequisites

**Key issue:** Are all technical prerequisites fulfilled to guarantee smooth Christmas sales?

Without a performing shop the generation of sales will be a difficult undertaking. That might sound banal, but since it is an absolutely fundamental 'To Do' it should not be neglected: Especially if sales in high season need to flow fast – everything has to be just right on the technical side of things.



### Test server performance, upgrade capacity if necessary

The foundation of all other functionality is enough server performance: Test your capacity for the expected additional load und upgrade if necessary.

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### Test web shop functionality and improve if necessary

Buying decisions can also depend on the functionality within a shop. Test filters, on-site search as well as other tools and plan capacity for the short-term improvement of individual functionality.

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### Ensure detailed data collection

Of course you already have a lot on your plate with this year's Christmas business, but also, you should already be thinking about next year and making sure that all tracking and transaction data is collected correctly. Only then will you have the right basis for a successful all around optimization of your Christmas business next year.

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## Everything ready?

Merry Christmas to you  
and your team!

