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**Tips to Increase
Holiday Sales
with Social Media**





Not too long ago social media as we know it didn't even exist. Today, **9 out of 10 US companies with at least 100 employees use social media as part of their marketing mix according to eMarketer. Likewise, **47% of consumers claim they will use social media to get gift ideas, 45% will look for coupon and sales information via social, and 41% will read up on recommendations from their peers and take into consideration others' likes and reviews says Statista.com.****

As a small-to-medium sized business, this is your chance to reap the rewards of all the time you spent setting up and growing your social media presence. Here are 15 ways you can capture the attention of your customers through social media and turn that interest into holiday sales.

And don't forget -- it pays to start early! Folks are already starting to think about holiday gifts now, so it's a good time to get your message in front of them before the flurry of the holidays.

15 Tips to Increase Holiday Sales with Social Media

#1. Post your specials on social media in the days leading up to Black Friday.

People will be thinking of what to buy now, so letting your followers know in advance what will be on special will help them plan their shopping and get excited about hitting your sale. Post photos of the products that will be on sale. If you are offering a service, use a simple graphic tool like Canva to make a colorful image listing the service offering.

#2. Increase your overall posting activity. In the days leading up to the holidays, increase both sales related and non-sales related content on social media. For non-sales related content, post interesting and little-known (but sharable) facts and history about your favorite holiday in social media updates (e.g., Thanksgiving). Make sure to include plenty of information in a graphic form to catch the eyes of your followers. There will be a notable increase in activity on social media from both businesses and personal sharing, so you want to make sure your messages get noticed.



#3. Create a blog post with your top 7 tips for enjoying the holidays. Then, share those tips through your social media channels. Depending on your industry, this could be implemented many different ways. For example, if your business is related to travel your blog post could highlight ways to make traveling with kids easier. This tactic is content marketing at its best because it allows you to generate useful and timely content for your audience that can be used through your various marketing channels.

#4. Surprise Thanksgiving

shoppers with a thank you. For those who shop on Thanksgiving, send a small, unexpected gift or a hand-written thank you note to each person who orders from your site or walks into the store if you have a physical storefront. In our world of “online everything” it’s easy for people to forget that the shop owners behind that virtual storefront are real people who appreciate their business, and this is the perfect time to remind them.



#5. Increase your reach with holiday hashtags.

Hashtags are an excellent way to increase the reach of your message when using Instagram, Twitter and even Facebook. Create a hashtag for the holidays or take advantage of other popular and timely hashtags. Not sure how much traffic a hashtag is getting? Do your homework on Hashtacker or Tagboard. #holidayshopping, #blackfriday and #holidaygifts are some of the most common holiday hashtags that are already seeing a lot of activity.



#6. Show your support for a charity.

Show your holiday spirit by select a charity to recognize over the holidays. You can weave the mission and goal of your charity throughout your social media posts and tweets. In addition, you can identify and share that you will be having “special giving” days or times when you will give a portion of sales to that charity.

#7. Plan a Facebook advertising campaign. Plan a campaign with your most popular products and services. Sure it seems silly to spend money on advertising when you can gain some eyeballs and engagement without spending the extra cash, but guess what? The next 4 weeks are going to be big and you want to make sure that your business

gets a market share of all those eyeballs. Pay per click advertising on Google or even Facebook will deliver targeted, tailored messages to your key audience, whether or not you decide to boost or promote your ad.

#8. Plan a “Cyber Monday” give-away on Facebook.

Using one of the contest and sweepstakes tools that allow you to award multiple prizes, have your customers enter to win while shopping on Cyber Monday. Make sure you offer one big prize that you can feature in the sweepstakes, but then also offer several smaller prizes. Your customers will be drawn to the chance of winning a big ticket item, but will still be thrilled to know they have a greater chance of winning something smaller, such as one of twenty-five \$20 gift certificates.



#9. Plan a 12 days of Christmas give-away on Facebook.

Take advantage of those high traffic shopping days before Christmas. Every day leading up to Christmas, give away one prize. Begin promoting the contest in November so that you get lots of entries and be sure you can collect emails. Then you can announce the prizes via email. To make this easier, be sure to sign up with one of the more popular sweepstakes and contest tools that coordinate with Facebook.

#10. Make a “Pin It and Win It” contest. Does your business have visual appeal for Pinterest? Select items from your website or store to feature on a Holiday Wish List. Then create a Pin it to Win It contest with the items on your Holiday Wish List. You can even make notes on your website highlighting that those items are featured on your Pinterest Holiday Wish List to drive traffic back and forth. Make sure you increase your Pinterest activity in November so that you have plenty of

images of your product on your boards for your customers to find and mark as favorites.



#11. Build your email list and offer online coupons.

Use your social media campaigns, both paid and unpaid, to drive people to your email list, and once there make them happy with a coupon or small gift certificate to be spent at your online store. While social media is great for many uses, it doesn't guarantee that 100% of your followers will get your message like email marketing does. Your newsletter is for people who are familiar with your

brand and have possibly already bought from you before. They are statistically more likely to buy from you again. Don't ignore them.

#12. Use visual marketing to engage your customers.

We all know that engaged customers are more likely to recommend products and services to others and come back for repeat business. Why not ask your customers to tell you which products THEY think should be on sale? For example, a photo on Facebook could show three purses side by side and ask your Facebook fans which one should be 25% off on Friday. Once your customers have weighed in on your specials, they are much more likely to remember them when gift giving.

#13. Run "Facebook Friday" sales. In the weeks leading up to the holiday, let your followers know that they will soon be able to take advantage of sales at your store on Fridays and plan a new line of products or services to go on sale each Friday. Your followers will soon be coming to your fan page on Fridays to find out what the product of the week is with the incentive to click through and buy.



#14. Be the expert on holiday shipping. If it's one thing all holiday shoppers do -- it's procrastinate. People get busy and before they know it they should have already sent out those gifts to friends and relatives. Be the helpful online business that reminds folks when to get their gifts in the mail so they can plan accordingly. Reminders of when to ship for Christmas delivery for standard mail, priority mail, and first class mail will be much appreciated the day before folks need to rush to the post office.



#15. Promote your special offers on your webpage with a social media link. Even if you are just changing up one or two things on your website, change your site just enough for people to know that you are ready to take their holiday orders. Highlight your sales with a new image, add an announcement on the top part of your webpage, or maybe even just add some holiday color to your site. Bring these changes to a new level for your social media outreach by adding a chance for your readers to share special offer deals via your social media platforms.

Want more tips on how to use social media to reach your customers and expand your business? Check out the other social media tips and advice at the blog at www.marketingstaircase.com