

YOUR EMERGENCY CHECKLIST FOR LAST-MINUTE **HOLIDAY MARKETING**

It's crunch time: The holiday season is like the Super Bowl of marketing.

We're on the final push to the end of the year and most marketers are already deep into their marketing campaigns, and consumers are crossing gifts off their lists.

If you've waited til the last minute, we're here to help. Here's an emergency checklist to make sure you have everything in order for a successful end of the year:



ONE BIG PROMOTION →

The big promotion is probably something your brand comes up with as early as the summer. According to Experian, 69% of marketers start planning in August and nearly half launch them by Halloween.

Don't have one? Here are some options for a contingency plan:

- * Hold a sale
- * Release an infographic (if it's too late to make one from scratch, consider revamping an existing graphic with a holiday theme)
- * Publish a white paper or an eBook (Or pull one in your archive and repurpose it to address your customers' concerns around the holidays)
- * Launch a specialized learning series – think video or blogs that solve customers' problems this time of year
- * Sponsor a social contest with a giveaway
- * Now is the time to think about optimizing your campaign to get the best results with other marketing tools in your belt

GOALS (BENCHMARKS TO MEASURE YOUR PROGRESS) →

Your promotion won't be successful if you don't know where you want it to go. Before you build out all of your supporting assets, make sure you have a plan that includes:

WEB GOALS:

- * REACH – The number of impressions you get through search, social and links
- * ENGAGEMENT – The number of responses, clickthroughs you get
- * TRAFFIC – The number of visits you get to your website

REVENUE GOALS:

- * LEADS – How many qualified prospects do you attract
- * CONVERSIONS – How many people buy, download your content or request a demo

□ SEASONAL OPTIMIZATION & SEO →

You probably have a creative name for your promotion already, but consider how you can make it fit into your SEO strategy.

Don't have one? Here are some options for an SEO strategy:

- * Can you include a keyword that people use to find your business?
- * Are you using internal jargon or terms your target audience searches frequently?
- * Is there a relevant hashtag you can use for inspiration, while also capitalizing on existing buzz?

For example, we found the hashtag #Thankfulchallenge was an appropriate conversation where we could jump in and share our 30 Stats for Thanksgiving series. **PRO TIP:** *It's important to research hashtags before you jump, as evidenced by campaign mishaps earlier this year.*

□ A CONTENT CALENDAR →

You need to plan with details about when you'll release materials promoting your campaign. This guarantees they're distributed at the optimal times without overlap.

□ CONTENT TO SUPPORT YOUR BIG HOLIDAY PUSH →

To support your campaign, you need a range of assets that will get people excited about and engaged in your promotion.

Don't have any? Content such as:

- * **PICTURES:** INFOSTATS, PHOTOS, ILLUSTRATIONS OR GRAPHICS – Visuals have a high impact. They draw attention and make campaigns feel complete.
- * **SITE-BASED WRITTEN CONTENT:** ARTICLES AND BLOG POSTS – Text-based content adds context and search value to your campaign. It conveys the fine print and educates readers, while also using keywords and relevant terms that make the campaign searchable and bring people to your website.
- * **SHARABLE CONTENT:** INTERVIEWS WITH INFLUENCERS, INSIGHTFUL QUOTES AND STRIKING STATS – These elements, pulled from your site resources, provide compelling items to share and can add allure to your content.
- * **VIDEOS:** IN-PERSON INTERVIEWS, VIDEO BLOGS, ANIMATED PRODUCT DEMOS – Streaming media adds another dimension to your marketing mix and has strong appeal for visual learners. It gives your campaign a dynamic edge.

□ AN EMAIL CAMPAIGN

You need an email campaign to distribute your promotional content throughout the promotion.

Campaigns including:

- * An intro email
- * A last-minute email
- * A follow-up for people who don't open
- * A follow-up for people who don't click
- * A follow-up for people who click but don't convert
- * A follow-up for people who convert, such as a thank you message
- * An unsubscribe option specifically for the campaign*.

While you want to keep the promotion fresh on people's mind, they might not be into it. Don't lose the right to email them year-round if they're simply not interested in the holiday offer.

□ SOCIAL STRATEGY

Create a comprehensive plan to reach your social networks and promote the campaign from start to finish.

Don't have a strategy? Try:

- * At least 1 daily post per network promoting the campaign (with more on Twitter). This is in addition to your regular schedule – you don't want to turn your social feeds exclusively into your holiday promo channel.
- * Unique visuals to share on social
- * A list of influencers to reach out to, who might support your campaign and get it in front of their own social circles
- * A unique hashtag for the promotion

□ SUPPORT FROM YOUR TEAM

Get your staff excited about the promotion. Consider putting the spotlight on the people behind the product or service, and getting them to speak about why it's great and how it works for customers. Also leverage your professional networks so colleagues can help spread the word about the campaign.

Show support by:

- * Incentivize employee support with an INTERNAL contest – even for bragging rights