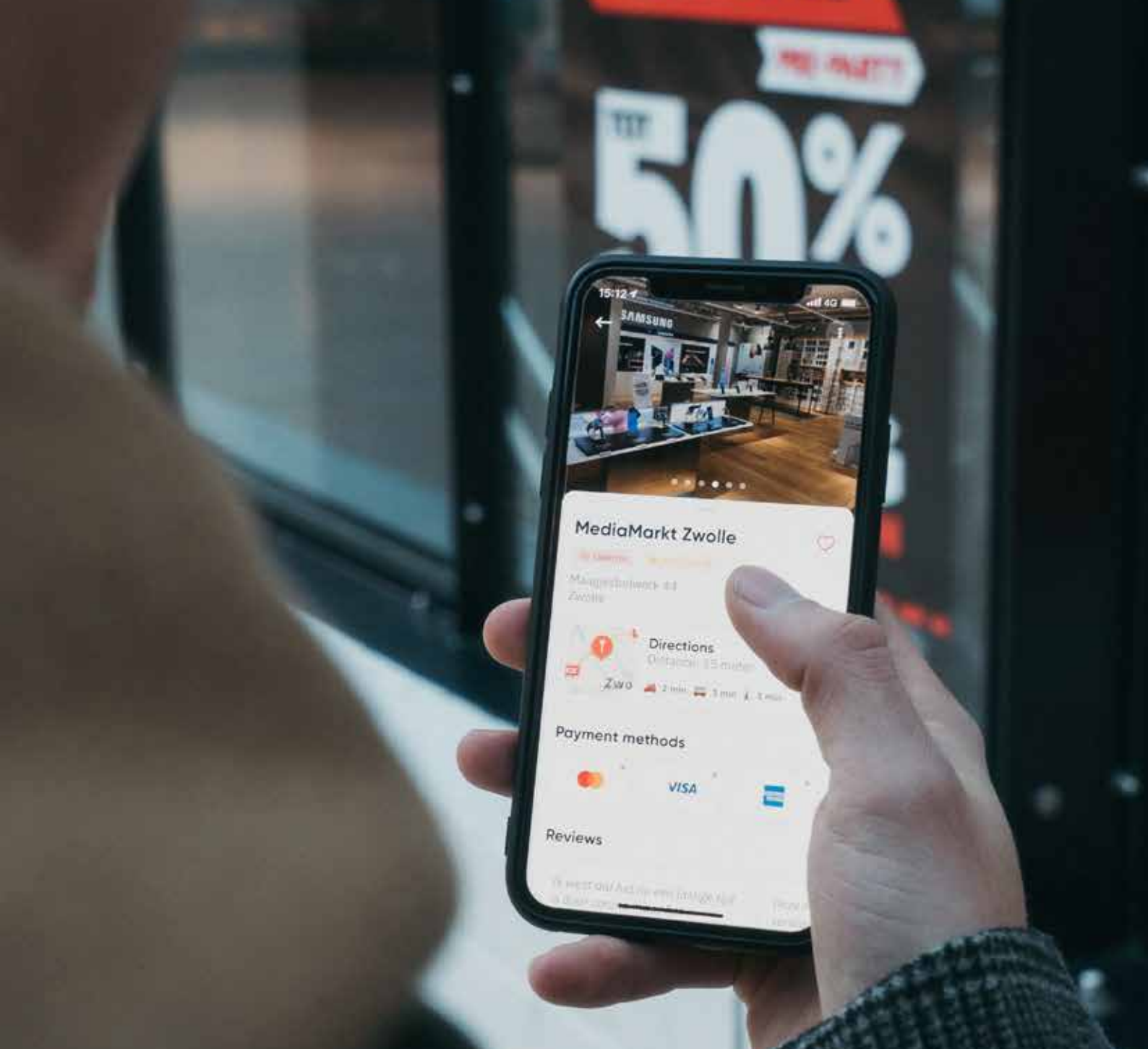


HOLIDAY SHOPPING GUIDE

HOW TO BUILD A SUCCESSFUL
STRATEGY AHEAD OF THE
SEASONAL SHOPPING SEASON

Ogilvy | Social.Lab



“

2021 IS PREDICTED TO BE THE YEAR WITH THE **HIGHEST EXPENDITURE** IN ABOUT FOUR DECADES FOR **RETAIL**

-NRF Retail annual forecast

”

THE APPROACH TO SEASONAL SHOPPING IN 2021

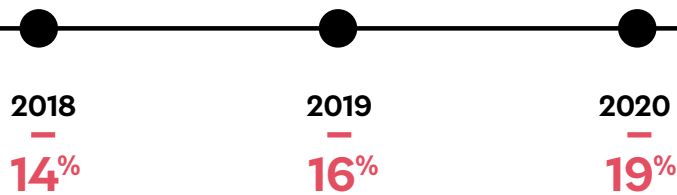
2020 taught us that people can adapt to any situation and technology helps them do it faster. Facing unforeseen challenges due to the pandemic, consumers within a few months have adopted new behaviors that led to a new era.

When consumers make decisions in 2021, they do not think about the digital channels, neither any contact points nor their overall journey to purchase. They expect companies to provide them with valuable content, respect to their private personal data, relevant and exciting ads, and an overall consistent multi-channel experience.

Last year, the retail vertical recorded the highest turnover ever made during the holiday season, with the global online sales going up 50% and the turnover reaching \$1.1 trillion.

Source: Salesforce

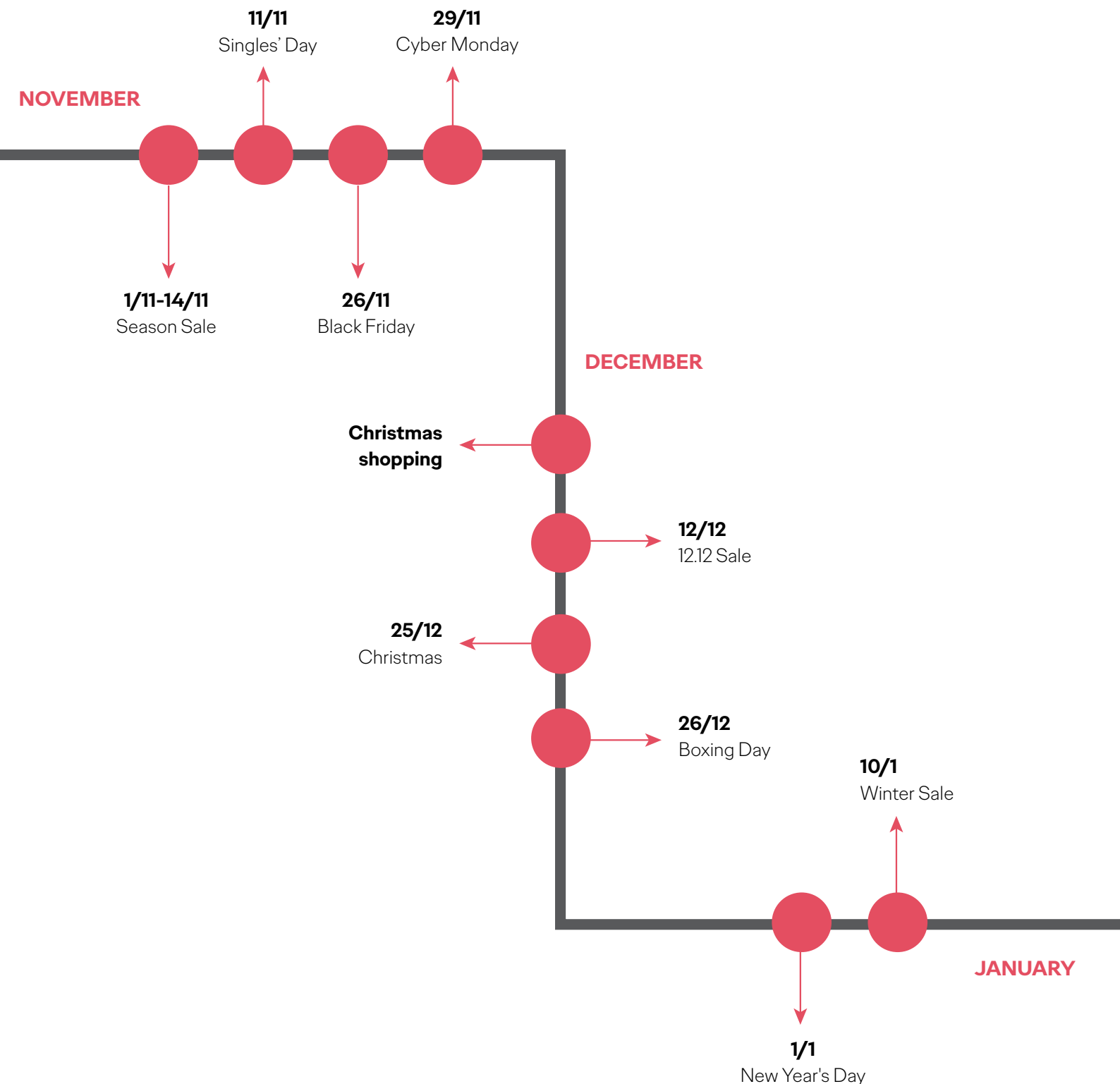
Annual share of online shopping:



GLOBAL IMPACT OF E-COMMERCE

Source: eMarketer, UNCTAD

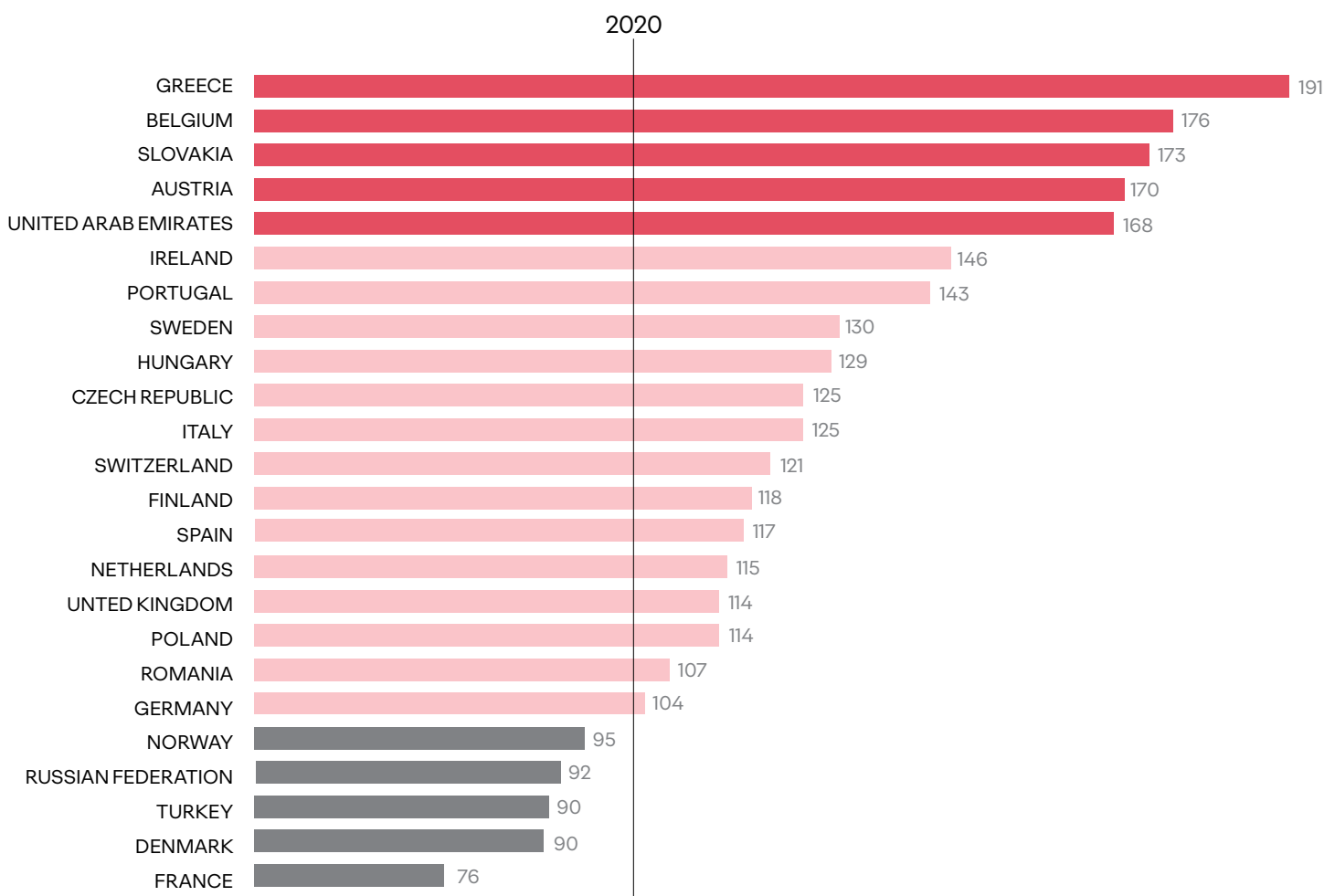
KEY DATES FOR SEASONAL SHOPPING



BLACK FRIDAY & CYBER MONDAY

Black Friday and Cyber Monday in Europe have been on the rise in the recent years, especially in 2020. It is estimated that sales during the Black Friday period had the highest annual growth rate in Greece, Belgium, Slovakia and Austria, at +91%, +76%, +73% and +70% respectively.

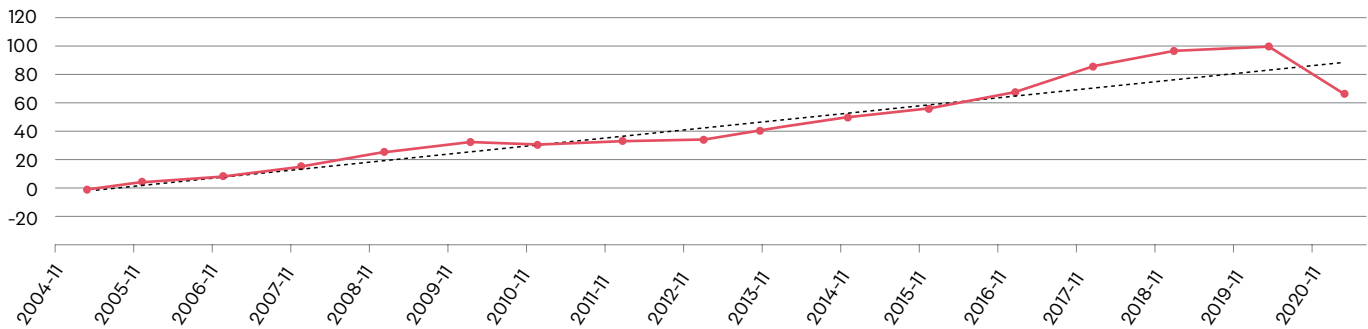
Black Friday Sales - EMEA Region (2020 vs 2019)



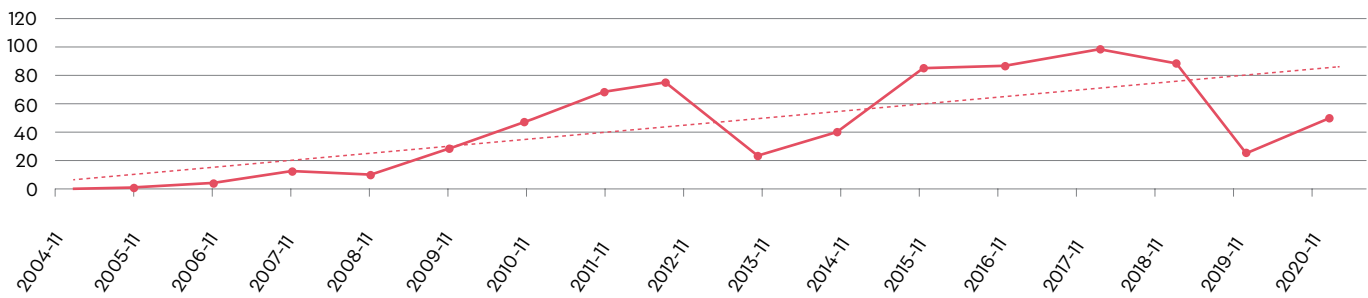
SEARCH TRENDS WORLDWIDE

LAST 10 YEARS (2011-2021)

BLACK FRIDAY



CYBER MONDAY

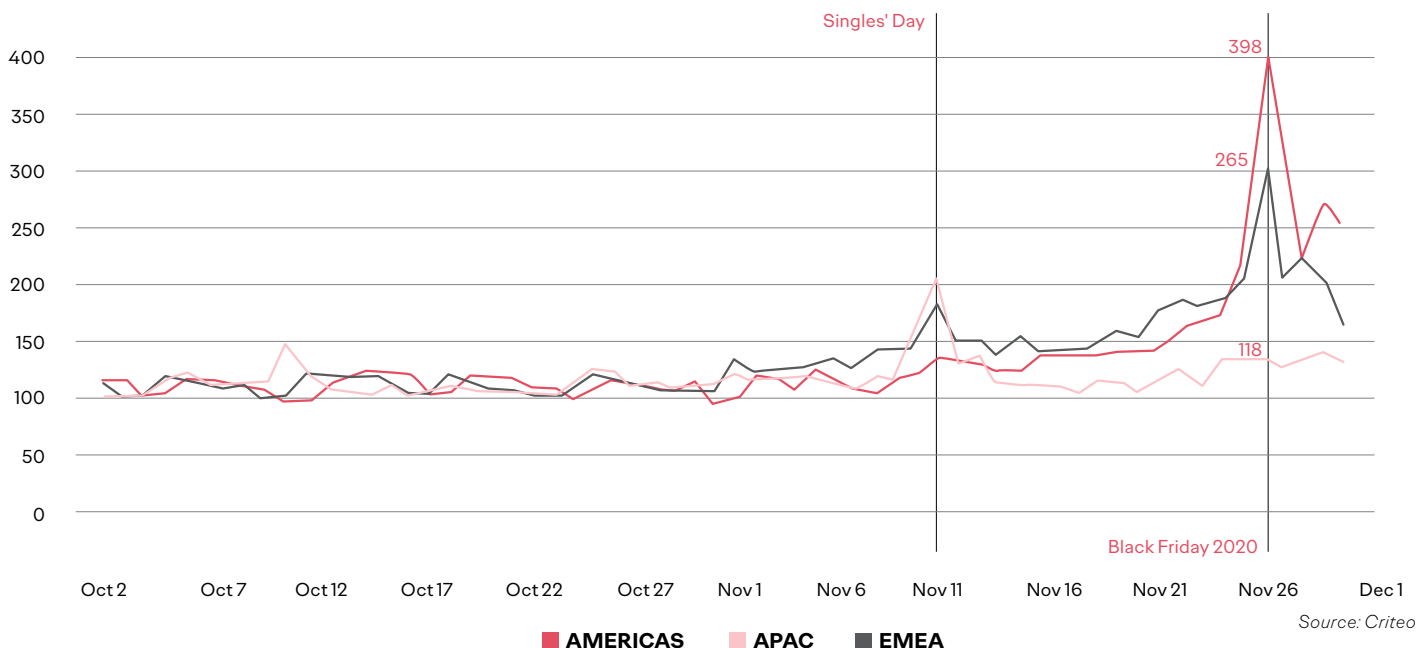


Source: Google Trends

BLACK FRIDAY 2020, WORLDWIDE

Indexed Daily Sales, compared to average in October 1-28, 2020

Same set of Retailers with stable sales tracking during the period in 2019 and 2020



Source: Criteo

*indexed sales compared to Average in October 1-28, 2020 (four weeks) At least 10 retailers at most granular level.

CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR

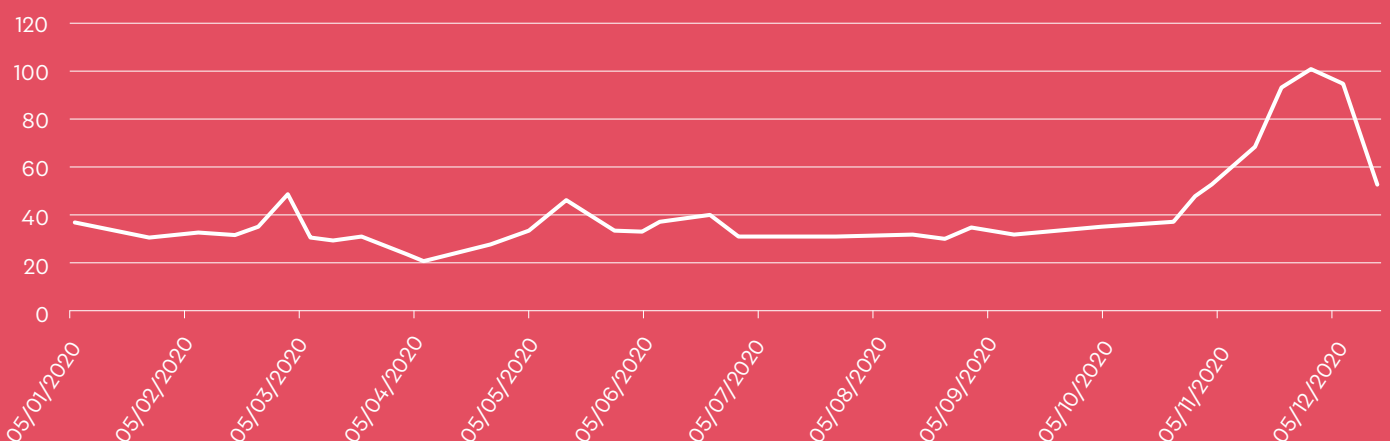
GIFTING-RELATED SEARCHES ARE DOMINATING CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR TIME PERIODS.

Year after year, this search begins earlier and earlier. Especially in 2020, consumers had started searching for gifts in early November, considering the offers of Black Friday and Cyber Monday.

We often say that this period works in fact as a continuation of Black Friday, with people entering the “purchase” mood from the end of November until the winter sale in January and February.

We notice the highest increase in search intention during the week just before Christmas (December 18-25).

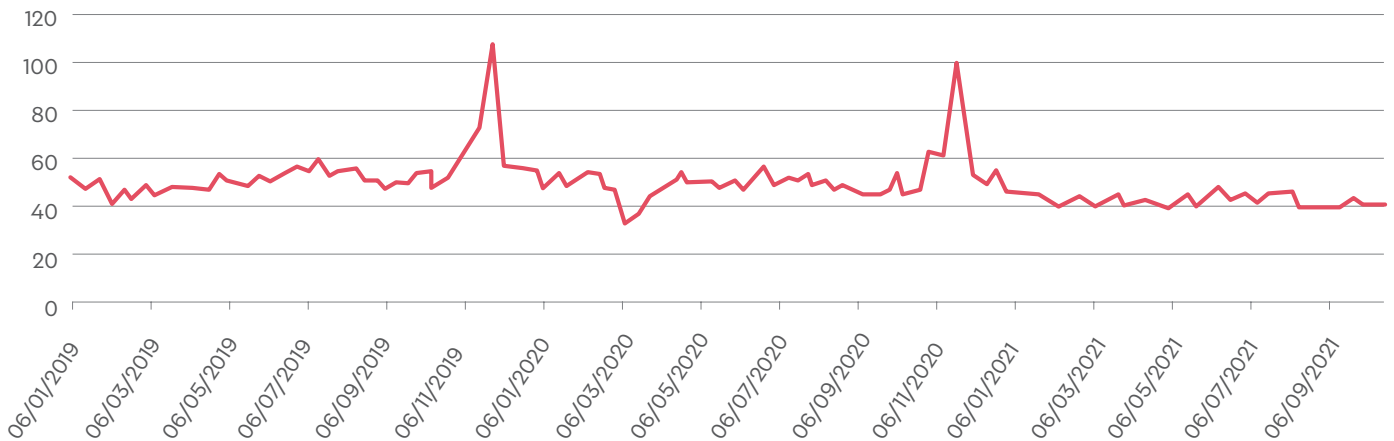
Search trend around "gifting" worldwide (2020)



Source: Google Trends

Respectively, we see great interest and high volume of searches for discounts. This trend is naturally affected by the Sale periods, while the largest increase is observed in the 1st week of January.

Search trend around "discounts" worldwide (2019-2021)



1 Cell phone cases

2 Mobile phones

3 Christmas tree decorations

4 Sneakers

5 Books

6 Face creams

7 Christmas lighting

8 Training sport shoes

9 Vitamins

EVERY BRAND SHOULD TAKE INTO ACCOUNT

User experience

User experience should be the basis that the whole strategy will be built around.

Nowadays, potential customers are always demanding more and more from the brands, so we have to "win" every user from the very first touchpoint by providing a flawless experience, starting from the moment we are introduced to them until the post-purchase phase.

Delivery & shipping

In many cases, we have identified both sending orders and long waiting times as big pain points, especially in the previous years when online seasonal shopping had been established broadly.

The best practice to follow is to be transparent and avoid creating big delivery promises which may not be fulfilled later. Stock management should be also treated with ultimate care so that there is no need to cancel orders, which would eventually affect the image of the respective brand negatively.

Offers / discounts

It's that time of year when consumers are looking forward to finding the best deals of and they are in the buying mood of spending more.

Now is the right time for the best offers to pop up. This may affect the planning of the whole fiscal year, that is why it is good to have it foreseen from the beginning of the year so that you can meet the high demands of that period.

Website infrastructure

Your website operates as not only your storefront in the search & discovery phase but also as the platform through which online shopping will take place.

Existing content should be optimized in relation to the way our audience is searching through the web. In addition, all necessary technical features must be spot on and not being crashed by incidents like the sudden spike in traffic or multiple users entering payment details and completing their orders on the checkout simultaneously.

Note that during periods of high demand, we avoid making big changes or trying new functionalities.

Online vs In-Store

Purchases that occur during the period of Black Friday and Cyber Monday are mainly through online, however a large number of consumers, after researching online, then proceed to purchase in physical stores (ROPO). This happens even more intensely during the festive period, and the after-Christmas sales.

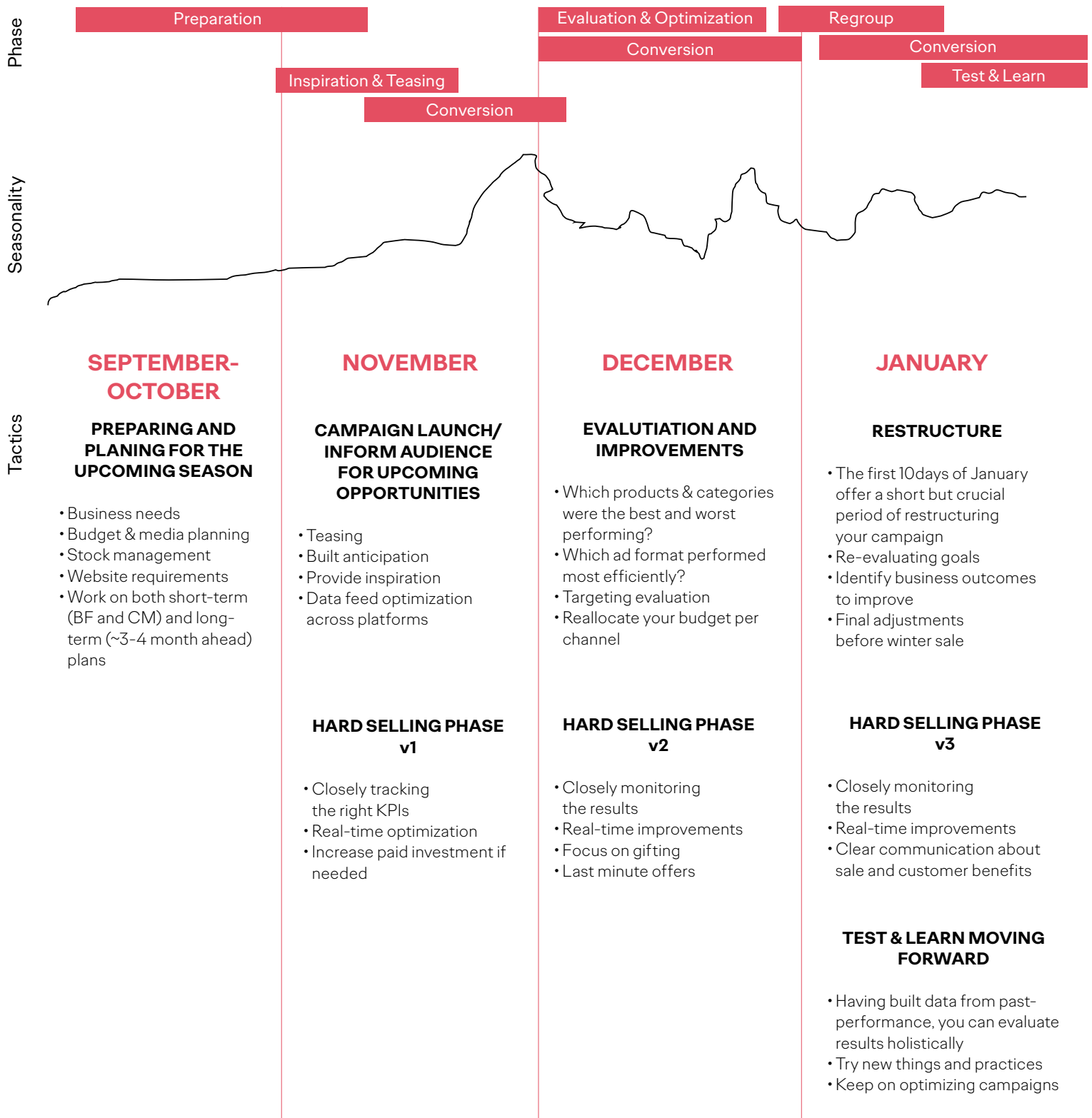
Brands that complement their online presence with efforts in physical stores should ensure that the user experience is equally positive no matter how users choose to make their purchases; and it is obvious that there must be coherence between them. Otherwise, there is a likelihood of confusion which can trigger negative feedback.

Promotion strategy

It is vital to have an effective promotional strategy in order to reach potential consumers with your offers and products.

The competition is very intense and, at the same time, the results of this period contribute the greatest impact on the annual revenue due to the seasonality and they can make a real difference between a successful or unsuccessful year.

PLAN AHEAD AND PREPARE



MEDIA EXCELLENCE

A well-structured media strategy combined with the right business mindset can be the vehicle that will significantly differentiate a brand from its competitors.

The main goal is to achieve efficiency in the key media indicators that we set in advance, while also maintaining the qualitative indicators that are directly related to sales results and brand KPIs at a high level.

In addition, we must not forget that during these extremely competitive time periods in the advertising sector the cost of purchasing and displaying ads increases dramatically. Accordingly, the margins of errors are pretty narrow and costing.

Budget

We should always plan in advance and have adequate enough budget at our disposal to cover the needs of each brand. A good way to calculate the budget needs is by studying the seasonality, any historical data of the previous year(s), and also by using the projection tools of the advertising platforms.

Creatives

The look & feel of the visuals should refer to the respective period (Black Friday, Cyber Monday, etc.), whether it means creating custom materials or modifying/adding elements to existing visuals, for example a festive frame

in a Facebook catalog. It is good to emphasize urgency but also highlight additional competitive advantages, such as Free Delivery or Last Minute Flash Deals. A mobile-first approach is necessary to create digital-first creatives.

Automation

Advertising platforms are moving more and more towards automation and artificial intelligence, however, the way that we will implement those automated solutions needs our special attention. If it is not executed the right way, it is possible that we will end up having the opposite results.

The two most important parameters that we have observed affecting the success of the automated solutions are:

- The timing. In order for them to run effectively, we need to give the required time where we will make minimal to no changes. This is especially difficult during the holiday season. In case we can not meet the necessary requirements it is better to stick to some manual solutions.
- The data with which we feed the advertising platforms. The larger and more varied the volume of data, the better we will be able to "train" the algorithm to work in our favor. online shopping will take place.

Targeting

Holiday & seasonal shopping period is a perfect opportunity to approach new users and help increase the exposure and recognition of each brand. Ideally, we prefer to target data-driven audiences depending on the capabilities of each platform.

Brands that rely on 1st party data (such as CRM lists) and use it to create audiences have a great advantage. Of course, as we move towards the hardest selling days, we do not forget to target more intensely users who had already some type of interaction with the owned properties (remarketing lists).

Multi-channel

The consumer journey is now quite complicated and it goes through many steps before reaching to the final purchase. It is important to be present in different channels in order to create synergies but also to reduce the risks of investing in just a single medium. This allows us to be even more flexible and be able to make quick budget adjustments or shifts towards more efficient channels. Also, each platform can play a separate role and work differently depending on the phase in which users engage

KPIs

KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) are necessary for evaluating the results of a brand's promotion. We set goals and KPIs that fit the strategy we had set from the beginning and which will help us judge whether an action is successful or not as well as find points for improvement while the campaign is up and running. KPIs can vary depending on the objective of each campaign and the phase in which users engage with our ads.

SMART TIPS PER SOCIAL PLATFORM



This holiday season will be defined by people's desire to see timeless human needs reflected in modern shopping experiences.

There are three steps to ensure a great Festive Comeback: Design the flagship store experience (Facebook Shop) in the palm of your hand. 73% of global shoppers are interested in trying new and different ways of shopping, especially through mobile device.

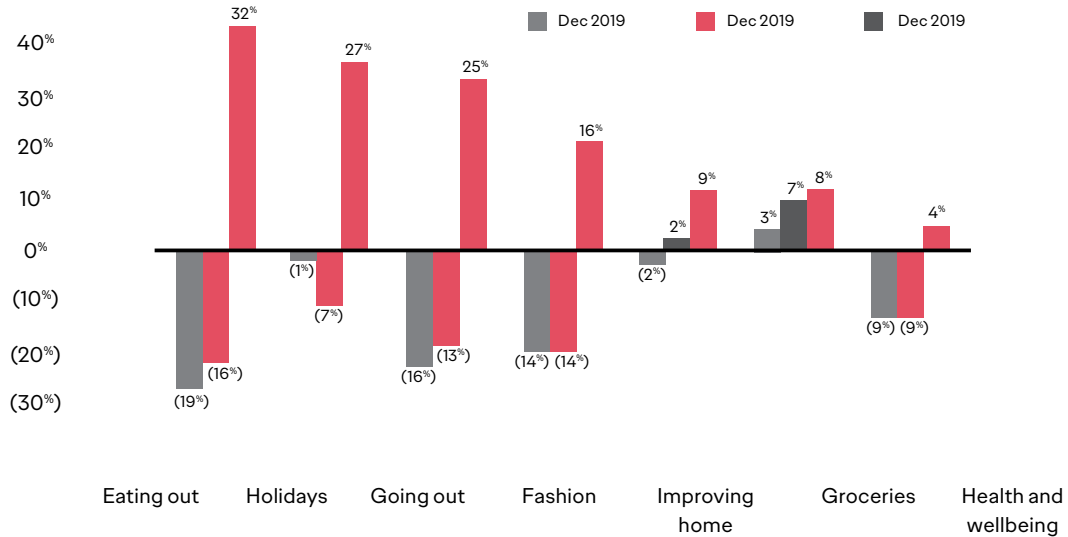
Tap into the rise of spontaneous social shopping. As new habits emerge, be aware of blind-spots that could limit growth opportunities. Consider the expansion in touchpoints to connect your brand with your audience, injecting creativity and joy. Make digital discovery feel real with the power of AR technology. And explore conversational commerce as a way to drive a personalised service, bridge customer service gaps and drive greater levels of loyalty.

Finally, this Holiday season, Facebook's also launching a new discounts program for shoppers that purchase through its apps. Users may find gifts from Facebook and Instagram, like 20% off their first purchase and free shipping, when they complete an eligible purchase directly on both apps. And when they make an eligible purchase directly on Facebook or Instagram, they can also refer up to 10 friends to take advantage of an exclusive deal.



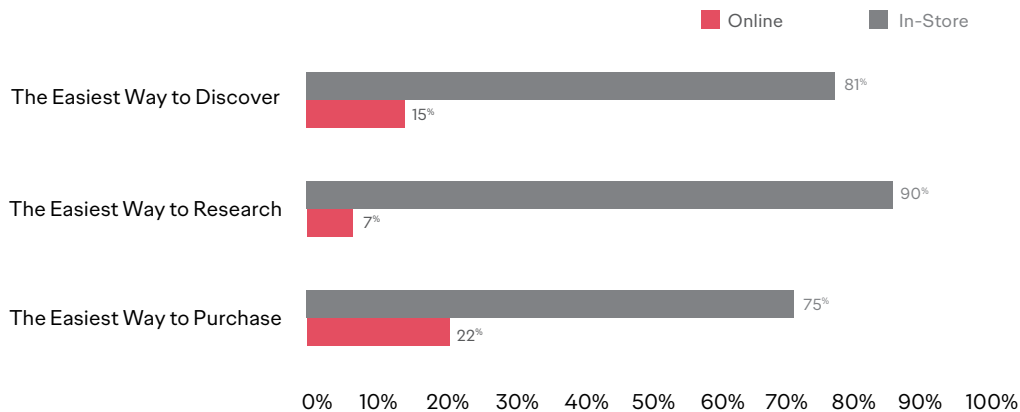


Net spending intention in the next 12 months



Source: PWC Consumer Sentiment Survey, 12-15 March 2021, N: 2,067 adults

Social is now becoming the new flagship store, serving as the main source for product and brand discovery



Source: "Facebook Seasonal Holidays Study" by YouGov, online study of 49,563 people aged 18+ across 32 markets, 9 Dec to 24 Dec 2020.

CADBURY'S FESTIVE SUCCESS

Reinventing Santa for Safe Spaces



f LIVE X2 + WATCH



f POLLS



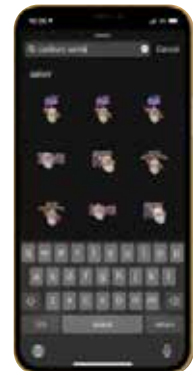
@ POLLS



👤 ARADS



👤 FILTER



GIPHY



f STORIES + FEED



@ STORIES + FEED



REELS



REELS



REELS

Source: Facebook Insights Live, The Great Festive Comeback, July 2021

SMART TIPS PER SOCIAL PLATFORM



Your catalog is the foundational tool for your shop on Instagram. Your catalog holds information about the products you wish to promote and sell on Instagram. It powers your shop and product detail pages (PDPs), and enables you to create shoppable content.

To set up your catalog, first, create a Business Manager account, which includes your catalog, commerce account, ad account, pixel and catalog. When you create a catalog, you'll assign it to your Business Manager account and it will live in the Catalog tab of Commerce Manager.

The next step is to add products to your catalog. There are several ways to do so, and you can pick the one most suitable to your business, after comparing them [here](#): Platform partner, Manual, Data feed, Facebook Pixel, Catalog Batch API.

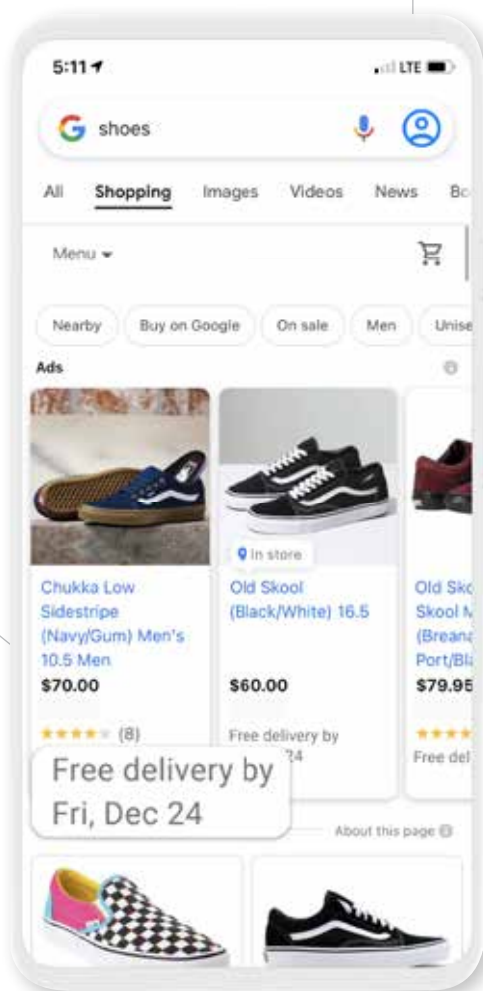
Follow these best practices to create and manage your catalog. Use one, or if you need to, merge several catalogs. Assign permissions. Add items. Follow Facebook's Commerce Eligibility Requirements. Create sets of items. Set up variants (eg., different sizes or colors), so they display correctly. Check if any items are rejected. Ensure that all required and optional catalog fields are complete. Keep prices and availability up to date. Make sure item links are correct. Provide accurate titles and descriptions. To showcase your items, use high resolution images that are at least 500 x 500 pixels and show your items accurately. Add at least 2 images per product so people can really see how an item looks.



SMART TIPS PER SOCIAL PLATFORM

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The holidays are upon us. As of June, 58% of U.S. holiday shoppers said they will shop online more this season than in previous years and 59% said they will shop earlier to avoid an item being out of stock. In fact, U.S. searches for “holiday gift ideas” in August have already surpassed 2020 levels.

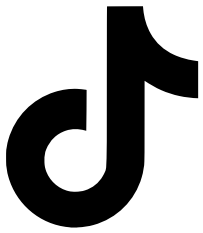


To help brands stand out, Google has recently introduced new annotations to highlight fast shipping, easy returns, and new business identity attributes this holiday season, through annotations in Google Merchant Center.

YouTube is also a great tool to build awareness and inspire people to take the action that matters to your business. You can even transform your video ad into a digital storefront by complementing your Video action campaigns with a browseable product feed that encourages clicks and conversions. To drive action from existing and new customers, use a combination of Customer Match and Similar audiences.

After launch, Brand Lift surveys can show you how your campaign influenced people’s feelings about your product with ad recall, brand awareness, and consideration metrics.

SMART TIPS PER SOCIAL PLATFORM



TikTok is full of popular hashtags that show the sheer scale and variety of shopping and holiday-related content on the platform.

In terms of holiday shopping, videos containing #blackfriday and #itsblackfriday recently hit 1.2 billion views, while #gift more than 11.8 billion views from 5.3 billion views in 2020, #unboxing last but not least, #Christmas 43.8 billion views from 21.6 billion views within one just year.



2 out of 3

TikTokers plan to spend more than \$200 on gifts this year, a 9% increase from last year



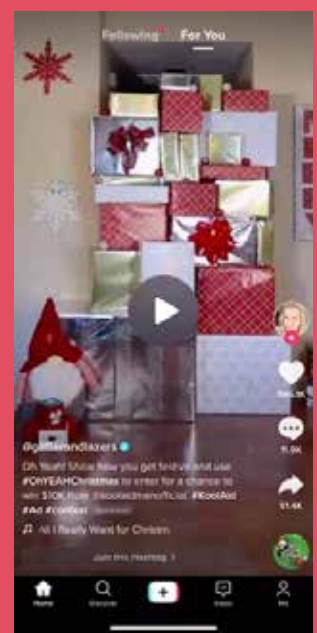
62%

of those likely to shop for this year's upcoming winter holiday season say they will start planning for gifts two months before Christmas



47%

of TikTokers say that TikTok is likely to inspire a gift idea this year



SMART TIPS PER SOCIAL PLATFORM



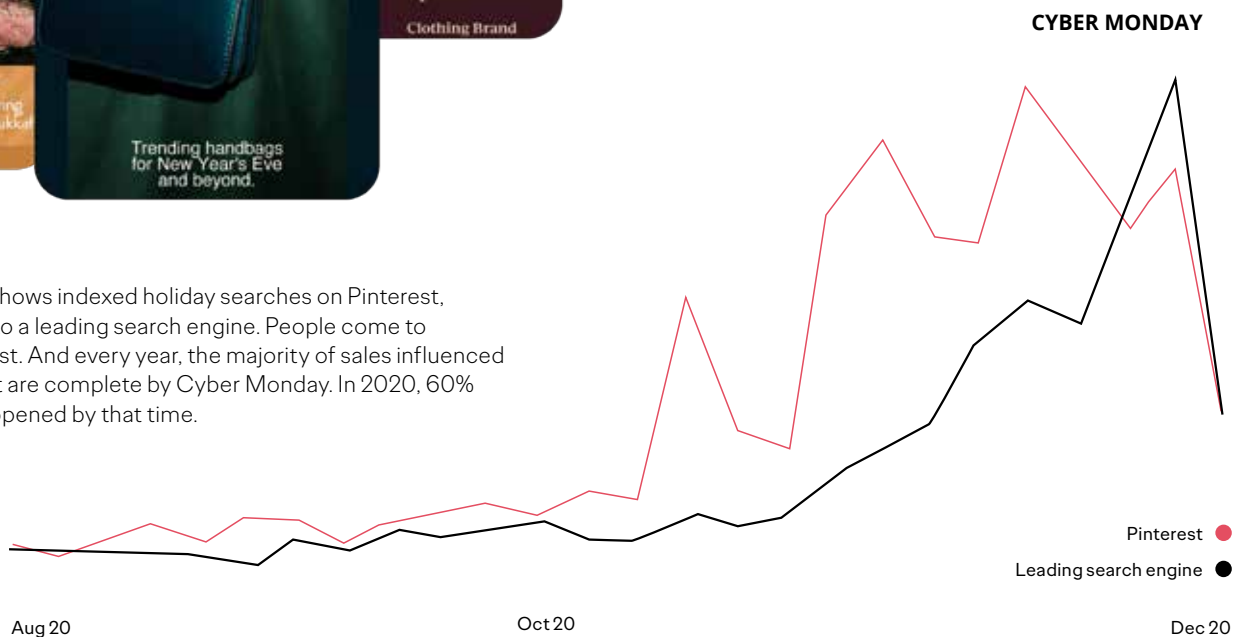
People on Pinterest are ready to go big for holiday 2021. They've already started planning—and Pinterest is their first stop for new ideas.

Brands who start their holiday campaigns earlier in the season see better results on Pinterest (+6% incremental sales lift for brands who advertise early and 4.7x more conversions when people are exposed to Pinterest ads earlier in the holiday season).

Pinterest has identified six types of holiday shoppers on Pinterest: The early bird, The traditionalist, The self-gifter, The rookie host, The shopping-first shopper, and The next-level party planner.



This chart shows indexed holiday searches on Pinterest, compared to a leading search engine. People come to Pinterest first. And every year, the majority of sales influenced by Pinterest are complete by Cyber Monday. In 2020, 60% of sales happened by that time.



Source: Pinterest for Business, Holiday 2021

SMART TIPS PER SOCIAL PLATFORM



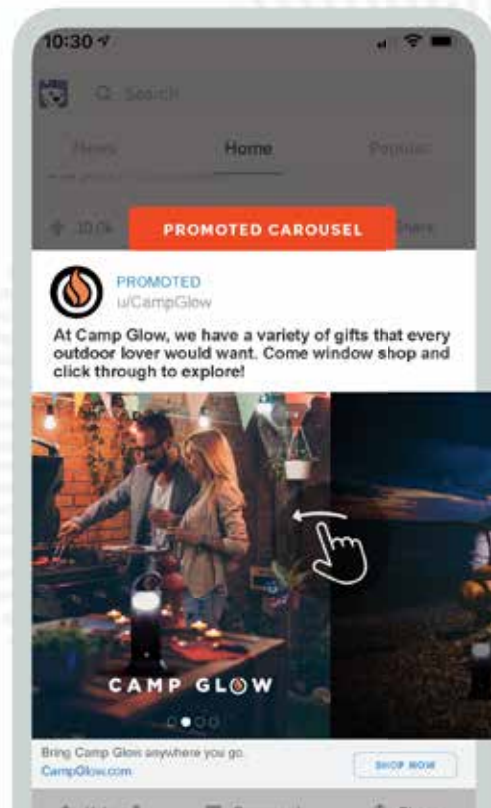
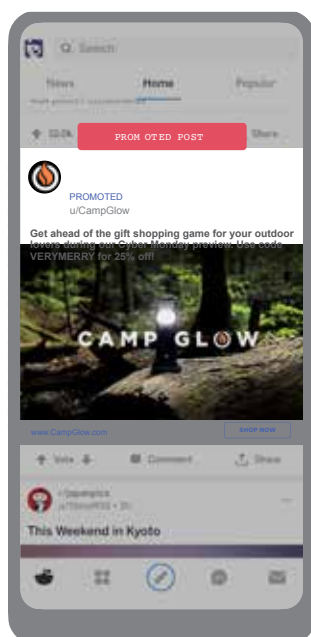
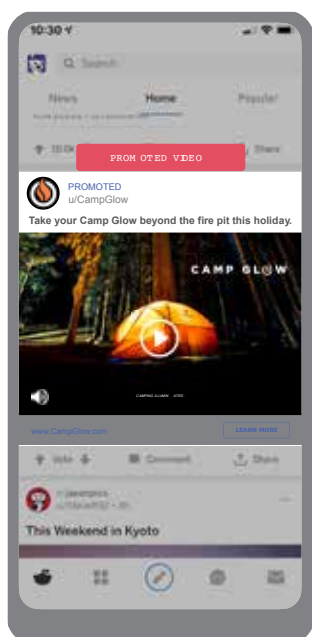
Users turn to their trusted communities to make purchase decisions And holiday purchases start with Reddit research. People come to Reddit looking for advice on gifts to buy, traditions to start, recipes to cook, and more. They turn to trusted communities at every stage of the way - from discovery to consideration and action.

Reddit has recently launched a new **Holiday Hub mini-site**, which provides a range of insights into key platform usage trends, in order to help marketers understand the latest shifts and build more effective holiday campaigns.

85% of users who did holiday research on Reddit made a purchase based on their research.

The top holiday gift categories on Reddit are: apparel clothing or shoes (68%), entertainment movies or streaming υπηρεσίες (50%), home goods & décor pillows, rugs or lighting (56%), electronics like laptops, headphones or tablets (64%), and gaming like consoles or accessories (55%). From discovery to purchase, Reddit is the go-to place for holiday gifting.

Reddit suggests that you should communicate a clear value proposition, use an authentic and conversational tone, play with humor and cultural references, and try to experiment with longer headlines (300 characters).



SMART TIPS PER SOCIAL PLATFORM



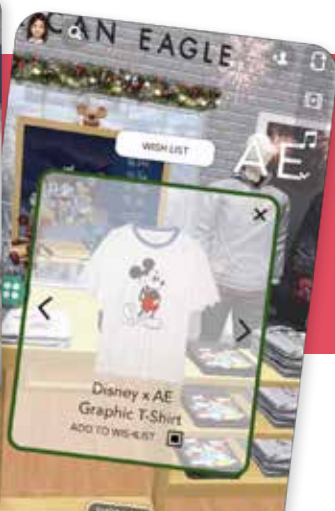
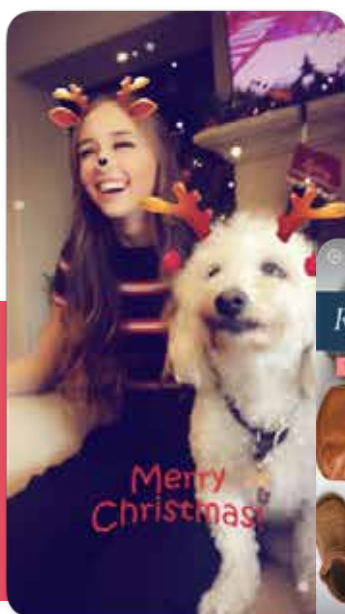
As the holiday season approaches, Snapchatters around the world are looking forward to a time of traditions, celebrations, sharing wishlists, and of course – the festive shopping season. Snapchat is a unique and special place during the holidays to connect, get inspired, share gift ideas, and shop for the perfect gift.

Snapchatters spend 1.6x more than the average shopper across all shopping moments October through December. 1 in 3 Snapchatters share pictures with friends or family while browsing for gifts, while 2 in 3 Snapchatters plan to spend as much or more in 2021 as in 2020, as the 80% of them use Snapchat to plan their holiday gifting.

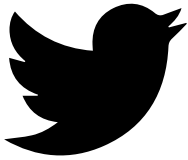
Snapchat shares that most of users are purchasing on-the-go, as 67% of e-Commerce sales will come from mobile in 2021, and Snapchatters are feeling again hopeful, happy and excited, seeking meaningful connections through engaging shopping and celebratory experiences that will drive lasting and impactful results all season long.

72% of Snapchatters plan to shop Black Friday and Cyber Monday. And 54% of them hope to receive a mobile phone or related accessory this holiday season.

When it comes to ad formats, the most relevant ones are Single Image or Video Ads, Collection Ads, Story Ads and Dynamic Product Ads. Don't forget setting up your campaigns by targeting Snapchatters who have interacted with your brand with Snap Audience Match and Lookalike Audiences, as well as installing the Snap Pixel and retargeting users who have interacted with your ads with Ad Engagement Audiences.



SMART TIPS PER SOCIAL PLATFORM



There were 84 million tweets about the holiday season in 2020. Did you know that two-thirds of Twitter shoppers consistently engage on Twitter during the holidays to connect and share, making it the perfect place to rise above the holiday marketing noise? And what's even more impressive is that the 84% of Twitter shoppers use the platform to look for deals, read product reviews, and find gift ideas. This makes sense as shoppers on Twitter have higher budgets, too (\$308 vs. \$253), shop more frequently (6.9 times vs. 4.3 times), and shop online more frequently (3.6 times vs. 1.9 times) than those not on the platform.

Past Holiday campaigns can teach us: i) households that engage with media buy more stuff, ii) campaigns that promoted limited-time sales, weekly or daily discounts, and exclusive coupons generated the greatest sales lift, and iii) the frequent exposure to an ad boosts purchase intent, so rotate 3–5 creative messages per week to expose your target audience to your message multiple times throughout the holiday season.

In any case, internal data from the platform this year, prove that Twitter users get inspiration for gifts 3x as much as non-users and that the 40% of people on Twitter say that Twitter influenced their gifting purchases.


Christmas
49M total Tweets

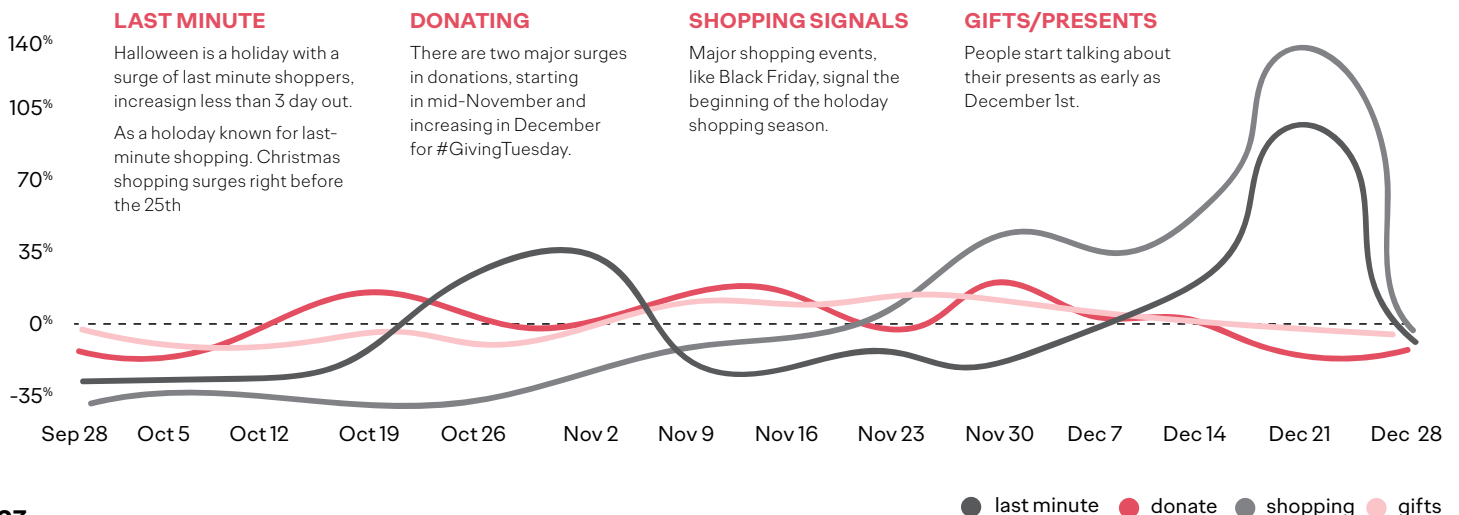

Thanksgiving
18M total Tweets


New Year's
18M total Tweets


Black Friday
3M total Tweets


Hanukkah
280K total Tweets


Cyber Monday
560K total Tweets



KEY TAKE OUTS

1

Start early.

Every year, users start their shopping journey way ahead of the key seasonal shopping dates. The earlier you start planning, the better prepared you will be.

2

Observe the trends & behaviors of your audience and adjust accordingly.

Listen to your audience by using the right tools. Try to find those behaviors that can be leveraged to improve any part of your strategy.

3

Lean on multi-channel promotion.

Create a multi-channel promotion strategy so that you can effectively achieve your targets. Be flexible with budget allocation as well as cross-channel optimizations.

4

Offer an excellent experience and focus on user retention.

To ensure a quality experience for users, it is crucial to meet expectations at each stage, not only at the purchase phase. Invest in nurturing strong relationships with existing customers and this will help eventually increase repeated sales.

Ogilvy | Social.Lab

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