

The Ultimate Guide to Holiday Advertising

From Black Friday to Christmas,
How to Drive Sales During
the 2019 Holiday Period



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MakeMeReach Managed Service

TIP

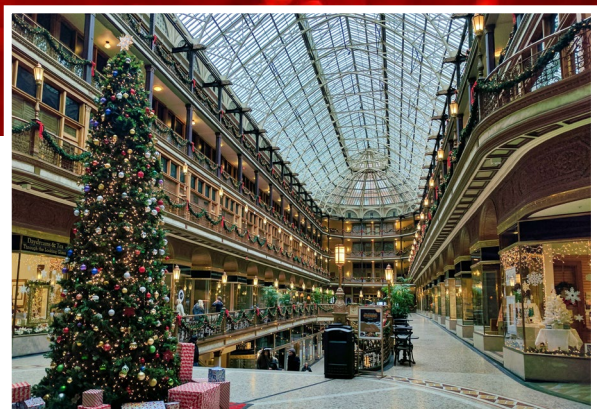
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40%

of yearly sales for small and mid-sized retailers take place within the last two months of the year



Between Black Friday, Cyber Monday, and Christmas, the last months of the year are a crucial period for retailers and e-commerce businesses. If once upon a time these events were separate, today they are increasingly one major shopping event. We've combined them into a single guide to help you get the most out of your online advertising efforts all across this important shopping period.

To put things into perspective, when Christmas is combined with Black Friday, Cyber Monday, Thanksgiving, and other events around this time of year, according to the [National Retail Foundation \(NRF\)](#), as much as 40% of yearly sales for small and mid-sized retailers take place within the last two months of the year.

Here's a quick look at each of these events.



Black Friday

Black Friday happens the day after Thanksgiving, falling on the last Friday of November each year. Traditionally an annual shopping event reserved for the US market, Black Friday is becoming more popular around the world. Even if you haven't experienced the hustle and bustle of a Black Friday in-store, the name itself should conjure up images of meticulous planning, exhausting checkout lines, and panicked impulse buys.

Globally, Black Friday is growing every year, so even outside of the US, it's an occasion brands simply cannot miss out on. According to a Facebook study, [shopping on Black Friday and Cyber Monday](#) grew by 9% and 15%, respectively, between the 2017 and 2018 seasons globally.

Cyber Monday

More of a recent invention, Cyber Monday offers many of the same deals without having to take off your slippers. If you don't like crowds, you'll thank that savvy person who came up with the solution of profiting from many of the same amazing deals as Black Friday, all from the comfort of your armchair!

Collectively, the Black Friday-Cyber Monday period is referred to as Black Week, often considered the official start to the holiday season.

Christmas

Christmas conjures up all sorts of feelings: memories of time spent celebrating with family, the excitement of opening presents, the chilly weather or even regrets of having eaten a little too much at Christmas dinner!

It's a special time of year for people in many parts of the world. And we don't have to tell you how important Christmas is for businesses, not only for retail and e-commerce, but also sectors like travel, tourism, and entertainment.



Your guide to the holiday shopping period

For many businesses, the whole holiday shopping period—beginning with Black Friday—is a strategic period of the year. Whether you're an e-commerce business, a retailer with physical stores, or any other kind of business selling things online, you'll want to make the most of the commercial opportunities offered by these last couple of months of the year offer. This guide is your resource to help you do just that.

For businesses across industries, online advertising plays a crucial role. Advertising on social networks like Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, and Pinterest, combined with the reach and ubiquity of Google, gives savvy advertisers the ability to get their messages in front of the right people, at the right time—driving the actions that matter to them.

This eBook is a step-by-step guide to ensuring your online advertising is the best it can be across the period spanning from Black Friday through Christmas! As you read through the pages that follow, you'll learn:

1. What technical integrations you'll need in place before you get started—and how to make sure they're ready to go.
2. Why it's important to get started early.
3. Where you should be advertising, and why you need to build a strategy that reaches across networks.
4. How to build the right audience, and fully leverage retargeting to drive people down the marketing funnel.
5. Why “keeping it local” matters, especially in retail, and how to do this effectively in your online advertising.
6. What makes a great ad creative during the holiday period.
7. How to optimize your campaigns as they evolve.
8. Some practical tips on how to make the most out of your advertising at this crucial time of year.

First, some statistics



\$7.9
billion

US consumers spent \$7.9 billion in online sales, making it the highest online selling day in US e-commerce history.

Black Week

On Cyber Monday 2018, US consumers spent **\$7.9 billion in online sales**, making it the highest online selling day in US e-commerce history. For perspective, in 2017, consumers spent \$6.6 billion.

Mobile devices played a huge role, accounting for \$2.83 billion in sales for the day—36 percent of total sales.

56% of people who shop around Black Week believe the Black Friday offers the best deals of the season—meaning they're shopping to buy and lock in those deals.

And the Black Friday phenomenon extends outside of the US! In the UK, sales increased by **+292% on Black Friday 2018** compared with the average in October. And in France, sales were up by +265%.

Those presents all add up: holiday retail sales reached the \$1 trillion mark for the first time in 2018.

86%
of Americans will
purchase a Christmas
present this year

Around 112.5 million Americans travel during the period around Christmas and New Year's

112.5
million

Christmas

Christmas is a truly special time of the year. In many places throughout the world, it's a time when families come together to share moments together and make memories.

In the US, an incredible 90% of Americans celebrate Christmas—a figure that tends to remain steady from one year to the next—and 86% of them plan to purchase at least one Christmas present this year! And those presents all add up: holiday retail sales reached the \$1 trillion mark for the first time in 2018.

Consumers spend more around the holidays every year. In 2019, they are expected to spend 3.7% more on average than in 2018.

When they do shop, it's considered, calculated, and often research takes some time. Shoppers take 13 days on average to consider a new purchase.

The holidays are also an increasingly important time for the travel industry, with around 112.5 million Americans traveling during the period of time around Christmas and New Year's in 2018. According to a study by the American Automobile Association, that represents a 4.4% increase compared to 2017—a record increase.



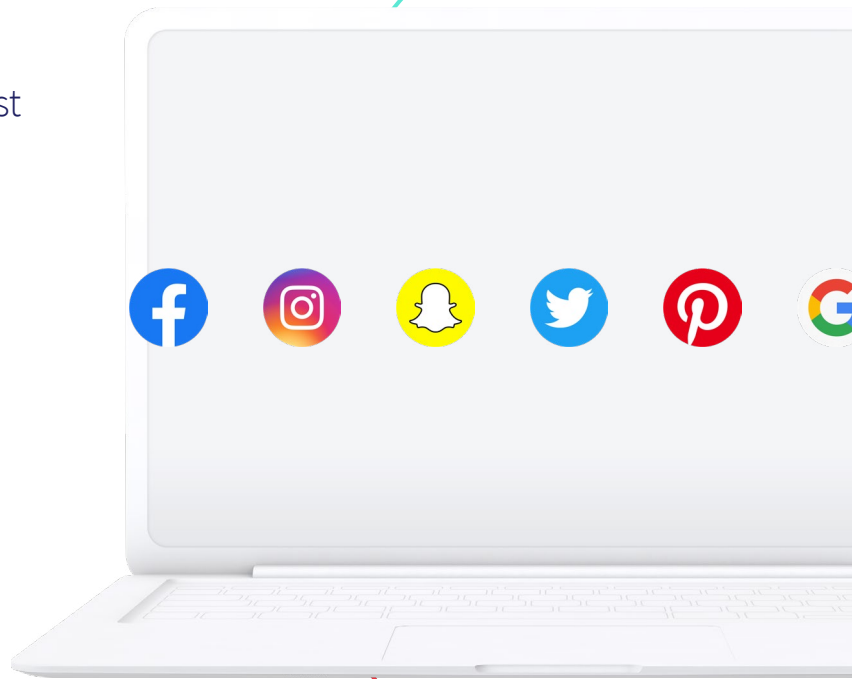
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Let's get technical!



Having a strong online presence is no longer a choice. It's simply a must for businesses in every industry.

Whether or not selling online is important to you, there are certain technical integrations that you'll need to set up to ensure you make the most of your advertising investment all throughout the holiday selling season.



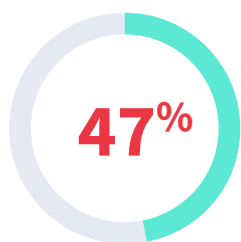
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First, your website

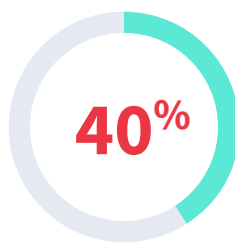
Check your site speed

Ever heard the phrase “speed kills”? When it comes to online transactions, it's a lack of speed that kills your chances of a sale—whether that sale is there on site or in a physical store later on. [One study found](#) that 47% of online consumers expect a page to load within 2 seconds or less, and 40% of them will abandon a page that takes more than 3 seconds to load. In another study, 46% of shoppers said they'll never return to a slow website.

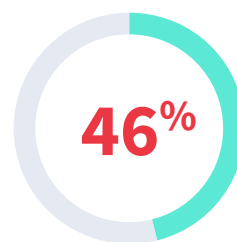
For image-heavy websites, use a tool like [Compressor.io](#) to cut down on load times. For a greater overview of the issues that need addressing to improve site speed, there are a host of website optimization tools out there that can analyze your site and provide areas for improvement.



Percentage of online consumers expect a page to load within 2 seconds or less



Percentage of users that will abandon a page that takes more than 3 seconds to load



Percentage of shoppers said they'll never return to a slow website

Make sure your website is optimized for mobile



It almost shouldn't have to be said at this point, but your website must be designed with mobile in mind. As of the first quarter of 2019, mobile devices (excluding tablets) generated [48.7 percent of global website traffic](#).

Adding importance to a great mobile website experience, according to Google, [61% of users](#) are unlikely to return to a mobile site that was difficult to access and 40% reported that they visit a competitor's site instead.

And during the holiday season specifically, mobile is key. Mobile e-commerce sales increased by [32.6 percent in 2018](#), which accounted for 44 percent of all holiday e-commerce sales. On Cyber Monday 2018, mobile devices were responsible for [54.3 percent of all visits](#) to retail sites.

Review the experience of your website when accessed via a smartphone. Is it easy to navigate? Does the experience leave you satisfied or frustrated? With your online advertising goals in mind, make adjustments to your website to improve mobile user experience before you launch your campaigns from Black Friday to Christmas.

48.7%

Percentage of global website traffic generated by mobile devices

44%
mobile

Percentage of all holiday e-commerce sales

B

Set up your pixels and tags

To accurately analyze your performances and effectively retarget people who have shown interest during your Black Friday and Christmas campaigns, you'll need to install small snippets of code on select pages of your website. These are called “pixels” or “tags” depending on the network.



Facebook & Instagram

Facebook advertising without the pixel is a little like losing your long-term memory! Even if you think you have it correctly set up, do a sanity check. Having it working correctly will take your advertising to the next level, providing the ability to remarket effectively to contacts you've already engaged with.



For a step-by-step guide on setting up the Facebook pixel on your website and making the most of the insights you can get from it:

[Download our Complete Guide](#)

MakeMeReach: Facebook Marketing Consulting Partner

Getting the technical set-up for your Facebook ads can be as challenging as it is essential to get the most out of your ad spend. And sometimes, a little help can go a long way.

As a [Facebook Marketing Consulting Partner](#), MakeMeReach is your resource to ensure you're ready to scale your Facebook ads campaigns! Being a badged Partner means we have been vetted by Facebook in our technical expertise and our proven ability to help clients set up optimal Facebook marketing.

So, what can we help you with?

Among the technical tasks we can take care of for you are:

- Facebook pixel installation
- Product catalog set-up
- Advanced matching set-up
- Integration of offline data



Google

The global site tag enables you to track your Google Ads conversions. This tag should be installed on every page of your website. You'll also have to add other pieces of code to certain pages on your site, depending on the types of conversions you want to track.

These snippets of code work together with the global site tag to track conversions. Get more information on setting this up on [Google's support website](#).



Snapchat

Adding new power to your Snapchat advertising is the Snap Pixel, now out of beta and available to all Snapchat advertisers. The Snap Pixel makes it possible for advertisers to track specific actions consumers take on their website and create customized audiences for their campaigns.

For more information on setting up the Snap Pixel, head to [Snapchat's support website](#).



Twitter

Similar to the other networks mentioned above, the Twitter website tag allows advertisers to see what actions people take on their site, across devices. Twitter advertisers can then go on to make a list of those users and target them with future marketing campaigns.

Get more information on setting it up on the [Twitter for Business website](#).



Pinterest

Pinterest also lets advertisers see the actions users have taken on their website using the Pinterest tag. You can then build specific audiences based on those actions to accurately target future advertising campaigns.

Read more about the Pinterest tag and how to set it up on [Pinterest's support website](#).

C Set Up Some Standard And Custom Events



Once your pixels and tags are correctly set up, make sure you configure the standard and custom events that you want to measure. What sort of actions show that a particular prospect is valuable to your business? What information could you use to create contextual remarketing ads that have a higher chance of converting? It could be “add to cart” or “add to wishlist,” or perhaps it’s something to suit your particular business model which can be created using a custom event.

D Make Sure Your Product Feed Is Up To Date

Take the time to make sure your product feed is updated with all the products you’ll be promoting over the holiday sales season. Ensure they are all there and have the right prices, for example. Taking the time to do this work now will save you time later on!

An up-to-date product feed is important for all kinds of businesses, including ones with physical stores. To help you get the most out of your online ads to drive offline sales, including how to set up your product catalog, we’ve written an e-book with our partner Lengow.

**Download our Complete Guide to
Online Ads for Offline Sales**

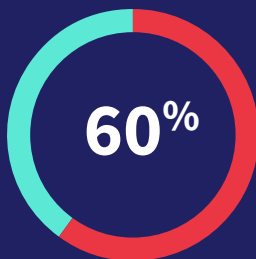




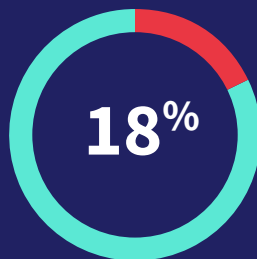
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Get started early

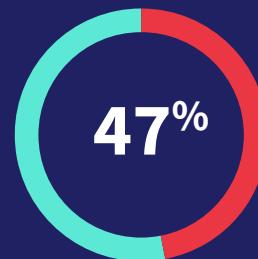
Consumers start doing their research early, so you need to start planning and running your campaigns early, too.



Percentage of consumers who start shopping before Thanksgiving



Percentage of consumers who started their shopping in September



Percentage of consumers who get inspiration for their holiday purchases online

The trend in communication from brands about Black Friday deals has shifted earlier and earlier over the last few years. This in turn has caused a change in consumers' research patterns leading up to the big sales period. So these days, the time to entice with coupon codes and special offers isn't on Thanksgiving—it's well in advance of the holiday weekend.

For e-commerce and retailers, this period represents the toughest competition of the year but the trick is to start early. With holiday promotions expected to begin at the start of November, shoppers have the option to complete their holiday buying at less stressful times than the highly anticipated Black Friday weekend. It's imperative that brands start their lead generation campaigns early in order to generate interest around their products that can then be offered at a reduced price over a short period of time (Black Friday through to Cyber Monday).

As for Christmas, shopping takes months to complete for many consumers! According to Deloitte's 2018 Holiday Survey, 60% of holiday shoppers will start shopping before Thanksgiving, and close to one-fifth (18%) started their shopping in September. Starting your campaigns early means your brand and products have a higher

chance of being part of the ongoing research and selection process. And a lot of people are using online channels to do research: 47% of people get inspiration for their holiday purchases online.

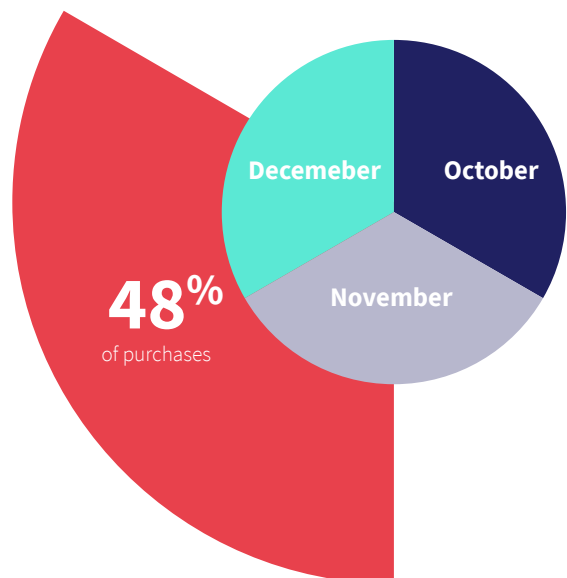
Interestingly, 57% of shoppers do not expect to complete their shopping until December, making an average of seven physical store visits and eight online retailer visits—meaning your campaigns should facilitate this long-term, multi-touchpoint approach from consumers.

For retail and e-commerce businesses looking to maximize revenues, this majority of shoppers who start before Thanksgiving are a lucrative group. The Deloitte study has found that early bird shoppers spend on average US\$370 more than those who start later. They also tend to be more focused on finding deals, more engaged across both digital and physical channels, and more likely to buy high-value, luxury gifts. Using your Christmas advertising campaigns to encouraging shoppers to start earlier, with promotional offers and other deals, could be a good ploy!



Plan for the rush

Even if the holiday shopping season is long and beginning earlier, it's also important for retail and e-commerce businesses to plan for the rush. Deloitte found that a huge **48%** of purchases are set to take place during the 30-day window from late November to mid-December, which incorporates the traditional sales period of Black Friday and Cyber Monday.

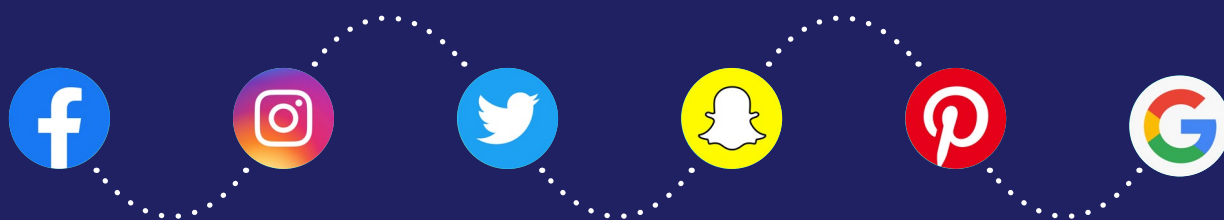




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Where should you
be advertising?

There are many options of where to run your online ads today. It's important to leverage the strength of each network to build solid Black Friday and holiday ads strategies for your business.



First, think cross-network

Before going into the strengths of each network, one of the most important things to keep in mind is how to build a strategy that breaks down the silos between them. A strong cross-network strategy is key to reaching consumers through the full funnel and driving conversions during the holiday season, from Black Friday all the way through Christmas.

Customers today move seamlessly from one network to another. No matter the industry, the customer journey today is 3-dimensional,

involving a succession of touch points across search and social, driven by the consumer. A single ad click on a single network doesn't lead to purchase. A good marketing strategy, especially at a crucial time of year like the period stretching from Black Friday to Christmas, needs to align with this fundamental shift in power, spanning across networks to reach customers at each step in their path to purchase.

Integrating Facebook & Google leads to Black Friday boom for TAMMY & BENJAMIN

Selling their products both online and in their Paris boutique, **TAMMY & BENJAMIN** targeted the 2018 Black Friday weekend as a strategic sales period. To ensure the best results, they engaged the MakeMeReach Managed Service team to run an integrated sales campaign across Facebook, Instagram, and Google.

The strategy saw the MakeMeReach team focus on driving action through the full funnel on Facebook and Instagram, supported by brand search campaigns on Google. Social media networks serve as the number one source of purchase inspiration and, when coupled with the high-purchase intent of Google search, great things happen for e-commerce businesses.

In the case of TAMMY & BENJAMIN, they saw a 230% lift in sales on Facebook, and an 80% lift in sales on Google, compared to Black Friday 2017.

On **Facebook**, campaigns targeted English-speaking users worldwide. Starting in September, the MakeMeReach Managed Service team first ran a traffic campaign to drive awareness and fill the top of the funnel with potential customers.

Making use of the Facebook Pixel, qualified prospects who had visited at least two different product pages were combined into a website custom audience and retargeted on Facebook and Instagram from early November. The same ad formats from the awareness stage were retained in these consideration and conversion stages, combined with Facebook Dynamic ads to fully leverage retargeting based on users' previous interests.

Running alongside these Facebook and Instagram campaigns, **Google** targeting was limited to the UK, US, and France. The Google ads featured

broadly the same messaging as those on Facebook, and leveraged warm audiences from the Facebook campaigns. The Google campaigns also introduced an "up to 50% off" offer between 8pm CET on the Thursday before Black Friday and midnight the following Monday. This strategy ensured a strong brand story across channels



and re-engagement of users already inspired on social, while also providing a compelling offer to convert searchers with high purchase intent.

The success of this campaign shows how the strategy fits with the way shoppers behave online today. Moving seamlessly between channels, from social to search and back again, the modern consumer is in full control of their journey. They may be inspired by an ad on one channel, move through to Google search to find out more, and continue this journey over several months before actually purchasing.



Facebook



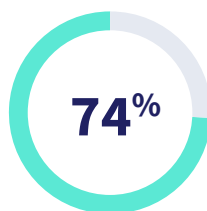
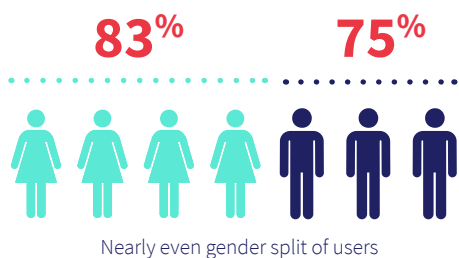
With over 2.4 billion monthly active users, whatever audience you want to reach probably has a presence on Facebook. To help advertisers fully leverage and engage this audience, Facebook has developed some strong advertising solutions for business in all kinds of industries. These tools and features help businesses like yours reach the right consumers at the right time.

Looking at the gender split of users on Facebook, it's reasonably even, with a staggering [83% of female internet users](#) and [75% of male internet users](#) engaged. In terms of age groups, the 18-29

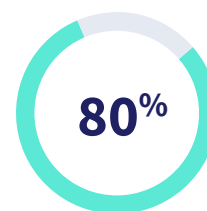
bracket is the most dedicated to Facebook, with [80% of internet users](#) in this age range having a presence on Facebook.

[74% of Facebook users](#) visit the network daily, a higher percentage than any other network.

Added to that, another interesting point is that as of [Q2 2018](#), just under 11% of Facebook's monthly active users were based in North America, with a huge 37% based in Asia-Pacific. India and Indonesia are the leading markets in this region in terms of number of Facebook users.



Percentage of Facebook users who visit the network daily



18-29
age range

Age bracket the most active on Facebook



Instagram

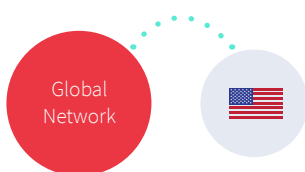


Instagram's user base has grown dramatically since the platform's creation in 2010. With 1 billion monthly active users, Instagram offers a unique opportunity for marketers to reach their target audiences through advertising. As an extremely visual social network, Instagram's unique offering to advertisers is a blend of inspiration and performance. Instagram advertising offers brands the ability to inspire and then drive purchases, build communities and deeply engage prospects.

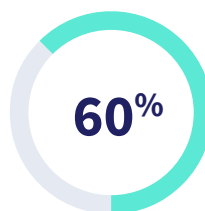
Over 60% of all users are aged between 18-34, with 87% younger than 45. It is a truly global community, with 75% of Instagram users located

outside the US, and this global network is very engaged. In fact, over 60% of users log in daily, making it the second most engaged network after Facebook.

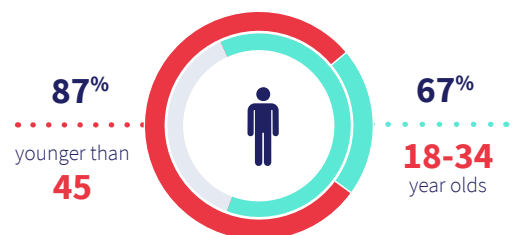
And, good news: if you're already running ads on Facebook, you could be making the most of Instagram advertising in no time! Not only do you not require an Instagram for Business account to start running Instagram ads (you only need a Facebook Page), in one click you can also use mixed placement to run the same Facebook ads across Instagram!



A truly global community, with 75% of Instagram users located outside the US



Percentage of users that log in daily



Age brackets the most dedicated to Instagram



Google



You don't need us to tell you how important Google is! With an average of [40,000 search queries happening every second](#) (over 3.5 billion searches per day and 1.2 trillion searches per year worldwide), Google is THE gateway to the internet today, and where people go to research and discover more about the products that interest them.

With their advertising solutions, Google provides the ability to “turn browsing into buying.” With options suited to businesses from a variety of industries, Google’s solutions will enable you to reach the people who matter to your business. Google solutions connect people to physical businesses 9 billion times per month, and they have 7 properties with over 1 billion users each (Android, Chrome, Maps, Search, YouTube, Gmail and the Google Play Store).

We think you probably get the idea: Google provides an unmatched ability for your business to be found when qualified prospects are searching and, when [combined with ad campaigns on social](#), savvy businesses can reach their prospects across multiple touchpoints.



40,000
Search queries **every second**

3.5 Billion
Search queries **per day**

1.2 Trillion
Search queries **per year worldwide**



Snapchat



Snapchat's major strength is in its die-hard niche audience, where it has carved out a reputation as the only social network where users don't feel judged. The way the app is set up means that, unlike Facebook and Instagram, people don't care about getting as many likes or followers as their friends. The fact that people can't access others' metrics means there is simply no competition.

When Snap launched in 2011, it was solely about taking pictures. There were no Stories and no Discover. Users couldn't even send [text-based messages](#) on the app until 2014, three years after it launched. Even now, there are no likes, no re-posts and no comments. You open the app, and you're looking through a lens. Evan Spiegel, the company's founder and CEO, doubled down on this commitment to the camera when he filed for Snap's IPO, [plainly stating](#), "Snap Inc. is a camera company."

Snap users have 20 to 30 friends in the app. It's only their inner circle. For this reason, users are highly engaged. Added to that, Snapchat users spend an average of over 30 minutes each day in the app, and more than 60% of them are creating content every day. Users are already swiping, clicking, and creating content on Snap, so when they see an ad, the chances of them engaging are much stronger.

In terms of audience:

- There are around [190 million active daily users worldwide](#).
- [79% of them are over 18 years old](#), so it's no longer just an app for teens.
- [51% of Snapchat daily users cannot be reached on Instagram](#).



Twitter



Twitter's slogan is "it's what happening". It's the place people go to discuss live and current events, and it's especially strong in niche communities of highly engaged individuals who come together on Twitter around their passions.

With more than 330 million monthly active users worldwide as of the first quarter of 2019, Twitter can't be ignored. Twitter audiences are largely urban and suburban, and in the US 41% of users earn over US\$75,000 per year, and 49% say they

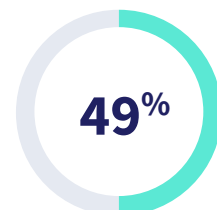
'tend to buy premium products', making the network an interesting one for reaching high value prospects.

In addition, **Twitter users are 1.6X more likely, than non-Twitter users, to use social media to research/ find products to buy. Nearly half of Twitter users say they keep up with the latest fashions (compared to 26% for non-Twitter users).**

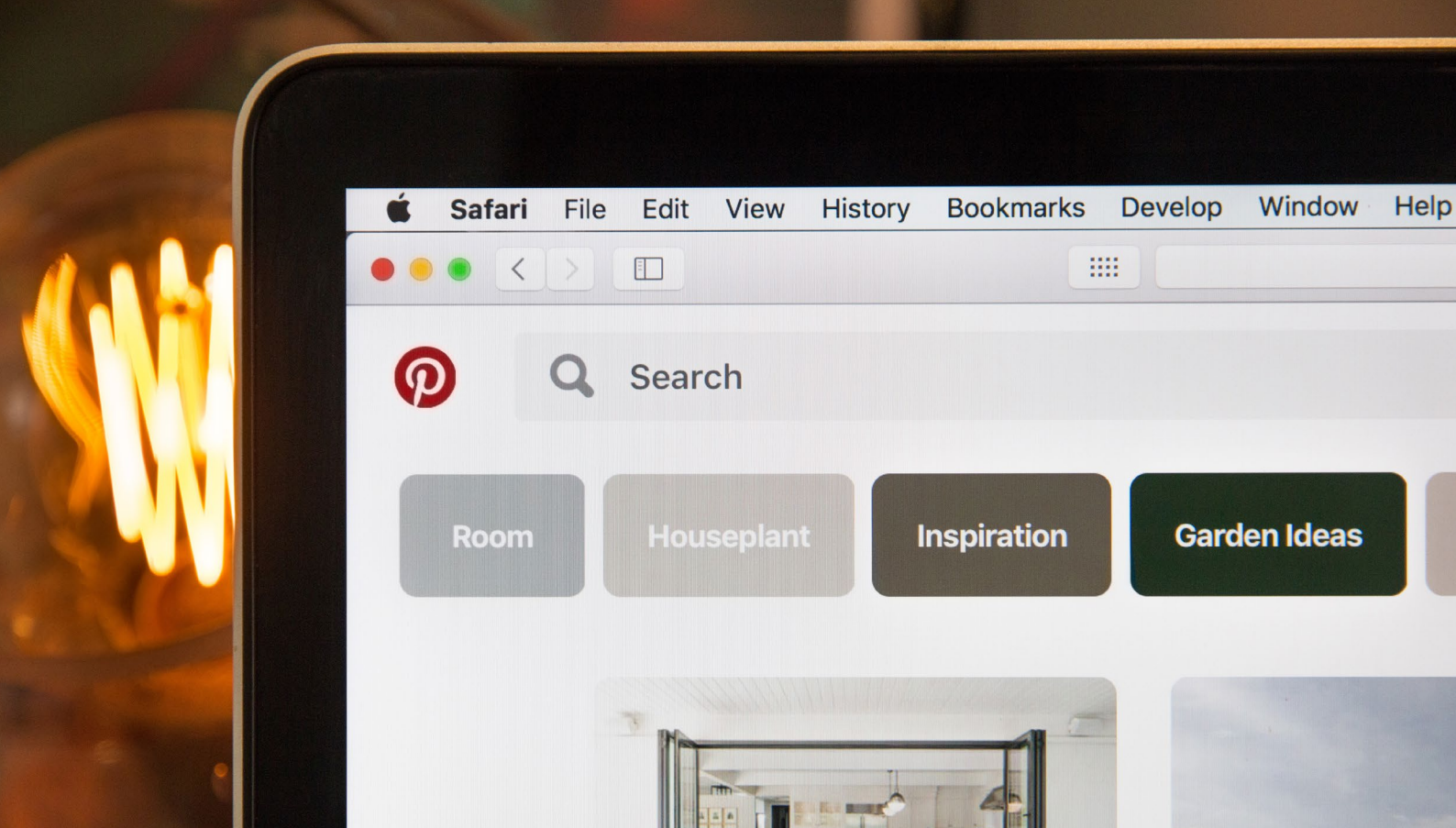
330 Million
Active users **worldwide**



41%
of US users
earn over
\$75,000



Percentage of users say they 'tend to buy premium products'



Pinterest

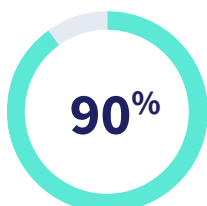


Think of Pinterest as the world's largest digital catalogue. This social network allows users to share and discover by posting (referred to as "pinning") images or videos either on their own or other users' "boards." A board is a collection of pins which are usually based on a common theme. In this highly visual space, users then go on to browse what others have pinned, and draw inspiration from it.

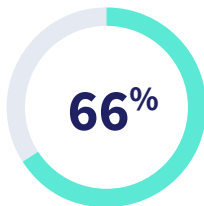
Pinterest is a uniquely positioned channel, with users well aligned with the needs of brands. It's where 300 million users around the world

discover, dream, and plan all of their purchases. Every day, Pinners are actively searching for new brands, products, and services while using Pinterest.

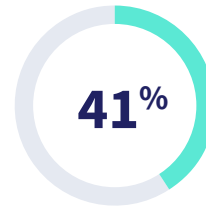
In fact, about **90% of Pinners** use the network to make purchase decisions, a percentage higher than any other social network. And 66% buy something after seeing a brand's Pins. Pinterest drives more traffic proportionally to shopping sites than other social platforms do. And Pinterest even drives in-store purchasing: 41% of people who shop in-store use Pinterest while shopping.



Percentage of pinners use the network to make purchase decisions



Percentage of people who buy something after seeing a brand's Pins



Percentage of people who shop in-store use Pinterest while shopping



4

Build the right
audience





Across all of the networks we introduced above, it's extremely likely that you'll be able to reach the audience of interest for your business.

In this section, we'll focus on how to build audiences on Facebook, Instagram, and Google. Across these networks, there are a variety of options to fit different needs, and allow you to fully leverage your

current base of loyal customers. Below, we'll present different audience types within the stages of the buyer's journey: awareness, consideration, and conversion.



Awareness Top-of-funnel

Facebook & Instagram

Saved audiences

Facebook offers a variety of targeting options, from demographic and location-based options, to interests and Custom Audiences. As a Facebook advertiser, you're able to refine and tune these filters until you have defined the perfect target audiences for your campaigns.



Lookalike audiences

[Lookalike Audiences](#) allow you to target people who are similar to your existing target audiences. Once you have created a Custom Audience on Facebook, you can use it as the base for a Lookalike Audience. This is a great way to prospect for new customers.

Lookalike Audiences can range from 1-20% of the total population of the country you're targeting, with 1% being the closest match to your seed audience.

International lookalike audiences

If you're expanding to new markets where you don't yet have any custom audiences, International Lookalikes is a great tool. It uses an existing custom audience (chosen by you) to create a lookalike in the new market.

Value-based lookalike audiences

[Value-Based Lookalike Audiences](#) are a great option to find new customers with the help of your CRM data. In this option, you share the demographics of your high-spending customers with Facebook, so the algorithm can find similar people who are also likely to purchase from your store.

Tip for seasonal campaigns: upload your CRM data from previous holiday seasons and/ or high-value spenders to use this as an extra-relevant seed audience for your Lookalikes.

Targeting expansion



[Targeting Expansion](#) uses Facebook's internal data to target your ads to interests that you may not have otherwise considered. Targeting Expansion gives Facebook the option to expand your target audience by adjusting your interest-based targeting, in order to reach more people who may lead to better and/or cheaper results.



Awareness Top-of-funnel

Google

Custom affinity audiences

This audience building option from Google enables you to put together the exact audience you're interested in, using keywords, URLs, places, and even apps.

With Custom affinity audiences, marketers have the option to create their own, highly tailored audience based on internet users' recent web activity. Google effectively gathers data together from user search history, keywords used and website visits, and makes this accessible to advertisers for targeting. Making use of this real data allows marketers to better control their targeting with smaller and more refined audiences.

Custom intent

With this type of targeting, choose words or phrases related to the people that are most likely to engage with your site and make purchases. In addition to keywords, custom intent audiences allows you to add URLs for websites, apps, or YouTube content related to your audience's interests.

In-market

Select from these audiences to find customers who are in the market, which means that they're researching products and are actively considering buying a service or product like yours. These audiences are designed for advertisers focused on getting conversions from likely buyers. In-market audiences can help drive remarketing performance and reach consumers close to completing a purchase.



Life events

Engage with viewers on YouTube and Gmail around important life milestones, like graduating, moving homes, or getting married. By understanding when these moments are taking place, you can tailor your advertising to reach the right users with the right messages.



Consideration & conversion middle and lower funnel

Facebook & Instagram

The most effective way to reach people who have previously shown interest in your business, as well as your existing customers, is by creating a Custom Audience either using the [Facebook Pixel or SDK](#), or your CRM data.

Website custom audiences

Custom Audiences created from your [website data](#) are a powerful way to reach existing customers and those who have previously shown some interest in your business.

The Facebook pixel and SDK gather information about your website visitors and app users, to build audiences to whom you can then deliver ads on Facebook, Instagram, and the Audience Network.

Without the pixel you can't effectively track or optimize for conversion, and you're unable to retarget audiences such as:

- People who visited a specific page or category on your site
- People who visited your website during the past X days
- People who visited your site X times during the holidays season
- People who took specific actions on your website - for example, people who added a product to the cart but didn't complete a purchase.

Custom audiences from lists

From a list of your customers, Facebook allows you to create a [Custom Audience](#). With this audience set up, you can deliver ads on Facebook, Instagram, and the Audience Network. You can upload a customer list as either a CSV or TXT file, which is then hashed locally on your browser and sent to Facebook.

Here's a list of best practices for building custom audiences on Facebook:

- Separate first and last names in individual columns.
- Always include the country code and country data as their own column in the list. Since Facebook is a global platform, these fields help to narrow down the search for matches.
- Facebook accepts multiple formats for date of birth, phone numbers and zip codes, but always double check your data before uploading.
- The more data columns you have in the list, the more likely it is that Facebook will find matches.



Consideration & conversion middle and lower funnel

Remarketing

You can also reach people who have already engaged with your company, including past visitors to a website, mobile app, videos, or given you their contact information. Read more about [remarketing](#) on Google.

Customer match

Customer Match lets you use your online and offline data to reach and re-engage with your customers across Search, Shopping, Gmail, and YouTube. Anyone in business knows it's cheaper and easier to get a repeat purchase from a previously satisfied customer, than it is to find a new one! Using information that your customers have shared with you, Customer Match will target ads to those customers and other customers like them.

Similar audiences

As well as remarketing, you probably also want to find new visitors for your site, which you can do by finding people who have similar search behavior to your existing remarketing list members. Google provides a solution for this, similar to lookalike audiences on Facebook. It allows you to find and target people similar to your site's visitors, and get new visitors who are more likely to be well qualified for what you're selling.

Example

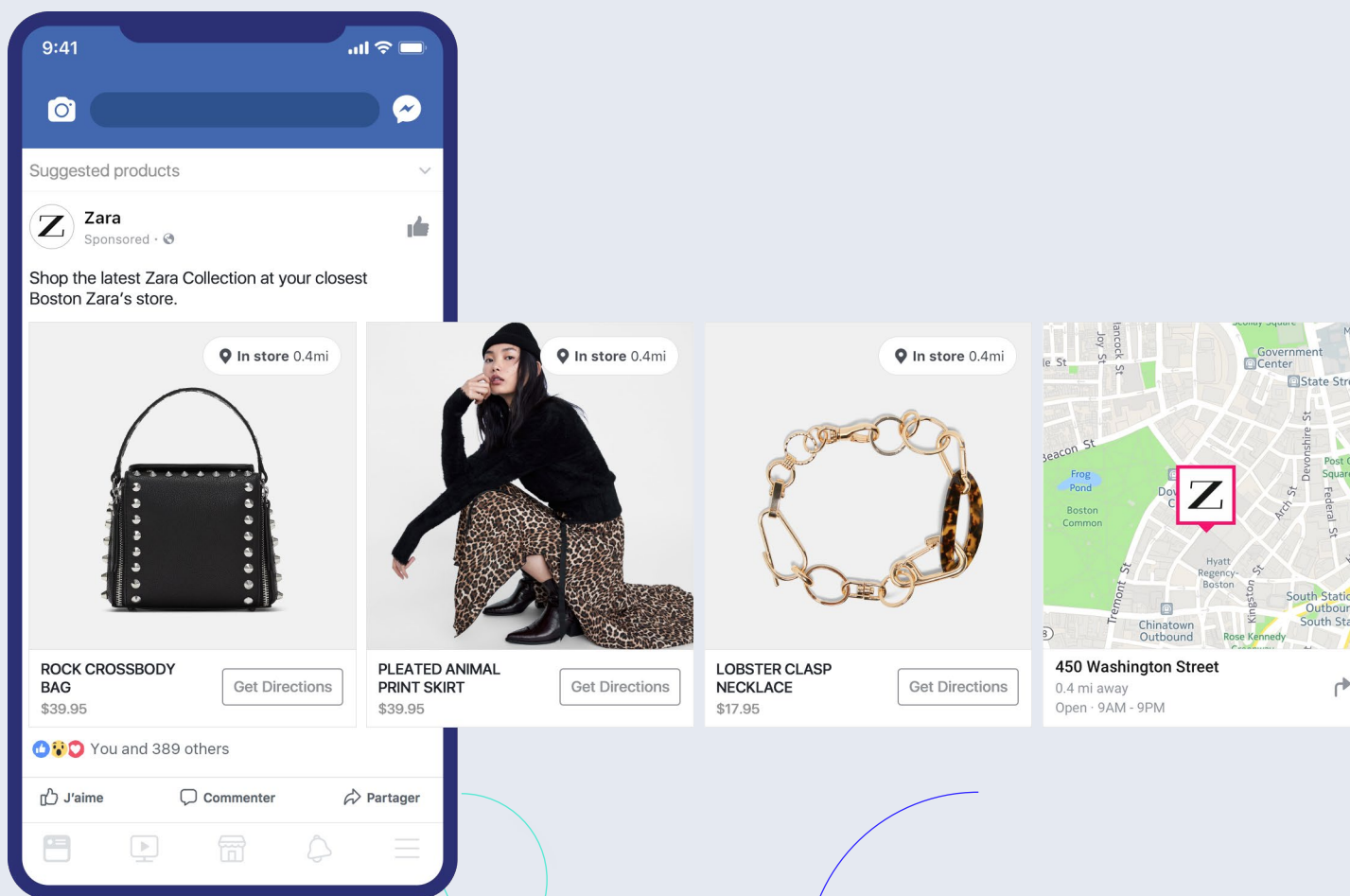
Putting it into practice

In September, consumers are already thinking about the deals they might be able to snap up at Black Friday and Cyber Monday. But they often haven't decided on a brand, and are searching for categories or types of products. You could set up a campaign with a Lookalike Audience, using an impacting format like Instagram Stories ads to show off your range of products.

In October, move to the consideration phase. Start using intent-based audiences built from lists of previous customers or website visitors, for example. Pairing this phase with an ad format like Facebook Collection ads could work well.

In November, things are getting serious. Harness the power of the Facebook Pixel and SDK to remarket to people who have actively looked at specific products in the months before. This is where you are driving conversions and purchases. [Facebook Dynamic Ads](#) could be a good format to go with here.

For Christmas, you could set up a similar strategy to reach your customers throughout the funnel!



Facebook Dynamic Ads



5

Think locally

90%

In the US, 90% of retail sales still happen in-store.

55%

A recent study found that 55% of Gen Z said they planned to do the majority of their holiday shopping in brick and mortar stores

78%

78% of holiday shoppers who visited a store turned to online search before going to a store.

8 out of 10 consumers say they're less likely to go to a store if they can't see available inventory online in advance.



For retailers everywhere, it's important to think locally when it comes to your holiday ads strategies. People still largely shop in physical stores: in the US, 90% of retail sales still happen in-store. And that remains true even for younger generations. A recent study found that 55% of Gen Z said they planned to do the majority of their holiday shopping in brick and mortar stores—a higher percentage than Boomers.

But if physical stores remain key, the way to get customers there is online, and especially on mobile. In the same survey of holiday shoppers, 84% reported that they would turn to their mobile devices for research, price comparisons, reviews, inspiration, and more before deciding on their holiday purchases.

And more generally, consumers are increasingly dependent on mobile when it comes to researching products, comparing prices, and then finding their way in-store. 8 out of 10 consumers say they're less likely to go to a store if they can't see available inventory online in advance. That's a major role of smartphones today: researching and finding physical stores to purchase in. According to Google, 78% of holiday shoppers who visited a store turned to online search before going to a store.

There are plenty of features across networks you can use to get customers into your stores for Black Friday and the holiday season.



Keeping it local with Facebook and Instagram

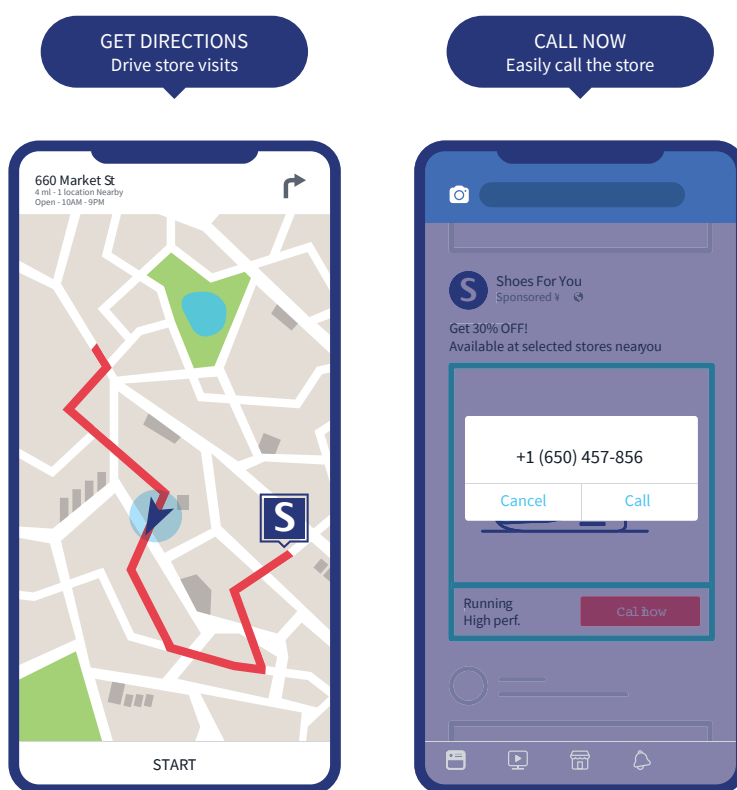
The Store Visit objective from Facebook gives retailers the ability to bridge the gaps between the digital and the physical, driving consumers to their stores. Choosing the objective means the Facebook algorithm will show your ads to people most likely to make an in-store purchase.

The Store Visits objective can be used with Facebook ad formats like image, video and carousel ads.

It's an effective way of allowing consumers to action their inspiration, by guiding them to your closest store location. If used with the Facebook Carousel ad format, a native store locator is available, which will display a map as one of the cards in the carousel.

The CTAs, maps, and text will always be based on the business location nearest the person served your ad.

The store locator makes ads more useful for consumers by putting contact information and opening hours of nearby stores only one tap away. Users can then get directions, call or message your business in just a few seconds.



A note on offline conversion tracking

If you're a retail business with physical stores, you'll know the importance of integrated tracking for your campaigns.

The problem is that, compared to an online purchase, physical purchases in-store can be a little harder to attribute to a specific Facebook ad campaign. But retailers need to know whether their Facebook ads made a difference to in-store purchases—and thankfully Facebook has a tool for that.

Facebook's offline conversion measurement tool helps retailers understand which offline events can be attributed to the success of your Facebook ads. By matching offline event data from your retail system to people who saw and clicked on your Facebook ads, you can better understand the effectiveness of your ad campaigns and return on your ad spend.





Keeping it local with Google

In a world where e-commerce and in-store shopping experiences are intertwined, how can you effectively integrate the online and offline worlds of your retail business and ensure you're not missing any customers? Google has some great options for you!

Local Inventory Ads

[Local Inventory Ads](#) from Google provide shoppers with a way to discover stores near them selling products of interest. They let you turn browsing into buying by showing your products and providing users with information on your store when they search Google nearby. When someone clicks on your ad, they are redirected to a Google-hosted page for your store, called the local storefront, where they can see stock, store hours, directions, and more.

With Local Inventory Ads from Google you can't set your own radius but, as long as your business is listed, it will appear in searches within a distance set by Google. In addition, in order to qualify for this ad format, you'll need to:

- Own a physical store that is open to the public.
- Sell goods that shoppers can buy without requiring an additional purchase, like a membership for example.
- Have a store located in the country you're targeting ads to.
- Meet Google's requirements for protecting customers personally identifiable information.



Local campaigns

[These campaigns](#) are designed to use Google advertising to drive store visits and are available across Google properties including Google Search Network, Maps, YouTube, and the Google Display Network. You provide Google with store locations, campaign budget, and ad assets. Using these inputs, Google's machine learning technology automatically optimizes bids, ad placements, and asset combinations.



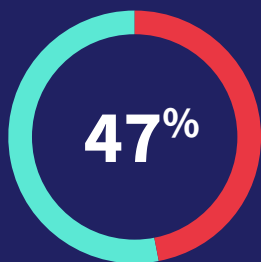
6

Get creative!

According to a [Nielsen study](#), 47% of sales contribution comes from ad creative. And The [Harvard Business Review](#) found in their research that a euro invested in a highly creative ad campaign had, on average, double the sales impact of a euro spent on a non-creative campaign.

Creative is key when it comes to the performance of your online ads, and it's becoming even more essential as platforms become increasingly visual. Increased competition across platforms also means advertisers need to be more creative to gain cut-through. To break through the clutter of an ocean of similar ads, advertisers need to think outside the box.

It's crucial to pay attention to your creative assets, to make sure you stand out from the crowd.



Percentage of sales contribution coming from ad creative, according to a Nielsen study



The Harvard Business Review found in their research that a euro invested in a highly creative ad campaign had, on average, double the sales impact of a euro spent on a non-creative campaign.

Here are our tips for high-performing Black Friday and holiday ad creative:

1. Have a strong visual concept and stick with it. Identify the core elements of your brand and build messages throughout your ads that stick to these. Don't flip-flop from one wildly different message to another across ad campaigns, but focus on building a brand narrative that your customers and prospects can buy into.

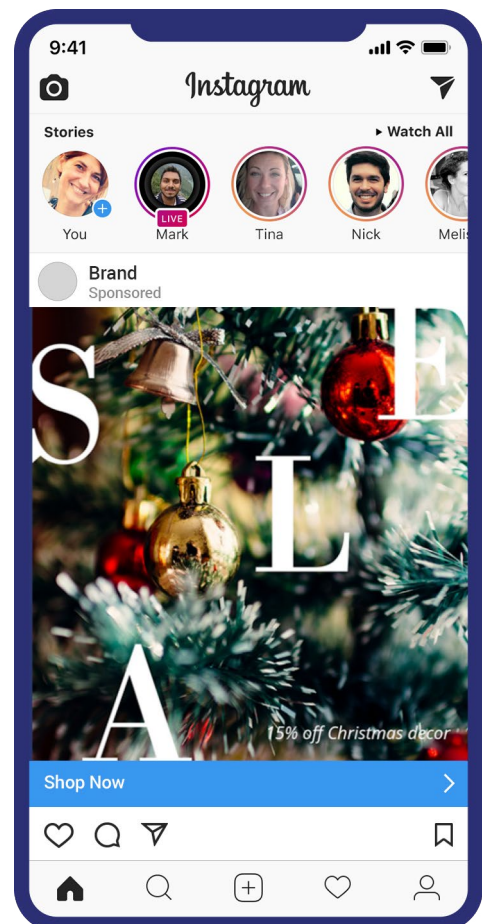
2. Make it relevant. Across networks, being relevant is crucial. You are spending money when someone views or clicks on your ad. If you're showing ads that aren't relevant to your target audience, you're wasting time and money, and it may effect your ad delivery.

3. Include an enticing value proposition. A value proposition tells the reader why they should click on your ad to learn more about your product. How is your product or service different from any other? Why should the viewer click on your ad to see your website?

During Black Friday and the holiday period, it's a good idea to:

- Display the product price and/or discount. Listing a price will filter out people who aren't willing to pay that amount for the product.
- Create urgency. Customers tend to procrastinate on taking action. Even if presented with a great offer, they'll still wait in hope of coming across an even better deal. Push a user to action with words. Here are some of the most popular ones: "limited time, only, hurry, act now, last chance, today only, clearance, don't miss out, offer expires, prices going up."
- Offer a limited-time promotion. Everyone loves a good deal, but more people will act on one with an expiry date.

4. Have a clear call-to-action. A beautiful and relevant ad is great, but without a call-to-action (CTA), your viewer might not know what to do next. Add a CTA like "Buy now and save X%," or "Offer ends soon" and compel the viewer to act now.

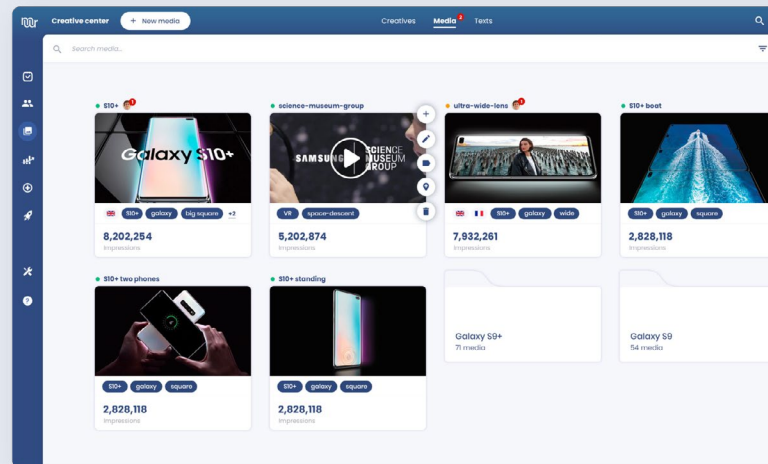


The MakeMeReach Creative Center

Managing multiple creatives across multiple networks, with multiple collaborators, can be a challenge for any marketing team. It's not always easy to see which creatives are performing best across networks. And sharing results and creatives happens through many different channels, making it tricky to have a holistic vision and get the most out of your holiday season advertising.

MakeMeReach is building a smart solution to your creatives challenges: introducing the Creative Center! The Creative Center is an actionable, intelligent creatives library which aggregates and adapts creative assets for the major digital media channels, giving you an overview of creative performance across networks.

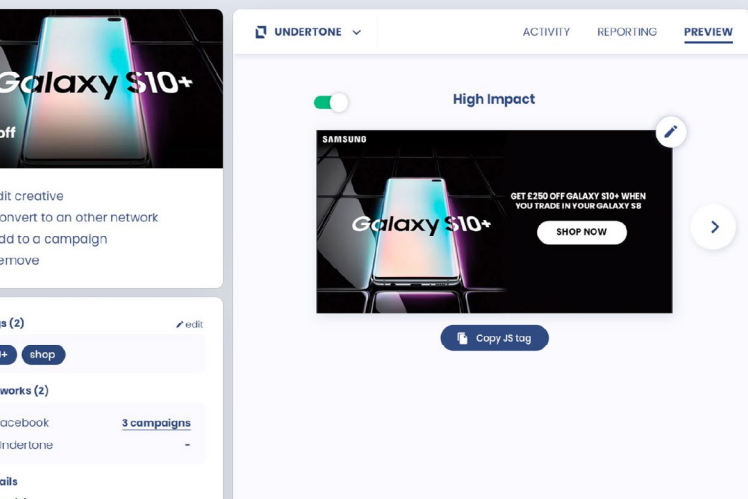
Its collaborative nature allows brand, creative, and agency teams to work together efficiently, eliminating the need for endless emails back and forth, file transfers to all kind of stakeholders, and more headaches.



What does it do?

- Gathers all digital assets (image, video, and text) used on every major platform
- Automatically adapts content used on one network to a different network, saving the time and manual effort of doing it yourself (e.g. from social ads to display ads)
- Produces new content from existing assets
- Allows seamless validation of creatives between different stakeholders (Media agencies, advertisers, etc.)
- Generates consolidated cross-network reports on your assets and creatives

The Creative Center brings all of your creatives and data to one place, enabling easier and smarter creatives management for everyone involved. You'll be able to avoid repeating the same processes across each network, as well as see how well a particular image performed across multiple creatives. You can then leverage those insights to make informed decisions about your creatives going forward.





7

Optimize as you go



During the Black Friday and Christmas shopping period, CPMs (Cost per Thousand Impressions) can increase a lot, since so many businesses are looking for a slice of the holiday spend. It isn't enough to have carefully built audiences or on-brand and relevant creatives—you need to make sure to also bid high enough to reach your consumers.

When it comes to advertising across networks, there are many options for optimizing campaign performance. In many cases, a good bulk of the work can be easily automated, while some of it will require more human attention.

When considering automation, it's important to think about your holiday campaigns in a couple of ways. As a general rule, longer ongoing campaigns are the best for seeing the real value behind automation. Having more time allows for value to be added in things like bidding, budgets, and rotating creatives, for example. Short-term, limited offers and flash sales require more manual monitoring. Automation will play less of a role since it could be dangerous to automate too much if you have a limited stock of the product, for example.

The good news is that your holiday campaigns can fit into both of these buckets—it can be thought of as both short and longer term. Starting in early fall, you are effectively promoting the deals you have coming up, so automation can provide a lot of value.

Here are some ideas of what you could automate earlier on in the lead up to this period:

1. Ad Rotation

Ad fatigue is the number one enemy of effective online campaigns. In order to fight it, refresh your campaigns periodically by rotating ads based on various sets of rules (such as prioritizing high-performing ads or switching creatives after a set time). Automating ad rotation is a great idea for longer campaigns that have multiple ads. You can easily set up this type of rule in the MakeMeReach Automation Center.

2. Budget Automation

We all know that respecting the budget is crucial to social advertising success. You need to be careful with it, and ensure it is well allocated. Budget automation can be set up to transfer budget from one campaign or ad set that is under-performing to another campaign or ad set that has a better chance of success. And it's all done on an ongoing basis and in real time! This could be useful to ensure you optimize the performance of your ads promoting your upcoming Christmas sale!

3. Automate based on external factors

Integrations with tools like Zapier give MakeMeReach users even more automation options like making changes to ad campaigns based on external factors like the weather or website events. Third-party integrations like this enable performance marketers on MakeMeReach to set up a “safety-net” of automation, allowing them to focus on the things that really need their attention.

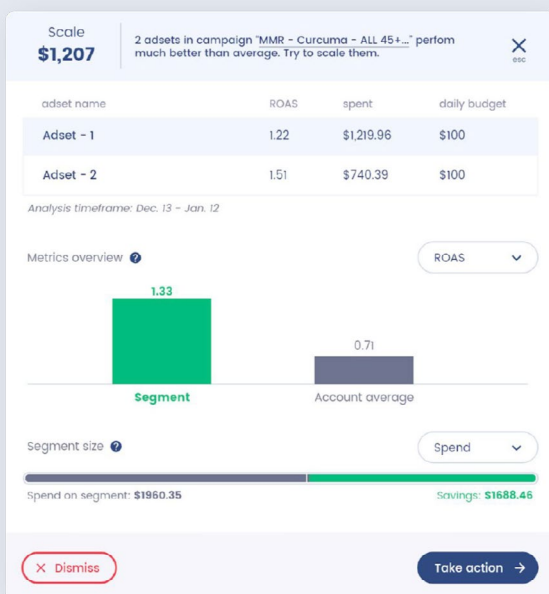
Go further with your **automation**

AI recommendations from MakeMeReach

At a crucial period of the year like Black Friday and the holidays, it's more important than ever to make sure you don't miss any opportunities to optimize your ads. The MakeMeReach AI recommendation engine is a powerful tool to help you do just that, across advertising channels.

We believe in smart collaboration between human and machine, since algorithms today have the power to analyze data at a scale that was once unimaginable. But we also know that the marketer has the contextual insights to take the business forward, and should always own the strategy.

Our AI recommendation tool is built with this in mind. You stay in control, but you are supported to make the best decisions.



The screenshot displays the MakeMeReach AI recommendation interface with three action options. At the top, it shows a 'Scale' of \$1,207 and a note: '2 adsets in campaign "MMR - Curcuma - ALL 45+..." perform much better than average. Try to scale them.' Below this are three action options, each with a checkbox and a description:

- Split test current budget vs new budget** (SAFE): You will duplicate 2 adsets, set a wished expanded budget in the dupes and split test them against original adsets.
- Pause original adset and raise a budget of the dupe** (EASY): You will duplicate 2 adsets, set a wished expanded budget in the dupes and split test them against original adsets.
- Raise budget** (ADVANCED): You raise a budget of 2 adsets by 10% (or by any other percentage).

At the bottom, there are 'Back to details' and 'TAKE ACTION!' buttons.

How does it work?

The technology behind the AI functions on:

- **Anomaly detection** to figure out what is normal for your account and what is unusual. The algorithm detects outliers, spikes, and trends.
- **Analysis of factors** to figure out which influenced each anomaly. This analysis identifies the best way to act on the opportunity.

Using this information, the AI algorithm finds opportunities for actionable growth. The opportunities can be anything that effects your ads performance, from placement to format to audience.

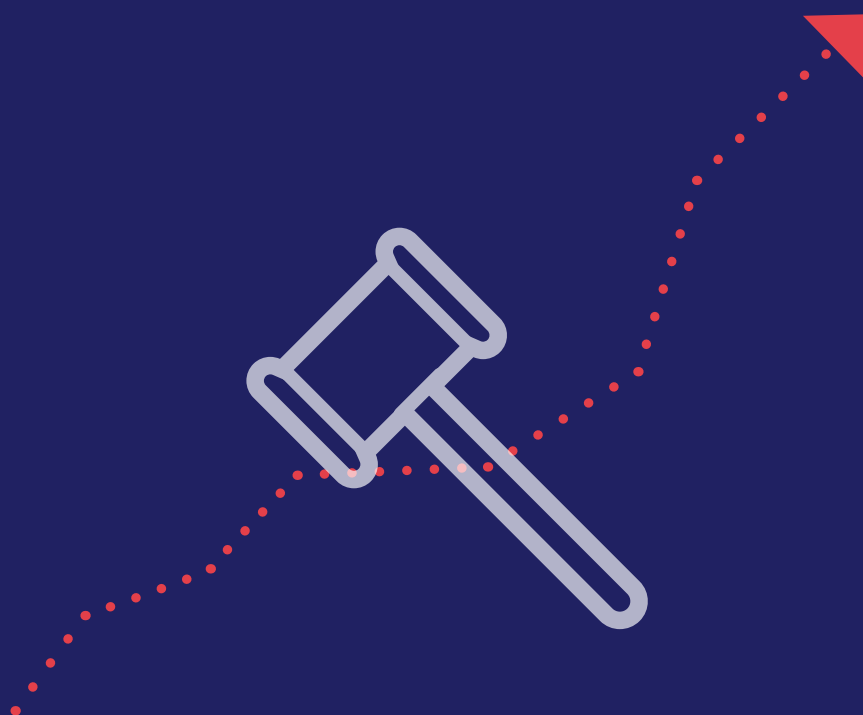
Our AI always suggests multiple solutions so you can make your own decision and implement it. And to make things extra easy, there is no manual work required to implement each suggestion directly in MakeMeReach.

Try our AI recommendations for yourself.

Book a Demo

What should you handle manually?

The season spanning from Black Friday through the holidays shoots the competition sky high for advertisers. What normally works for you probably won't yield the same results during the most competitive days.



As a rule of thumb, you should increase both bids and budgets during the holiday season, particularly around certain dates like the week before Christmas. It's logical, since volumes and the average basket size is higher, you should be prepared to bid higher for each conversion.

The amount you set as your budget is also important. You want to ensure you spend your full budget: it's no use skimping on that during the biggest sales periods of the year! In a situation where you are bidding high but not seeing your budget used up, try also increasing that budget. Many of the networks we've discussed take both into account in their pacing algorithms.



8

4 quick tips to making the most of the holiday season



1

Retarget



As we mentioned earlier in this eBook, starting your campaigns early is absolutely crucial. Not only will it align with the way people are shopping these days (researching for longer periods of time, across channels, before purchasing), it will also enable you to make the most of retargeting closer to big shopping days.

Did you know an astounding 97% of people who visit your website are not going to purchase the first time? That's why retargeting is so important!

People who have visited your website are already engaged with your business and took a small action which potentially shows a level of purchase intent. They've effectively qualified themselves as a potential customer, and have left a digital trail in their wake. Using this trail, and the clues they have

already provided you about their preferences and interests, you're now able to continue the sales conversation with them rather than starting from scratch.

To ensure you're making the most of retargeting, build it into your strategy! Ensure you have the Facebook Pixel and correct Google tags set up, for example, and don't let qualified traffic slip through your fingers!

2

Learn from previous campaigns



Ensure you do a proper analysis of previous holiday season campaigns—and for Christmas, that should include the Black Friday campaign you may have just run. What worked and what didn't? Did you meet your goals or fall short? If you were disappointed by previous results, what could have been the drivers of the lack of success? Remember, the definition of insanity is repeating the same processes over and over, and expecting different results!

3

Think outside the box with creatives



Creatives are especially important in advertising around key holidays like Christmas. People are ready to celebrate and many are looking to brands to inspire them and to elevate the Christmas spirit! Strong creatives, no matter the network, are important to help you stand out from the crowd. Don't just do the same old—think creatively and do something different, to really stand out!

4

Outsource your campaigns



Are you ramping up your online advertising investment? Or maybe you're already giving it a big focus, but aren't too sure how to go to the next level and start seeing big results? If you haven't been 'WOWed' in a while by the campaigns you're running, you could be missing something.

MakeMeReach Managed Service

With deep expertise in advertising across a variety of networks, trust our team of experts to take end-to-end control of your campaigns, improving performance with the help of our cutting-edge technology platform.

Our Managed Service team is made up of performance marketing experts who manage the A-to-Z of social advertising campaigns for our clients. From strategy, to implementation, to optimization and reporting, our clients trust us to consistently achieve their objectives.

Why use Managed Service?

Seasonal Rush

Black Friday and Christmas are coming up and you need more grunt behind your campaigns. There are a lot of examples of times this has been useful for our existing self-service clients, who were able to use our Managed Service team for specific busy times during the year. We are now able to provide a packaged-offering for these special holiday campaigns.

Looking to scale

You're scaling your business and need a dedicated person to take care of online advertising campaigns, but don't want to hire internally yet.

Support for your team

Someone in your team is leaving or there's too much work and you need temporary help.





Ready to take your online ads
to the next level?

[Book a Demo](#)

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Preferred partner for online ad campaigns management of **+4000 companies** worldwide since **2009**



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