

Top tips for a rocking online festive retail campaign

By [Linah Maigurira](#)

30 Nov 2017

As the year draws to a close, retailers are readying themselves to make the most of the annual festive shopping rush. When it comes to drawing people into their stores, both online and physical, retailers may face increased competition, but they also have a wider array of tools at their disposal than ever before.



©Wavebreak Media Ltd via www.123RF.com

One of the most powerful of those tools is display advertising. As with all tools, however, it's only powerful if used correctly.

With that in mind, here's what you need to know about rocking your retail display campaign this festive season.

The opportunity is massive

Of course, before you launch head-first into a display advertising campaign, it's worth taking a look at the market opportunity you're chasing, especially in the online space. Google's research shows that 30% of volume in retail demand happens around the festive season. A recent [Connected Consumer Survey](#) shows that 2.5m South Africans shop online and 49% of them use their smartphones for purchase inspiration, while 30% use them for purchase preparation.

Despite what the naysayers may tell you, e-commerce in Africa is on a serious upward swing. According to estimates from

McKinsey, e-commerce in Africa will account for 10% of retail sales by 2025. That translates to \$75-billion in annual revenue. This growth is being driven by an emerging middle class with increasing internet access and a willingness to spend. That willingness only increases over the festive season when people are looking for gifts for friends and families, as well as goods for any gatherings they might be hosting.

In other words, the ideal time to grab these customers' attention is right now.

Make yourself visible

It's important that you realise that your ads don't just have to be visually appealing, they have to stand out from your competitors'. As much as people are willing to spend at this time of the year, it's also important to remember that they're less brand loyal than ever. They're usually after the best deal or a specific product.

As well as paying attention to the visual and design elements of your display campaign, another way of making it visible is to get it out there as early as possible. This means you'll be ahead of the rush of people trying to get emergency approvals from the display ad networks in the holiday rush.

Remember, customers search on different sites much farther in advance to these major shopping days to see where they can get the best deals.

Set budget aside to maximise reach

Another important thing to remember when planning your festive season is to ensure you have enough reach to win share of mind, and budget set aside. Ideally, you should estimate your spend by pulling historical data for the holidays and layering your account's current year-on-year trends. Capture missed traffic by budgeting more for days where your historical click share decreased but retail query volume or your competitor's click share increased.

That said, you should also allow flexibility in your budget to survive holiday shopping peaks and valleys, especially with the longer shopping season this year. When setting KPIs, factor in cross-device and in-store impact.

Make it relevant

Let's be honest, you probably don't have enough money to target everyone with your online advertising campaign. And why should you? If you take that approach, you're effectively gambling that the campaign will draw people to your site.

Instead, you should target the consumers most likely to be interested in what you're selling. The best display tools allow you to target according to parameters including topic, location, age, gender, and interest. Your ads should target existing customers, re-engaging their interest, as well as new customers that have similar characteristics to your current audience.

Get mobile right

Smartphones have completely changed the way we shop. According to 2016 research from Ipsos, 82% of smartphone owners who bought something in a store first turned to their devices for information relevant to that purchase. Your ads, therefore, need to be responsive to different screen sizes and accurate to the location of your customers.

With people checking their phones more than 150 times per day, mobile is the perfect place to grab their attention and get them to spend with you. Remember, mobile is pivotal to people shopping with you both online and in the physical retail space.

Many shoppers either look at items in-store before buying online via their mobile devices, or make the decision to go into a store based on something they've seen on their mobile devices.

Have a post-holiday strategy

Keep in mind that the holiday rush will carry on for a little while after the designated holidays. Keep budgets open for post-holiday sales and use the remarketing tools at your disposal to re-engage customers across devices. People are still willing to spend at this time, especially if they've been gifted money or vouchers.

Start the new year fresh

Once January arrives, you can start to upweight and grow your audience. Focus on increasing sales performance among those you've converted over the festive season and start the new year off with a bang.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Linah Maigurira, Google SA Industry Manager

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>