

How online retailers can prep for success this Black Friday

Retailers hoping to secure their portion of the expected 30% year-on-year online Black Friday growth should ensure that they make payments as easy as possible and coordinate marketing across channels. While the big day fast approaching, there is still time to make a noticeable difference before the 29 November shopping extravaganza.



“PayGate believes we can expect Black Friday online sales to grow by [at least 30%](#) in 2019,” says Brendon Williamson, chief sales officer at payment service provider PayGate. “While it’s always tough to compete against the really big e-commerce outfits, there is definitely still time for smaller retailers to implement some strategic plans to capitalise on the opportunity.”

PayGate’s growth predictions, despite the slow economy, are based on the fact that this year Black Friday takes place on the 29th of November, after payday. What’s more, according to online marketing specialist and founder of SiteMeUp, Michael Richards, shoppers are planning ahead to make the most of the bargains on offer.

“Online merchants will likely be more competitive this year and hopefully more organised in logistics. I would expect a few e-commerce businesses to dominate. However, I feel some smaller merchants will find opportunity still exists if they prepare properly,” says Richards.

Amongst the pointers from SiteMeUp is to ensure awareness and to keep things simple.



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Cindy Diamond 8 Oct 2019



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“Firstly, teaser campaigns are recommended for merchants to ensure their customer base is aware that they will be having a Black Friday sale. Merchants should be pushing their marketing efforts to build reach on all their digital channels. Social Media (Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest) and Google Campaigns (Search, YouTube, display advertising and remarketing)

should all be working together to achieve an increase in followers and sign-ups along with strategies to provide sneak peaks of the planned promotions,” Richards explains.

South African consumers have really caught onto the Black Friday and Cyber Monday craze and, according to Richards, many of them will also be looking to maximise their spend this year. This will include setting aside a Black Friday savings account for the more pedantic, or simply putting a wish list and budget in place.

“Merchants who have features on their e-commerce websites such as wish lists and rewards should be promoting these to incentivise users to shop with them come Black Friday,” says Richards.

“Allowing folks to fill their shopping carts ahead of time can be a very useful trick. They can then simply check out when the sales open, saving time and ensuring they get the items they want. Merchants have to realise that they can either make it super simple and easy, or the consumer will just go to the next retailer on their search page.”

Richards encourages merchants to keep shopping online simple so as not to confuse users. He says products should be categorised correctly, helping users to quickly find what they are looking for.

“Try having a dedicated page promoting all the products you have available for sale, sliders, pop-ups and featured areas of your site should have a clear message and direct link to where your users can find your deals.”



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Williamson says PayGate’s tech team has spent months gearing up for increased traffic this year. Managing capacity of its cloud-based service means the company can quickly and easily respond to traffic on the fly, but advises merchants to check how robust their own sites are ahead of time.

“Merchants should be focussing on getting the customer to their site as the first hurdle. Once they are there merchants must be sure the customer journey is simple, clear and results in as few abandoned carts as possible. This will include making sure that shoppers can end their experience by paying with whatever method they are comfortable.

“Ensuring you have an EFT option, like SiD Secure EFT, is essential for those shoppers who are hesitant about using their cards and also acts as a failsafe should card or other payment methods fail,” he advises.

“Great ecommerce customer journeys must be planned from search to delivery. Making even small improvements now can ensure a more lucrative Black Friday, come November.”

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