2017 STEELHOUSE / HOLIDAY MINI GUIDE

You have to love summer and its long, lazy days. Beaches, beers, sun -- and every marketer's favorite time -- holiday season campaign planning! If that last part caught you off guard, be warned, the holidays have a way of sneaking up on you. ***They'll be here sooner than you think.***

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Holiday Mini-Guide

A season that once officially kicked off on Black Friday has crept closer and closer to Halloween with each passing year. This is a scary prospect for any marketer who isn't prepared to launch their campaigns by the time the jack-o-lanterns start to rot. But don't worry, SteelHouse is here to help.

Holiday 2017 will be the year of social and video, and we will make sure you're prepared. Are you trying to snag as many new shoppers as possible? Aiming to get the most out of your mobile campaigns? Want to connect with your audience through social? However you plan on tackling the holidays -- ***WE HAVE YOU COVERED.***

Pre-Holiday Checklist

- [x] **Know Your Stats** | What is the typical trend for your site traffic between October and December? How many of your users visit on mobile vs desktop? How did conversions trend last year?

- [x] **Determine What Works** | Analyze past holiday campaigns to discover which combinations of channels, ad formats, and messaging works best for your brand.

- [x] **Grab Your Calendar** | Marketers have their own holidays this time of year - Black Friday, Thanksgiving Weekend, Cyber Monday - have special promotions ready for them.

- [ ] **Set Your Goals** | What are your goals? ROAS? CPA? Top-line revenue? Choose the right goal to match your campaign's purpose.

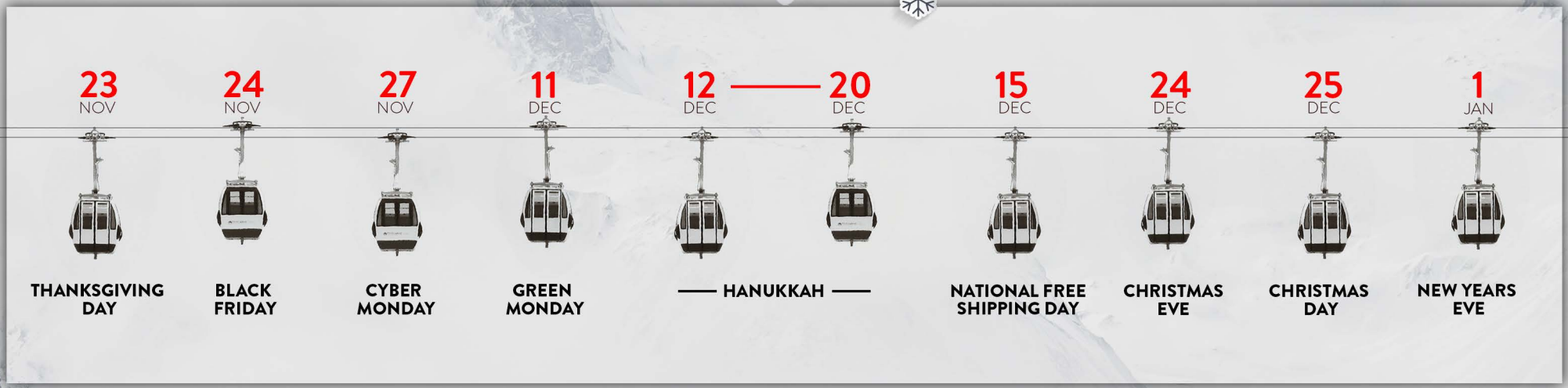
- [ ] **Gather Your Assets** | Video outperforms static image ads, so load up on video assets to better engage your audience.

- [ ] **Think About Channels & Devices** | Display and desktop are still going strong, but mobile and social continue to gain momentum. Take note of which channels and devices your customers engage with.

- [ ] **Understand Your Competition** How has your competitive landscape changed over the last year? Are there any new developments to consider when creating new campaigns?

Marketing Calendar

IMPORTANT ECOMMERCE ***DATES TO KEEP IN MIND***

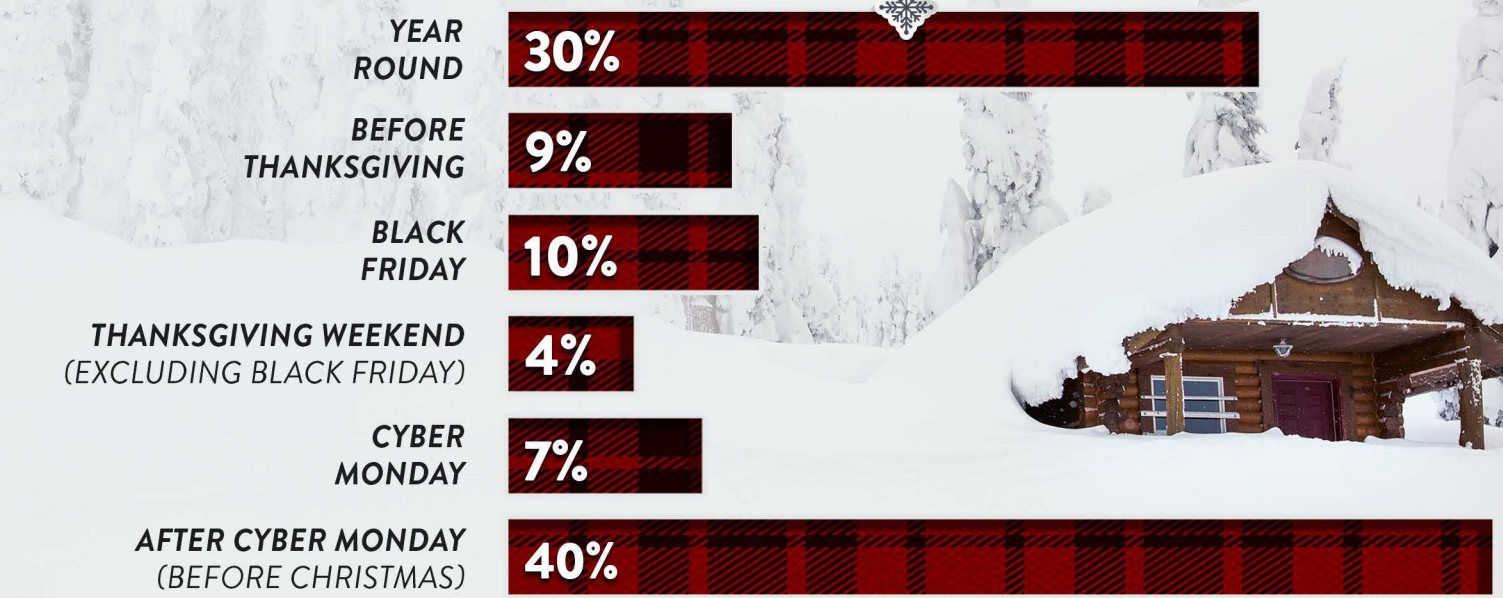


Tip: 73% of shoppers say sales and discounts are the main factors that influence where they purchase holiday gifts from. Create special promotions for each holiday to take advantage.

Tip: Just because the holidays are over doesn't mean shoppers are done looking for deals. **44% of surveyed shoppers say they plan to shop for after-Christmas sales.**

January 2017

TIME OF YEAR WHEN US INTERNET USERS CONDUCT THE MAJORITY OF THEIR HOLIDAY SHOPPING



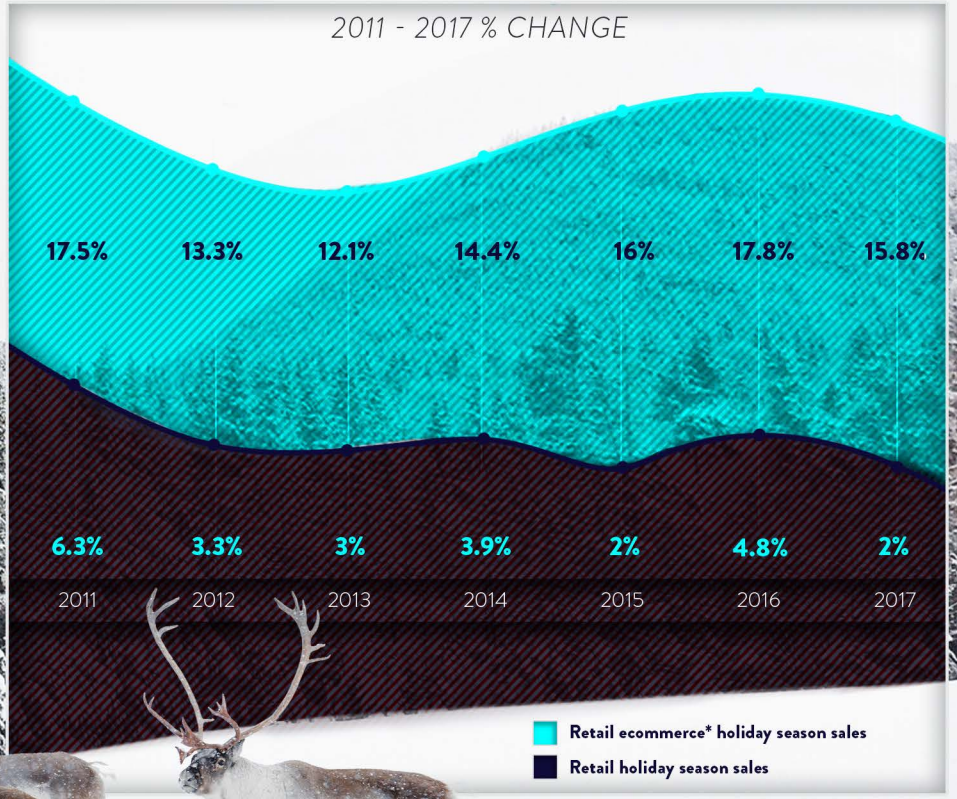
The bulk of internet shoppers do their holiday gift-buying after Cyber Monday, while one in five do the majority of their shopping from Black Friday to Cyber Monday. Many retailers launched their **2016 Black Friday sales the week before Thanksgiving**, so these numbers may start to trend toward earlier dates.

Stats & Trends

GROW GROW GROW

If there's one consistent trend in recent holidays, it's growth. 2016 saw ecommerce retailers have their best year since 2011, and while eMarketer projects 2017 sales growth to taper off a bit, this year's holiday season is looking to be a good one.

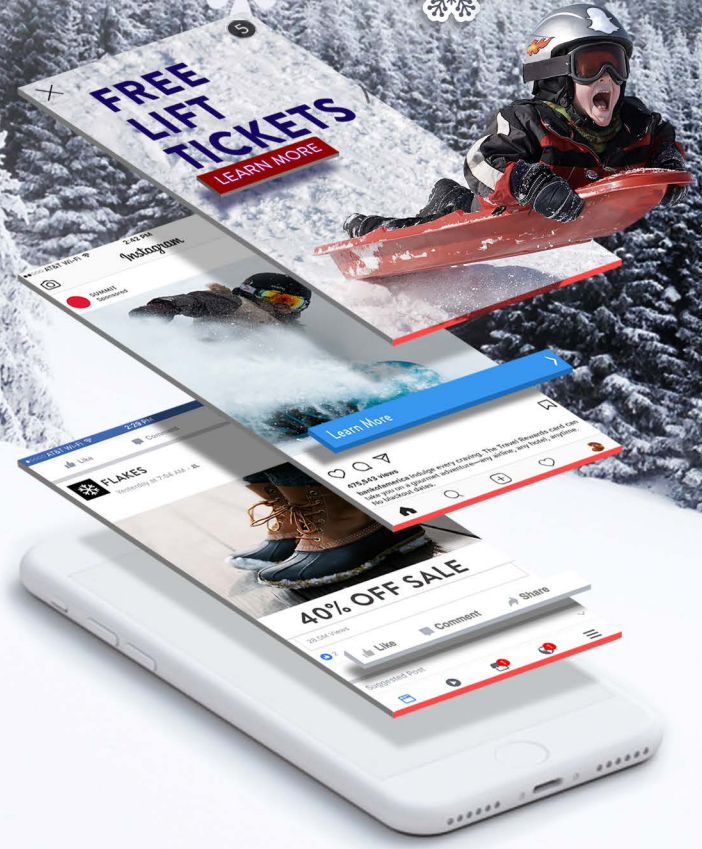
US RETAIL & RETAIL ECOMMERCE* HOLIDAY SEASON SALES GROWTH



Note: Sales are for Nov & Dec of each year; excludes travel and event tickets; *includes products or services ordered using the internet, regardless of the method of payment or fullfillment
Source: eMarketer, Jan 2017

Get Social

DURING THE HOLIDAYS



Social as a channel is booming – and extremely influential

31%
Increase in social ad spending for 2017

37%
18-34 year olds who learn about holiday sales through social.

52%
Online and offline purchases influenced by Facebook

69%
Consumers who use Facebook to hunt for deals or share products

93%
Marketers who plan on using social to advertise deals or discounts

Tip: In 2016, over 87% of social network users accessed social sites via their mobile phone. Prioritize mobile whenever possible for your social campaigns.

Desktop Sales Dominate

WHILE ***MOBILE CONTINUES TO SURGE***

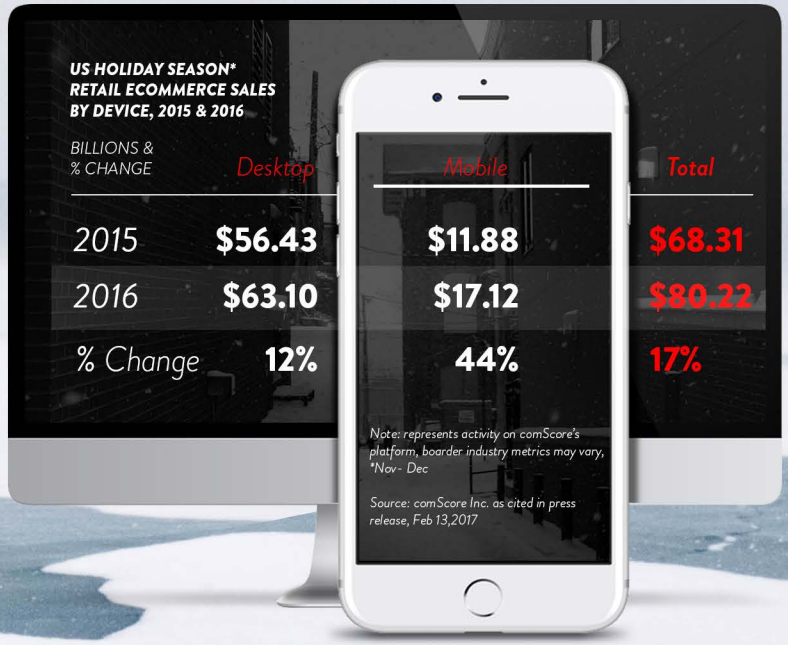
Having a strong presence across all channels and devices isn't optional. If you want to reach your audience on the devices they use most, you need to have campaigns that are optimized for both desktop and mobile.

DESKTOP IS STILL THE KING *OF ECOMMERCE, WITH*

$63 BILLION IN SALES

in sales from November to December in 2016. This was a 12% increase over the 2015 holiday season.

Mobile ecommerce sales aren't as big as desktop -- YET. 2016 saw retailers rake in over ***$17 billion in mobile sales*** during the holidays, representing a 44% increase over the previous year.



Mobile sales, specifically from smartphones, will continue to improve as time goes on. eMarketer projects that by 2021, yearly smartphone ecommerce sales will be over $325 billion -- an 80% increase over 2016.

Tip: Many shoppers hop from device to device while deciding to make a purchase. Make sure your campaigns are multi-channel and cross-device to reach them where they're ready to convert.

All I Want for X-mas

IS IN-STORE **ATTRIBUTION**

Online sales are on the upswing across desktop and mobile, but digital ads also influence conversions made in-store. Retailers need to track when and where a customer converts after seeing an online ad to have a better sense of how effective their advertising is.

Thankfully, technology is catching up to the demand, and advertising solutions like SteelHouse can now measure offline metrics like foot traffic and in-store revenue lift from display campaigns.

Tip: 52% of millennials compare prices, and 37% searched for sales or discounts on their smartphones while shopping in-store. Start measuring in-store conversions now to better understand your ads' impact.

2017 HOLIDAY CAMPAIGN

Recommendations

Achieving the best performance doesn't just happen. Here are a few ways you can make sure your campaigns are set up for success.

*TIS THE SEASON TO BE SOCIAL WITH VIDEO

Six out of every ten Americans on the internet use social networks. That means your customers are congregating on a channel that specializes in high engagement -- making it the perfect place to reach them. And there's no better way to reach them than with prospecting or retargeting campaigns powered by video.

Case Study

SPERRY

Users are on social networks to interact with the people and brands in their life. To take advantage of that, SteelHouse teamed up with Sperry to show the value of running engaging, high-performing video ad placements on Facebook. We A/B tested Facebook video against static-image ads, and the results speak for themselves.

CTR **6.5x** — *HIGHER VS STATIC*

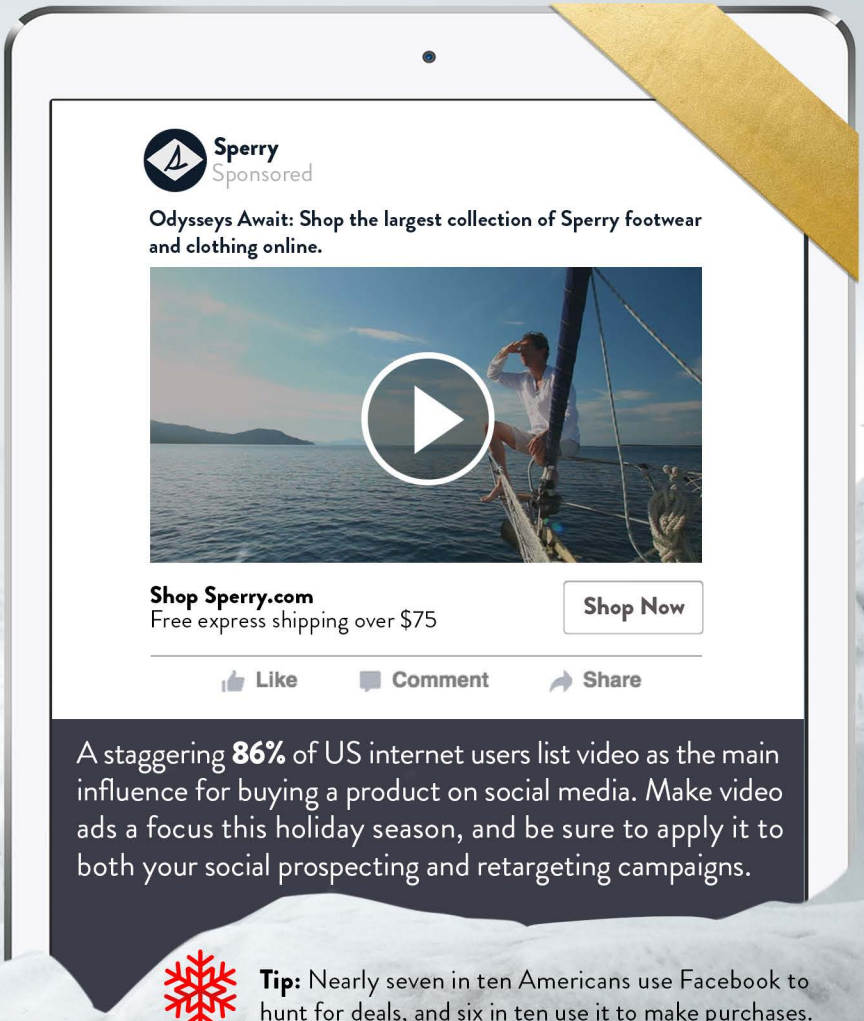
CLICK ROAS UP **267%**

CLICK CPA DOWN **55%**

— *STATIC ADS*

For more social video case studies:
https://steelhouse.com/research/case-studies/

Tip: Use already-existing video assets and repurpose them for your Facebook and Instagram video campaigns. Doing this with the SteelHouse Creative Suite lets you create videos at scale without a production team.



A staggering **86%** of US internet users list video as the main influence for buying a product on social media. Make video ads a focus this holiday season, and be sure to apply it to both your social prospecting and retargeting campaigns.

Tip: Nearly seven in ten Americans use Facebook to hunt for deals, and six in ten use it to make purchases.

Increase Your CPMs

Media clearing prices increase during the holidays due to higher competition, so be prepared (in both mind and budget) to increase your CPM bids. CPMs climb as high as 3X as normal on big shopping days like Black Friday.

And it's not just Black Friday. The same can be said for the entirety of the holiday season -- even as early as October. While CPMs will spike on shopping holidays, they also increase for regular days of the week, on all channels, as the holidays draw closer. Social platforms like Facebook saw a 46% increase in CPM in Q4 vs Q3 in 2016.

Tip: Video ads tend to carry a higher CPM, but it's worth it. SteelHouse data shows video ad CTR, ROAS, and CPA all outperform static imagery ads in head-to-head testing.

Deck the Halls

*WITH **PROSPECTING AND RETARGETING***

Prospecting and retargeting go together like mistle and toe. If you're planning on a strong retargeting effort this year, you need to fill your funnel with new shoppers -- and the best way to do that is with prospecting.

Tip: When building creative to help your campaigns stand out from the competition, keep video top of mind. Whether it's lifestyle footage for prospecting, or a more product-focused video for retargeting, video ads will help you drive stronger performance.

Launch your prospecting campaigns before the holiday season to ensure you have a full funnel, and be sure to include gift shoppers. Combine tactics such as look-alike, 3rd party data, demographic audiences, contextual, and vertical targeting to reach the largest pool of prospects who may be likely to convert.

Once your prospecting campaigns do their holiday magic, your retargeting campaigns are in a great position to perform. Your retargeting campaigns should not only focus on site visitors, but also shoppers from previous holiday seasons.

Tip: Comb through your CRM data to identify and reach shoppers who purchased holiday gifts from you before.

HOLIDAY GUIDE

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Happy Holidays
FROM THE STEELHOUSE TEAM
Ready to start planning your holiday campaigns? Get started with the SteelHouse Advertising Suite, the self-serve advertising platform. Sign up, log in, and create your holiday campaign today.
START NOW
Feeling Social? Visit us:
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