

elevate[®]

The Official Summer 2018 Holiday Ecommerce Checklist





Ho, Ho, Holy Cow. The Holidays Are Coming! Santa's Ready, Are You?

During the heat of summer, it may be too early to be wishing people “Happy Holidays,” but it’s never too early to get your ecommerce site ready for the biggest shopping season of the year.

We’ve created this checklist to help keep you on track so you can be on shoppers’ nice list this year.

If you’d like to learn more about our Pre-Holiday Audit and Planning services, or how Elevate can help you make the most of your holiday season, let’s talk!

holidays@elevatedigitalcommerce.com



* **Wow, there's a lot to do!**
That's where we can help.

Our Audits analyze more than 350 best practices in key areas across the site, which uncovers items that can have a critical impact on holiday revenue.

1 Identify Your Goals

Review your site analytics for last year's holiday season and identify your key traffic drivers as well as your key purchase path metrics. A great place to start is "Add to Cart" conversion rate, purchase conversion rate, average order size, and total sales during that time. Use this information as a benchmark to set your traffic and conversion KPIs for this year's holiday rush.

2 Identify Site Improvement Opportunities

Conduct a Site Audit

Use recent analytics as a guide and take a closer look at your site. Focus on the pages along your purchase path and identify potential usability issues and opportunities for improvement. You can also conduct usability testing with live users to help identify customer pain points. It's also important to examine your site's overall performance indicators such as page load times. Your site's performance can have a critical impact on your conversion rates, especially for mobile users.

Conduct a Search Log Audit

Take a look at what your customers are searching for and also what they are seeing as their results. Are there commonly searched terms that are yielding no results? Are common misspellings, alternate spellings, or synonyms properly linked? When we conduct a Search Log Audit, we typically look at the top 100–200 most-searched terms over the past 6 months.

3 Create a Holiday Landing Page Strategy

This should be done early for two reasons: 1. To allow time for A/B testing so that your landing pages are optimized for conversion *before* the holiday season. 2. To allow you to properly plan your marketing efforts to drive traffic to those landing pages.



*** Did you know?**

The average time to fully load a mobile landing page is 22 seconds.

BUT...

53% of people will leave the page if it takes longer than 3 seconds to load!

4 Launch Your Pre-Holiday Site Optimizations

We recommend that you prioritize site optimizations that address SEO, site navigation, site search, product list pages, product detail pages, and most importantly, site performance. It's key that your page load times are speedy for those browsing for awesome gift ideas. Make sure your site images are optimized and that you are minimizing the use of 3rd party scripts as much as possible – two of the biggest culprits behind slow load times.

This is also the perfect time to add user and system monitoring tools so that you can watch for issues during your peak holiday traffic periods.

5 Begin A/B Testing

A/B testing is a great way to validate site optimizations and also enhance your holiday landing pages. Make sure you begin your A/B tests early enough so they have time to run and collect data to give you a valid conclusion before your site's holiday code freeze

6 Finalize Your Holiday Marketing Plan

The earlier this is finished, the more time your team or partners have to create effective holiday messaging and creative executions. Remember to step back and look at your plan holistically, versus focusing on each component separately.

Your marketing plan should include a promotional or sale calendar, an email marketing plan, a paid search plan, a paid media plan, and a paid and owned social plan.



7 Launch Your Final Holiday Site Optimizations

All your A/B testing results should be implemented as well as all your final site optimizations, especially those addressing any friction areas within your gift card purchase flow, shopping cart, and checkout flow.

Now is also a good time to take a look at your customer service, shipping, and return policy site content to make sure it is accurate and easy to understand.

8 Prepare for High Traffic Surges

Better safe than sorry. Once your final site optimizations are implemented, make sure your team load-tests your site prior to any code freezes. There's nothing worse than the best planned marketing campaign bringing your systems to their knees under the weight of thousands of purchases per hour.

It's also beneficial for your development team to clean up log files and other unused files if they haven't already for optimal site performance. In addition, it's a good idea for your team to begin indexing at night instead of during peak traffic hours so there are no unnecessary drops in site performance for users.



Did you know?

In 2017, Cyber Monday hit a new record of \$6.59 billion in sales. This is more than Black Friday's \$5.03 billion, making it the largest U.S. online shopping day. Is your site ready for the highest revenue and traffic day of the year?

Don't Panic – There's Still Time!

Elevate can help you thrive this holiday season, so let's get started.

Email us at holidays@elevatedigitalcommerce.com to start a conversation.

Digital Commerce,
By Design.

elevate[®]

As a digital agency, we believe great design has the power to transform the world of commerce. We exist to help brands stand out and compete in today's experience-driven, customer-centric economy.

For more than 15 years, we've been entrusted by standard-setting brands such as Redken 5th Ave., Champion Sportswear, Hanes, Giorgio Armani Fragrances & Beauty, SOLO and Lancôme to create world-class ecommerce experiences.

Driven by design, we create customer-focused websites that pair world class user experience with flexible ecommerce platforms. Together, we advance your brand by delivering real results to establish a foundation for future innovation.

www.ElevateDigitalCommerce.com

328 S. Jefferson St., Fifth Floor
Chicago, Illinois 60661
(312) 932-1104