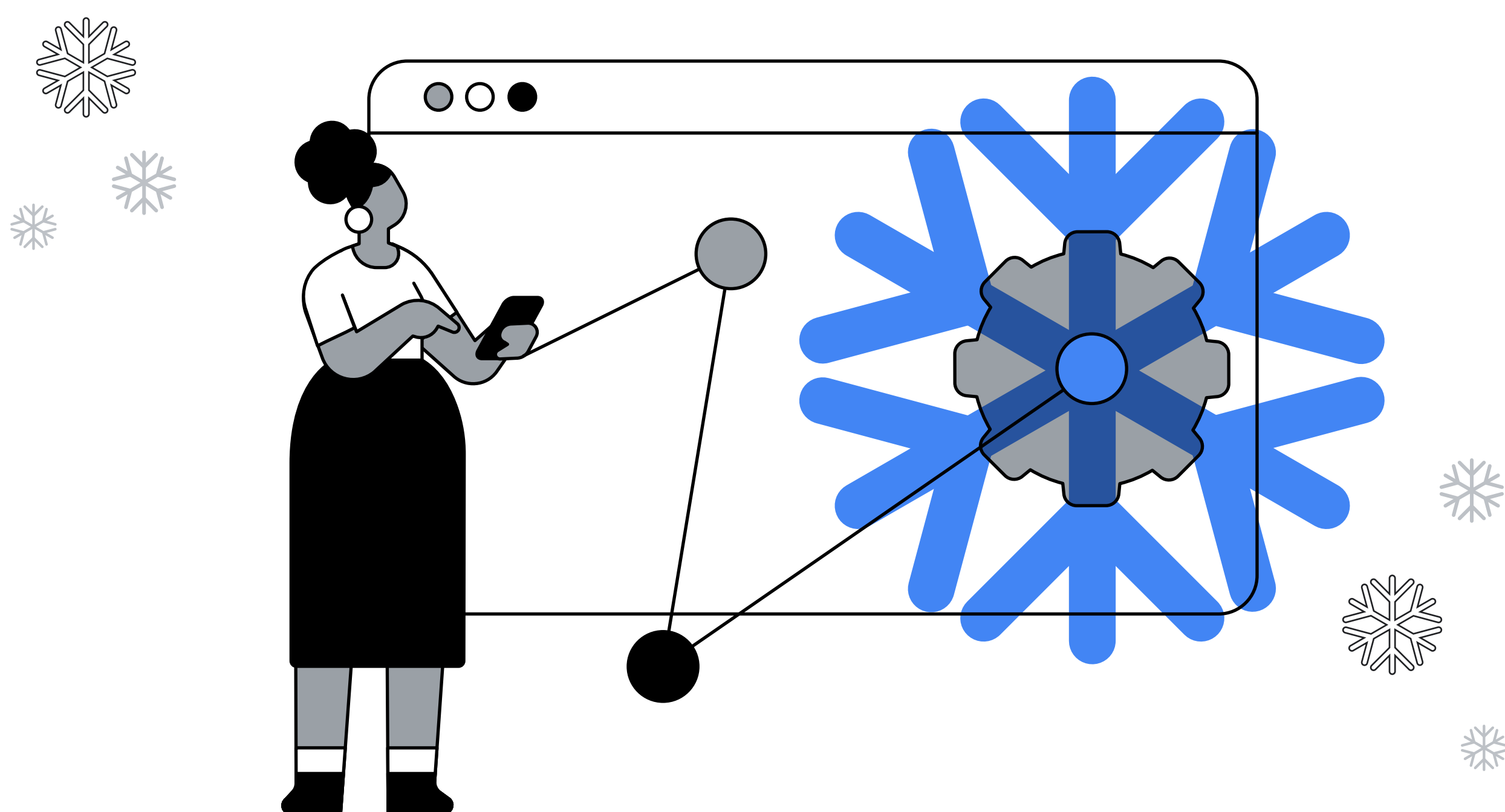


Shopping season 2020: Your marketing cheat sheet

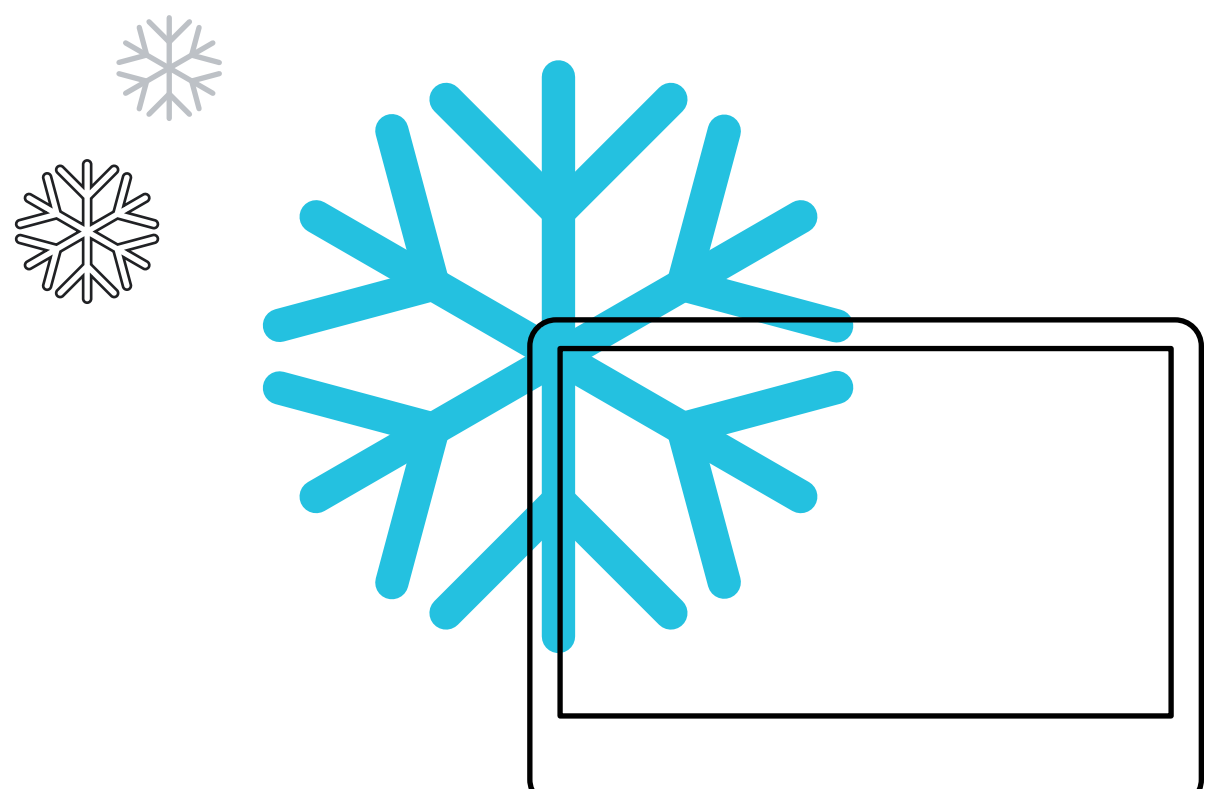


In a year of daily unexpected changes, planning ahead can seem impossible. But, to connect effectively with customers over the shopping season from Black Friday through to the new year sales, it's still essential.

To make things easier, we've examined the emerging trends and opportunities that every marketer should be aware of — from changing consumer behaviours to the new tools that will help you react quickly to shifting circumstances.

1 Make your strategy digital-first

According to research from the Office for National Statistics, online sales have accounted for over 30% of total retail sales since April this year.¹ Even when they're shopping in-store, consumers are looking online — 2019 shoppers searched prior to 86% of purchases in the 2019 holiday season.² And while there's a chance things could return to some sort of normality later in this year's season, research conducted by Euromonitor suggests that by 2024, 53% of retail revenue will go to retailers that have a digital offering as part of their business models.³



↗ **30%**
of total retail sales have
been accounted for online
since April 2020

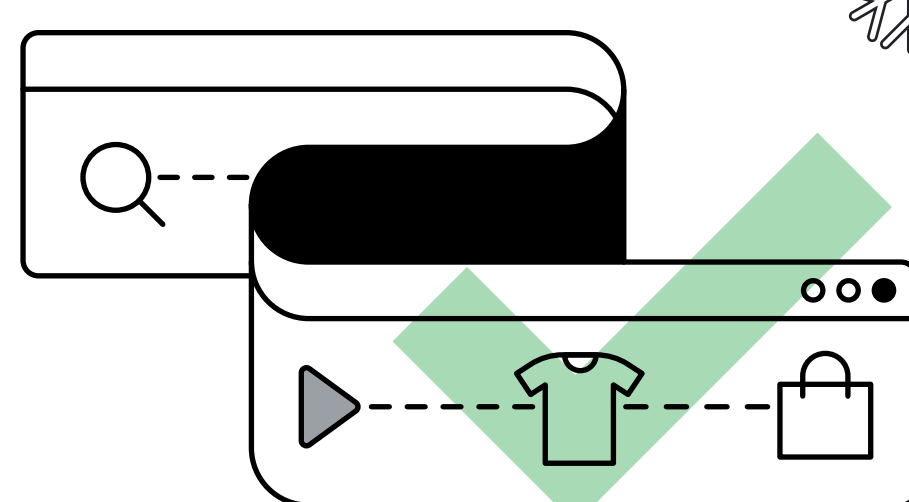
The takeaway: Improve your online customer experience

This should mean thinking online-first, but it isn't as simple as opening up a digital storefront. You should also consider making information more easily accessible across all browsers, devices and channels including inventory, promotions, opening times, and stock levels.

2 Reconsider your channel mix

Even before COVID-19, consumers were researching their purchases more than before, and using different channels to do it. Last Christmas shopping season, 79% of consumers used both YouTube and Search to research purchases.⁴ Apps were also key to the shopping experience — 55% of consumers reported using them,⁵ with 38% using retailer apps⁶ — and it's likely we'll see that trend continue, this year as downloads of apps from Google Play rose 30% from February to March.⁷

When the old rules no longer apply, the most risky thing is not trying anything new.

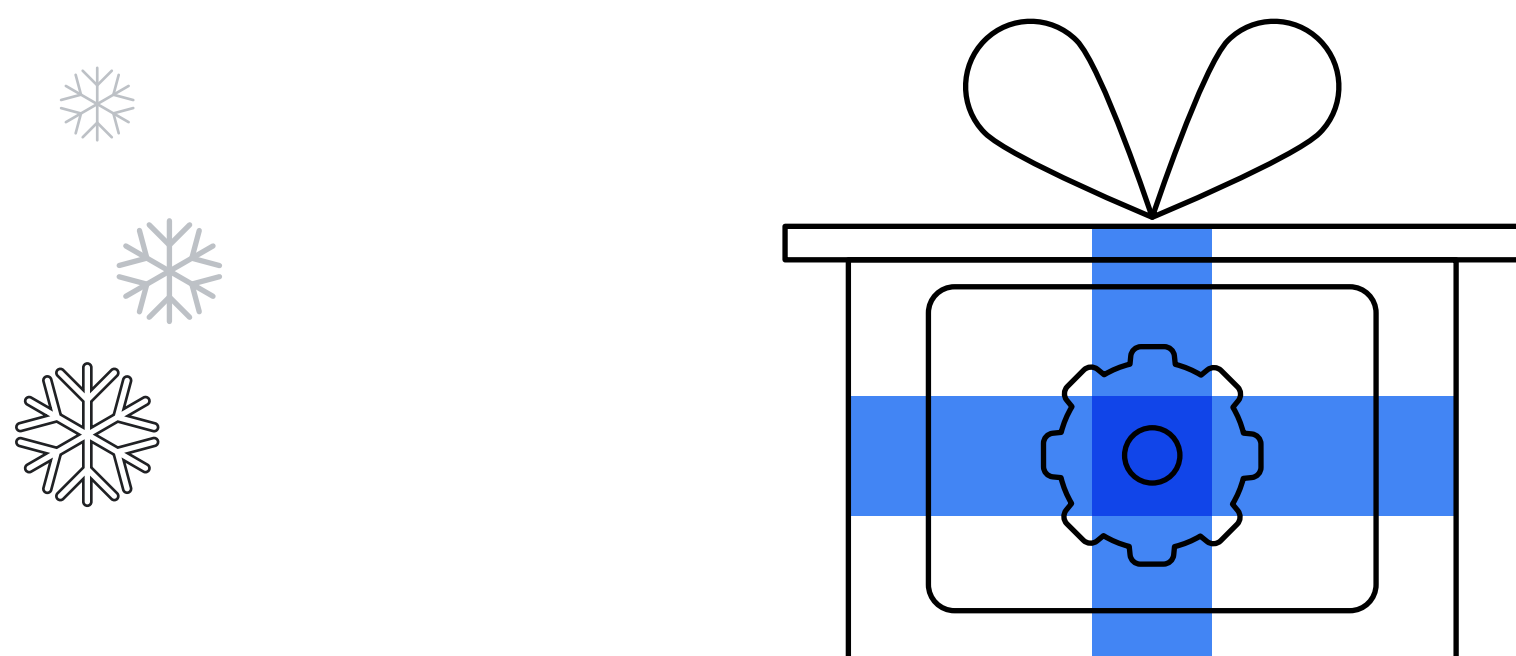


The takeaway: Ensure your video strategy reaches your whole audience

Use a blend of online video and TV in your advertising mix to reach wider audiences. Use YouTube's Find My Audience tool to help you understand who your most valuable customers are on YouTube — discover new audiences and learn how to reach them individually with relevant messages. Also, consider the role of an app that consumers regularly check throughout the Christmas shopping season, perhaps by introducing app-exclusive products or time-limited offers.

3 Use tools to turn signals into action

Demand has spiked unpredictably across a number of channels this year. Nobody could have predicted that at-home haircutting or DIY home decor would prove quite so popular back in January. And while these kinds of trends might be hard to foresee, taking steps now will ensure you're in a position to act on them fast as they emerge. Use Google's Rising Retail Categories tool to understand what people are searching for — the fast-rising retail categories in Google Search, the locations where they're growing, and the queries associated with them.



The takeaway: Get ready to react quickly

You could start by upgrading your team's skills with Google Digital Garage, a free resource to help everyone to get acquainted with the knowledge they need. And if you're ready for something more large-scale, talk to your Google partners about your digital maturity and data strategies, using artificial intelligence, automation and machine learning to improve your modelling.

Source list

1. Internet sales as a percentage of total retail sales, UK Office of National Statistics, 2019 - 2020
2. Google/Ipsos, Christmas Shopping Study, UK, Nov 2019 – Jan 2020, Online survey, n=3,151 Britons age 18+ who conducted Christmas shopping activities in past two days
3. Google/Euromonitor, Retail Foresight, DE/DK/ES/FR/IT/NL/PL/SE/UK/US, June 2020, n=9577
4. Google/Ipsos, Christmas Shopping Study, UK, Nov 2019 – Jan 2020, Online survey, n=3,151 Britons age 18+ who conducted Christmas shopping activities in past two days
5. Google/Ipsos, Christmas Shopping Study, UK, Nov 2019 – Jan 2020, Online survey, n=3,151 Britons age 18+ who conducted Christmas shopping activities in past two days
6. Google/Ipsos, Christmas Shopping Study, UK, Nov 2019 – Jan 2020, Online survey, n=3,151 Britons age 18+ who conducted Christmas shopping activities in past two days
7. Google Data, Global, Feb - Mar 2020