

# The ultimate seasonal calendar to help plan for the year ahead

Now more than ever, it's important for retailers to have a roadmap for the year ahead. The coronavirus pandemic has presented unique challenges to retailers – altering consumer expectations, habits, and purchasing behaviour dramatically.

From Valentine's Day, right up to the holiday season, this handy infographic uses the latest consumer trends, industry insights, and digital best practices to lay out the year's key seasonal moments. Utilise this calendar to guide your approach, prioritise your next steps, and create a marketing strategy that meets your evolving business needs.

## Valentine's Day

January

February

Valentine's Day

69% For the last three years 'same day delivery' searches spiked during Valentine's week, with a 69% week-over-week rise in 2019.<sup>2</sup>

17% Shopping queries for 'Valentine's' have grown 17% YoY from 2019 to 2020, and start as early as the first week in January.<sup>3</sup>

## Valentine's Day

Valentine's Day has become one of the biggest opportunities of the year for digital retailers, with queries like 'same day delivery' and 'romantic dinner showing massive growth.

**Types of retailers**  
Gift and greetings, florists, fashion and apparel, as well as personalisation services.

**Consumer insight**  
Searches for 'romantic dinner at home' were up 121% on 2019, as consumers looked to have a special meal while staying at home.<sup>1</sup>

**Audiences**  
Reach (new) customers who are celebrating Valentine's Day and are actively shopping during this moment, which you can do through in-market audiences. This covers gifts and occasions categories – from flowers and chocolates to jewellery.

## Mother's Day

Online shopping makes it easy to find a truly unique gift for Mother's Day. Make sure you're up-to-date with the search terms that customers are using to find one-of-a-kind gifts.

**Types of retailers**  
Home and garden, gift and greeting, florists, and fashion and apparel.

**Consumer insight**  
The current situation has moved many consumers to digital communications as well as online shopping, with 26% of consumers saying their use of video chat and conferencing has increased since the coronavirus outbreak.<sup>4</sup> Ensure your site is optimised for a positive e-commerce experience.

**Audiences**  
Be sure to cover a range of in-market audience categories to promote your products to shoppers who are looking to buy, such as through Mother's Day shopping, flowers, and greeting cards categories. Combine this with remarketing to re-engage with customers who are likely to convert.

## Mother's Day

March

Mother's Day

92% In 2019, queries in the U.K. for 'home bargains Mother's Day gifts' reached an all-time high, up 92% on the previous year.<sup>5</sup>

56% Shopping queries for 'unique Mother's Day gifts' have increased 56% year-on-year, and begin as early as the second week in January.<sup>6</sup>

## Easter Holiday

April

Easter

76% In 2020, U.K. searches for treats such as 'chocolate' grew by 76%, as many turned to comfort eating during the event.<sup>7</sup>

102% Searches for 'Easter garden ideas' were also up, showing a 102% increase between 2018 and 2019.<sup>8</sup>

## Easter Holiday

Easter is a time for catching up with friends and family, and sprucing up homes and gardens. Search queries reflect this, with table decor, recipes, and gifts making it a magical time.

**Types of retailers**  
Food and grocery, home furnishing, home and garden, and fashion and apparel.

**Consumer insight**  
In April 2020, searches for 'groceries delivery slots' grew globally by over 300% in the first week of the month.<sup>7</sup> As consumers are actively looking for ways to celebrate special moments from home this year, be transparent by providing clear and specific information about how and where they can get what they need.

**Audiences**  
Some of the most receptive audiences during Easter include those who enjoy celebrations with family, home decor enthusiasts, cooking enthusiasts, and foodies.

## Father's Day

From barbecues to clothing, gift searches for dads are wide-ranging. Dads can be tough to buy for, so maybe think outside the box.

**Types of retailers**  
Gift and greetings, fashion and apparel, home and garden, and consumer electronics.

**Consumer insight**  
With an increasing amount of time spent at home, consumers are turning to YouTube to learn new skills. Global watch time of how-to videos that include 'for beginners' or 'step by step' in the title saw a 65% increase in watch time year-on-year.<sup>9</sup> Consider creating video content to re-engage with consumers and showcase your products in action as they look for new ways to entertain themselves.

**Audiences**  
Information on consumer interests helps you to expand your advertising into relevant markets. For moments like Father's Day, which are family-centric, utilise affinity categories such as family-focused or lifestyle and hobbies to reach those who are likely interested in your products.

## Father's Day

June

Father's Day

Shopping queries for 'Father's Day' have grown 76% YoY from 2019 to 2020.<sup>11</sup>

Since 2017, there has been a 400% increase in searches for 'clothing gifts' for Father's Day in the U.K. and Ireland.<sup>12</sup>

## Summer Sales

July

Summer Sales

83% Searches for 'garden plants for sale' also peaked in April, up 83% from the same week in 2019.<sup>14</sup>

64% Searches for 'sale' increase during the warmer months. In 2019, 'ladies backpack sale' increased 296%, while 'men's designer wallets sale' were also up 64% on 2018 figures.<sup>15</sup>

## Summer Sales

We're making the most of our gardens more than ever now, so searches for keeping the garden glorious are at a high. Sales are up too, with many shoppers seeking bargains online.

**Types of retailers**  
Home and garden, fashion and apparel, and sporting goods.

**Consumer insight**  
People accept that holidaying abroad will probably not be a viable option this summer, instead they're looking for ways to enjoy summer from home. In the first week of April 2020, searches for 'garden furniture' were at their highest since 2018, up 38% on the previous year.<sup>13</sup> Stay up-to-date with the latest Google Search trends as consumers look to entertain themselves this summer.

**Audiences**  
For summer sales, use a mix of audience strategies, from activating key audiences such as bargain hunters, to those searching for the trending categories at this time of year. This includes home and garden, outdoor items, sports and fitness, and outdoor recreational equipment.

## Back to school

Getting back to school is a busy time for kids and parents alike, with new books, clothes, stationery, and technology high on most shoppers' lists.

**Types of retailers**  
Consumer electronics, fashion and apparel, stationery, and educational services.

**Consumer insight**  
It's still unclear how schools will operate in the near future. In March 2020, the volume of 'home learning' queries had doubled compared to the beginning of the year, and increased by 100% before May<sup>16</sup>. It's important to be flexible and anticipate a change in back-to-school shopping habits this year.

**Audiences**  
Back to school is one of the busiest retail moments of the year. Connect with those actively shopping for back to school items through in-market categories like computer and hardware, as well as apparel and accessories. Use detailed demographics to engage with key audiences such as parents, teachers, and students.

## Back to school

September

Back to school

90% In 2019, U.K. searches for 'back-to-school items' increased by 90% compared to 2018's figures, with searches starting as early as the second week in August.<sup>17</sup>

134% In 2019, queries for 'boys school shoes sale' increased by 134% compared to the previous year.<sup>18</sup>

## Single's Day

November

Single's Day

Last year, the typical discount on Singles' Day ranged from 20% to 40%, and products were distinctive because of new packaging.<sup>22</sup>

In 2019, sales from livestreaming accounted for \$3 billion and is predicted to contribute to at least \$70bn in gross merchandise value between 2019 and 2021. Live videos were particularly successful for beauty brands, driving 16% of category sales in 2019.<sup>23</sup>

## Single's Day

Singles' Day is an increasingly significant moment around the world. This 24-hour shopping extravaganza originated in China as a way for single people to indulge and buy themselves gifts at a reduced price. In 2019, Alibaba's Singles' Day sales surpassed \$38 billion in just 24 hours.<sup>19</sup>

**Types of retailers**  
Fashion and apparel, beauty, and home and garden.

**Consumer insight**  
In the U.K., staying home has led to a 35% increase in online streaming, and a 27% increase in video chat and video conferencing.<sup>24</sup> With more than 90% of Singles' Day purchases made on mobile devices, ensure your campaigns are optimised for mobile and promoted across social media.<sup>21</sup>

**Audiences**  
To align with relevant themes like 'self-care' and 'treating yourself,' focus on in-market categories where these consumers will feature, such as shoppers and luxury shoppers.

## Black Friday

Black Friday is a great opportunity to build brand awareness in the months before the peak holiday season, while also testing new tactics and growth opportunities. Get an early start, and set your campaigns up for success this holiday season.

**Types of retailers**  
Consumer electronics, fashion and apparel, and educational services.

**Consumer insight**  
In 2019, searches for 'Black Friday laptop deals UK' were up 139% compared to 2018. Similarly, 'Black Friday TV deals UK' increased by 115% and 'smart watch' Black Friday' by 197%.<sup>24</sup>

**Audiences**  
Combine multiple audience strategies to make the most of Black Friday. Reach certain demographics like technology enthusiasts and bargain hunters, while also creating a remarketing list of previous visitors, and optimise your shopping bids to re-engage your most valuable customers.

## Black Friday

November

Black Friday

31% Last year, U.K. shopping searches on Black Friday grew 31% on 2019 figures, and marks the peak of search interest for retail over the holiday season.<sup>25</sup>

51% The importance of the days around Black Friday have also grown as 51% of shoppers seek to spread out purchases over multiple days, including the week before Black Friday.<sup>26</sup>

## Holiday Season

December

Christmas

18% In 2019, U.K. queries for 'next-day delivery' during the week of Christmas grew 18% since 2018, and started rising two weeks before the actual holiday.<sup>29</sup>

49% 55% of U.K. consumers use shopping apps to aid their Christmas shopping, and downloading is common especially late in the season with downloads peaking at 49% post-Christmas.<sup>29</sup>

## Holiday Season

The Christmas holiday period is the busiest time of the year for most retailers. The majority of spending takes place either side of Christmas Day, as people buy gifts for loved ones and then take advantage of the post-Christmas sales. Any long-term changes in this behaviour are hard to predict, but the move to digital is assured.

**Types of retailers**  
Fashion and apparel, toys and games, and beauty.

**Consumer insight**  
Last year, 50% of British Christmas shoppers bought from new retailers and 73% said they were open to purchasing from retailers they haven't bought from before.<sup>27</sup> Given the shift to online we have witnessed this year, be prepared for online purchases to grow even further this holiday season.

**Audiences**  
Apply seasonal event audience strategies to reach those in key categories such as gift and occasion, holiday and seasonal, and after-Christmas sales.

## Source list

1. Google Trends Data, United Kingdom, 2019
2. Google Trends Data, United Kingdom, 2019 vs 2020
3. Google Trends Data, United Kingdom, 2019
4. McKinsey & Company COVID-19 United Kingdom Consumer Pulse Survey 4/30–5/3/2020, n = 1,003, sampled and weighted to match the U.K.'s general population 18+ years +39 +37 +34 +33 +30 +26 +25 +14 -1 -18 -25
5. Google Trends Data, United Kingdom, 2019
6. Google Trends Data, United Kingdom, 2019
7. Google Data, Global English, April 4 to the week of April 11, 2020, vs. March 29, 2020–April 4, 2020
8. Google Trends Data, United Kingdom, 2019
9. Google Trends Data, United Kingdom, 2019
10. Global YouTube Data, year on year 3/1/20 - 3/31/20 compared to 3/1/19 - 3/31/19
11. Google Trends Data, United Kingdom, 2019 vs 2020
12. Google Trends Data, United Kingdom, 2017 - 2020
13. Google Internal Data, United Kingdom 2018-2020
14. Google Internal Data, United Kingdom 2019 - 2020
15. Google Internal Data, United Kingdom, 2019
16. Google Trends Data, United Kingdom, Jan 2020 - May 2020
17. Google Trends Data, United Kingdom, 2019
18. Google Internal Data, United Kingdom, 2018 vs 2019
19. McKinsey China Digital Consumer Trends 2019
20. McKinsey & Company COVID-19 U.K. Consumer Pulse Survey 4/16–4/19/2020, n = 998, sampled and weighted to match U.K.'s general population 18+ years
21. McKinsey & Company 2018
22. McKinsey China Digital Consumer Trends 2019
23. McKinsey China Digital Consumer Trends 2019
24. Google Internal Data, United Kingdom 2018 vs. 2019
25. Google Internal Data, United Kingdom 2018 vs. 2019
26. Smart Shopper Research Kantar/Google 2019
27. Google/ Ipsos, Christmas Shopping Study, Nov 2019 – Jan 2020, Online survey, Britons 18+ who conducted Christmas shopping activities in past two days (n=3,151)
28. Google Trends Data, United Kingdom, 2019
29. Google/ Ipsos, Christmas Shopping Study, Nov 2019 – Jan 2020, Online survey, Britons 18+ who conducted Christmas shopping activities in past two days (n=3,151)