

Think with Google

Holiday Readiness Guide

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Every shopper is available this season – even your own. The most successful retailers win by offering consumers frictionless, personalized experiences at all moments of the customer journey, not just peak shopping days.



Last holiday season,

1 in 4

Canadian shoppers say they shopped more online than they did in previous seasons, and a similar amount have said they made fewer shopping trips.²



With our insights on holiday trends and best practices, you can succeed this season by starting earlier, being helpful, connecting online to offline, and keeping the lights on.

² Google/Ipsos, Omnichannel Holiday Study, Nov. 2017–Jan. 2018, Canada, Holiday shoppers 18+ who shopped in previous 48 hours n=2711.



Start earlier.

September



26% of Canadian shoppers get most of their shopping done early in the season.³



Google is the first place Canadian shoppers go to research a purchase they plan to make in store or online.⁴

³ Google/Ipsos, Omnichannel Holiday Study, Nov. 2017–Jan. 2018, Canada, Holiday Shoppers n=703 Early Birds, n=351 Deal Seekers, n=1048 Shop Throughout, n=609 Last Minute.

⁴ Google/Ipsos, "Shopping Tracker," April–June 2018, Online survey, Canada, n=2735 adults 18+ who shopped in the past two days.

Tune in to when your customers are actually shopping. Advertise ahead of peak holiday moments to capture early consumer demand and maximize profitability.



Get ahead of holiday traffic.

Use historical data around search traffic spikes to inform your marketing plan. Then, choose the best channels to reach customers.



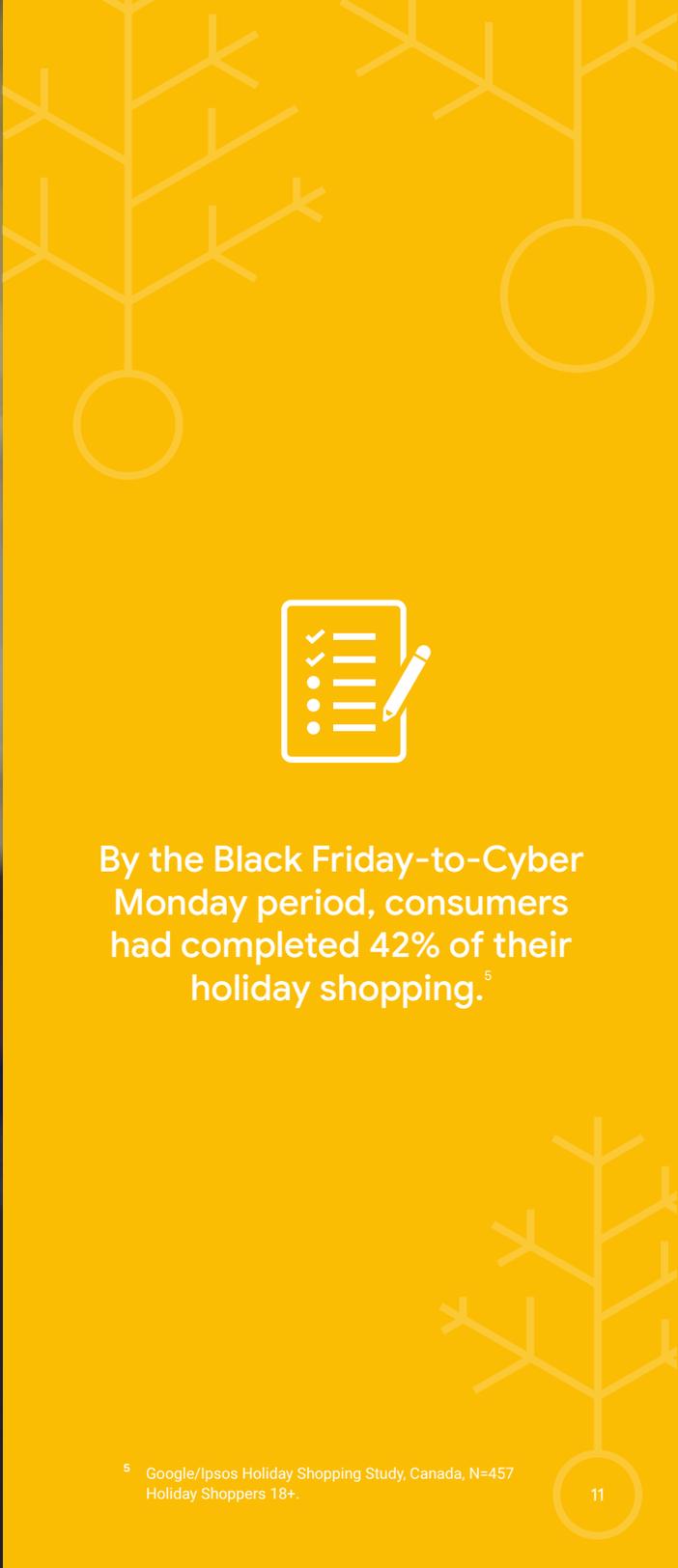
Put top performers front and centre.

Set up attribution and tracking to see how recent customers moved through your digital channels and understand what's working best this season.



Solidify a bidding strategy before early shoppers get started.

Look at past conversion rates to set benchmarks for this holiday season, then map bids to the sales calendar to know when to bid aggressively. You can also take the heavy lifting out of setting bids by leveraging automated bidding.



By the Black Friday-to-Cyber Monday period, consumers had completed 42% of their holiday shopping.⁵

⁵ Google/Ipsos Holiday Shopping Study, Canada, N=457 Holiday Shoppers 18+.

Be helpful.

October



When a company's mobile site or app doesn't satisfy their needs (for example: they can't find information, or the site is too slow), 32% of smartphone users will immediately go to another company's mobile site or app.⁶



Last holiday season, 54% of Canadian shopping occasions that involved a smartphone search resulted in a purchase.⁷

⁶ Google/Ipsos Connect, Jan. 2018, Playbook Omnibus 2018, n=1,521 Canada online smartphone users, A18+.

⁷ Google/Ipsos, Omnichannel Holiday Study, Nov. 2017–Jan. 2018, Canada, Holiday shoppers 13+ who shopped in previous 48 hours n=1314 shopping occasions that involved a smartphone search.

Consumers are using digital to decide where to shop and are leaning into mobile, especially for spontaneous purchases. A frictionless experience helps you stand out from the competition and reduces drop-off.



Double down on mobile shopping.

Reduce your mobile load time using tips from [Speed Scorecard](#). Create a positive shopping experience by using autofill forms, avoiding interstitials, and placing the product's price and "Add to cart" button above the fold.



Use video to educate and engage.

Upload videos of store tours, product demos, and seasonal gift recommendations to engage shoppers. On YouTube, use TrueView for Action to drive your consumers to buy or call while they watch.



In the past year,
40% of YouTube users
turned to the platform
to learn more about a
product before they
bought it.⁸

⁸ Google/Ipsos Connect, May 2017. A total of 4,917 U.S. respondents age 18–54 completed a device-agnostic survey. The study was fielded between April 27, 2017 and May 5, 2017.



Connect online to offline.

November



65% of Canadian holiday shoppers
turned to online search prior
to going in-store.⁹



43% of holiday shoppers wish
retailers would do a better job of
sharing inventory information.¹⁰

⁹ Google/Ipsos, Omnichannel Holiday Study, Nov. 2017–Jan. 2018, Canada, Holiday Shoppers who visited a store in the past 48 hours n=543.

¹⁰ Google/ Ipsos, Omnichannel Holiday Study, Nov. 2017–Jan. 2018, Canada, Holiday shoppers 18+ who shopped in previous 48 hours n=2711.

When consumers don't know where to find what they need, they turn to search. Bridge your online and offline strategy to drive foot traffic.



Keep your product prices and availability fresh.

Shoppers will leave your store if they don't see expected prices and availability. Set up automated feed delivery to make frequent updates to fluctuating holiday prices and availability.



Let shoppers know you have what they want nearby.

Update local inventory ads to enable location extensions, then bid by proximity of shoppers to your stores.



75%

75% of consumers expect retailers to have product availability information before visiting a store.¹¹

¹¹ Capgemini, Making the Digital Connection: Why Physical Retail Stores Need a Reboot (January, 2017) as quoted in eMarketer.

Keep the lights on.

December



In Canada, searches for “gifts” are higher in the week before Christmas than the week of Cyber Monday.¹²



As of the week of December 21st, 30% of Canadian shoppers said they still had some shopping to do.¹³

¹² Google Data, Canada, Nov. –Dec. 2016.

¹³ Google/Ipsos, Omnichannel Holiday Study, Nov. 2017–Jan. 2018, Canada, Holiday shoppers 18+ who shopped in previous 48 hours n=662 surveyed between Dec. 21–31.

Don't miss out on valuable traffic. Before the holidays, engage last-minute shoppers and deal-hunters looking for post-Christmas sales. Reach customers with new promotions and re-engage interested consumers who haven't completed their purchases.



Don't go dark in the last week of December.

Holiday traffic can be unpredictable. Monitor your account to ensure that you're there for your customers throughout the last week of December, and even into the post-holiday season.



Expand coverage of last-minute holiday searches and sales.

More products in the auction means more impressions and greater visibility. Check that you're advertising on all seasonally relevant keywords and products.



Remarket to your most valuable customers.

Over the holiday period, 39% of Canadian shoppers expect to be able to pick up where they left when they return to a retailer site if they didn't make a purchase.¹⁴

Drive additional post-holiday traffic and re-engage interested shoppers using remarketing lists and customer match.

¹⁴ Google/Ipsos, "Shopping Tracker", October–December 2017, Online survey, Canada, n=3,281 shoppers who return to a retailer site.



Searches for “store hours” in Canada peak on Christmas Eve, the highest day of the year followed by Boxing Day.¹⁵

Create the best customer experience.

- ✓ Develop and align your email marketing calendar with your advertising campaigns.
- ✓ Create a seamless payment experience for the customer.
- ✓ Ensure shipping is easy for the customer — and for your business.
- ✓ If driving in-store actions, keep your back office running smoothly with an inventory management system.
- ✓ Use our e-commerce integration with shopping partners to launch your store quickly and manage your campaigns from a single interface.
- ✓ Establish a crisis-response plan and determine who's available to troubleshoot suspension warnings, lower conversion rates, and other key notifications.



Think with Google

These are just a few of the ways your customers can have a helpful experience from their first moment of intent through their final purchase.

See more holiday insights and subscribe to the Think with Google newsletter at

 thinkwithgoogle.ca

Key dates (2018–2019)



Start earlier

Advertise ahead of peak holiday moments to capture early consumer demand.



Be helpful

Ensure your mobile experience is frictionless to stand out from the competition.



Connect online to offline

Black Friday

Focus online ads on driving in-store traffic — 65% of Canadian holiday shoppers turned to online search prior to going in-store.¹⁶

Cyber Monday



Keep the lights on

Two-day shipping cutoff

Christmas Day

Holiday shopping doesn't end on the 25th — as of the week of December 21st, 30% of Canadian shoppers said they still had some shopping to do.¹⁷

	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
OCT		1	2	3	4	5	6
	7	8 Thanksgiving	9	10	11	12	13
	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
	28	29	30	31			
NOV					1	2	3
	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
	18	19	20	21	22	23 Black Friday	24 Small Business Saturday
	25	26 Cyber Monday	27	28	29	30	
DEC							1
	2 Hanukkah begins	3	4	5	6	7	8
	9	10 Green Monday	11	12	13	14	15
	16	17	18	19	20	21	22 2-day shipping cutoff
	23	24 Christmas Eve	25 Christmas Day	26 Boxing Day	27	28	29
	30	31 New Year's Eve					
JAN			1 New Year's Day	2	3	4	5

¹⁶ Google/Ipsos, Omnichannel Holiday Study, Nov. 2017–Jan. 2018, Canada, Holiday Shoppers who visited a store in the past 48 hours n=543.

¹⁷ Google/Ipsos, Omnichannel Holiday Study, Nov. 2017–Jan. 2018, Canada, Holiday shoppers 18+ who shopped in previous 48 hours n=662 surveyed between Dec. 21–31.