

8 strategies for brand success on Black Friday

By [Helga Ndawula and Cassidy Lassen](#)

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Amidst soaring interest rates and persistent inflation, South African consumers are tightening their purse strings, focusing primarily on essential spending. To succeed on Black Friday 2023, brands must adopt data-driven approaches and provide substantial discounts.



Source: www.unsplash.com

Digital marketing specialist, Incubeta, shares eight tips that will help brands deliver a successful Black Friday, and lay the groundwork for a profitable Festive Season too.

1. Data is key

Data offers the best insights and brands should be tapping into all available data from previous Black Friday sales to see what worked and what didn't when it comes to elements such as subject lines, the type of discounts, ad copy, and creative. The migration from Google's Universal Analytics to GA4 in July may have caught some smaller brands off guard, but there is still time to work with specialists to analyse what historical data is available - but they will have to move fast. Fortunately any work done now will also stand companies in good stead for their festive strategies and is a worthwhile investment.

2. Checkout choice is a must

Having a buy now, pay later (BNPL) payment option will allow cash-strapped consumers who are hoping to make big-ticket purchases the opportunity to pay them off. In fact, it makes good sense to have as many payment options as possible to allow for freedom of choice. Having options like in-store pickup could also score you points with customers, and when it comes to choice at the checkout, offering guest checkout is also a great option. Some data collection opportunities may be lost, but too much friction at your checkout could cost you the sale and adds the chance of churn at the moment it counts the most.

3. Don't underestimate your customer

South Africans love a good deal. We have also become masters at gamifying loyalty programmes and this shopping savvy stands local consumers in excellent stead to get the most out of their Black Friday shopping experience. Retailers must avoid trying to pull the wool over shoppers' eyes. Too many brands have been caught out simply throwing their regular

marked-down products into the Black Friday basket and passing them off as holiday specials.



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In previous years consumers have been vicious in their online response to underhanded tactics and the media have been happy to name and shame. The risk to brand reputation is not worth the potential upside and companies should offer meaningful discounts without any pricing subterfuge.

4. Black Friday is not just for B2C companies

Marketing your B2B services or products to another company benefits from the same strategies used by consumer brands. Make your B2B Black Friday offering worthwhile, develop good content to grab attention, and make sure you can deliver on your promises. Whether it's physically delivering the product within the promised timeframe, or ensuring you have the capacity to deliver the service without keeping your business clients waiting, don't risk over-promising and under-delivering.

5. Plan ahead

Having a solid plan for Black Friday is essential. Choosing which products to promote is just the first step. Leaning into the data and trends from previous years will give brands a valuable starting point.

Ensuring you have your creative signed off and ready to go is crucial. Give yourself enough runway for the inevitable changes, approval turnaround times, and campaign build times. It's important to work closely with your agencies, with clearly defined roles and responsibilities, confirmed budget and run dates as well as campaign objectives agreed on well ahead of time. Keep a watchful eye on performance throughout the campaign to ensure you are on track to reach the targets you have set out to achieve. Being well prepared from the outset will stand you in good stead during the chaotic sale days.

6. Red flags

Logistics will continue to be a challenge for retail holidays and brands must factor in delays. The key is to keep your customers informed and manage their expectations. If a product can't be delivered in the usual timeframe, make sure you have flagged the issue on the product page. South African consumers are generally forgiving, but only if we know there is an issue. Setting expectations and then failing to deliver on them will damage your brand and you could lose a loyal customer for the sake of a one-time sale. Similarly, if a product sells out, make sure your team removes them from your website immediately.

7. Watch out for fraud

Wherever there is an opportunity to make money, you will find people trying to take advantage. Many Black Friday sales have limited stock or have time restrictions on deals, so people are laser-focused on getting that extra special offer - often to the exclusion of all else. This gives bad actors the perfect opportunity to take advantage. While of course, consumers are ultimately responsible, it's also vital that brands stay on top of any scam websites masquerading as legitimate ones and act to have them taken down. However unfair, the negative sentiment will stick with the legitimate brand.

8. Play the long game

For many companies, the retail holidays can make up a sizable portion of their annual sales. But Black Friday is more than just a sales opportunity. It's a great chance to expose your brand to new customers. It's also a chance to gather valuable

information on customers who don't make a purchase but have shown interest in your company.

Putting in a bit of effort ahead of time can help you boost your first-party data. Using your Black Friday data allows you to segment your lists by customer interests, purchase history, and other factors to ensure great targeted and retargeted email campaigns for the Festive season and well into 2024. It's also essential to work with your marketing team to make sure you have used every opportunity across all your channels.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Helga Ndawula is a paid media manager, social & display and Cassidy Lassen is a senior search Media manager at Incubeta.

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