

Title:

Must-Do's For The Holiday Selling Season - How To Cash In On The Busiest Retail Season Of The Year

Word Count:

544

Summary:

The holidays are a great time to be a retailer—60% of all retail sales are made during the holiday season. Millions of new online shoppers make their first internet purchases during this season, and their experience there can either erase their hesitations about online shopping, or reinforce them. This gives you, as an eBiz owner, an opportunity to create loyal customers and generate repeat business.

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Keywords:**Article Body:**

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That's why you need to be ready when the holidays roll around—don't get taken by surprise. Most people think the shopping season starts right after Thanksgiving. But Lisa Suttora of <http://WhatDoISell.com> says, "Holiday shoppers actually come online right about mid-August, when back-to-school-shopping tapers off, and they stay online until the end of January [when] they've spent all the extra holiday money." The best way for you to cash in on the holiday buying season is to be prepared well in advance.

How to Prepare for the Holiday Season:

1. Get your inventory listed early. You don't want to spend the holidays playing catch-up, so have your goods ready to go.

- Take stock of your inventory. Get it organized, and determine what needs to be

listed.

- Systematize your operation. Don't try to go through the entire listing process with each individual item. First, photograph all your items. Then upload and edit all your photos. Then write all your listings, and compile all your descriptions. By streamlining your processes this way, you'll save a great deal of time.

2. Have a shipping game plan. The number one concern of holiday buyers is whether their purchases will make it on time, so timely shipping is crucial.

- Stock up on shipping materials prior to the holiday selling season. You can even order your shipping supplies online at <http://USPS.com>.

- Prepackage your products, whenever possible. This way you can just print a label off and be ready to go.

- You can, in most cases, arrange to have the post office pick up your packages at no charge, rather than standing in line for hours.

3. Customize according to your buyers' needs.

- Offer gift wrapping and gift-recipient delivery. Customers value their time, especially around the holidays, and they'll pay extra for the service and convenience.

- Provide them with multiple shipping options. By offering overnight and express delivery, you can make sales all the way to December 24 that your competitors who only offer priority mail will miss.

- Create unique gift packages. For example, put a Curious George stuffed toy with a Curious George book and movie and wrap them together in Curious George paper. Says Suttora, "What you're doing is... pre-shopping for your customers."

Customer Service is King

If your customers have a good holiday experience with you, they'll most likely come again. Be in constant communication with them—you're letting them know you're on top of things. Always let them know their tracking numbers and order status. Respond immediately to their emails—not 24 hours later. When the sale is over, send them a thank you note—you're reminding them you're there and giving yourself a chance to promote your new products. Follow up on your sales—by building consumer confidence, you'll produce repeat business throughout the rest

of the year.