

How to get your brand ahead this Black Friday

Issued by [TDMC](#)

21 Nov 2022

Black Friday is an international sales beast that is gaining marked traction in the South African retail landscape. Savvy online buyers and sellers alike have got plenty to gain around this sales period...



Caleb Shepard, media director at leading e-commerce agency TDMC, shares 10 insider wisdoms on how to maximise your efficiency and brand position in the run up to the biggest sales day(s) of the year:

1. Spread it out

Black Friday has evolved from a big discount day or weekend to a month-long event with smaller discounts offered across more categories. Of course, you will still get your deep discounts which are useful for getting people into your shop, but it's a good time to leverage off the fact that people are hungry for deals.

2. Prioritise these three things

- Build your first party data. Owning first party data is key to long term success and sustainability.
- Make sure your logistics processes are streamlined and geared for the extra traffic – and hire casual staff if necessary.
- Check that your payment gateways are in order.

3. Effective marketing material is key for Black Friday success

Banner Blindness is real and one key visual for a variety of offerings is dangerous – you need to ensure you have enough creative options in your marketing suite so that the right audiences see the right messaging at the right time.

4. Think carefully about offering loss leader sales too often

We believe this can hurt a brand. If you are a brand that rarely discounts, brand loyal customers will flock to a generous

seasonal sale (and remember to reward subscribers with insider deals). Consumers are increasingly savvy, so if you are offering something someone else is, know that consumers are price checking.

5. The fundamentals of the sales funnel need to be strong over this period

Introduce the brand, tell your story, showcase product with price, and incentivise the customer to buy.

6. In tough economic times, 10% does not constitute a deal

Be wary of alienating potentially loyal customers with comparatively insignificant savings.

7. Complete a BBF (before Black Friday) checklist

- Check your site speed - Shopify (which is the platform we recommend to our online retailers) has a built-in Content Delivery Network which ensures sites are always performing optimally.
- Implement an abandoned cart SMS integration.
- Offer more payment options to customers – services like www.PayJustNow.com are an excellent way to reach would-be brand loyalists.
- Communicate stock availability, shipping times and shipping costs up front

8. Your after-sales process is as important as the sales funnel

This is your chance to impress your customer with excellent communication that keeps them informed every step of the journey from picking and packing to shipping and delivery. Once delivered, keep the relationship going with post purchase survey requests. If you begin the new customer welcome journey properly now, you're in a good position to further the relationship.

9. Increase your ad spend

We recommend that our clients allocate 25-30% more spend to their digital media advertising during this time due to rising cost per clicks (CPC's).

10. If Black Friday doesn't resonate with your brand journey, own it

We work with brands who shut shop on Black Friday and take their staff into the outdoors, while another of our clients has opted for Green Friday, where they help their customers make conscious decisions that are good for both their wallets and the planet. Black Friday is not for everybody and while many brands will opt to discount stock, you may prefer not to.

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