



Holiday Marketing Quickstarter

Inspiration for a Successful Season

The holiday season is full of opportunities for small businesses to promote themselves.

Soon, people will begin planning their holiday purchases in hopes they'll find the best products and offerings to meet their needs.

We've created a guide with everything you need to launch a full-scale, holiday marketing campaign. It's designed to be used however it best fits your needs: read from the beginning or jump into whatever sections apply to you and your business.

Whether you're a seasoned professional-looking for inspiration or a marketing novice just getting started, this guide is chock-full of resources to get your holiday campaign up and running quickly. We'll show you how to leverage your website, social media, email, SMS, events, and more to deliver an engaging digital holiday marketing strategy.

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When it comes to creating a successful marketing campaign, proper planning can be all you need to transform a good campaign into a great one.

We've compiled a list of notable dates this holiday season to help you get started!

November

November 6 - Daylight Savings
Time ends at 2:00 am

November 11 - Veterans Day

November 24 - Thanksgiving

November 25 - Black Friday

November 26 - Small Business
Saturday

November 27 - Artists Sunday

November 28 - Cyber Monday

November 29 - Giving Tuesday

November Themes:

"Movember", Height of the Holiday
preparations and shopping

December

December 18 - Hanukkah begins

December 21 - Winter Solstice
(shortest day of the year)

December 24 - Christmas Eve

December 25 - Christmas Day

December 26 - Hanukkah ends

December 26 - Boxing Day

December 26 - Kwanzaa begins

December 31 - New Year's Eve

December Themes:

End-of-year fundraising, Height of
the Holiday season

Launching fun contests or campaigns? Using the holiday to build your prospect list? Selling an all-star product that's sure to shine during the season? Point customers to where they need to go with well-thought-out landing pages.

Not sure where to start? Here are some of the most common types of landing pages to drive engagement and build your contact lists:

- Communications opt-in
- Find us online
- Event registration
- Charitable donation
- Contest entrance
- Product sales

The image displays three distinct landing page designs for 'All or Muffin Breads and Baked Goods'. The top landing page is for an event titled 'Bake Babka Like an Expert', featuring a photo of a babka loaf and details about the class, including the date (Friday, December 2, 8:00 - 9:30 p.m.) and a 'REGISTER NOW' button. The middle landing page is a 'Holiday Sweepstakes - Enter to Win!' form, which includes fields for email, first name, and last name, and an 'Enter' button. The bottom landing page is a 'Sign up to say in touch!' form, which includes fields for email, first name, last name, and birthday, and a 'Sign Up' button. All three pages feature the 'All or Muffin' logo and a clean, modern design.

Pro Tip:

Avoid leaving your web presence out in the cold by following this simple seasonal checklist:

- ☐ Update your hours of operation
- ☐ Add event information:
 - ☐ on-site events
 - ☐ trade shows
 - ☐ community events
 - ☐ virtual events
 - ☐ fundraising drives
- ☐ Feature limited-time items, like seasonal menus or products
- ☐ Promote discounts and offers prominently
- ☐ Highlight images of your store or product from past holiday seasons



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Social for the Season

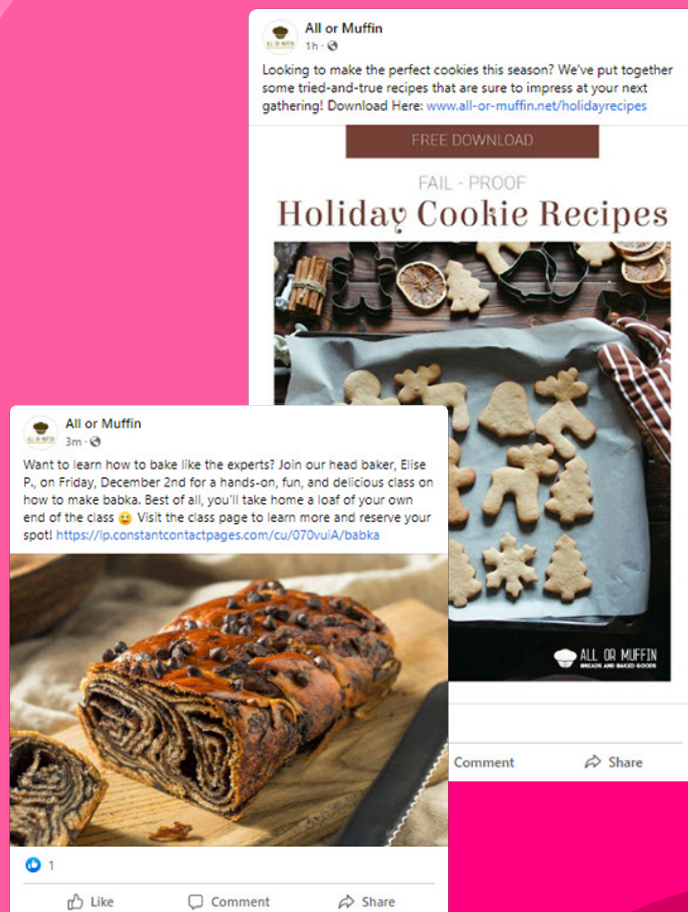
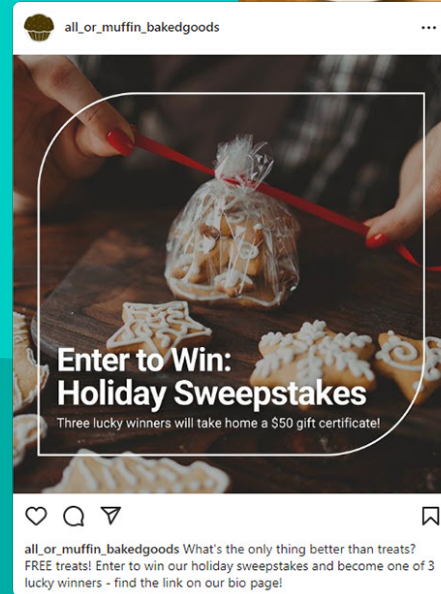
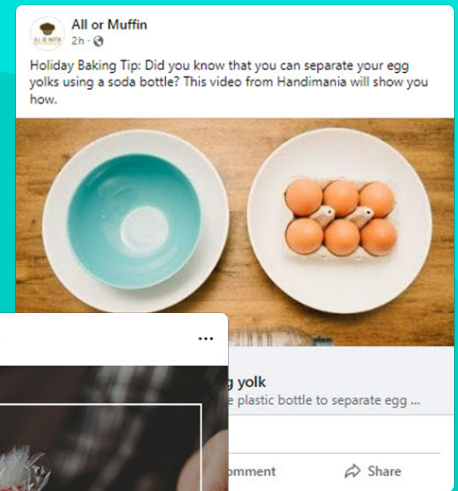
Social media plays a major role in helping you reach a larger audience. By producing various kinds of social content, you can reach more people and easily achieve your business goals. Incorporating each content type into your social feed allows you to maintain an engaged audience throughout the holiday season and after. Below are some ideas to help you get started.

Drive Awareness

Increases familiarity with your business, product, or service. Can also increase your social following.

Goal: Educate and boost public awareness.

- Q & A interviews
- Questions
- Fill-in-the-blanks
- Behind-the-scenes photos/videos
- Tips and tricks
- Content promotion (blogs, etc).
- News/trending posts
- Company info
- Giveaways
- Contests
 - Enter-to-win
 - Share-to-win

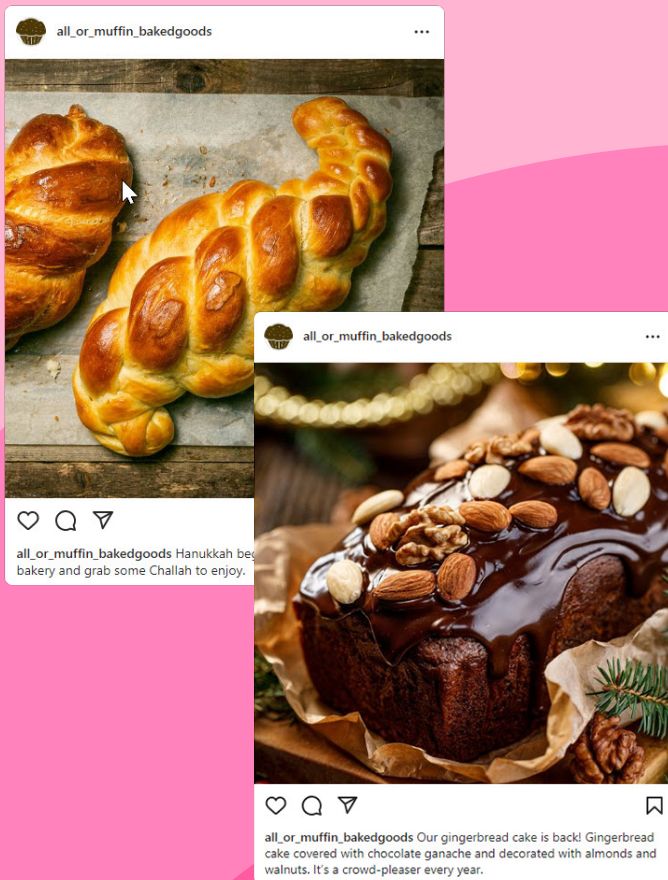


Grow Contacts

Invites customers / prospects to connect with you via email through sign-up forms or other lead-generation pieces.

Goal: Grow your customer base and prospecting pool.

- Contests
 - Enter-to-win
- Downloadable content
- Email opt-in
- Event RSVPs



Promote Product/Service

Alerts customers and prospects to a product launch, service expansion, brand initiative, or promotion.

Goal: Increase revenue or acquire new customers.

- Ads
- Promotions and sales
- Product features (images/video)
- Customer Testimonials
- Product teasers/previews
- Tutorials
- Fundraising kickoff

Customer Advocacy

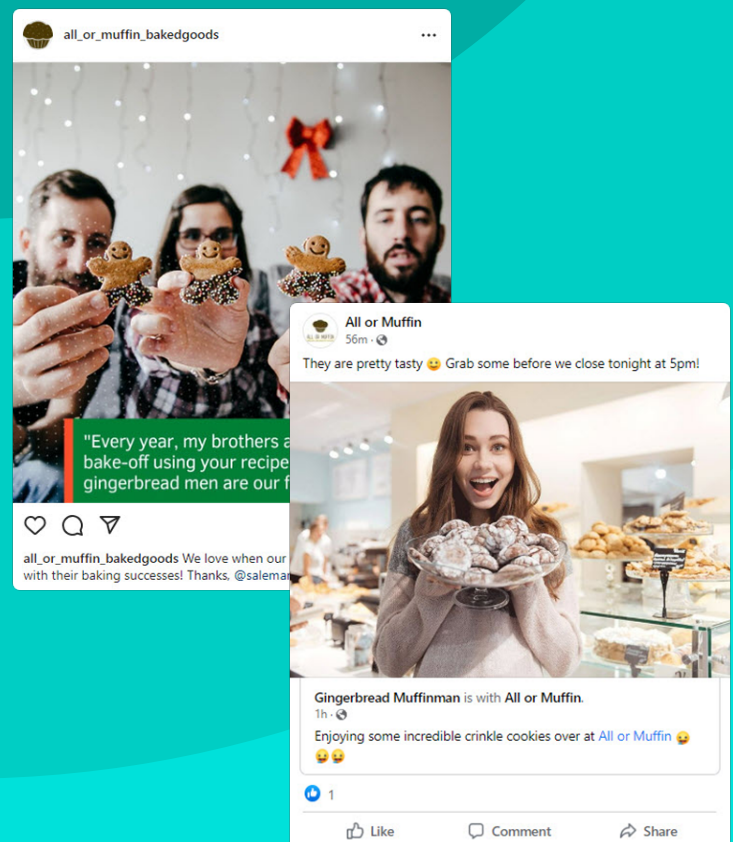
The digital version of word-of-mouth marketing.

Goal: Establish long-lasting customer relationships, boost brand awareness, and increase sales by amplifying positive customer experiences.

- Customer stories/quotes
- Polls/voting
- User-generated content
- Product reviews



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Social Platform Size Guide

Facebook

Profile photos must be at least 170 x 170 pixels.

Cover photos appear on your page at 820 x 312 pixels.

Images shared in a post have a recommended size of 1200 x 630 pixels or 1080 x 1080 pixels.



Instagram

Profile images appear on your homepage at 110 x 110 pixels.

Image thumbnails appear on your profile at 161 x 161 pixels. Square photos are 1080 x 1080 pixels and rectangular photos should use a 4:5 aspect ratio.

Story videos should use a resolution of 1080 x 1920 pixels or an aspect ratio of 9:16.



TikTok

Videos should have a resolution of 1080 x 1920 pixels with a 9:16 aspect ratio.

Newsfeed videos have a max file size of about 285MB for Apple and 72MB for Android. Ads have a max file size of 500MB.

Videos have a max length of 3 minutes.

YouTube

The channel profile image should be 800 x 800 pixels.

Custom thumbnail images could be 1280 x 720 pixels.

The channel cover photo has a minimum size of 2560 x 1440 pixels with an aspect ratio of 16:9.



Twitter

Profile photos have a recommended size of 400 x 400 pixels.

Header photos should be 1500 x 500 pixels.

Link images appear at 1200 x 675 pixels.

Tweets sharing a single image should use a standard 4:3 or 16:9 aspect ratio.



Pinterest

Profile images appear at 165 x 165 pixels on the homepage

Pins on the main page appear at 236 pixels with a scaled height. Expanded Pins have a minimum width of 600 pixels with a scaled height.

It is recommended to use an image aspect ratio of 2:3 for pins



LinkedIn

Your company logo image should be 300 x 300 pixels.

The company business banner size is recommended at 1128 x 191 pixels.

Images shared in a post have a recommended size of 1200 x 1200 pixels.

How Often to Post on Social?

Social media is a great way to share the spirit of the season with your followers, but how often should you be posting? Here are some guidelines to help you create a consistent and effective holiday social schedule.

Facebook

Three to seven times a week

Instagram

Feed: No more than one per day (treat Reels as part of your feed)
Stories: three to 10 stories posts per day

Twitter

One to three Tweets per day

LinkedIn

Three to five posts a week

TikTok

One to four times per day

YouTube

Two to three videos per week

Pinterest

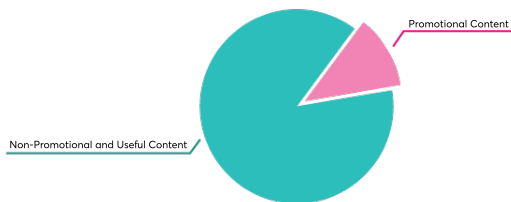
One to five posts per day



Context Mix Guidelines

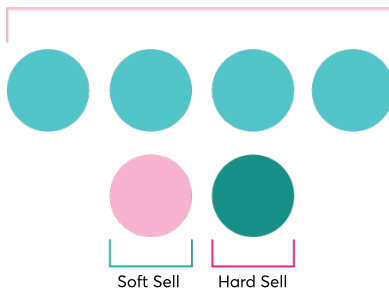
Posting to social is only one step toward social media success. Selecting the right content mix ratio can help you spruce up engagement and learn what post types resonate with your audience. Here are various content mix guidelines used by social media experts to get you started. Choose one to experiment with and use whatever works best for your business.

80/20

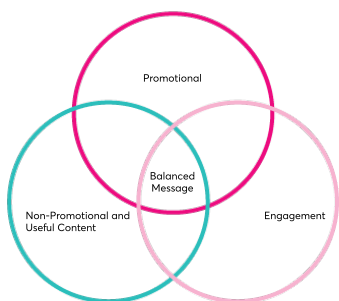


4-1-1

Non-Promotional



Rule of Thirds



4-1-1 Approach

For every six postings you publish, **four** should be **non-promotional content**, **one** should be a **soft sell** (think event invite), and **one** a **hard sell** (buy now).

80/20 Rule

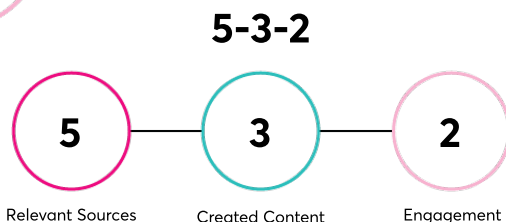
Out of all the posts you publish, **80%** of posts should contain **non-promotional and useful content** and **20%** should contain **promotional content**.

The Rule of Thirds

Not to be confused with photography composition rules, the rule of third says **1/3** of your posts should be **promotional**, **1/3** should be **non-promotional and useful**, and **1/3** on **engaging with your audience**.

5-3-2 Approach

For every ten posts you publish, **five** should be posts from **other relevant sources**, **three** should be content you've **created** (promotional or non), and **two** should **engage with your audience** and **humanize your brand**.



Email Marketing Ideas

Draw your subscribers' attention to your promotions, gift ideas, event invites, and more. Need inspiration? Here are a few email marketing ideas to get you started.

Drive Awareness

- Holiday gift guides
- Holiday-themed tips & tricks
- Holiday hours updates
- Gift ideas
- Last-minute reminders
- New Years look ahead
- Holiday-themed newsletter
- End-of-year updates
- Holiday event invites
- Share a story about the holidays
- Shipping deadlines

Promote Product/Service

- Holiday preview sale
- Giving Tuesday campaign
- Cyber Monday or Black Friday offers
- Small Business Saturday offers
- Free shipping
- Early bird pricing sales
- Holiday gift packages
- Gift certificates
- Free shipping
- Gift card bonus (buy one, get one, etc.)

Customer Advocacy

- Last-minute reminders
- Personalized gift ideas
- Holiday preview sale
- Customer appreciation
- Say thank you

Stand out of the crowd this holiday season with emails that pop!

Asking yourself these three questions and adhering to email best practices will allow you to create and send emails that resonate with your subscribers.

1. What are you trying to accomplish - **Headline**
2. Why should the reader care? - **Message body**
3. How can the reader get involved, what action do they need to take? - **Call to action**

Subject Lines

Creating subject lines that are both eye-catching and festive is the key to great email engagement. After all, before someone reads your email, they'll need to open it. Here is some subject line inspiration sure to help you stand out.

Promotional

- It's now or never! Save [%off] at [your business]
- Good times, good cheer, and great offers
- It's the most wonderful time for [product]
- Get in the holiday spirit with [offer]
- Shop our hottest holiday products now
- New service offers in time for the holidays
- Get your holiday shopping done with these amazing offers
- Limited time only: Get [% off] your holiday order
- Exclusive offers just in time for the holidays
- Unmatched selection of gifts for [mom/dad, etc.]
- Find the perfect gift for [mom/dad, etc.]
- Reserve your spot for [name of your event].
- Find out what we have planned for [holiday/ shopping day]
- Stress-free holiday shopping is possible at [your business]
- There's snow place like [your product]
- Do you hear what I hear?
- This sale sleighs
- Keep the holiday magic alive with [product]
- [Name], get a jump start on your holiday shopping
- Holiday shopping has never been easier

Non-Promotional

- Need last-minute gift ideas?
- Our top [Number] holiday picks
- Holiday [Topic] tips and tricks
- It's gift o'clock. Check out these ideas.
- Have you seen our holiday gift ideas?
- Learn how to [do something] this holiday season
- Holiday time-saving tips from [your business]
- We're open late! New hours for the holidays
- On a budget? Check out these gift ideas
- Gift Inspiration for [Name]
- Holiday preparations start now.
- [Name], Thanks for being a loyal customer
- [Name], thank you for making a difference

Want to Create Some Standout Subject Lines of Your Own?

- ☐ **Use personalization when it makes sense.** Personalization can help create a stronger connection with your customers and help increase open rates when used properly. Personalize by Name, Location, etc.
- ☐ **Stay short and sweet.** Subject line: 4 to 7 words (or 40 characters) Preheader Text: 5 to 8 words.
- ☐ **Avoid anything spammy.** Avoid ALL CAPS and excessive punctuation.
- ☐ **Subject line and preheader text should work together.** The subject line gives readers a reason to open, the preheader provides context.
- ☐ **Ask a question.** Questions can pique your reader's interest.
- ☐ **Include a deadline.** Create a sense of urgency by showing your message is timely.
- ☐ **A/B Test.** Discover what subject lines work best for your audience.

Best Way How to Design a Holiday Email for Conversions + Personalization

Looking to create a holiday email that will make an immediate impact? Here are some tips to help you write and design an email that's eye-catching, easy to read, and informative.

1. From Name (the sender)

This is the first thing your subscribers see, use a recognizable from-name as the sender—you can test your business name vs. person. **Note:** Your audience gets used to the sender, so whatever you choose to use, make sure you stick to it.

2. Subject Line

Determines if your customer will open your email, so it should be enticing, engaging, and relevant to the content. Keep it to 4-7 words (or under 50 characters).

3. Helpful Preheader

The preheader is an extension of the subject line and provides additional context. Be sure to keep it short and sweet, between 5 - 8 words.

4. Header

Use the header to encourage subscribers to read the main message of your email. Be sure to include enticing imagery and compelling content.

5. Personalize Messages

Personalization can be helpful for building customer relationships. Gather information from your audience and personalize content for each recipient when applicable.

6. Content

Content should focus on your main message. Keep copy concise by focusing on relevant content and using a clear call to action. Utilize graphic elements for more appeal and to increase engagement.

7. Organize Content Into Sections

Organize content into consistent sections. This simplifies the email creation process, allows you to set content expectations, and gives your subscribers something to look forward to.

8. Branding

To keep a consistent look and increase your brand awareness, use your brand colors (stick to four or less). **Pro Tip:** Customize your templates to match your brand identity and save creation time.

9. Images

Use high-quality, attention-grabbing imagery/GIFs.

10. Clear Call to Action

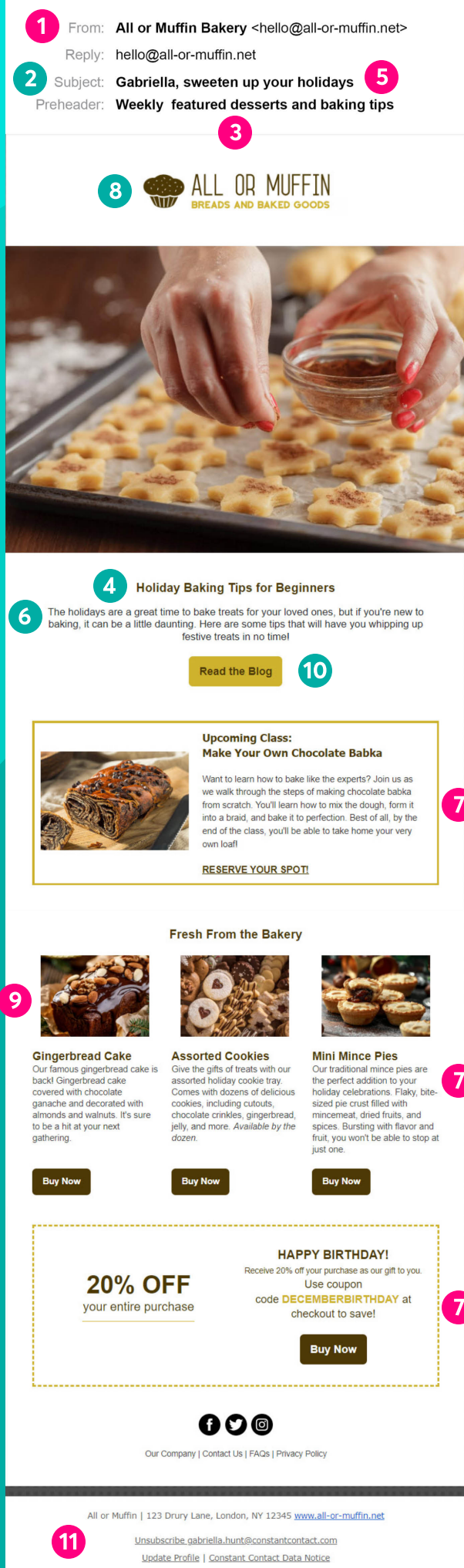
Be sure to include at least one, concise call to action. A good call to action should tell your subscriber exactly what you want them to do.

11. Footer

Include social icons with links to your social media pages to encourage your subscribers to stay connected with you. Your footer should also include an unsubscribe link and a mailing address as well.

Pro Tip: Optimize for Mobile

With many emails being opened on mobile, it's crucial your email is optimized for smaller screens. Utilizing responsive email templates ensures your email looks great and automatically adjusts to fit any screen size.




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Have Yourself a Merry Little Textmas

With shopping to do, events to attend, and family to visit, your audience is on-the-go more than ever during this season. SMS text message marketing can help you reach them where they are, even when they're out and about.

Here are some examples of how you can use text messages to drive awareness, sales and even customer loyalty.

Drive Awareness:

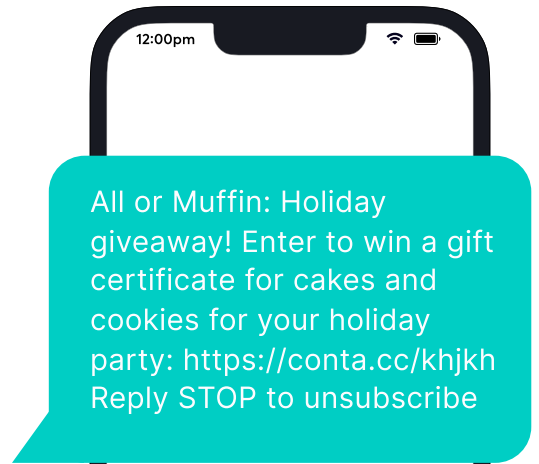
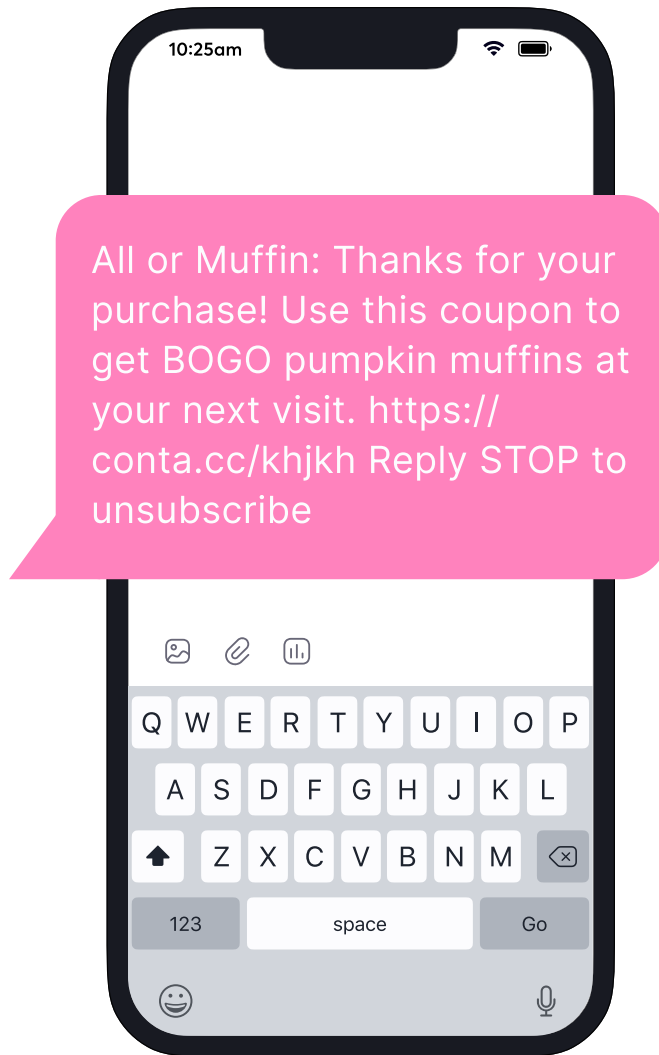


All or Muffin: Got the milk & cookies for 🧑🏻? Reply STOP to unsubscribe

All or Muffin: Our store will be closed Dec 23-27 so our hard-working bakers can rest up for a great new year. Reply STOP to unsubscribe

All or Muffin: Browsing the Downtown Holiday Market this weekend? We're open! Stop in and warm up with cocoa and a fresh-baked treat. Reply STOP to unsubscribe

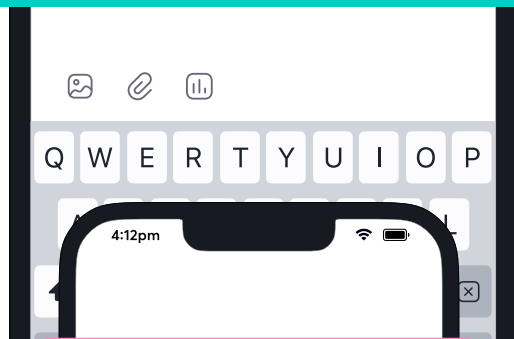
Grow Customer Loyalty:



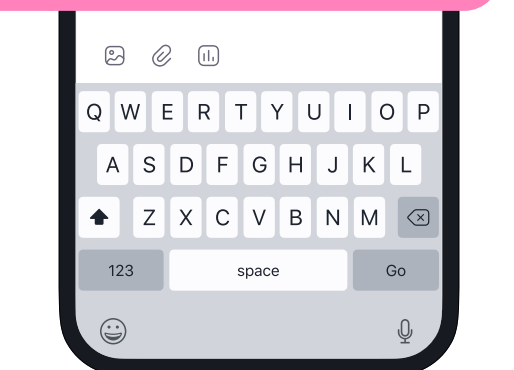
Promote Products and Services:



All or Muffin: Yule log cake orders open up today! Order before Nov 1 and get 10% off. <https://conta.cc/khjkh> Reply STOP to unsubscribe



All or Muffin: Mon, Dec 12 is the last day to place special orders for holiday goodies. Order yours today! <https://conta.cc/khjkh> Reply STOP to unsubscribe



Best Practices

If you're sending SMS text messages this holiday season, here are a few best practices to remember:

- Always include your company name in your text messages
- Recipients must be able to opt out
- Shortened URLs create better texts and a better experience
- Marketing texts can only be sent between the hours of 8 a.m. and 9 p.m. (local to the recipient)
- Exclusive discounts and coupons are perfect for SMS offers
- SMS text messages should be concise and relevant at the time received
- Even during the holidays, don't overwhelm your customers with text messages
- Remember that emojis can be used, but sparingly (they increase character count and some are not universal)
- SMS is a very personal channel– make your texts casual, conversational and friendly!



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Checklist: How to Get the Most Out of Your Holiday Event

Sure, you want your supporters to learn, network and have a great time at your seasonal events – but what are **YOU getting out of it?**

Here are a few things to keep in mind during each stage of your seasonal event process to ensure you get the most out of your events.



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Before:

- ☐ Create or segment your contact list for invitees
- ☐ Add RSVPs to a segmented mailing list
- ☐ Set up your event registration and landing page
- ☐ Create email and/or text series: Don't forget to register!
- ☐ Create email and/or text series: See you at the event!
- ☐ Share event details and registration page on social and encourage sharing (if open to all)
- ☐ Launch event ticket giveaway on social (if applicable)

During:

- ☐ If an open event:
 - ☐ Post sign-up sheets to allow people to opt in to your contact list
 - ☐ Include QR codes on signage for contact list opt-in
 - ☐ Share text-to-join instructions for your opt-in
- ☐ Encourage attendees to take and share photos of the event on social media
- ☐ Take photos of the event for sharing on social and website
- ☐ Check-in attendees for a targeted list of day-of attendees

After:

- ☐ Send attendees a text and/or email thanking them for attending and soliciting feedback
- ☐ Send RSVPs who did not attend a "we missed you!" event recap
- ☐ Post photos and recaps to social media
- ☐ Retweet/repost attendee content about the event
- ☐ Include photos and info from the event in upcoming newsletters
- ☐ Evaluate metrics to measure success
 - ☐ Event attendance
 - ☐ Email, social and text engagement
 - ☐ Product sales
 - ☐ Donations
 - ☐ Email list signups
- ☐ Take note of successes and feedback for future events

If you're just now beginning your holiday planning and want to save time, integrating your marketing tools can centralize the information you need to effectively manage your campaigns with less effort.

Here are some integrations you can use in conjunction with your email and social media marketing efforts to make sure you sleigh your goals this holiday season.



Customer List Growth

Use your holiday offerings to easily capture leads and grow your customer list fast.

- Google Ads
- WordPress Signup Forms

Video/Image Creation

Create festive, beautiful, and engaging communications fast.

- Vimeo
- Canva



Social Media

Easily create, optimize, schedule, and launch all your holiday social posts all at once, plus quickly see how each are performing in one place.

- Facebook
- Instagram
- LinkedIn
- Twitter



- Stripe
- Squarespace
- Wix
- Shopify
- Etsy
- eBay
- WooCommerce
- Nift Gift Cards
- ShipStation

eCommerce

Take advantage of holiday gift-giving and boost online sales seamlessly by automatically syncing your customer data with your email list.



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With over 5,085 integrations available in Constant Contact, the possibilities are endless.

Tying It All Together

Throughout this guide, you've unwrapped layer after layer of holiday marketing efforts– but what does it look like when it's all put together? Each of the efforts outlined in this guide can work independently, but each step builds on one another to boost your business over the holiday season.

See how a full holiday marketing campaign might look to your audience, from start to finish:

Social Media:

Your audience gains awareness of your business through a holiday-themed Instagram post and clicks through to your website and/or landing page.

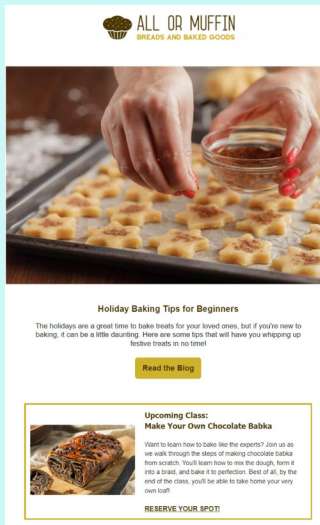


Landing Pages:

Once on your landing page, they share their email and additional information and are added to your contact list for future outreach.

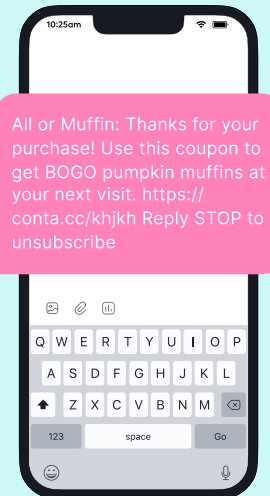
Email:

You email your contact list about upcoming events, where engaged audience members register for an event.



SMS Text Messaging:

Contacts who also shared a phone number are now eligible for exclusive SMS text coupons, reminders, and other info.



Events:

At your event, you are able to interact with engaged, interested customers. This event can provide great opportunities for photos and other content for future use!



From here, the campaign and contact cycle can start over again – for instance, with a social post featuring photos from your event and a link to a signup form where people can learn about your other upcoming events!

A holiday campaign isn't just a single moment in time or set of tactics – each touchpoint with your audience builds on the last. How and when your audience reacts to your touchpoints helps you learn more about how to best reach out to them. Build contact lists consisting of your event attendees and other active customers to customize future outreach and start your new year with a healthy, engaged audience.