Holiday Email Marketing Best Practices



2025 Holiday Email Marketing Best Practices: Thanksgiving, BFCM and Christmas

The holiday season is a high-stakes time for email marketers. With inboxes overflowing and consumer expectations rising, your email strategy needs to be sharper than ever. Here's how to stand out and drive results this Thanksgiving and BFCM (Black Friday Cyber Monday) weekend.

1. Subject Lines That Cut Through the Noise

Your subject line is your first impression—and your best chance at an open. Keep it short (especially for mobile), clear, and urgent. Emojis and personalization can help, but avoid vague or overly clever phrasing. A/B test subject lines to find what resonates.

MPro Tip: Use countdowns or exclusivity cues like "VIP Early Access" or "Ends Tonight" to boost urgency.

2. Test Everything-Then Test Again

With so many variables at play, thorough testing is non-negotiable. Preview your emails across major clients (Gmail, Outlook, Apple Mail) and devices. Validate dynamic content and personalization logic to avoid embarrassing errors.

Checklist:

- Mobile-first design
- · Dark mode compatibility
- · Dynamic content rendering
- · Link and image validation

3. Plan Your Campaign Cadence Early

Start building anticipation weeks in advance with teaser emails, early access offers, and wishlist prompts. Map out your full campaign flow—from pre-sale buzz to Cyber Monday follow-ups.

Suggested Timeline:

- 3-4 weeks out: Teasers & wishlist builders
- 1-2 weeks out: VIP early access
- Thanksgiving-Cyber Monday: Main offers, reminders, urgency emails
- Post-Cyber Monday: Retention & loyalty follow-ups

4. Deliverability Is the Gatekeeper

In 2025, inbox placement is tougher than ever. Gmail, Yahoo, and Microsoft now enforce strict authentication standards (SPF, DKIM, DMARC). If your domain isn't properly authenticated, your emails may be blocked or land in spam.

Must-Haves:

- . SPF, DKIM, and DMARC records
- Easy unsubscribe
- Complaint rate < 0.3%

5. Segment Smarter, Not Harder

Generic blasts are out. Use behavioral and transactional data to tailor your messaging. Start with simple segments like:

- Past Holiday Purchasers vs. Non-Holiday Purchasers
- VIP Customers vs. One-Time Buyers
- Engaged Subscribers vs. Dormant Contacts

MTip: Offer stronger incentives to less engaged or first-time buyers. Use loyalty perks or exclusive bundles for repeat customers.

6. Clean Your Lists-Now

Unengaged subscribers hurt your sender reputation and ROI. Before the holiday rush, prune your lists. Focus on active, engaged contacts to improve deliverability and conversion rates.

Bonus Insight: Brands that reduced sends by 70% and focused only on engaged subscribers saw a 50% increase in revenue.

7. Use Holiday-Themed Creative Thoughtfully

Festive visuals can boost engagement, but don't overdo it. Keep designs clean, mobile-friendly, and aligned with your brand. Use seasonal colors, GIFs, and clear CTAs to drive clicks.

8. Be Ready for Throttling

ISPs may slow delivery during peak sending periods. Add buffer time between send and expected inbox arrival—especially for time-sensitive offers.

MBest Practice: Send critical campaigns 2–3 hours before your desired delivery window.

9. Integrate Across Channels

Email works best when paired with social, SMS, and paid ads. Use consistent messaging and cross-channel reminders to reinforce urgency and drive conversions.

10. Ask for Help Early

If you need support with segmentation, scheduling, or deliverability, reach out to your email platform team early. The holiday season gets busy fast—don't wait until the last minute.

→ Have additional questions on this topic? Let's chat early so we can help you maximize results.