

1. **Choose your subject lines carefully.** With more emails flooding into inboxes this time of year, subject lines can make or break your open rate – and your campaign success.
2. **Spend extra time testing and proof-reading.** Make sure you thoroughly test how your email appears in multiple email clients across mobile and desktop. If you're using personalization or dynamic content, test that as well. The more time spent up-front, the less room for error.
 - A test list should have multiple emails that go to desktop/mobile and different email clients (i.e. Gmail, Outlook, Hotmail, etc.). Learn how to create a test list here: [Test Lists](#)
3. **Plan out your messaging.** If you have a sale on a certain day, work backwards. When do you want to let people know about it? Will you have a follow-up email to remind people about it? Stay organized this holiday season by carefully planning your email sends, social ads, or direct mail campaigns. Create deadlines for when you want to have:
 - the creative content finished
 - the audiences/segments finalized
 - the email or advertisement scheduled
4. **Add extra time for your email to be delivered.** With high volumes to process, some ISPs will throttle the speed at which emails are delivered to the inbox. To account for this, make sure to add a couple hours of "padding" from when you hit the send button to when you must have it in the inbox.
5. **Use holiday imagery, graphics and themes in your creative.** Capture the spirit of the holidays in your email designs to bring out that holiday shopping excitement.
6. **Create segments to speak to people where they are.** It can be as simple as creating one version of an email for existing customers and a second version for prospects (people who haven't purchased yet). If you're new to segmentation, start small. People are more likely to engage with your messaging if it is more unique than a "one size fits all" message.
 - Sample segment: Past Holiday Purchasers (Transactions from previous years during holiday season) vs Non-Holiday Purchasers (Zero transactions from previous years)
 - Offer greater incentive to non-holiday purchasers to buy now
 - Standard promos to past holiday purchasers
7. **Remove your unengaged subscribers.** Holidays are not the time to try to reengage the unengaged. Limit your audience to active subscribers only for better results. This will also reduce issues with email deliverability.

We are here to help if you need help creating segments, scheduling emails, or have general questions about best practices. Because we receive an influx of requests during the holiday season, we recommend engaging with us as early as possible.