

# Festive season retail is all about timing



By [Eben Esterhuizen](#)

30 Sep 2019

According to Stats SA, the main contributors to the 2,4% increase were retailers in textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods (contributing 0,8 of a percentage point), all 'other' retailers (contributing 0,7 of a percentage point); and general dealers (contributing 0,5 of a percentage point).



©Jozef Polc via [123RF](#)

More specifically, the largest annual growth rates recorded in June 2019 were recorded for:

- Retailers in household furniture, appliances and equipment (5,2%); and
- Retailers in textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods (4,8%).

Planning for Q4 and the Christmas buying season includes having a sales calendar scheduling enough time for the key dates ahead.

The run-up to festive season sales can start as early as Boss's Day which falls on Wednesday 16 October. Having unusual, well-priced specials advertised from the beginning of October will bring customers into the sales funnel area early and the old adage that "the money is in the list" remains true. Social media competitions are a strategic way to encourage people to share their email address or cell phone number. Then, as potential customers, they can be targeted via omnichannel platforms for the next key sales dates. This is something [Net Florist does well](#).

**"Social is the new shop window: the place that consumers browse to find ideas and inspiration." Deloitte Retail Trends 2019**

Other important dates to plan ahead for on the marketing calendar are:

Diwali – around 27 or 28 October 2019: There are different types of opportunities for retailers before Diwali as it's a time of spring cleaning and celebration, so sales could be around lighting, home decor, fireworks, gifts, food and sweet treats.

Halloween – Thursday, 31 October: We're seeing more uptake for Halloween in South Africa and it was big on social media locally last year. This is another chance to run a fun (starting early) competition to entice potential customers - even if there's no "hard sell" of products.

### **"We absolutely see an uptick in traffic and retailer promotional activity that starts 1 November." Marissa Tarleton, CMO of RetailMeNot**

Single's Day – Monday, 11 November: The first of the huge global shopping events. Since the first Single's Day in China (Guanggun Jie) it has become the [largest e-commerce event](#) in the world. Last year Alibaba broke sales records, generating \$30.8 billion in 24 hours.

The date was chosen as the number 1 symbolises a single person and 11 (November) two people finding each other. In South Africa, it's catching fire, with online brands such as [Zando getting it right](#) with a positive call to action (well - call to shopping) of Affirmation, Action, Reinvention.



Big, bigger, biggest: Black Friday, Cyber Monday and Singles Day

Norman Shaw 29 Nov 2018



### **"Global shoppers buy earlier throughout Black Week - 50% of holiday shopping was complete by Monday, 3 December 2018." Kate Walters, exec planning director, Swirl McGarryBowen**

Black Friday – Friday, 29 November: Last year our local Black Friday was described by the media as a "buying frenzy" and it appeared that way with websites crashing under the strain of great deals and keen customers.

Data from [Absa bank](#) highlights that two out of three South African consumers participated in Black Friday shopping at some point, so this is a massive opportunity for retailers. Research also shows consumers are holding back on buying durable goods and waiting for Black Friday specials.

[According to BankservAfrica](#) Economic Transaction Index (BETI) retail sales over the Black Friday and Cyber Monday period most likely "saved" the South African economy in November.

Small Business Saturday - Saturday, 30 November: This is such a great day for small businesses to begin creating hype around months before. The event was created by American Express in 2010 and falls in between the Black Friday and Cyber Monday heavyweights – the ideal time to showcase bespoke local products, catching the more discerning shoppers.

### **"From the 2017 to the 2018 holiday season, mobile-first shoppers, grew by 22%." Facebook Holiday Marketing Guide 2019**

Cyber Monday - Monday, 2 December: \$7.9 billion was spent on this day in 2018 (19,3% up from 2017, so it's likely this

year will see the same kind of traction. In South Africa, according to the BETI report, there was 36.4% growth in online sales for Cyber Monday.

Green Monday - Monday, 9 December: In 2007 eBay came up with Green Monday which is held on the second Monday of December. It's basically a reminder to buy Christmas Gifts and, as the name suggests, there could be some fun branding around this date – with “green” or for products which are aligned with green in terms of being eco-friendly.

Free Shipping Day - Saturday, 14 December: Falling on the second last weekend before Christmas this is the global event where online stores have free shipping. As marketing guru [Giedre Kronberga](#) says, “It’s yet another try to keep customers shopping after the Black Friday-Cyber Monday craze is over.”

It’s noteworthy on the festive season sales calendar as free delivery is one of the key incentives to online shopping. In fact, [stats show](#) nine out of ten customers consider free shipping the top incentive to shop online.



### Is Black Friday a good fit for your business?

23 Nov 2018



While much of the upcoming sales focus will be online it is also worth making the bricks and mortar customer experience inviting having great specials on offer. According to [eMarketer](#), “42% of US holiday shoppers said they shopped in-store for the holiday ambiance, and 27% of US holiday shoppers said they shopped in-store to spend time with family.”

Locally, families who haven’t the cash to go on holiday often find shopping in-store a pleasurable way to spend time together, so family-themed events could be a sales magnet for retailers. Instead of the best debit order, may the best festive season promotion win.

## ABOUT EBEN ESTERHUIZEN

Eben has over 20 years retail, pharma & FMCG experience in South Africa. He understands consumer & shopper behaviour patterns, and is an expert in CE. Eben is passionate about delivering bottomline success for brands in retail. A champion for innovation, as General Manager at The Pharma Group, Eben is continually developing both himself and his team to deliver excellence in the marketplace.

- A month dedicated to Black Friday - 2 Dec 2019
- 6 pharmacy retail trends to watch in 2020 - 18 Nov 2019
- Festive season retail is all about timing - 30 Sep 2019
- Are we moving into an age of gender-fluid purchasing? - 7 Aug 2019
- 3 trends in retailtainment - 3 Jul 2019

[View my profile and articles...](#)

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>