

Unwrapping retail success this festive season

By [Mike Smollan](#)

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Flashback to 1990 with Google recently creating a modern version of the *Home Alone* hit movie, where this time adult Kevin defeats his enemies from breaking and entering, with the help of Google Assistant-enabled devices.

The ad appeals to viewer emotions by generating a feeling of nostalgia and memories, the ultimate brief for retailers this festive season as they wrap up magical experiences for customers.

The pandemic accelerated the shift towards online shopping and influenced the way retailers prioritised contactless fulfilment options, and digital engagement strategies. Putting the spotlight on creating captivating, cohesive, memorable omnichannel shopping experiences.

As retailers up the ante and become more innovative, agile and customer-centric when it comes to preparations for this full on frenzied time.

The tussle between online and offline has indeed become more apparent, where price parity, consumer offers and adequate stock are represented in physical stores as well as on various ecommerce platforms. Retailers need to make sure

that they have created a seamless connection between both channels, as what happens online often leads to offline sales.

Having built meaningful customer relationships over the course of the year, including amping up the shopping experience as well as finding the sweet spot in the split between instore and online, it's now about presenting new and exciting ways to allow consumers to browse, buy and save leading up to the festive season. Meeting them wherever, whenever, and however they prefer to shop.



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From a global perspective, according to www.olbuz.com, shoppers have already started their holiday shopping, some as early as June, so understanding the micro moments to maximise sales will be key within a small pre-December window.

For example, being prepared for increased demand by reviewing last season's data and comparing metrics; playing smart to stay competitive by keeping an eye on competitor's prices and offers; shifting marketing strategies to make sure there is a platform to connect with mobile shoppers - as a start by having a mobile browser compatible website; having a strong presence on social media, or perhaps considering the option of hiring influencers to create campaigns around specific products.

The 'Future Shopper Report 2023' (Wunderman Thompson) takes a deeper dive presenting some interesting stats. Reporting that 56% of global consumers say they want seamless communications across digital and physical channels, 60% preferring to shop with a retailer or brand that has both digital and physical stores, and in the knowledge that 32% of all online spending is done on mobile phones.



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So too, marketplaces remain the number one online channel – however, despite this dominance, this year has seen a resurgence in physical retail and D2C brands.

The next few weeks will without a doubt be a busy time for all retailers be it online or offline, with the following top tips tabled for consideration, on how to acquire more business:

- Price is #1 when it comes to decision-making online.

- Price may be king, but service is not far behind in importance with the number one thing global consumers would change about online shopping is “faster delivery”.
- Furthermore, optimising the in-store experience starts by understanding online behaviours.
- When thinking about service, make sure that returns are part of the deal from hassle-free return policies to clear communication around updates, tracking information and timely delivery.
- Sustainability, purpose and ethics are more important than ever, but needs to be underpinned by the right price and service across both online and offline.
- With the world digitising at a pace, redefining the view of “our consumer” is key.
- Adopting content that entertains to stand out, such as TikTok to tap into cultural or seasonal moments and at the same time, making the most of these communities where content is co-created with people, not just for people.

In addition, www.advertisingweek.com recently plugged into the thinking of several marketing leaders who highlighted how retailers and brands can win over this year’s festive shoppers. From creating experiential moments that will stay with customers, to making shopping easier across all core channels, being real but making it positive, as well as maximising value and rewarding loyalty.

Success this festive season will ultimately come down to how switched on retailers, onboard new approaches and shift marketing strategies both online and offline. With solutions that offer fresh perspectives and new ways of doing things around integrated, omnichannel, personalised, digital experiences where service excellence partners new age consumers who have much higher expectations than previous years.

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