

HOLIDAY 2026

Wrapped in the Chat: The 2026 Holiday Insights Guide

Winning the Season on the Most Connected Screen

Today's shoppers are highly intentional, delaying purchases for deals and researching extensively before buying. In this environment, awareness alone isn't enough.

Shopper confidence is what drives conversion.

To win the holiday season, brands must move beyond passive discovery and focus on active validation. This guide explores how to align messaging, timing, and ad formats with the private, trusted conversations where holiday purchase decisions are made.

Discovery
Starts early
(July-Oct)

Validation
Group chats
Peer reassurance

Conversion
Frictionless AR
& 1:1 Snaps

Q5
Late spenders
(Late Dec-Jan)

Advocacy
Share what
they love)



1

Collaborative Commerce and Peer-to-Peer Validation

Holiday shopping is no longer an isolated consumer action. It is built entirely on a foundation of real-time, peer-to-peer reassurance within trusted social networks.

The modern path to a holiday purchase relies on micro-moments of validation: a shopper surfaces an item, shares it inside a tight-knit circle, secures consensus from family or close friends, and moves from an initial consideration phase to an absolute conversion.

THE PRIMARY CIRCLE OF INFLUENCE

Family and friends function as the **number 1 point of influence** on ultimate purchase decisions. 🧡



Source: 2025 NRG vertical study commissioned by Snap Inc. U.S. Only. Base: Total (n=718) Snapchatters (n=356) Non-Snapchatters (n=236)

THE SHARED JOURNEY

A staggering **92% of daily Snapchatters actively integrate their close network** into their collaborative holiday shopping journey.

Source: Source: 2023 Havas Next Gen Social Commerce study, commissioned by Snap Inc.

THE CHAT-TO-CART PIPELINE

Consumers demonstrate a clear behavioral lift when buying collectively, showing a **64% higher likelihood to buy** a product after discussing it inside their private chat feeds.

Source: 2024 NRG Moments Research
Commissioned by Snap Inc.

THE ADVOCACY MULTIPLIER

Discovery automatically triggers brand advocacy during the holidays—**68% of U.S. Snapchatters say that seeing which brands their social circle loves makes them want those brands more.** 👍

Source: 2025 NRG vertical study commissioned by Snap Inc.
Base: Total (n=718) Snapchatters (n=356) Non-Snapchatters (n=236)

The Unbounded Holiday (July through Q5)



The traditional holiday shopping timeline has structurally expanded into a multi-month decision matrix. Snapchatters plan carefully to mitigate seasonal friction, initiating their ideation and buying cycles months ahead of winter retail tentpoles. Crucially, this behavior does not drop off on December 25th; it extends into a high-velocity post-holiday shopping wave.

THE EARLY BLUEPRINT

Festive planning starts long before autumn, with **1 in 2 daily Snapchatters typically finalizing their holiday and New Year wish lists** before Halloween.

Source: "Shopping Season and the Holidays" study by Ipsos, commissioned by Snap Inc, 2026

PRE-NOVEMBER EXECUTION

Early action is a standard shopping reality, as **48% of daily Snapchatters actively begin buying seasonal items** before advent calendars are put up in November.

Source: "Shopping Season and the Holidays" study by Ipsos, commissioned by Snap Inc, 2026

THE INSPIRATION WINDOW

Early engagement is critical for capturing intent, given that **60% of Snapchat holiday shoppers begin seeking creative product inspiration** and gathering specific gift ideas before December arrives. 🛍️

Source: "Shopping Season and the Holidays" study by Ipsos, commissioned by Snap Inc, 2026

THE Q5 PREMIUM WINDOW

The post-Christmas period represents a massive, highly active commercial runway. **60% of all consumers continue shopping** immediately after Christmas. 🎄

Source: Ipsos Q5 2025 research on behalf of Snap Inc.

AT A GLANCE

1 in 2

daily Snapchatters finalize their holiday and New Year wish lists before Halloween

Source: "Shopping Season and the Holidays" study by Ipsos, commissioned by Snap Inc, 2026

60%

of daily Snapchat holiday shoppers seek creative product inspiration before December arrives

Source: "Shopping Season and the Holidays" study by Ipsos, commissioned by Snap Inc, 2026

65%

of daily Snapchatters specifically report that they enjoy shopping from late December through the end of January

Source: Ipsos Q5 2025 research on behalf of Snap Inc.

87%

maintain or increase their app usage during this exact Q5 frame.

Source: Ipsos Q5 2025 research on behalf of Snap Inc.

Premium Cross-Category Intent

Snapchatters do not behave like casual, passive holiday browsers; they show up as high-value power shoppers determined to maximize their festive investments. They show an exceptionally high propensity to spend heavily across diverse retail categories, prioritizing high-value items, gift exchanges, and curated travel experiences.

SEASONAL PURCHASES INDEX

SPORTSWEAR

2.5x

more likely to purchase during the holiday window

APPLIANCES

2.1x

more likely to invest in home appliances

HOLIDAY TRIPS & TRAVEL

2.1x

more likely to book seasonal travel.

LUXURY GOODS

3.1x

more likely to purchase luxury apparel, accessories, or premium goods.

Source: "Shopping Season and the Holidays" study by Ipsos, commissioned by Snap Inc, 2026

THE HOLIDAY SPENDING BLUEPRINT

The average **estimated holiday spend** for daily Snapchatters across Christmas and New Year reaches **\$984**, nearly doubling the \$567 average outlay of non-users.

Source: "Shopping Season and the Holidays" study by Ipsos, commissioned by Snap Inc, 2026

GIFTING PRIORITIZATION

Gift-giving is protected within seasonal budgets, with **79% of Snapchat shoppers prioritizing gift purchases** over all other forms of holiday spending. 📺

Source: "Shopping Season and the Holidays" study by Ipsos, commissioned by Snap Inc, 2026

HIGH-VALUE INVESTMENT INDICES

Compared to standard internet users, these holiday shoppers significantly over-index on premium seasonal purchases. 💎

Source: "Shopping Season and the Holidays" study by Ipsos, commissioned by Snap Inc, 2026



Tactical Action Plan:

Strategic Recommendations for Brands: To convert this high-intent consumer behavior into actual business performance, brands must deploy creative and ad products that align with how Snapchatters organically communicate, share, and validate choices.

Driving Holiday ROI on Snapchat

Proven to Perform

Snapchat is not only where holiday shopping conversations happen. It's also proven to drive business results. According to a Snapchat & TransUnion MMM benchmark analysis, Snapchat is 33% more efficient at driving incremental retail sales than the paid social average.

Source: Transunion MMM Meta Analysis commissioned by Snapchat, Q4'25 using 2022-2024 data



Drive 1:1 Conversations Via Sponsored Snaps

Because final buying choices are vetted within private channels, standard broadcast impressions are insufficient. Utilizing Sponsored Snaps allows brands to land natively within the Chat feed, the most heavily frequented space in the app.

CREATIVE TIP FOR SPONSORED SNAPS

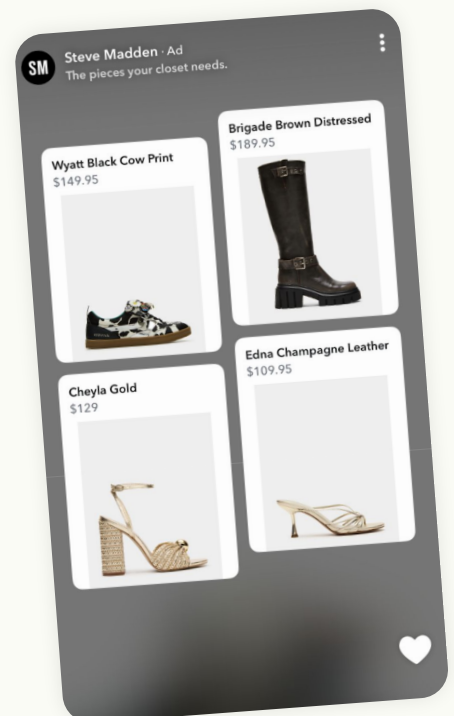
Design your ad assets to mirror raw, authentic recommendations rather than highly polished, unachievable lifestyle spots. Use conversational openers that encourage the user to instantly tap the shoppable attachment or seamlessly forward the image directly into their primary group chats.

Precision Optimization Via Dynamic Product Ads (DPAS)

When seasonal intent scales rapidly in November and December, manual optimization can cause performance delays. Dynamic Product Ads close the purchase loop automatically by pairing real-time consumer intent with automated, high-performance catalog variations.

CREATIVE TIP FOR DYNAMIC PRODUCT ADS

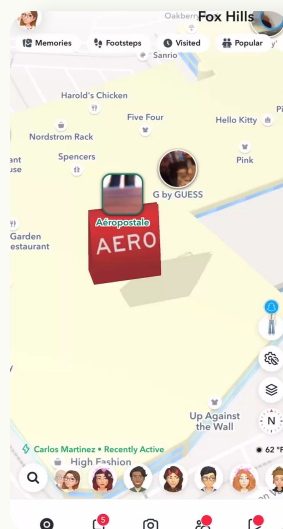
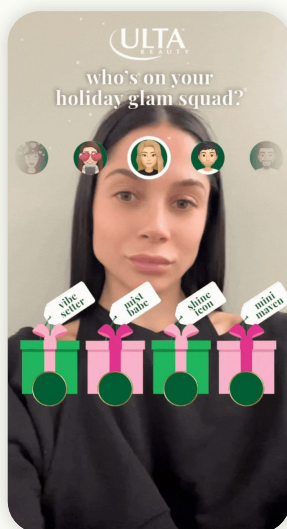
Leverage your existing product catalogs to dynamically deliver varied creative options to Snapchatters who have already shown baseline intent. This guarantees that you serve relevant, real-time pricing and promotion variations with minimal creative production lift, driving efficient cost-per-acquisition metrics during peak auction periods.



Driving Holiday ROI on Snapchat

Immersive Interaction via AR Camera Lenses

Snapchat provides interactive, high-impact spaces that bring physical retail into the digital world:



AR Shopping Lenses:

Immersive augmented reality experiences (like virtual try-ons or gamified holiday gift randomizers) that turn browsing into an interactive experience and compress the path to purchase.

Promoted Places on Snap Maps:

Allowing retail brands to drive physical foot traffic and local digital awareness by highlighting brick-and-mortar storefronts directly on the interactive Snap Map.

CREATIVE TIP FOR AR SHOPPING LENSES

Implement high-fidelity, accurate try-ons for products like cosmetics, apparel, or eyewear to build purchasing confidence.

Build interactive gift randomizers to help Snapchatters brainstorm gift ideas for family, boosting shareability.

Feature clear swipe-up CTAs to let Snapchatters purchase directly from the AR lens instantly.

CREATIVE TIP FOR PROMOTED PLACES

Highlight store-exclusive promotions, in-store events, or extended holiday trading hours directly on the map.

Use highly recognizable, visually popping brand logos as Map pins to stand out to nearby Snapchatters.

Offer effortless pathfinding directions and click-to-shop online fallback options

The Ultimate 2026 Holiday Checklist



☐ **Initiate the Baseline Early**

Do not hold your entire budget for late-season dates. Deploy your foundational brand and inspiration campaigns at least 2 to 4 weeks prior to target seasonal events to capture long planning windows.

☐ **Optimize Assets for Shareability**

Ensure every visual creative asset is built to spark community validation. Focus on interactive layouts, direct call-to-actions, and open, peer-to-peer recommendation cues.

☐ **Capitalize fully on the Q5 Wave**

Avoid the common pitfall of shutting down campaigns immediately on December 25th.

Maintain your lower-funnel performance and conversion budgets throughout January to secure high-value post-holiday spenders when overall marketplace ad clutter naturally drops.

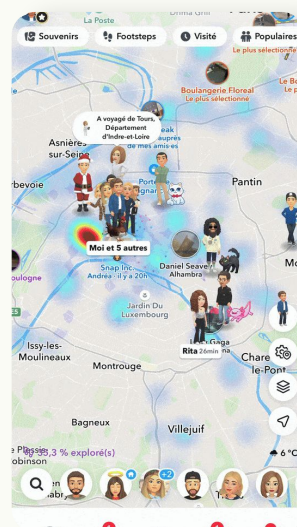
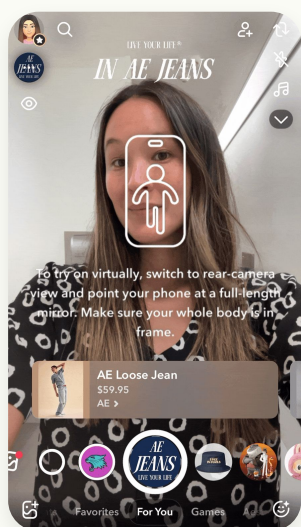
Let's make the season bright for your brand.

**Connect with your Snap team
to start planning your holiday strategy.**

Driving Holiday ROI on Snapchat

Immersive Interaction via AR Camera Lenses

Snapchat provides interactive, high-impact spaces that bring physical retail into the digital world:



AR Shopping Lenses:

Immersive augmented reality experiences (like virtual try-ons or gamified holiday gift randomizers) that turn browsing into an interactive experience and compress the path to purchase.

Creative Tip

AR Shopping Lenses

Implement high-fidelity, accurate try-ons for products like cosmetics, apparel, or eyewear to build purchasing confidence.

Build interactive gift randomizers to help Snapchatters brainstorm gift ideas for family, boosting shareability.

Feature clear swipe-up CTAs to let Snapchatters purchase directly from the AR lens instantly.

Promoted Places on Snap Maps:

Allowing retail brands to drive physical foot traffic and local digital awareness by highlighting brick-and-mortar storefronts directly on the interactive Snap Map.

Creative Tip

For Promoted Places on Maps

Highlight store-exclusive promotions, in-store events, or extended holiday trading hours directly on the map.

Use highly recognizable, visually popping brand logos as Map pins to stand out to nearby Snapchatters.

Offer effortless pathfinding directions and click-to-shop online fallback options