



Holiday Marketing Quickstarter

Inspiration for a Successful Season

 Constant Contact

The holiday season is full of opportunities for small businesses to promote themselves.

Soon, people will begin planning their holiday purchases in hopes they'll find the best products and offerings to meet their needs.

We've created a guide with everything you need to launch a full-scale holiday marketing campaign. It's designed to be used however it best fits your needs: read from the beginning or jump into whatever sections apply to you and your business.

Whether you're a seasoned professional looking for inspiration or a marketing novice just getting started, this guide is chock-full of resources to get your holiday campaign up and running quickly. We'll show you how to leverage your website, social media, email, SMS, events, and more to deliver an engaging digital holiday marketing strategy.

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When it comes to creating a successful marketing campaign, proper planning can be what you need to transform a good campaign into a great one.

We've compiled a list of notable dates this holiday season to help you get started.

November

November 6 — Daylight Savings

Time ends at 2:00 am

November 11 — Veterans Day

November 24 — Thanksgiving

November 25 — Black Friday

November 26 — Small Business Saturday

November 27 — Artists Sunday

November 28 — Cyber Monday

November 29 — Giving Tuesday

November Themes:

"Movember", Height of the Holiday preparations and shopping

December

December 18 — Hanukkah begins

December 21 — Winter Solstice (shortest day of the year)

December 24 — Christmas Eve

December 25 — Christmas Day

December 26 — Hanukkah ends

December 26 — Boxing Day

December 26 — Kwanzaa begins

December 31 — New Year's Eve

December Themes:

End-of-year fundraising, Height of the Holiday season

Launching fun contests or campaigns?
Using the holiday to build your prospect list? Selling an all-star product that's sure to shine during the season? Point customers to where they need to go with well-thought-out landing pages.

Not sure where to start? Here are some of the most common types of landing pages to drive engagement and build your contact lists:

- Communications opt-in
- Contest Entrance
- Contest Entrance
- Charitable donation
- Find us online
- Product Sales
- Event Registration

Communications opt-in

Find us online

Event Registration



Pro tip: Avoid leaving your web presence out in the cold by following this simple seasonal checklist:

- Update your hours of operation
- Add event information:
 - on-site events
 - trade shows
 - community events
 - virtual events
 - fundraising drives
- Feature limited-time items, like seasonal menus or products
- Promote discounts and offers prominently
- Highlight images of your store or product from past holiday seasons

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Social for the Season

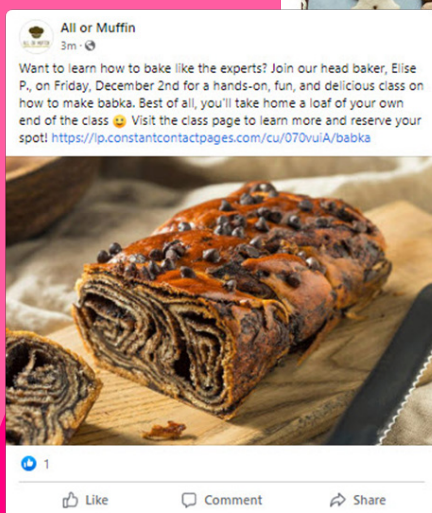
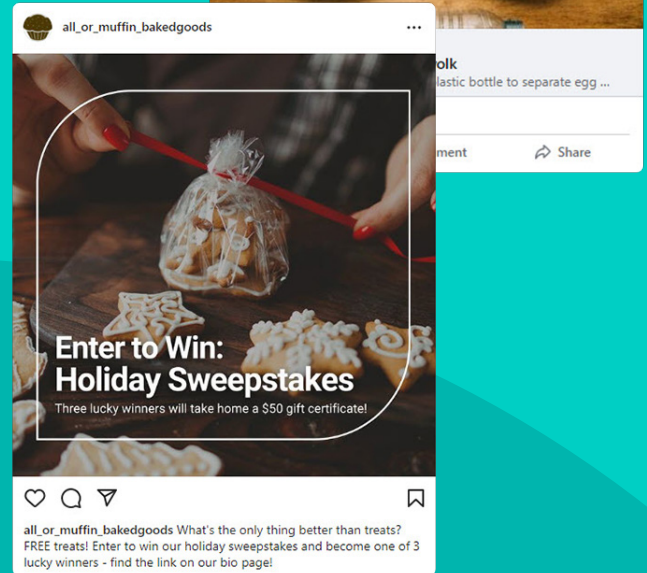
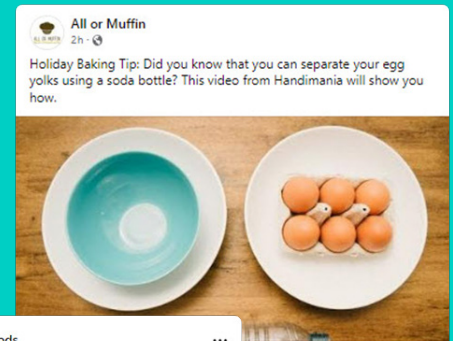
Social Media plays a major role in reaching a larger audience. By producing various kinds of social content, you can reach more people and easily achieve your business goals. Incorporating each content type into your social feed allows you to maintain an engaged audience throughout the holiday season and after. Below are some ideas to help you get started.

Drive Awareness

Increases familiarity with your business, product, or service. Can also increase your social following.

Goal: Educate and boost public awareness

- Q&A interviews
- Questions
- Fill-in-the-blanks
- Behind-the-scenes photos/videos
- Tips and Tricks
- Content Promotion
- News/trending topics
- Company info
- Giveaways
- Contests
 - Enter-to-win
 - Share-to-win

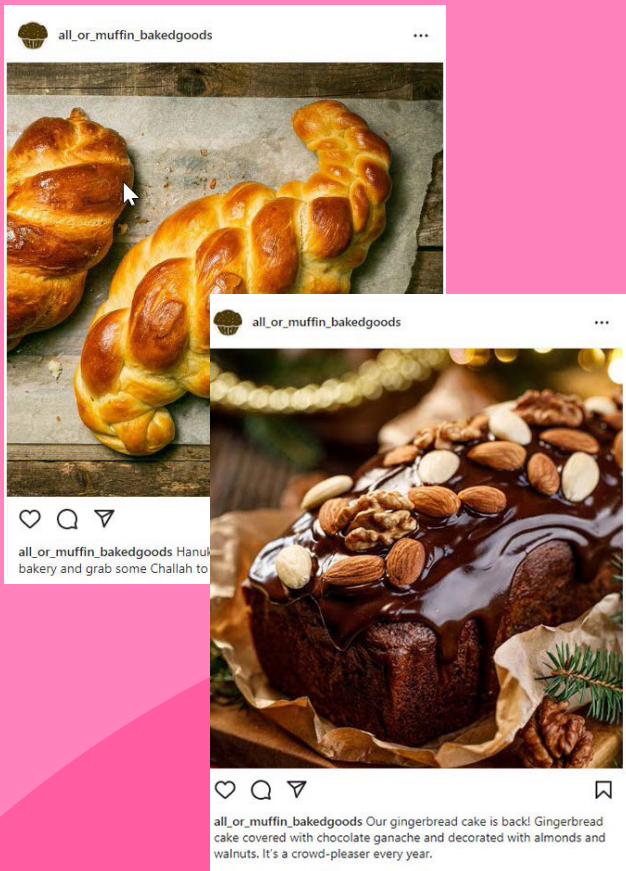


Grow Contacts

Invites customers/prospects to connect with you via email through sign-up forms or other lead-generation pieces.

Goal: Educate and boost public awareness

- Contests
- Enter-to-Win
- Downloadable content
- Email opt-in
- Event RSVPs



Promote Product/Service

Alerts customers and prospects to a product launch, service expansion, brand initiative, or promotion.

Goal: Increase revenue or acquire new customers

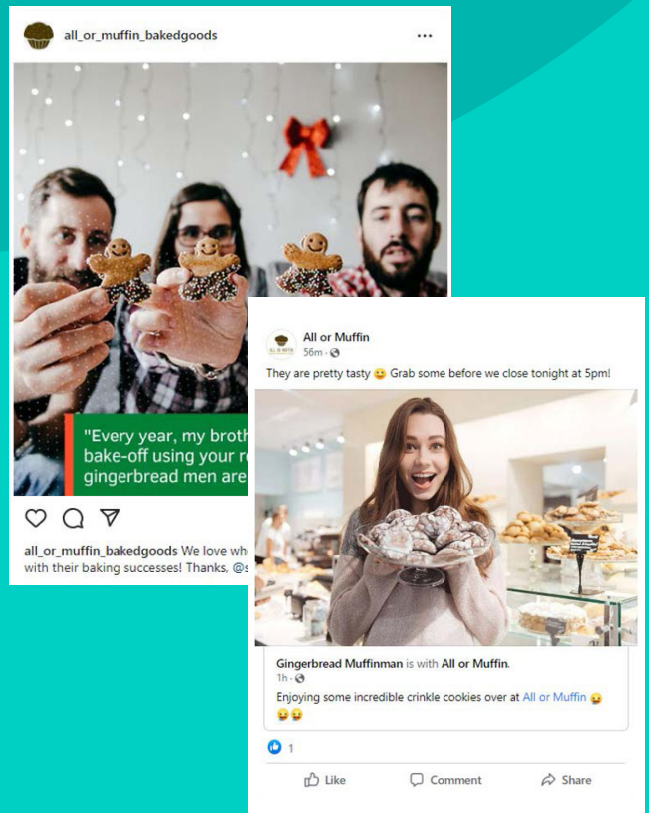
- Ads
- Promotions and sales
- Product features (images/video)
- Customer testimonials
- Product teasers/previews
- Tutorials
- Fundraising kickoff

Customer Advocacy

The digital version of word-of-mouth advertising.

Goal: Educate and boost public awareness

- Customer stories/quotes
- Polls/voting
- User-generated content
- Product reviews



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Social Platform Size Guide

Facebook

Profile photos must be at least 170x170 pixels.

Cover photos appear on your page at 820 x 312 pixels.

Images shared in a post have a recommended size of 1200 x 630 pixels or 1080 x 1080 pixels.

Instagram

Profile images appear on your homepage at 110 x 110 pixels.

Image thumbnails appear on your profile at 161 x 161 pixels. Square photos are 1080 x 1080 pixels and rectangular photos should be 4:5 aspect ratio.

Story videos should use a resolution of 1080 x 1920 pixels or an aspect ratio of 9:16.

Pinterest

Profile images appear at 165 x 165 pixels on the homepage.

Pins on the main page appear at 236 pixels with a scaled height. Expanded Pins have a minimum width of 600 pixels with a scaled height.

It is recommended to use an image aspect ratio of 2:3 for pins.

LinkedIn

Your company logo image should be 300 x 300 pixels.

The company business banner size is recommended at 1128 x 191 pixels.

Images shared in a post have a recommended size of 1200 x 1200 pixels.

TikTok

Videos should have a resolution of 1080 x 1920 pixels with a 9:16 aspect ratio.

News feed videos have a max file size of about 285MB for Apple and 72MB for Android. Ads have a max file size of 500MB.

Videos have a max length of 3 minutes.

YouTube

The channel profile image should be 800 x 800 pixels.

Custom thumbnail images should be 1280 x 720 pixels.

The channel cover photo has a minimum size of 2560 x 1440 pixels with an aspect ratio of 16:9.

Shorts videos have max length of 60 seconds and a recommended resolution of 1080 x 1920 pixels with a 9:16 aspect ratio.

Twitter

Profile photos have a recommended size of 400 x 400 pixels.

Header photos should be 1500 x 1500 pixels.

Link images appear at 1200 x 675 pixels.

Tweets sharing a single image should use a standard 4:3 or 16:9 aspect ratio.



How Often Should You Post on Social?

Social media is a great way to share the spirit of the season with your followers, but how often should you be posting? Here are some guidelines to help you create a consistent and effective holiday social schedule.

Facebook

Three to seven times a week

Twitter

One to three Tweets per day

Pinterest

One to five posts per day

Instagram

Feed: No more than one time per day (treat Reels as part of your feed).

Stories: three to 10 stories per day.

YouTube

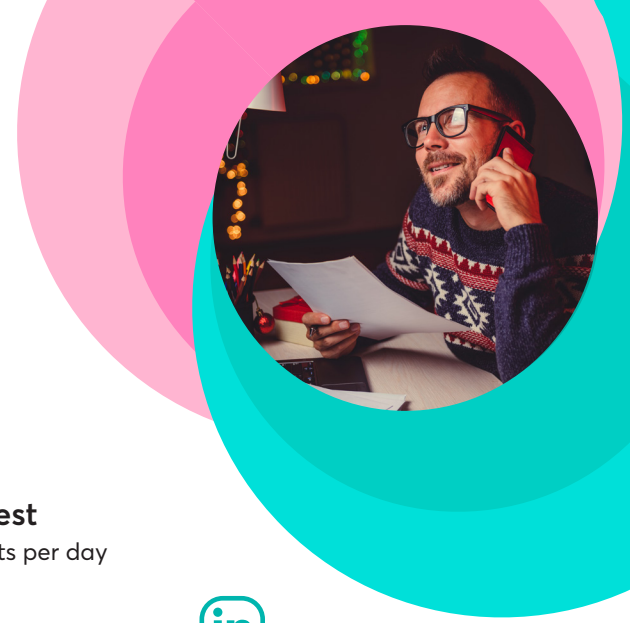
Two to three videos per week

TikTok

One to four times per day

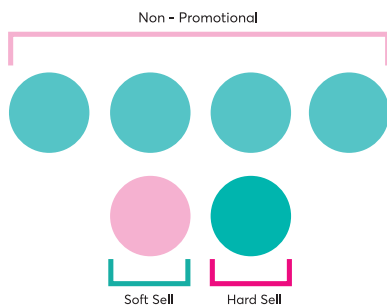
LinkedIn

Three to five posts a week



Content Mix Guidelines

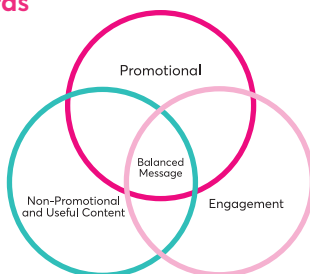
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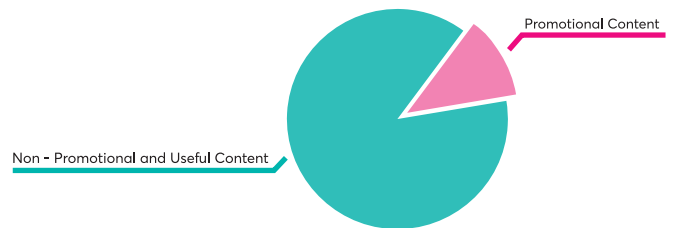
4-1-1 Approach

For every six postings you publish, **four should be non-promotional content, one should be a soft sell** (think event invite), and **one a hard sell** (buy now).

The rule of thirds



Not to be confused with photography composition rules, the rule of third says **1/3 of your posts should be promotional, 1/3 should be non-promotional and useful, and 1/3 on engaging with your audience.**



80/20 rule

Out of all the posts you publish, **80% of posts should contain non-promotional and useful content** and **20% should contain promotional content.**



5-3-2 Approach

For every ten posts you publish, **five should be posts from other relevant sources, three should be content you've created** (promotional or non), and **two should engage with your audience and humanize your brand.**

Email Marketing Ideas

Draw your subscribers' attention to your promotions, gift ideas, event invites, and more. Need inspiration? Here are a few email marketing ideas to get you started.

Drive Awareness

- Holiday gift guides
- Holiday-themed tips & tricks
- Holiday hours updates
- Gift ideas
- Last-minute reminders
- New Years look ahead
- Holiday-themed newsletter
- End-of-year updates
- Holiday event invites
- Share a story about the holidays
- Shipping deadlines

Promote Product/Service

- Holiday preview sale
- Giving Tuesday campaign
- Cyber Monday or Black Friday offers
- Small Business Saturday offers
- Free shipping offer
- Early bird pricing sales
- Holiday gift packages
- Gift certificates
- Gift card bonus (buy one, get one, etc.)

Customer Advocacy

- Last-minute reminders
- Personalized gift ideas
- Holiday preview sale
- Customer appreciation
- Say thank you

**Stand out of the crowd
this holiday season with
emails that pop!**

Asking yourself these three questions and adhering to email best practices will allow you to create and send emails that resonate with your subscribers.

1. What are you trying to accomplish? — **Headline**
2. Why should the reader care? — **Message body**
3. How can the reader get involved, what action do they need to take? — **Call to action**

Subject Lines

Creating subject lines that are both eye-catching and festive is key to great email engagement. After all, before someone reads your email, they'll need to open it. Here is some subject line inspiration to help you stand out.

Promotional

- It's now or never! Save [% off] at [your business]
- Good times, good cheer, and great offers
- It's the most wonderful time for [product]
- Get in the holiday spirit with [offer]
- Shop our hottest holiday products now
- New service offers in time for the holidays
- Get your holiday shopping done with these offers
- Limited time only: Get [% off] your holiday offer
- Exclusive offers just in time for the holidays
- Unmatched selection of gifts for [mom/dad, etc.]
- Find the perfect gift for [mom/dad, etc.]
- Reserve your spot for [name of your event]
- Find out what we have planned for [holiday/shopping day]
- Stress-free holiday shopping is possible at [your business]
- There's snow place like [your product]
- Do you hear what I hear?
- This sale sleighs
- Keep the holiday magic alive with [product]
- [Name], get a jump start on your holiday shopping
- Holiday shopping has never been easier

Non-Promotional

- Need last-minute gift ideas?
- Our top [Number] holiday picks
- Holiday [Topic] tips and tricks
- It's gift o'clock. Check out these ideas
- Have you seen our holiday gift ideas?
- Learn how to [do something] this holiday season
- Holiday time-saving tips from [your business]
- We're open late! New hours for the holidays
- On a budget? Check out these gift ideas
- Gift inspiration for [Name]
- Holiday preparations start now
- [Name], thanks for being a loyal customer
- [Name], thank you for making a difference

Want to create standout subject lines of your own?

- Use personalization when it makes sense.** Personalization can help create a stronger connection with your customers and help increase open rates when used properly. Personalize by name, location, etc.
- Stay short and sweet.** Subject line: 4 to 7 words (or 40 characters). Preheader text: 5 to 8 words.
- Avoid anything spammy.** Avoid ALL CAPS and excessive punctuation.
- Subject line and preheader text should work together.** The subject line gives readers a reason to open, the preheader provides context.
- Ask a question.** Questions can pique your reader's interest.
- Include a deadline.** Create a sense of urgency by showing your message is timely
- A/B Test.** Test different subject lines to discover what subject lines work best for your audience.

How to Design a Holiday Email for Conversions + Personalization

Looking to create a holiday email that will make an immediate impact? Here are some tips to help you write and design an email that's eye-catching, easy to read, and informative.

1. From Name (the sender)

This is the first thing your subscribers see, use a recognizable from-name as the sender—you can test your business name vs. person. Note: Your audience gets used to the sender, so whatever you choose to use, make sure you stick to it.

2. Subject Line

Determines if your customer will open your email, so it should be enticing, engaging, and relevant to the content. Keep it to 4-7 words (or under 50 characters).

3. Helpful Preheader

The preheader is an extension of the subject line and provides additional context. Be sure to keep it short and sweet, between 5 and 8 words.

4. Header

Use the header to encourage subscribers to read the main message of your email. Be sure to include brand elements.

5. Personalize Messages

Personalization can be helpful for building customer relationships. Gather information from your audience and personalize content for each recipient when applicable.

6. Content

Content should focus on your main message. Keep copy concise by focusing on relevant content and using a clear call-to-action. Utilize graphic elements for more appeal and to increase engagement.

7. Organize content into sections

Organize content into consistent sections. This simplifies the email creation process, allows you to set content expectations, and gives your subscribers something to look forward to.

8. Branding

To keep a consistent look, add your logo and use your brand colors (stick to 4 or less). Pro Tip: Customize your templates to match your brand identity and save creation time.

9. Images

Use high-quality, attention-grabbing imagery/GIFs

10. Clear Call to Action

Be sure to include a clear, concise call to action. A good call to action should tell your subscriber exactly what you want them to do.

11. Footer

Include social icons with links to your social media pages to encourage your subscribers to stay connected with you. Your footer should also include an unsubscribe link and a mailing address as well.

Pro Tip: Optimize for Mobile. With many emails being opened on mobile, it's crucial your email is optimized for smaller screens. Utilizing responsive email templates ensures your email looks great and automatically adjusts to fit any screen size,





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1 From: **All or Muffin Bakery** <hello@all-or-muffin.net>
Reply: hello@all-or-muffin.net

2 Subject: **Gabriella, sweeten up your holidays** 5
Preheader: **Weekly featured desserts and baking tips**

3

8  ALL OR MUFFIN
BREADS AND BAKED GOODS



4 **Holiday Baking Tips for Beginners**
The holidays are a great time to bake treats for your loved ones, but if you're new to baking, it can be a little daunting. Here are some tips that will have you whipping up festive treats in no time!

6 **Read the Blog** 10

7 **Upcoming Class: Make Your Own Chocolate Babka**
Want to learn how to bake like the experts? Join us as we walk through the steps of making chocolate babka from scratch. You'll learn how to mix the dough, form it into a braid, and bake it to perfection. Best of all, by the end of the class, you'll be able to take home your very own loaf!
[RESERVE YOUR SPOT!](#)


9 **Fresh From the Bakery**

Gingerbread Cake
Our famous gingerbread cake is back! Gingerbread cake covered with chocolate ganache and decorated with almonds and walnuts. It's sure to be a hit at your next gathering.
[Buy Now](#)

Assorted Cookies
Give the gifts of treats with our assorted holiday cookie tray. Comes with dozens of delicious cookies, including cutouts, chocolate crinkles, gingerbread, jelly, and more. Available by the dozen.
[Buy Now](#)

Mini Mince Pies
Our traditional mince pies are the perfect addition to your holiday celebrations. Flaky, bite-sized pie crust filled with mincemeat, dried fruits, and spices. Bursting with flavor and fruit, you won't be able to stop at just one.
[Buy Now](#)

7 **HAPPY BIRTHDAY!**
Receive 20% off your purchase as our gift to you. Use coupon code **DECEMBERBIRTHDAY** at checkout to save!
[Buy Now](#)

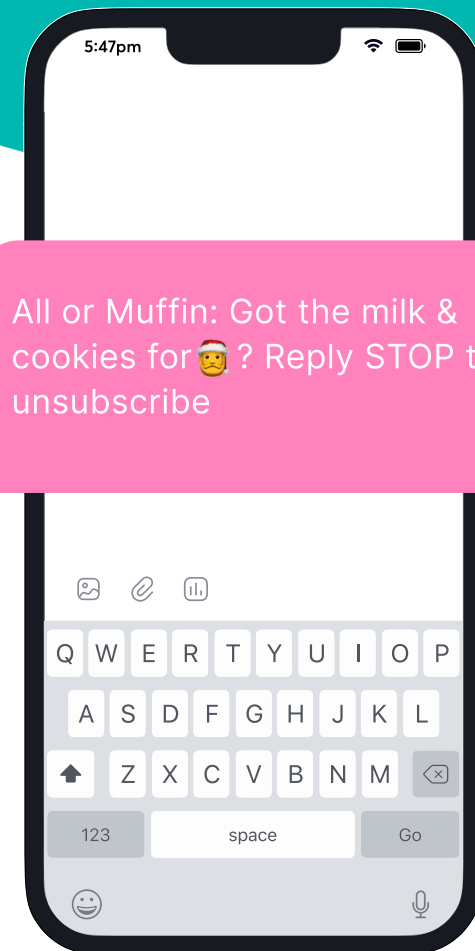

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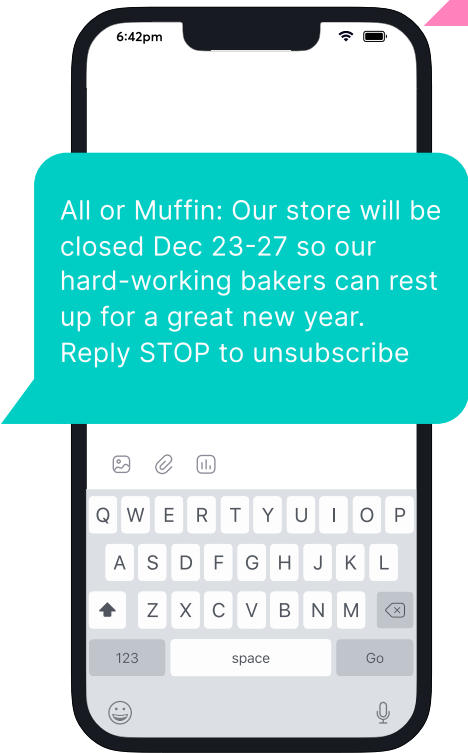
Have Yourself a Merry Little Textmas

With shopping to do, events to attend, and family to visit, your audience is on-the-go more than ever during this season. SMS text message marketing can help you reach them where they are, even they they're out and about. Here are some examples of how you can use text messages to drive awareness, sales, and even customer loyalty.

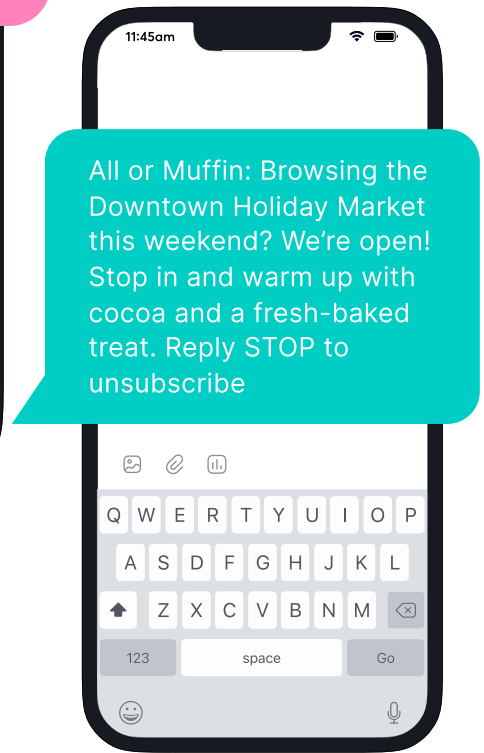
Drive Awareness:



All or Muffin: Got the milk & cookies for 🍼? Reply STOP to unsubscribe

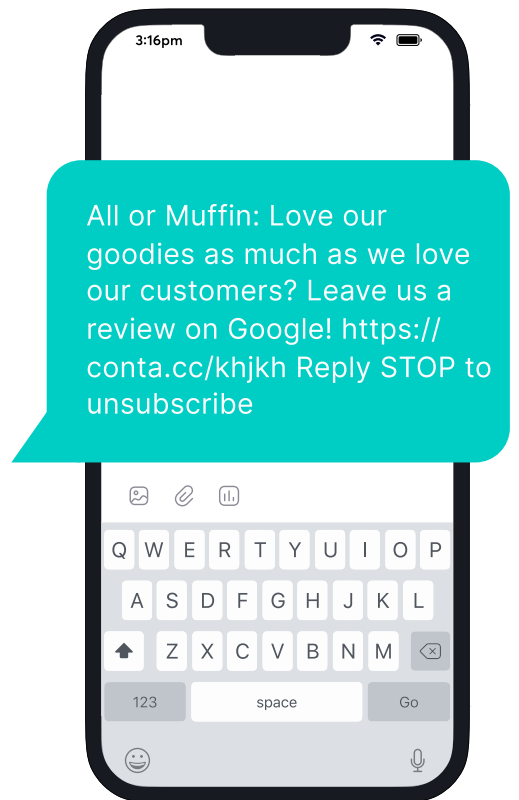
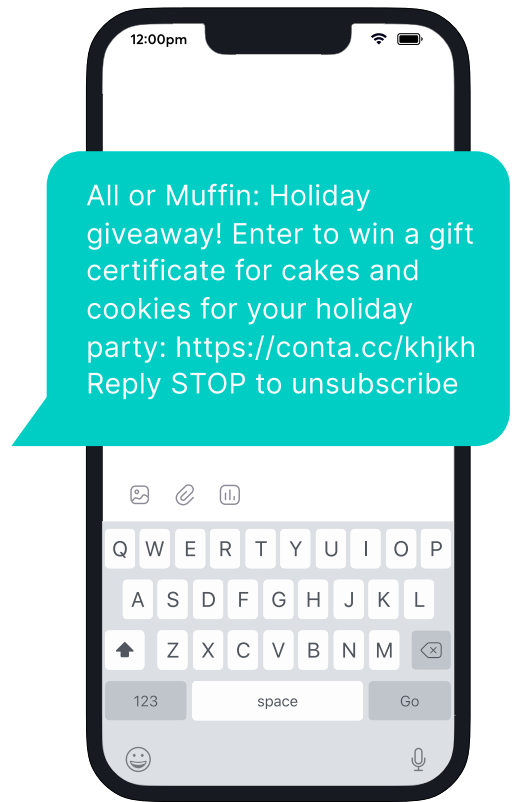
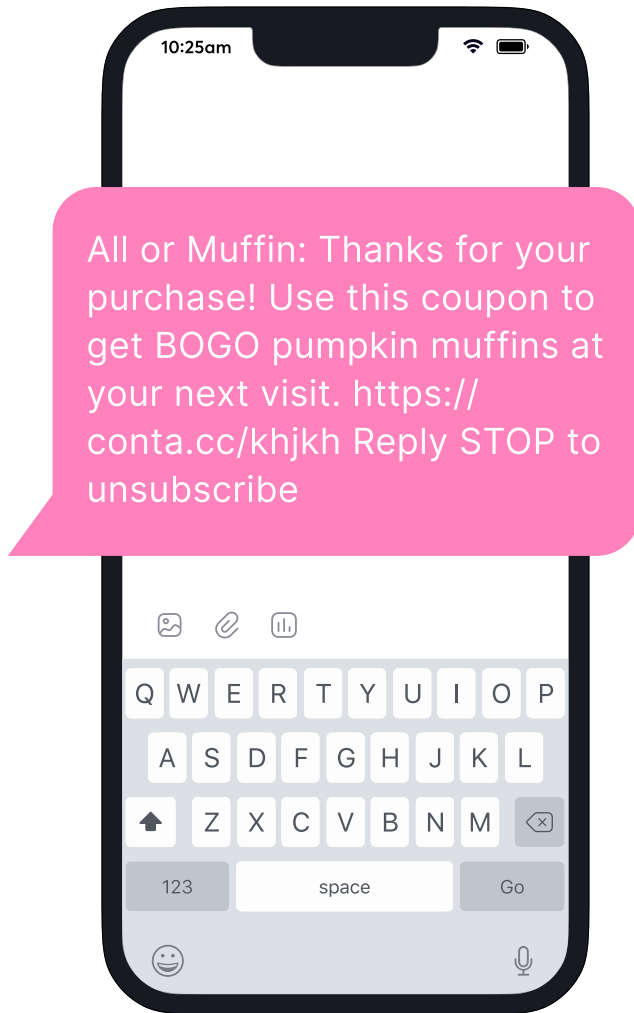


All or Muffin: Our store will be closed Dec 23-27 so our hard-working bakers can rest up for a great new year. Reply STOP to unsubscribe




All or Muffin: Browsing the Downtown Holiday Market this weekend? We're open! Stop in and warm up with cocoa and a fresh-baked treat. Reply STOP to unsubscribe

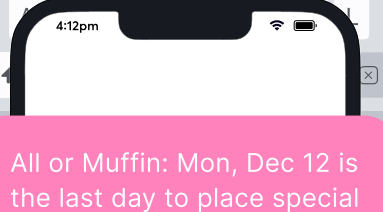
Grow Customer Loyalty:



Promote Products and Services:



All or Muffin: Yule log cake orders open up today! Order before Nov 1 and get 10% off. <https://conta.cc/khjkh> Reply STOP to unsubscribe



All or Muffin: Mon, Dec 12 is the last day to place special orders for holiday goodies. Order yours today! <https://conta.cc/khjkh> Reply STOP to unsubscribe



Best Practices

If you're sending SMS text messages this holiday season, here are the few best practices to remember:

- Always include your company name in your text messages.
- Recipients must be able to opt out.
- Shortened URLs create better texts and a better experience
- Marketing texts can only be sent between the hours of 8 a.m. and 9 p.m. (local to the recipient).
- Exclusive discounts and coupons are perfect for SMS offers.
- SMS text messages should be concise and relevant at the time received.
- Even during the holidays, don't overwhelm your customers with text messages.
- Remember that emojis can be used, but sparingly (they increase character count and some are not universal).
- SMS is a very personal channel—make your texts casual, conversational, and friendly!



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Checklist: How to Get the Most Out of Your Holiday Event

Sure, you want your supporters to learn, network, and have a great time at your seasonal events—but what are YOU getting out of it?

Here are a few things to keep in mind during each stage of your seasonal event process to ensure you get the most out of your events.



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Before:

- Create or segment your contact list for invitees
- Add RSVPs to a segmented mailing list
- Set up your event registration and landing page
- Create email and/or text series: Don't forget to register!
- Create email and/or text series: See you at the event!
- Share event details and registration page on social and encourage sharing (if open to all)
- Launch event ticket giveaway on social (if applicable)

During:

- If an open event:
 - Post sign-up sheets to allow people to opt in to your contact list
 - Include QR codes on signage for contact list opt-in
 - Share text-to-join instructions for your opt-in
- Encourage attendees to take and share photos of the event on social media
- Take photos of the event for sharing on social and website
- Check-in attendees for a targeted list of day-of attendees

After:

- Send attendees a text and/or email thanking them for attending and soliciting feedback
- Send RSVPs who did not attend a "we missed you!" event recap
- Post photos and recaps to social media
- Retweet/repost attendee content about the event
- Include photos and info from the event in upcoming newsletters
- Evaluate metrics to measure success
 - Event attendance
 - Email, social and text engagement
 - Product sales
 - Donations
 - Email list signups
- Take note of successes and feedback for future events

If you're just now beginning your holiday planning and want to save time, integrating your marketing tools can centralize the information you need to effectively manage your campaigns with less effort.

Here are some integrations you can use in conjunction with your email and social media marketing efforts to make sure you sleigh your goals this holiday season.



Video/Image Creation

Create festive, beautiful, and engaging communications fast.

- Vimeo
- Canva

Customer List Growth

Use your holiday offerings to easily capture leads and grow your customer list fast.

- Google ads
- WordPress signup forms



Social Media

Easily create, optimize, schedule, and launch all your holiday social posts all at once, plus quickly see how each are performing in one place.


- Facebook
- Instagram
- LinkedIn
- Twitter

eCommerce

Take advantage of holiday gift-giving and boost online sales seamlessly by automatically syncing your customer data with your email list.

- Stripe
- Squarespace
- Wix
- Shopify
- Etsy
- eBay
- WooCommerce
- Nift gift cards
- ShipStation



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With over 5,085 integrations available in Constant Contact, the possibilities are endless.

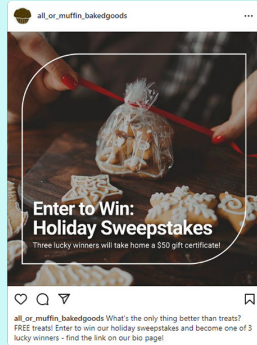
Tying It All Together

Throughout this guide, you've unwrapped layer after layer of holiday marketing efforts—but what does it look like when its all put together? Each of the efforts outlined in this guide can work independently, but each step builds on one another to boost your business over the holiday season.

See how a full holiday marketing campaign might look to your audience, from start to finish:

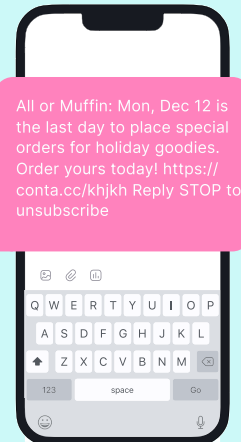
Social Media:

Your audience gains awareness of your business through a holiday-themed Instagram post and clicks through to your website and/or landing page.



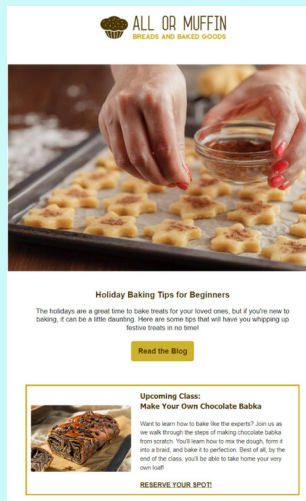
Landing Pages:

Once on your landing page, they share their email and additional information and are added to your contact list for future outreach.

A dark-themed landing page for 'ALL OR MUFFIN BAKERS AND BAKED GOODS'. The headline is "Sign up to say in touch!". Below it is a sub-headline: "Don't be on a 'know-to-know' basis - sign up for our mailing list to keep up on our latest products, specials and classes!". The form includes fields for "Email", "First Name", "Last Name", and "Birthday". A yellow "Sign Up" button is at the bottom.

Email:

You email your contact list about upcoming events, where engaged audience members register for an event.

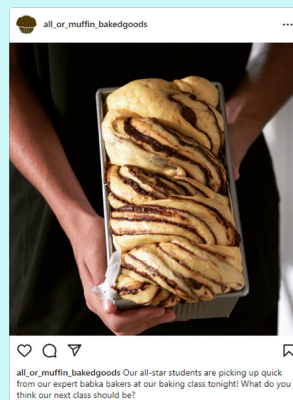


SMS Text Messaging:

Contacts who also share a phone number are now eligible for exclusive SMS text coupons, reminders, and other info.

Events:

At your event, you are able to interact with engaged, interested customers. This event can provide great opportunities for photos and other content for future use!



From here, the campaign and contact cycle can start over again—for instance, with a social post featuring photos from your event and a link to a sign up form where people can learn about your other upcoming events!

A holiday campaign isn't just a single moment in time or set of tactics—each touch point with your audience builds on the last. How and when your audience reacts to your touch points helps you learn more about how to best reach out to them. Build contact lists consisting of your event attendees and other active customers to customize future outreach and start your new year with a healthy, engaged audience.



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