

Is Your Internet Business Ready for Holiday Shoppers?

By Angela Wu

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Okay, I confess: I can be a terrible procrastinator when it comes to shopping for the holidays. I don't much like fighting my way through crowded shopping malls. So, instead, I'm ready - even willing - to surf the web looking for the perfect gift.

And I'm not the only one. According to one article from Internet.com, experienced web buyers found online shopping more satisfactory than traditional 'brick-and-mortar' stores or catalog shopping.**

It seems that Internet shopping is poised to become bigger each year. By preparing your online business for the throng of holiday shoppers, you too can pick up additional sales, both from new customers and from repeat business. Here are a few tips to help your business make the most of the holiday season ...

== Offer discounts and specials - free shipping, bonus gifts, whatever's appropriate for your business. Display these offers prominently on your website and make sure the ordering process is simple and obvious.

== Use your customer list! Email a special offer directly to previous customers and newsletter subscribers. They already know you and conversion rates are much higher than for first-time visitors.

== Redo your pay-per-click campaigns. Provided that your bids will still give you a reasonable return, bid on select holiday or gift-related key phrases to boost your visibility to holiday shoppers. Read the article, "How to Instantly Boost Traffic and Sales for Just

Pennies!" for more on pay-per-click search engines.
<http://onlinebusinessbasics.com/articles/payperclick.html>

== Encourage referrals. Put up a 'Tell a friend' button or script on your site so that visitors can let their friends know about your great holiday offer. Or offer a coupon and invite the customer to 'share' it with a friend. More on encouraging referral business is available in the article, "Building a Referral-Friendly Business":
<http://onlinebusinessbasics.com/articles/referrals.html>

== Send out a holiday-related press release. For instance, people love to hear heartwarming stories and acts of charity, particularly during the holiday season.

== Write holiday articles or stories that relate to your product or service. Distribute the article and encourage others to pass it on. At the end of the article, leave a small link or blurb about your business and the current holiday specials.

Sometimes all it takes is a few minutes' work to grab the attention of eager holiday shoppers! Have a safe, happy, and prosperous holiday season.

Angela is the editor of Online Business Basics, an exclusive newsletter for eBusiness beginners. She offers a 'no hype, no bull' approach to building a profitable Internet business. Every issue is packed with helpful tips and useful tools, specially selected to fit a beginner's shoestring budget. Visit her online today at <http://onlinebusinessbasics.com/article.html> OR <mailto:businessbasics@workyourleads.com> for a series of 10 free reports on building a business on the web.

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