

Online Etailers Predict a Green Holiday Season

By June Campbell

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E-tailers and other online merchants are dreaming of a green Christmas! Research findings indicate that ecommerce is predicted to boom this holiday season!

If your holiday marketing promotions are targeting Europeans, there's good news. According to Forester Research, this will be the strongest year yet for European online holiday shopping. It's predicted that 7.6 billion euros will be spent online, a substantial increase over last year's four billion euros.

The UK is expected to be a particularly strong area for online shopping in terms of money spent, but in terms of numbers, more Germans are expected to shop online than other Europeans.

If your promotions involve marketing to Australians, there's more good news. Australia's ninemsn MediaCentre commissioned research suggesting that Australians really, truly hate Christmas shopping. Lines, crowded stores and parking problems take their toll. One in three people get in arguments while shopping, and only 40% of people say they enjoy the shopping experience. Therefore, three out of five Australians who go online regularly found the idea of online shopping appealing. Two in five people with no online experience were interested in the idea.

In North America, Seattle's Atlas Institute conducted a study that shed light on North American's online shopping habits. Based holiday shopping trends in 2000 and 2001, online shoppers have much different patterns than their offline counterparts.

For example, weekdays, especially Wednesdays, are the most active for online shopping. The most active hours occur during work time, from noon to three, CST. In 2001, in the US, half of online shopping was done in the workplace. Wednesday, November 28 was the peak day for holiday online shopping.

Unlike offline shopping, holiday shopping tapers off the week prior to Christmas Day, and becomes quite busy shortly after Christmas. Surprisingly, January equals December in terms of online sales.

Jupiter Research quotes figures showing that as of November, 2002, online shoppers have become more patient, and are increasingly prepared to tolerate longer delivery times in exchange for free shipping and handling. 5346603400f consumers said they would be willing to wait, as compared to 1846605314f online shoppers who preferred to pick up their packages in an offline store.

In July 2002, eMarketer reported research showing a 47 percent rise in online retail spending in the US between 2000 and 2001. Abacus (a division of DoubleClick) reported that the percentage of shoppers buying online is up to 9 Most frequently purchased catalogue items are outdoor and recreational merchandise (41), followed by wearing apparel (36), and auto parts and accessories (29).

EMarketer also reported in August, that online retailers in Asia, Europe and North America, along with niche market e-tailors, were most successful at generating new business. Luxury items and high margin clothing are topping the list.

There you have it. If you're selling online, it's a smart move to study the trends and design your holiday promotions accordingly. Have a prosperous Holiday Season!

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