



Wagento Holiday Guide 2020



2020—much to our chagrin—has been a year unlike any other. Because of this, the simultaneously cherished and stress-filled holiday season will surely follow suit. It's more important than ever that businesses be prepared.

Don't get us wrong—this isn't necessarily a negative thing for companies navigating the hustle and bustle of Black Friday and beyond. While the prevalence of online shopping was already growing steadily, this year's unprecedented pandemic accelerated this rate even further. For businesses that have established themselves in the digital world, record numbers of online shoppers¹ can be expected with a diminishing sum of in-person shoppers.

Something else that sets 2020 apart from other years is what customers are increasingly recognizing as priorities. A brand's values can be just as important as its product or service. Sustainability, charity, and customer relations are just a few examples of these values that consumers assess when choosing between merchants.

In light of this season's heightened uncertainty, Wagento has created this special 2020 Holiday Guide to expand on a few key pillars at the heart of eCommerce and retail success. From humanitarian efforts and sustainability, to mobile commerce and personalization, Wagento covers and explains a variety of subjects for merchants to consider and implement into their own holiday readiness roadmap.

Humanitarian Holiday

Now more than ever—in the wake of a year riddled with social, economic, and political woes—human compassion and benevolence are qualities that stand out. As a company, it's important to be transparent about your core values, and show your customers what you care about. Attach a human heart to your brand, and strive to be a company that your customers respect. One way to do this is through charity. If your company is able, choose a fund or charity to donate to or support. If you're already invested in a particular charity, use this season to prop it up and draw further awareness. Show customers that your words match your actions and describe ways you're helping or getting involved. Customers will take notice of your generosity and kindness and it will result in greater customer loyalty.

Humanitarian Punch List

- ✓ Make meaningful connections with a charity or nonprofit you care about
- ✓ Share charity or fund info on social media
- ✓ Email prospects or former customers to let them know how to get involved
- ✓ Make meaningful connections with causes

Wagento + Mile in My Shoes

Mile in My Shoes² is a Minneapolis-based nonprofit dedicated to transforming lives and building community through running. Wagento is a longtime supporter of the organization, and in 2019, the funds raised from MageX went directly to Mile in My Shoes (MiMS) expenses. MiMS uses running as a way to connect with the homeless and at-risk populations of Minneapolis, while encouraging wellness, inspiring social action, and developing bonds among people of diverse backgrounds. “Change perceptions and change lives” has been the defining mission statement of MiMS since its conception, and we can see that it has certainly achieved both.

Season Of Sustainability

One of the ever-growing consideration points of shoppers is a company’s carbon footprint. While choosing not to prioritize the environment may not necessarily be detrimental to your business, exercising sustainable practices may solidify customer loyalty and promote a more eco-conscious brand. In fact, over 80 percent³ of people believe businesses should help the environment, while 77⁴ percent of millennials favor environmentally-conscious brands over ones that aren’t. All in all, customers appreciate brands that align with their values and will spend their money accordingly.

Sustainability Punch List

- ✔ Evaluate and adapt supply chain
- ✔ Identify resource wasting in the office and production process
- ✔ Research and implement sustainable practices for employees
- ✔ Share efforts and commitment on social platforms and beyond

Make It Personal

One of the best ways a company can attract and retain customers is to humanize its brand by harnessing personalization. From a merchant's products and services to its messaging and website structure, a personalized approach gives customers the sense of being valuable and heard.

When it comes to the products and shopping process itself, merchants can make it more personal by employing customer-specific product recommendations or specialized deals and packages. During this holiday season, think about which specials will be most memorable to customers and speak to what they value most.

Another important aspect of personalization is human connection and approachability. Customers will appreciate merchants who prioritize real time conversations and individual help and feedback. During a year where human interaction has been limited on a global scale, any sort of extra effort in this area will serve as a noticeable gesture that customers will appreciate.

Merchants can also take the step to humanize their content as well. Using a storytelling approach—in page descriptions, product details, case studies, and more—will give your content an added emotional appeal and realness that will resonate with customers. In some cases, retailers may want to tailor some of their content and promotional materials to reflect current events or social issues that their consumer base is passionate about.

Keep in mind, some eCommerce platforms, such as Magento, come with built-in tools to help with this entire personalization process!

Make It Personal Punch List

- ✓ Product recommendations
- ✓ Specialized deals + packages
- ✓ Timely Instagram stories
- ✓ Storytelling content approach
- ✓ User-generated content

Merry Mobile

Just as shopping has increasingly shifted online from its brick-and-mortar counterpart, so too has mobile commerce risen in popularity and scope. More people are making purchases on their mobile devices, which is why it's crucial for businesses to ensure that the shopping experience is optimized for desktop and phone alike.

Studies show that 85 percent⁵ of cart abandonment happens at the checkout, which results in \$1 trillion⁶ in abandoned checkouts per year in the United States. To solve this, merchants need to ensure that the purchase flow for mobile and checkout are running smoothly and customers can enjoy quick, easy transactions.

Avoid Cart Abandonment Punch List

- ✔ Guest checkout option
- ✔ Cart abandonment notifications
- ✔ Payment option variety
- ✔ Instant checkout option
- ✔ One-page checkout

Omnichannel Tidings

If you want to attract and retain as many customers as you can this season, make sure you supply a variety of ways to purchase and pick up your products! Going “omnichannel” has become the trend among retailers, which means creating shopping experiences across multiple, yet connected channels such as: online marketplaces, social commerce, brick-and-mortar, and cross-border. Shoppers value ease and accessibility, so merchants who offer multiple options to suit different needs and lifestyles will be rewarded with happy, loyal customers.

It’s also important for merchants to consider their shipping and pickup options. Depending on your business needs, you will need to decide between handling shipping and fulfillment in-house, outsourcing shipping and fulfillment to a third-party logistics (3PL) provider, or outsourcing shipping and fulfillment with a dropshipper. Regardless of which option you choose, make sure to use your eCommerce platform to automate the shipping process. Another increasingly popular fulfillment option is the buy-online-pick-up-in-store (BOPIS) model. Customers enjoy having the ability to browse and choose items online, even if they must come to the store for pickup.

One final pillar to consider is your return policy. Shoppers return 15 to 30 percent⁷ of online purchases during the holiday season. This means that, in order to maintain happy customers, it’s crucial to have a reasonable return process in place. You can automate the return process through your 3PL provider or simplify the process via a returns solution, such as Happy Returns.

Omnichannel Punch List

- ✔ Offer buy-online-pick-up-in-store (BOPIS) options
- ✔ Determine best shipping method to accommodate holiday rush
- ✔ Configure settings for optimized cross-border selling
- ✔ Establish an easy return process

Bibliography

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*Thank you for taking the time to look through our 2020 Holiday Guide!
Wishing you a season of joy and safety.*