

23rd

DECEMBER – USUALLY WAITROSE'S BUSIEST DAY OF THE YEAR

240,000

TURKEYS EXPECTED TO SELL AT WAITROSE THIS CHRISTMAS

10

YEARS THAT JL AND WR'S REAL CHRISTMAS TREES ARE GROWN BEFORE THEY GO ON SALE

36,101

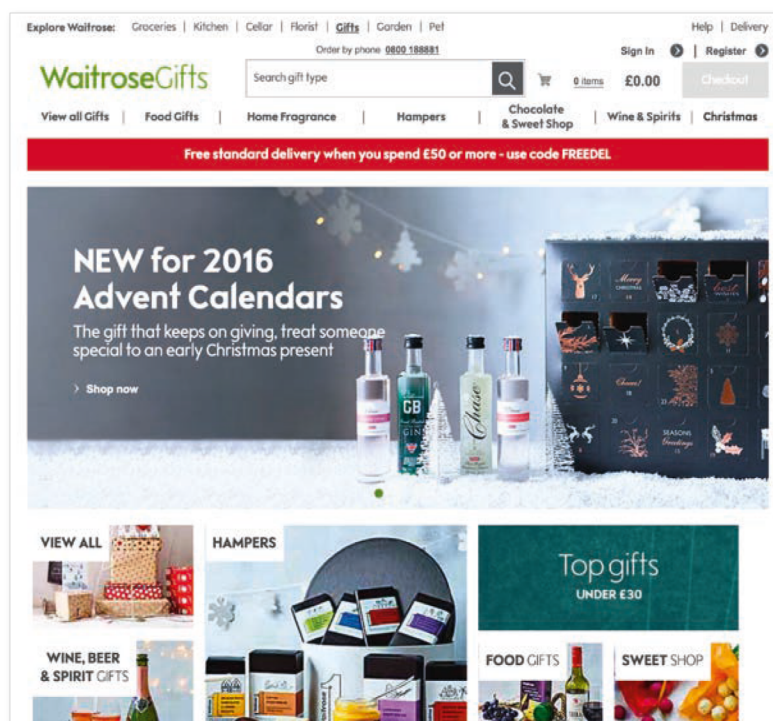
CALLS TAKEN BY JOHN LEWIS'S CONTACT CENTRES ON BLACK FRIDAY 2015

Drivers stepping it up a gear

After present-buying comes fridge-filling and the days in the run-up to Christmas are the busiest time of the year for Waitrose's customer delivery drivers.

Waitrose's Coulsdon Dotcom Fulfilment Centre (DFC) in south London is a 24/7 operation and this Christmas it's expecting to deliver 10,000 orders – containing more than half a million products – to customers in the week in the run-up to the big day.

The DFC exists solely to serve online customers within a 16-mile radius of the site and its aisles are built to accommodate three trolleys to save time and drive productivity. Sunil Pamnani, Department Manager, Retail Support, says: "In our busiest hour we will deliver up to four orders per minute between 9 and 10am on Friday 23 December – that's 200 items per minute! At our peak, deliveries per day will be more than 1,800."



We're all shopping online

The relentless nature of peak means Christmas shopping activity swiftly crosses into Clearance bargain hunting. Last year's online John Lewis Clearance launch on Christmas Eve generated 17.7% more sales in the first hour than in the previous year and it's likely to attract similar levels of interest this December.

It's down to the Online teams across the Partnership to ensure both divisions' websites are fully supported and include accurate pricing and stock levels throughout the peak period, so many Partners will be working round the clock.

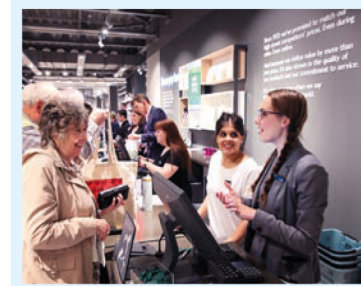
Christmas is a time to shine for Waitrose's specialist websites, with hits to WaitroseGifts and WaitroseCellar in particular set to soar. Ross Avery, Director, e-Commerce, Waitrose, says: "Through our specialist websites we're able to engage directly with customers on their subject of interest, providing advice and inspiration and offering a reliable, competitive delivery service right throughout peak." Online traffic levels at peak are 10 times the average of a 'normal' day.



Help is at hand

Helping Hands is back for 2016 and Partners from John Lewis Victoria, Group, Partnership Services and Waitrose's Bracknell head office have committed to swap their day job for a day or two in selling branches over peak.

This year, more than 1,420 Partners have signed up to support a John Lewis branch, while Waitrose will receive support from 766 Partners. Peak officially begins with next week's return of Black Friday and the first Helping Hands volunteers will be joining selling branches on Friday in John Lewis and on Saturday in Waitrose and helpers will support throughout the season until 2 January (John Lewis) and 6 January (Waitrose). 



DOWN ON THE FARM

It's not just our shops putting on the Christmas sparkle: the Leckford Farm Shop and Nursery will also soon be in the Christmas spirit, with 'Festive Weekends' planned for the 3 and 10 December. Twenty local suppliers have been invited, and there will also be music and craft activities for children.



DON'T MENTION THE SNOW

Retail has a love/hate relationship with snow at Christmas. A light dusting? Great: gets customers in the mood. Two feet of the stuff? Not great. England and Wales grinds to a halt (Scotland's made of sterner stuff). That's why our distribution centres and branches have the grit and shovels ready.

