

## Top 5 Christmas Sales Boosting Tips

### By Deborah M. Collier

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*Your strategy for boosting sales using the Internet will depend on the nature of the products and services you sell. More importantly, it will rely on how well you know your customers, your choice of marketing channels and how effectively and creatively you use them.*

*Deborah Collier, President at The Certificate in Online Business delivers her Top 5 Christmas Sales Boosting Tips.*

Christmas for marketers and business owners is an extremely challenging time of year. If you are a business-to-consumer company, it's more challenging to entice customers that your product is absolutely the best Christmas present choice or experience. If you are a business-to-business company, then dependent on that nature of your offering, you may find that your products and services are put on hold.

Understanding your customer values and needs is essential, not only for overall marketing strategy, but also for preparing your messaging, products and services in a way that engages them. Competitive pricing, effective merchandising, as well as web site and customer service experience, are key to the success of your Christmas sales.

#### **1) Offer the right products at the right for a competitive price**

When it comes to selling over the Internet, sales are not completely dependent on price, however bargain hunting is a key driver of online sales. Discover your competition, and either offer a competitive price that doesn't diminish your brand, or offer value-added incentives and bundled packages. You may wish to consider employing a third-party price comparison tool on your web site, if your product prices are competitively priced against your competitors. It's widely known that non-brand loyal customers will use the search engines to find the best prices. Effective web merchandising is also key. The ability to present complimentary, discovery or competing brand products at the right time in the shopping process will maximise sales in an online store.

#### **2) Invest in web site customer experience**

Customer experience in web site terms is about ensuring that your customers are captured quickly enough once they reach the web site. You have 4 seconds to grab a customer's attention, and it takes 20 seconds for them to abandon a web site with uninteresting, badly presented or irrelevant information. You should engage your customer through education, entertainment or allowing them to interact and offer opinion. During the festive period capturing a potential customer's attention quickly, is even more challenge. The right product offers, information, presentation of text, findability and navigation are all key to success.

### 3) **Employ the right promotional tactics for your products and services**

Employing the right tactics for marketing, whether this be through digital or non-digital channels, is key to the success of any campaign strategy. When it comes to successful communication and advertising of your products or services, it's all about the perfect timing and frequency of engaging messages to your target audience. It's essential that you know all about your customer and what they will be doing during the run-up to Christmas. Will they be going out less? Will they be out shopping or discovering products online? Will they be attending parties? What events will they be interested in? What will they be reading? What will they be searching for? You can then align your digital marketing strategy around that. Remember however, to ensure that what you do offline is echoed online and vice-versa.

### 4) **Ensure your terms & conditions are user-friendly**

Internet shoppers are not lawyers. They are concerned with how and when your product or service will be delivered to them, cancellation and refund policies, security and privacy of their credit card and personal data, for example. They need to feel that they are safe hands and cared about. Ensure that the language is easy to understand, and clearly presented. The terms and conditions should appear on the checkout page and also be clearly accessible independently on the web site. This will support your sales process, avoid customer frustration and strain on your customer services team.

### 5) **Bite the bullet on delivery costs**

If you own or run an online shop, it's important to ensure that any physical products are delivered safely and securely in time for Christmas. Ensure that you have made adequate provisions and offer a choice of delivery options and schedules. Be careful however, not to make delivery costs too high. Consider absorbing the costs of delivery yourself, or offer special incentives. For example, "Free shipping on orders of £50 or more". Your costs per transaction may be higher, but if your products are desirable and you market them correctly, you are more likely to increase your sales significantly.

## **Deborah M. Collier**

### **President & Chief Marketing Officer – The Certificate in Online Business**

Deborah is the founder of the Certificate in Online Business™ (COB) series of globally-recognised industry qualifications, which were established in 2008. She developed the reputation of the programs among well-known brands gaining testimonials from Directors and managers at government organisations and leading companies such as Mars, Schneider Electric, House of Fraser and Procter & Gamble. Deborah leads the strategic direction of the training programs and company. In addition, she oversees marketing, partnerships and licensing.



Follow Deborah on Twitter: [twitter.com/deborahmcollier](https://twitter.com/deborahmcollier) Learn from Deborah and her team: [COBCertified.com](http://COBCertified.com)

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