



**How to make your
ads stand out during
the holidays.**





Introduction.



The holiday season marks a big opportunity for small businesses, but, with almost every brand competing for the attention of holiday shoppers, cutting through the noise is no easy feat.

So how do you differentiate your holiday ads from your competitors? What makes an attention-grabbing ad?

In this eBook we cover the fundamentals of successful holiday and Christmas marketing ads: the current landscape at a glance; what makes a high-performing holiday ad; how to plan your holiday advertising strategy; and tips to make your ads stand out.



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Holiday spending and advertising by the numbers.



8 in 10

[8 in 10 holiday shoppers globally](#) are influenced by the internet before making a purchase.



27-30%

In 2023, [27-30% of retail sales](#) in Australia occurred online.



14%

Retailers are cautiously optimistic about the holiday season, with [14% expecting sales to increase by 5% or more](#) leading up to Christmas.



\$78B

Australians [are predicted to spend \\$78 billion](#) in the lead up to Christmas this year, an increase of 0.4% from last year.



71%

71% of retailers expect [higher levels of discounting in 2023](#) than in the pre-Christmas period in 2022.



33%

33% of Australian [consumers plan to increase their online shopping](#) this festive season, intending to make 72% of their purchases online.



The 5 elements of high-performing holiday ads.

For an ad to be effective it must command attention, be memorable and tap into a want or need of your target audience. When there are several businesses advertising relevant products or services, making a unique, memorable impression is essential.

Whether you're a cafe owner, landscaper, florist, cleaner or anything in between, your ads should provide a compelling reason why someone should choose you over your competitors and take the next step. This comes down to five key elements:

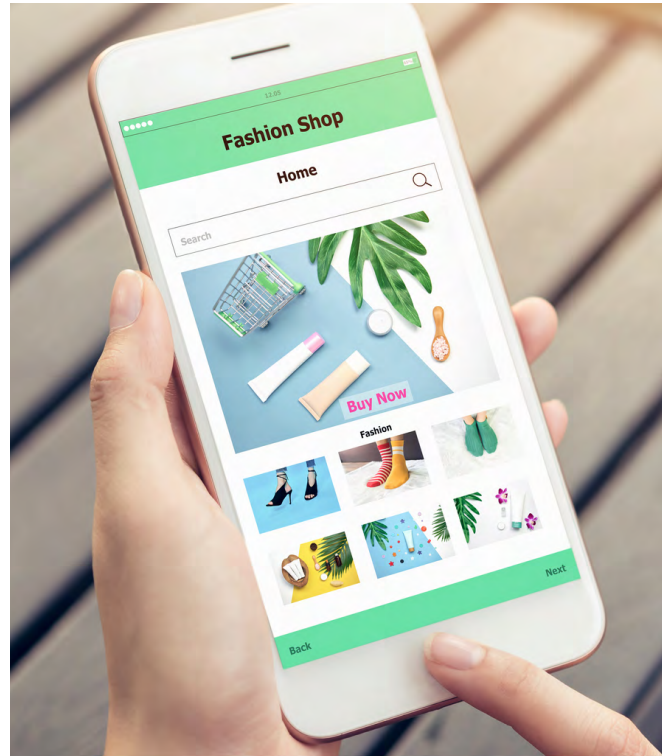


1. The offer.

It's likely there are multiple businesses in your area advertising similar products or services to your business, so highlighting these alone isn't enough to create an engaging proposition.

To capture attention and drive clicks on your ad, you'll need an engaging offer. Depending on your business, this could be:

- A flat percentage discount
- A 'spend \$X get X% off' deal
- A 2-for-1 offer or package deal
- A free gift or bonus with purchase
- Limited-edition holiday products or services
- Same-day service or delivery
- An extended warranty.



2. The copy.

This is where you really have an opportunity to sell yourself – but keep it punchy. Your ad text should be short and to-the-point. Include a hook that compels your reader to find out more.

For example, if you're a hairstylist advertising a salon offer for the new year, your headline might be something like: '2024: The year of no bad hair days.'

Try to avoid clichés and overused phrases like 'Save money' or 'Click here'. Get creative. Think about how you can convey your message in a unique and memorable way.



The 5 elements of high-performing holiday ads.



3. The look.

Visual creative includes imagery, videos, your logo and any other visual elements which make up your ad.

Successful creative communicates the spirit of your brand in a split second and stops your audience from scrolling past your business.

Keep these tips in mind:

- Highlight your key offer with a button, banner, feature typography or contrasting colours
- Include your logo
- Use eye-catching colours and imagery, but keep it consistent with your branding
- Use the [recommended format and aspect ratio for images and videos](#)
- Add movement with gifs or video.



The 5 elements of high-performing holiday ads.



4. The call to action.

Your call to action (CTA) is a short snippet of copy that directs your reader to take an action, such as click on a link, call a phone number or sign up to something. Keep your CTA short, concise, specific and action oriented.

For example:

Get your offer >

Claim your deal >

Learn more >

Find out how >

Get a quote >

Book online >



5. The targeting.

You can have the most compelling ad in the world, but if your potential customers aren't seeing it, it's not going to achieve the results you want.

Targeting is one of the most important aspects of a festive season marketing campaign because it ensures your ads are reaching the right people.

Targeting options differ slightly depending on the advertising channel you're using, but some of the general types to be aware of include:

- **Demographic targeting:** This includes details such as age range, gender, location, job/industry and marital status
- **Interest targeting:** This involves targeting a specific interest, such as fitness and health
- **Keyword targeting:** When you target certain keywords, your ads show up when people search for those keywords or on pages that relate to those keywords, depending on your ad type
- **Placement targeting:** You can choose to target people based on the sites they visit
- **Retargeting:** You can also target custom audiences based on who has already visited your website.



Planning your holiday advertising strategy.



Whether you're running a Christmas campaign, capitalising on the Black Friday and Cyber Monday sales or ramping up your online ads for any other peak holiday period, good planning is essential to creating targeted and effective advertising.

Here's how to get started:



Define your goals.

Be clear on what you want to achieve from your holiday advertising and how you'll measure success. For example, you might set a goal to:

- Improve sales by X% year on year
- Increase quote enquiries by X%
- Increase traffic to your website by X%
- Increase subscriptions by X%
- Grow your customer base by X%



Planning your holiday advertising strategy.



Pinpoint your customer persona.

Think about the types of customers you already have and build a general picture of their traits and profile. These characteristics include:

- **Age range**
- **Gender**
- **Location**
- **Job**
- **Hobbies/interests**
- **Marital status**

Once you've defined a persona for your typical customer, it's time to get inside their head and consider their habits and motivations. Ask yourself the following questions:

- What platforms or channels does my customer use?
- What motivates my customer to make a purchase? (For example, price, speed, quality etc.)
- What would stop my customer from making a purchase?
- What problems does my customer need solved?
- What questions does my customer need answered?
- What does my customer want to know about my business?

Define your customer persona or personas early on and it will be much easier to choose your ad channels, target your audience and create a relevant offer, ad copy and visual creative.



Analyse your competitors.

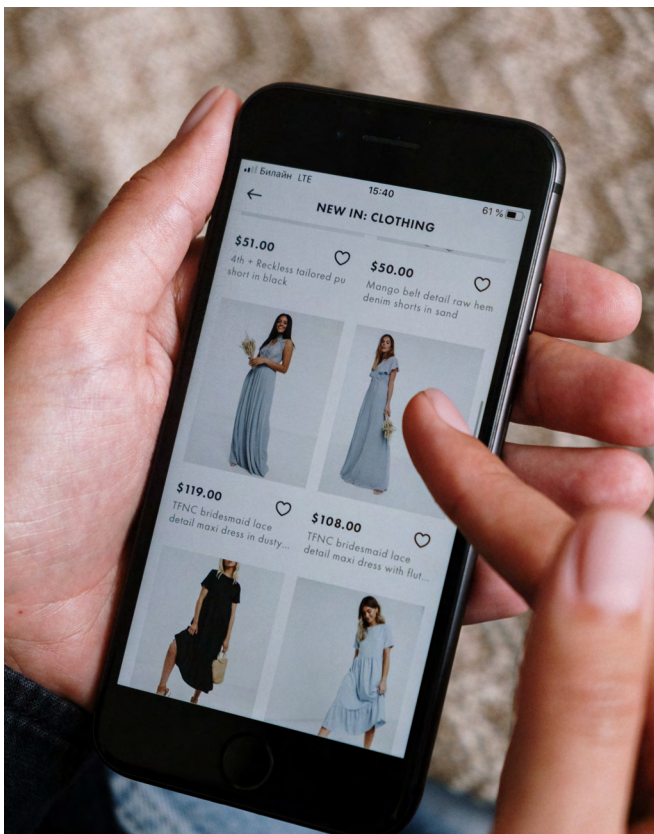
To outperform your competitors, you first need to understand their approach. Take a look at the holiday ads of your key competitors, or other small businesses with comparable products or services.

What platforms or channels do they use? What offers do they make? How have people engaged with their ads? What do they do well and what can they improve on?

From there, think about how you can go above and beyond to lead the charge. This could be by making a more compelling offer, using more engaging creative and copy, advertising on more relevant channels or any combination of these factors.



Tips to make effective, attention-grabbing ads.



Once you've planned out your holiday advertising strategy, it's time to work on your ads.

Get started with these best-practice tips:

- Direct, short language and WIIFM ('Free install by Christmas')
- Social proof



Address your audience directly.

Readers are more likely to be attracted to ads that address them personally. Use the active voice to make it clear you're speaking directly to your audience.

Passive voice: Joe's Mowing customers have healthy, green lawns year-round.

Active voice: Get your summer back. Let Joe's Mowing handle your weekly mowing, weeding and maintenance.



Include a clear WIIFM or What's In It For Me.

The overarching goal is for your audience to notice your ad and say, "That is what I need". To achieve this, you need to provide a specific reason or benefit.

Depending on what and why you're advertising, your customers' WIIFM might be cost savings, exceptional service, speed of delivery, a product or service that solves a specific problem or a mix of these factors.



Keep it short and sweet.

Most online users' impressions last less than 2.5 seconds, so you need to make an impression quickly. Keep your ad copy short and succinct, and if your ad contains a video or gif, make sure the most impactful elements are covered in the first few seconds.



Tips to make effective, attention-grabbing ads.



Use social proof.

With more than two-thirds of Australian consumers reading online reviews before making a purchase, you can't afford to ignore the value of customer feedback.

Where ad space allows, include a glowing testimonial to bolster your credibility and provide social proof that your audience should take the next step. You can also validate your claims by adding relevant customer data – for example, 'See why XX number of customers have joined in the last week'.



Tap into emotions.

Studies have shown that emotionally driven advertising is more likely to be remembered and have a lasting impact. As American poet Maya Angelou wrote: "I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

Consider how you can use emotion to make your audience feel moved or connected to your brand and your ad. Emotion-driven holiday themes to consider include:

- Togetherness
- Time with family
- Giving back
- Relaxation and unwinding
- New beginnings
- Celebration



Test and learn.

Ultimately, designing the best attention-grabbing ads for your business is a process of testing and learning.

While the best-practice tips above will help you start on the right foot, be prepared to try different approaches and fine-tune your approach over time.



Wrapping up.



Thoughtfully crafted, eye-catching advertising goes a long way in getting the best return on your holiday marketing spend – but it does take time and effort.

If you need a hand anywhere along the way, **Yellow Pages** has an award-winning suite of [digital marketing services](#) that get results for small businesses all over Australia.

From pay-per-click advertising to digital display and social ads, our team can help you grow your business through a clear, targeted advertising strategy.