

4 critical takeaways from holiday 2014 for 2015

The holidays may have passed, but before you close the book on 2014, take a moment to leverage these shopping insights to boost your bottom line in 2015.

Make buying as frictionless as possible

Shoppers go online because it's quick and easy. Always keep this motivation top of mind as you improve your shopping experience. If your current website (or a proposed feature) doesn't make buying painless, then it needs to be scrapped or improved.

Put your best deal forward, at the right time

Everyone loves deals, but timing is a key factor in their effectiveness. Offer your best promotions during Thanksgiving and Cyber Monday, when consumers are most likely to only buy if they have a deal.

The graph below shows the promotions that would convince buyers to purchase more online in 2015. While free shipping is obviously a must-have, you may also consider a less costly promotion, like free local-pickup.



Action Steps for Retailers

1. Be your own toughest critic. Always ask whether an **experience or feature makes shopping and buying easier**, faster and painless.
2. Key elements of an optimized **mobile** experience:
 - Smooth transition from email to site
 - Quickly loading pages that fit small screens
 - Big images and legible text
 - Easily clickable links, without enlarging
 - "Remember me" auto-login
3. Make your **best deals available Thanksgiving through Cyber Monday** to maximize your share of the deal-driven crowd. Prioritize **free shipping**.
4. Offer more ways to **make items gift-ready**, even when shipping to the buyer.

Lessons from the 2014 holidays apply year-round, especially with the mobile experience. Is it quick, simple and smooth? It not only should be—it needs to be.

Hayley Silver

Vice President, Bizrate Insights

23% of online purchases were on mobile devices

Mobile and tablet purchases represented nearly a quarter of all online purchases last Thanksgiving, with 1/3 of those coming from mobile phones. Furthermore, over 47% of consumers read their email on a smart phone. In light of this upward trend, make sure you are optimizing your mobile experience.

About the studies in this report:

1. Bizrate Insights/Forrester Q4 Holiday Shopping Study 2014, November 21 – December 8, 2014. n=32,259
2. Bizrate Insights Holiday Retrospective Study 2014, January 7-14, 2015. n=6,611
3. Bizrate Insights Gift question. November 1 – December 31, 2014. n=5,205,506