

# 33 Marketing Holiday Ideas

## Get Your Holiday Sales Sizzling!

The holidays are coming, and we all know what that means for retailers. But retailers aren't the only ones who can get in on the holiday shopping game. Whether you own a store, restaurant, service provider or even a B2B company, smart marketing can boost your holiday sales, too. Here are 33 marketing ideas to get your holiday sales sizzling.

1. Invite B2B customers to a thank-you dinner or other special event.
2. Invite B2B prospects to a "getting to know you" party.
3. Stand out by holding your holiday party before Thanksgiving, or after the New Year when customers are more business-minded and thinking ahead to 2015 budgets.
4. Stand out (and save money) by holding a holiday breakfast or luncheon instead of a full-scale evening party.
5. Join forces with other small business owners in the area to hold a weekend "sidewalk sale."
6. Cross-promote your business with cards, brochures and flyers in complementary businesses' locations.
7. Put discounts or coupons for other nearby businesses' products or services in customers' shopping bags, and have them do the same for you.
8. Hold a special sale for your best customers only, at a time when you're normally closed.
9. Choose a charity to get involved with, and get customers involved too. Offer a discount or free gift card for customers who volunteer a certain amount of time to the charity or donate a certain amount.
10. Join other businesses to host a gift-giving tree. Find a local charity, put a tree in the business district or shopping area, post Christmas wishes on the tree, and have customers pick a wish and buy the desired gift.
11. Exhibit at holiday shows. See if local crafts fairs or gift shows accept commercial vendors and, if so, rent a booth.
12. Hold a Black Friday sale for your B2B business. (It doesn't have to be on the real "Black Friday"—pick another Friday during the holiday season.)
13. Send real holiday cards, not e-cards. They're more likely to get noticed.
14. Send Thanksgiving or New Year's cards. They're also more likely to get noticed than cards sent during the Christmas season.
15. Hold a holiday open house for prospects. More relaxed than a regular party, it offers an opportunity for them to drop by at their convenience and learn more about your business.
16. Capture customers through their kids. Hold a kids' contest like a make-your-own-ornament contest or holiday coloring contest. Give a big prize or just give everyone small prizes, like candy canes.
17. Make any business kid-friendly by providing a kids' space with toys or books to keep tired, fussy children occupied while parents shop.
18. Get listed in local bloggers' holiday gift guides. It's too late for most print gift guides, but there's still time to get your products or services spotlighted by relevant bloggers. Reach out with a free sample.
19. Feed the crowd. Hand out free cookies or beverages to energize tired shoppers.

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20. Make them comfy. Provide seating so shoppers' companions can sit down if they don't want to shop.
21. Give it away. If your business is located in a mall or shopping area, station an employee outside to give away free samples of your product or service to passersby.
22. Hire masseuses to give shoppers free foot or shoulder rubs in your store if they buy something.
23. Have Santa come to your business. If you're in a shopping district, join with other businesses to hire a Santa. You can even set up a photo booth and have photos taken with Santa and ask for donations.
24. Hold a "12 Days of..." sale, event or contest. Give away a different prize every day, offer a different discount every day or spotlight a different product every day.
25. Give away useful items with each purchase, like good-quality tissue paper or ribbons for gift-wrapping. Put your business's name on it and you've got a marketing tool, too.
26. Give away gifts with purchase. Offering items that can serve as stocking stuffers makes customers more likely to buy so they can get the gift.
27. Try a two-for-one sale. This works great for subscription items; offer customers a free gift subscription or half-price gift subscription when they renew their own membership or subscription.
28. Get personal. Instead of holding a big party for clients, take them out to lunch individually during the holidays (or early in the New Year if they're too busy).
29. Provide entertainment. Hire musicians to play in your store or restaurant, or right outside to attract customers in.
30. Display holiday-themed art by local artists in your restaurant, coffee shop or bar and offer it for sale.
31. Sell gift cards for shoppers who can't make up their minds. Be sure to keep them by the point-of-sale as a last minute impulse buy.
32. Create personalized food gifts by printing your business logo on M&Ms, candy bars, cookies or candy wrappers.
33. Print a personalized calendar to give out to your clients. A restaurant could include photos of popular dishes; a dog wash could showcase cute dog breeds.