The Holiday Playbook
For Small Businesses
2020
Welcome

This Holiday Playbook from TikTok is a tactical marketing guide to help you understand your customers, plan effectively, and drive sales this holiday season.

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The Holiday Season Opportunity
Here we are!

It’s the holiday season, and a busy period for shopping and gifting. This is a great time to reach in-market shoppers, attract new customers, and build relationships with your buyers that last into next year and beyond.

This **Holiday Playbook** from TikTok will be packed with tips and tricks to maximize your marketing opportunity during the busy holiday season, and help you end 2020 on a high.
However, things are different in 2020.

Many industries have been turned upside down as a result of the pandemic, and the global lockdown. Consumers and businesses alike have been forced to adapt to new realities - such as remote working, supply chain challenges, flexible product options, and shifts in the way we communicate with our audiences.
It’s specifically tough for small businesses.

When it comes to operating your business, we understand that you face unique challenges, which may have heightened this year:

1. **Getting your brand discovered.**
   Many small businesses often struggle with building awareness, especially in a noisy ad space around the holidays.

2. **Reaching new customers.**
   The biggest challenge reported by two thirds of small business leaders. It’s hard to know where to invest to maximize reach and impact.

3. **Navigating the digital landscape.**
   Keeping up with trends and new marketing opportunities is tricky when you’re wearing a lot of hats.
Your audience has changed too.

67% of US consumers say their perception of brands has been greatly impacted by the pandemic. Just over half of holiday shoppers are likely to be more financially conscious, focusing more on value than ever before.

70% of people globally have said their mobile phone usage has gone up during the pandemic – making online shopping an even larger focus this year.
And those changes carry into holiday shopping behaviour.

As people spend more time on their phones, they’re also using their phones to browse and shop.

81%

of buyers said they planned to shop online through the end of 2020⁴.

52%

of buyers say they’ve shifted more of their spending to online compared to earlier this year⁴.

60%

of consumers shopped via a mobile app⁴.
There’s a ton of opportunity for those that lean in.

Audiences want to buy from brands that help them discover new things in a personalized and relevant way. They are open to new brands too – the pandemic has spotlighted the need to support local and smaller businesses – globally, many consumers have tried a different brand or shopped at a different retailer during the pandemic.

30% of users shopping from new brands this year⁶

62% of US consumers will prioritize “shopping small” when businesses in their area reopen⁷

75% of US consumers plan to support small businesses more often⁸
In summary

This holiday season represents a huge opportunity to jump-start your business and drive revenue.

So we’ve created this tactical marketing guide to help you understand your customers, plan effectively, and drive sales this holiday season.

We will show you why and how TikTok can help your business get discovered on our platform - and help drive sales - through meaningful connections with your existing and potential customers.
How to Use the Holidays to Jump-Start Your Business
Be Strategic to Be Successful

The best way to exploit the upcoming shopping period is to plan effectively. Although it might feel like it’s a little late to be planning for the holidays, it’s still more than enough time to build a marketing plan.
Here’s what we recommend:

1. **Identify key events you want to focus on.**
   The key to a successful holiday period is knowing what key dates matter to your business.

2. **Build your shopfront.**
   Customers want to buy from brands that help them discover new products, find what they need easily, and check-out through a frictionless mobile shopping experience.

3. **Establish your offers and promotions.**
   With audiences more financially conscious than they might have been previously, sales can make a difference.

4. **Be clear on your goals.**
   It’s important to know what you’re hoping to achieve from your marketing spend, so you can optimize towards that.

5. **Launch your campaign.**
   Make it easier on yourselves by using assets you already have, and leveraging smart creative tools.

Let’s walk through each one in turn.
Identify key events you want to focus on.

It’s worth planning out the dates that matter to you as a business. The calendar below outlines the key shopping days in the latter part of the year.

**KEY DATES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NOV 20</td>
<td>Holiday Shopping Season Begins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOV 27</td>
<td>Black Friday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOV 28</td>
<td>Small Business Saturday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOV 30</td>
<td>Cyber Monday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEC 21</td>
<td>Last Ship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEC 26-31</td>
<td>Postseason Sales &amp; Gift Card Shopping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JAN 1</td>
<td>New Year’s Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JAN 1-31</td>
<td>New Year’s Sales &amp; Resolutions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Build your shopfront.

Removing friction between your customer and the products they want is key. Ensure your site is easy to navigate, complete with a search function to help users find what they need quickly.

40% of buyers said an easy-to-navigate website made their online shopping experience a positive one.\(^1\)

75% of consumers expect retailers to have product availability information before visiting in store.\(^10\)

42% of holiday shoppers wished that retailers did a better job of sharing inventory online.\(^11\)

TikTok Tip

Within product pages, clear photos and accurate descriptions can help customers make informed purchases when they can’t visit you in person. This also means making sure your website is mobile-optimized, contains the relevant products you want to promote in 2020, accurate stock levels for all products.
Establish your offers and promotions.

This year, people are likely to be more price-sensitive than ever before, so be ready with offers and promotions where possible.

Where possible, put your cost-saving offers front and center in your marketing efforts.

TikTok Tip

Use a TikTok specific promo code like “TikTok2020” to help track all sales from TikTok!
Be clear on your goals.

This is so important. 44% of merchants anticipate that their main challenge with holiday planning will be figuring out their marketing strategy.1

Research has shown that when small businesses focus on both driving awareness of their brand as well as driving sales, they see greater overall success in meeting their key performance goals, and make meaningful connections with their customers.
Here’s an easy way to think about the journey a potential customer takes with your brand:

**Discovery.**
Start by building an audience and make sure they can find your brand online.

**Consideration.**
Your audience browses your product offering and evaluate whether your products hold value for them.

**Purchase.**
They decide to buy something. Now you’ve got yourself a customer!
An Introduction to TikTok and How It Can Help
What is TikTok?

TikTok is the leading destination for mobile short-form video.

We are an entertainment platform for joyful, creative, and diverse experiences.
Your Audience is on TikTok

And they are engaged. Compared to other platforms, users spend more time on TikTok per session than Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and Pinterest.

And most importantly, TikTokers love to shop, share thoughts on recent purchases, and discuss the online consumer experience.
TikTok can help address your core challenges.

**Getting your brand discovered**
Discovery is easy on TikTok. 52% of users said they find new products from ads on TikTok. Use TikTok to tell connect with your potential customers, by telling compelling stories that drive awareness and engagement.

**Reaching new customers**
TikTok provides an opportunity to engage with audiences that aren’t on other platforms. For example, 50% of our audience aren’t on Instagram.

**Navigating the digital landscape**
We have a suite of tools and resources to help you each step of the way - from planning your campaign, to building your creative, to launching your campaign, and measuring results, so getting started has never been easier.
Let’s get you set up.

When brands show up on TikTok, it’s not advertising; it’s connection, inspiration, co-creation & entertainment.

We want to make it as easy for you to be part of our community. Let’s start by talking through the steps to get your account set up.

- Download TikTok. If you haven’t already, what are you waiting for?

- Sign up for a TikTok Ads Manager account at tiktok.com/business

- Define your strategy

- Make your first ad

- Launch your campaign!
Getting Your Campaigns Up and Running on TikTok
TikTok has the tools to help achieve your marketing objectives.

Appearing in the For You feed between user content, TikTok’s In-feed Ads are engaging video experiences that can be targeted to specific audiences, and includes a range of calls-to-action (CTAs). It’s great for building awareness, growing your audience and engaging with our community.
TikTok’s Creative Tools

TikTok’s suite of tools enable you to embrace the creativity and authenticity of the TikTok community. If you think you’d need an expensive video editing team to run ads on TikTok, think again: creating captivating ads for TikTok’s self-serve platform is a cinch!

With these tools, you’re able to make fun and engaging videos simply and easily with just the photos and videos you have on hand. We have 4 creative tools to help you get started:

**Video Templates**
A wide range of video templates that utilize photo and video assets. Easy to use with limited flexibility in creative execution.

**Smart Video**
An A.I.-driven creative tool that adds editing and visual treatments to existing video and photo assets.

**Smart Video Soundtrack**
An easy-to-use tool that adds royalty-free music to existing video assets, and adjusts the levels of original audio and music.

**Automated Creative Optimization**
A creative delivery tool that automatically generates combinations of your creative assets for mid-campaign optimizations and additional creative insights.
Use Our Holiday Templates

1. Log into TikTok’s ad platform at [ads.tiktok.com](http://ads.tiktok.com)
2. Click Assets from the main navigation menu at the top of the screen and then select ‘Creative’
3. Click the ‘Create’ button and the select ‘Use Video Template’ to access the holiday and general video templates
Make the First TikTok for Your Business

TikTok’s creative tools use your existing photo and video assets, rather than building your creative from scratch. While we don’t provide stock imagery or video yet, it’s easy to turn your brand assets into TikToks!

PHOTO
Ideal photo assets are 9:16 aspect ratio but some cropping tools do exist for adapting additional aspect ratios.

VIDEO
Ideal video assets are 9:16 aspect ratio and less than :30. Sound and music are not required, but strongly recommended!

MUSIC
Sound and music assets are not required but the custom sounds and music you own can be integrated if desired.

TikTok Tip
We recommend having at least 8–10 photo and video assets to get started.
For each objective, you should tailor your creative to hit these goals:

1. **Discovery (raise awareness of your business)**

   No one is more of an expert on your business than you, so think about how you introduce your business and products to friends and family. Define the ‘elevator pitch’ for your business: highlight the unique attributes of your brand and products when crafting your ad. Think about telling the story of your brand – why was it founded? What does your brand stand for and believe in? How do your products deliver on these values?

2. **Consideration (stand out amongst competitive products)**

   Once a customer has determined a need for a type of product, they are typically evaluating different brands that offer similar solutions. Make sure your products offer the best solution for what they are looking for, through captions and/or voiceover in your ad. Look to include selling points around the following areas (where relevant):
   - Performance
   - Cost
   - Value (Performance + Cost)
   - Design attributes
   - Variety and customization

3. **Purchase (where your audience become customers)**

   While you should make sure your ads look as native to the platform as possible, don’t be afraid to include a strong call-to-action (CTA) that shows the user what to do next if they are interested in your brand. You can use captions and/or voiceover to highlight your CTA, as well as TikTok’s native CTA button that lives in the app. Make sure you highlight key elements of the purchase and delivery experience that could be enticing for customers, such as:
   - Price
   - Delivery time and cost
   - Giftwrapping service (if available)
   - Discounts and promotions
Find your voice.

Creative is the most important part of your campaign, so it’s worth spending time to get it right. Here are some tips:

1. **Introduce your brand:** The key is to create for your audience first. You can tell an engaging and real story by just using existing video, and applying text over the top. It’s doesn’t have to be complicated – the best ads on TikTok are the simple ones that feel real.

2. **Show your personality:** Demonstrate your business’s personality through colors, sounds, and visual effects that show off who you are. Remember to weave in brand benefits as a soft sell, to make it feel less like an “ad”. Spend time thinking about what your brand would look like on TikTok, and play with it.

3. **Demonstrate your value:** It’s always a good idea to teach your audience something new, and include a strong call-to-action (CTA) to your website. Audiences on TikTok are highly engaged, focused, and have sound on, so it’s a real opportunity to engage them while they are leaned-in.

By creating something that feels native, and uses sound, your message will feel authentic and more likely to be engaged with. **Test, learn and have fun with it!**
Holiday Creative Ideas

For inspiration around creative themes, check out what’s popping on the platform around the holiday period.

#itsblackfriday
1.2B views

#shopping
5.5B views

#blackfriday
394M views

#meetmyfam
3.4B views

#lastminutexmas
4.6B views

#gift
4.4B views

#christmasmakeup
135.2M views

#winterishere
5.3B views
Examples of Campaigns
Across Different Objectives

GOOD DYE YOUNG
Black Friday sales featuring product ranges

BLAVIA SKINCARE
A New Year’s message spotlighting a skincare routine

BEHAVE
Holiday gifting and New Years messaging
Set Up Your Campaign

You have your creative ready to go - congratulations! Now it’s time to get your campaign set up in TikTok. Here are a few key terms to help:

Advertising Objective: What you want people to do when they see your ad. This is the first thing you’ll pick when creating your campaigns.

Audiences: Who your campaigns will be displayed to in the TikTok marketing feed. You’ll select your audience during the Ad Group step of the campaign creation process.

Flight Dates: When your campaigns will run. You’ll also be able to define your campaign dates during the Ad Group step of the campaign creation process.

Bid Range: Your optimal range will vary based on variables such as audiences, category and creative quality. We’ve provided an estimated range which you can test as a starting point on the next page.

Creatives: These are ads that you just created. Discovery creatives are focused on introducing customers to your brand, whereas Purchase creatives will educate customers on your product(s), and push them to buy.
Our Recommended Approach

Use this handy plan to help you plan out your holiday campaign:

1. Discovery:
   Build your audiences and test winning strategies in the run up to the holidays.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Audiences</th>
<th>Creatives</th>
<th>Flight Dates</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Starting Bid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location, Age, Gender</td>
<td>Brand Discovery: 3-5</td>
<td>Nov 1-23</td>
<td>Video Views (2 seconds)</td>
<td>$5-$7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location, Age, Interest, or Behavior</td>
<td>Brand Discovery: 3-5</td>
<td>Nov 1-24</td>
<td>Traffic</td>
<td>$3-$5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Consideration:
   Leverage learnings and build engagement around key holiday dates.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Audiences</th>
<th>Creatives</th>
<th>Flight Dates</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Starting Bid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Best Performing from #1</td>
<td>Product Focused: 3-5</td>
<td>Nov 25-28</td>
<td>Traffic</td>
<td>$5-$7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ad Engagers (Impressions)</td>
<td>Product Focused: 3-5</td>
<td>Nov 25-28</td>
<td>Conversion: Product Page Views</td>
<td>$5-$7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website Visitors</td>
<td>Product Focused: 3-5</td>
<td>Nov 25-28</td>
<td>Conversion: Product Page Views</td>
<td>$5-$7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Purchase:
   Drive sales during the gifting & shopping season.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Audiences</th>
<th>Creatives</th>
<th>Flight Dates</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Starting Bid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Best Performing from #1 and #2</td>
<td>Brand Discovery: Best Performing 3-5</td>
<td>Nov 29-Dec 26</td>
<td>Conversion: Product Page Views</td>
<td>$5-$7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best Performing from #1 and #2</td>
<td>Product Focused: Best Performing 3-5</td>
<td>Key Dates</td>
<td>Conversion: Add to Cart</td>
<td>$8-$12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Checklists & Resources
That was a lot of information!
Let’s run through some key learnings to make sure you hit the ground running.

To get started, here’s what we recommend:

- Identify key events and dates that are important to your business
- Build your shopfront, and make sure the shopping experience is as seamless as possible
- Establish your offers and promotions, putting them front and center to inspire purchase
- Set your campaign goals, and decide what you would like to drive with your marketing spend

Then, get your campaign set up!

- Download TikTok and spend time experiencing the platform
- Sign up for a TikTok Ads Manager account at tiktok.com/business/en
- Set up your Shopify app, if you have a Shopify site
- Define your strategy: are you driving awareness, sales...or both?
- Make your first ad using our helpful templates and creative tools
- Launch your campaign and track performance!
### Questions to ask while planning:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Campaign name:</th>
<th>Key Dates</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**What are my campaign objectives?**

- Discovery
  - Reach

- Consideration
  - Traffic
  - App Installs
  - Video Views

- Conversions

**How will I measure them?**

-             

**Who am I trying to reach?**

-             

**Is my website ready for shoppers?**

-             

**Estimated Monthly Budget:**

-                    

-                    

-                    

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And don’t stop after the holidays have ended...

**Turn seasonal shoppers into year-round customers!**

Your relationship with holiday shoppers doesn’t need to end after the holidays! Instead, take steps to maintain and nurture your relationship with new customers you acquired over the holidays. Keep your customers engaged year-round by staying active on TikTok.
Happy Holidays!

TikTok
Sources

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7. US Amex Study, 2020
8. US Groupon Study, 2020
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13. TikTok Global Data, Sep-Dec 2019
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