

Get ready to advertise this holiday season with 5 key stats

Article



This year, US [holiday sales](#) will reach a record \$1.353 trillion, per our July 2024 forecast. That holiday season is starting earlier and earlier, which means marketers need to be prepared now for shopping to pick up in September and October. The election and consumer concerns about the economy will complicate where advertisers reach consumers and what messaging they use. Here are five stats marketers should see as they prep their holiday campaigns.

1. The holiday season is earlier than ever

Key stat: Half (50%) of US holiday shoppers will start shopping before Thanksgiving this year, up six percentage points from 2023, according to June 2024 data from CivicScience.

What this means for marketers: Early shopping means early advertising. Plan to spread holiday budgets out over a longer period of time. Many shoppers will hold out until Cyber Five sales, but some will get started early as [Amazon](#) and other retailers hold October sales events.

2. Reach shoppers on their phones

Key stat: US retail [mcommerce](#) holiday season sales will be up 13.4% YoY, reaching a total of \$140.65 billion, according to our July 2024 forecast.

What it means for marketers: [Mobile advertising](#) or ads featuring QR codes that drive people to mobile will be important this holiday season. Last year, mobile accounted for more than half (50.6%) of US ecommerce holiday sales for the first time. This year that share will increase to 52.7%.

The biggest chunk of time spent with mobile in the US (34.5%) will go to video, so advertisers looking to reach mobile users may look to digital video platforms like YouTube and TikTok. Ads served within retailer apps can also be a good way to reach consumers close to time of purchase.

3. Gen Z is sold on social commerce

Key stat: US [Gen Zers](#) are more than twice as likely as the general population to [buy holiday gifts via social platforms](#) this year, according to May 2024 data from Basis Technologies and GWI. Some 42% of Gen Zers will buy on social media compared with 20% of the general public.

What it means: Marketers who want to reach Gen Z this holiday season need to be on social media, serving up both ads and organic content. But with one-fifth of all generations [buying gifts from social media](#), it's not just Gen Z who marketers should be targeting.

Among those who plan to buy holiday gifts on social media, [Instagram \(57%\)](#) and [Facebook \(56%\)](#) will be the most popular, followed by [TikTok \(43%\)](#) and YouTube (38%), per Basis Technologies and GWI, making these worthwhile platforms for reaching Gen Z and beyond.

4. Lean into value

Key stat: 55% of consumers' Cyber Five purchases in 2023 were driven by sales and promotions, according to NRF data.

What it means for marketers: Consumers are still uneasy about the economy, so marketers should lean into messaging about values, deals, and discounts this holiday season. Building a sense of urgency and making consumers feel like they've gotten a win during a sale will help incentivize conversion.

5. Recognize the impact of the election

Key stat: 60% of US agency and marketing professionals consider brand safety and suitability among the most important criteria when buying digital video ads, according to data from the Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB), Advertiser Perceptions, and Guideline.

What it means for marketers: With our forecast predicting over \$12 billion going to political ads in the US this election cycle, and most of that spend going to [TV](#), advertisers need to be aware of the content that may be served adjacent to their ads. Even [brands that don't want to interact with politics](#) will be impacted by election ads crowding inventory in some states and impacting consumer sentiment.

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