

# Eleven

**Ridiculously simple and free things  
you can do to improve holiday sales**



It's that time of year! It's the season of open wallets and swiping credit cards. Some of you will be generating 20 to 30 percent of your annual revenues in the next few months. So what's your plan to get your fair share – or more- of this season's sales?

What? You haven't had time to work on your holiday strategy yet?

No worries because I've compiled a great list of eleven ridiculously simple things you can do *right now* to make this season a lucrative one for your business. And here's the great news. It doesn't matter what type of retail store you own. Just about every category of business can enjoy a holiday bump using these strategies.

So read on. Find an idea or two that resonate with you and implement them flawlessly. I challenge you not just to make sales this holiday season but to create an environment for your customers that provides convenience, joy and an experience that will keep them coming back for more long after the holiday season ends.

Until next time remember,  
You can do this!  
Angel

Angel Cicerone  
*President, Tenant Mentorship*  
*Author, Growing Small*



# Countdown



## In a World Full of Kardashians, Be a Diana

**Stop competing! Be authentic and uniquely you!**

### **DON'T**

Get lost in the bargain hunting hype on Black Friday and Cyber Monday. A small business can't compete!

### **DO**

Create your own holiday (or anti-holiday events)

What only small retail can do!

*Provide an exceptional high touch, high experience environment*

Start holiday promotion early!

*31% of U.S. consumers say they'll begin shopping for the holidays before the end of October*

Create a signature experience

*Add couches for comfort, neck massage for stress relief, champagne, "first look" events, over-the-top holiday décor, additional personnel, personal shoppers, Shop by Zoom, "send us your list" services, upgraded gift wrap, delivery options. What will make you stand out from the crowd?*





## Find the Sweet Spot. And Use It!

### First, a review of merchandising basics

- High margin items in high traffic areas
- High demand items in low traffic areas
- Uncluttered, warm, inviting interior
- Seasonal sounds, smell, music, lighting
- Use different elevations for displays
- Inviting, dimensional, attention-getting windows
- Clean!

### Next, find the sweet spot...

This is the space just to the right of your entrance. It's prime real estate and should produce double/ triple sales per square foot as other parts of your store.

### ....and create a dynamic display there

Grab and go gift items  
Tiered/bundled offers  
High profit margin merchandise  
Themed displays (by color, usage)  
Rotating displays of new items as they arrive

*As an example, one client of mine bundled candy bars (5 together, tied in a ribbon) and displayed them in the sweet spot. She sold 285% MORE candy bars in one month.*





## Double the Impact of Your Message

### 1. Partner with another business or organization whose target mirrors yours or is geographically desirable, for example:

- A restaurant with a neighboring boutique
- Any store and a local charity
- A hair salon and clothing store
- A fitness center with an organic food market

### 2. Create a measurable co-promotion

- Don't just leave business cards or brochures at other businesses. Do something to actually drive traffic!
- Bring a receipt from A and get a discount at B
- Host a joint or progressive party/shopping experience
- Distribute joint bouncebacks

### 3. Promote

- Write blogs and distribute via each other's websites and emails
- Run ads or create pages on each other's emails or websites
- Share each other's posts on social media
- Place signage in both stores

### 4. Track

- Be sure everything you do has a tracking component. Is it an effective partnership? Are you bringing each other business?

*Don't be afraid to think about new and unique partnerships. A golf equipment store could partner with a yoga studio to offer yoga for golfers. Get creative!*





## Use Kids to Drive Traffic

Parents want to create a perfect holiday experience for their kids. Help them do just that, even if your concept isn't specifically geared towards children.

Here are just a few ideas:

- Cookies with Santa event
- Lunch with the Minions or Star Wars characters
- Parent and child crafts/art classes
- Cooking/baking classes
- Treasure hunts
- Shop and drop
- Hide a toy in your store each day or week and invite shoppers to "hunt"

*You might also consider stocking a few popular kids' gift items. Most everyone has to buy something for a child and you can make it convenient for them by having a selection available.*





## The Money's in the Cards

**First the facts:**

**Gift cards account for over 18% of holiday sales!**

Two-thirds of consumers have purchased at least one gift card

**Retailers who switch from paper to plastic cards typically see a 50-100% increase in sales**

The average amount loaded on a digital gift card is 10-15% more than a plastic gift card.

**61% of gift card holders spend more than the amount of their gift card and 75% of those who overspend spend 60% more than the value of their card**

Gift cards are most popular with teenagers

**More than one in every four digital or online cards sold in December are sold between December 21<sup>st</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>**

40% of gift card recipients do not use the total value of the card







## The Money's in the Cards

**Create a plan to reach or exceed that 18% gift card sales goal!**

**Put gift card promotion at the top of your "To Do" List**

Plenty of in-store signage

Ongoing employee training – ask for the sale

*(Would you like to purchase a gift card for a friend or family member?)*

Use all other assets to promote, including website, social media, email and any other advertising you may be doing

**Create incentives for purchase**

For example, get a \$20 gift certificate for yourself with the purchase of a \$100 card

*Hint: If your average sale is about \$150, then the incentive should be given on gift card sale of \$200 – increasing your average sale!*

**Capture the late shoppers**

Email daily during week before Christmas

**Make it easy to purchase**

Utilize your website, email and social media to sell direct and download





## How to Get Your Employees into the Spirit to Sell More!

### Pay them!

Create a bonus structure for your employees based on *increased* sales.

Choose a metric for comparison and bonus employees on that.

You can base your incentive on:

- An increase in average sale

- Week-over-week sales increases from the same period last year

- Individual employee sales goals

- Gift card sales increases

- Team goals for overall store sales increase

*Hint: Provide additional training in sales and product knowledge now. Hold pep rallies. Get everyone engaged and motivated to make this your best holiday sales season ever!*





## **Play Your Hand. Build Your Brand.**

**It's a great time to be a locally-owned business**  
**52% of all Thanksgiving weekend shoppers shop on Small Business Saturday**

Create and promote your back story!

Tell the world who you are and why you started your business.

Share your story on in-store signage, your website and social media

Participate in shop local events

Amex – Small Business Saturday

Independent We Stand

Both offer the opportunity to list your business on their websites and receive free promotional materials





## 'Tis the season to use video!

### Get out your smart phone and start shooting!

Consumers love video! Video not only allows viewers to see, feel, and hear the passion you have for your product or service, it helps improve connection with your brand and ultimately, sales!

Video email gives you a competitive edge!

Recipients spend 44% more time on a video email

Recipients share and forward 41% more often

Video email has a 55% increase in click through rates

There is an abundance of research that overwhelmingly suggest videos on a website or in emails will **increase sales anywhere between 30 to 100 percent!** In fact, The Relevancy Group, a market research company, recently found that companies using video in email experience, on average, **40 percent higher revenue in a month** than those that do not employ video.

Best practices for video

30 to 60 seconds max

Perfection not required

Host on YouTube and link to your website, social media and email

What to video?

Store tours, product demos, customer testimonials, new items, invitations to visit, behind the scenes...just be authentic and people with love it!





## Plan for December 26<sup>th</sup> and Beyond!

The holiday shopping season doesn't end at Christmas  
Weekend after should be one of the busiest of the year

Over 60% of consumers plan post-holiday shopping pre-holiday

70% of post-holiday shoppers shop for themselves

Over 70% say they are motivated by big sales, deals and discounts

More than half of post holiday shoppers rely on emails from specific retailers,  
while more than 1 in 3 search for deals online.

### **Prepare now!**

Distribute bouncebacks during the height of the sales season for purchases  
after the holiday

Plan inventory and sales strategy for post holiday clearance/sales  
Don't leave it up to leftovers

Promote your post holiday sales or events early. Build excitement!





## Measure

**Understand the results of *every* strategy you implement**

**Measure:**

- Social media post engagement
- Email open/response rate/click throughs
- Total sales from promotions
- Sales by category and employee
- Sales from sweet spot displays
- Sales generated by partnerships
- Sales by time-of-day and day-of-week
- Sales by gender

The more you know about the source of your sales, product mix and purchasing patterns, the better able you are to more efficiently run your business.

