

Don't Bank on Holiday Sales to Save Your Bottom Line – Here's How to Engage the Discount-Driven Customer Year-Round

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The holiday shopping frenzy – Black Friday, Cyber Monday, and every “deal day” in between – has become a staple of retail. In 2024, Black Friday alone saw a record \$10.8 billion in U.S. online sales, with discounts driving the motivation.

But while this season of discounts may drive impressive short-term gains, relying solely on holiday sales is a risk that retail brands can't afford to take.

More than ever, consumers are savvy about marketing tactics, seeking value year-round instead of waiting for seasonal deals. A recent survey found that 62% of shoppers are willing to switch brands if their preferred one is too expensive, and nearly half plan to shop at more affordable retailers. This shift should signal an opportunity for brands to rethink their customer retention and value creation approach.

Here are three strategies to engage discount-driven customers year-round, ensuring your brand stays top of mind even after the holiday decorations are boxed away.

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1. Build authentic connections that last beyond the sale

The modern consumer isn't just looking for discounts – they're looking for meaning. Retailers need to align with values that resonate with their audience. For the iconic sport-inspired U.S. Polo Assn. brand, authenticity has been our cornerstone. Our products are authentically connected to a sport with a rich history so customers are getting more than just a logo – there is a real story behind it.

Now that we have partnered with ESPN to broadcast our top tournaments and U.S. Polo Assn. brand and lifestyle content, we are able to reach millions more sports and brand fans where they are than ever before. So, it's more important than ever that we stay true to who we are because we have such a unique opportunity to tell our story.

Brands that focus on storytelling and authenticity can foster a sense of belonging that extends far beyond price tags. For instance, our global marketing efforts highlight polo's excitement, heritage and community, creating a connection that drives loyalty. Whether through social media campaigns, iconic global events or in-store experiences, the key is to remind customers why they love your brand in the first place.

2. Offer value through consistency, not just discounts

While doorbuster deals might attract one-off purchases, consistency in value builds long-term relationships. This doesn't mean slashing prices year-round; it means delivering a price-to-quality proposition that keeps customers returning. Staples like Levi's 501 jeans or Nike Air Force 1s endure because they're reliable and iconic.

Our core products – like the polo shirt and denim – are evergreen pieces that balance affordability with quality. These aren't just items; they're essential wardrobe staples that our customers rely on. Retailers should identify their "core" and invest in making those products synonymous with their brand.

Consistency also extends to customer experience. Whether online, in-store or through omnichannel touchpoints, customers should feel valued at every interaction. For us, loyalty programs add another layer of engagement by offering perks that go beyond discounts. It's about creating a relationship, not just a transaction.

3. Create “moments” year-round to reignite interest

The success of events like Black Friday and Amazon Prime Day highlights the power of creating excitement around shopping. Why limit that to one season? Brands should craft their own “shopping holidays” or moments throughout the year to keep customers engaged.

For example, in Turkey – where U.S. Polo Assn. has a very large market but Black Friday isn't widely recognized – we launched “USPA Week,” offering exclusive promotions and engaging local audiences. The campaign resonated so well that other brands followed suit. These tailored moments allow retailers to capture attention while staying aligned with their brand identity.

We are always looking at what other best-in-class companies are doing, we consume data and learn from others. Even the top brands in the world can learn from what others are doing in their space and beyond.

Additionally, expanding your storytelling to include

lifestyle-focused content can deepen engagement. For example, we launched “*Field & Fashion*,” the official digital magazine of U.S. Polo Assn., showcasing the top sporting events of the year, our iconic global events and our seasonal products in aspirational settings, tying them all back to our story of polo. Instead of focusing solely on sales, we share an exciting lifestyle that fans and customers want to participate in.

Related: [How to Beat the Post-Holiday Sales Slump and Crush Your Q1 Goals](#)

Planning for 2025 and beyond

As we approach 2025, the trends of value-driven shopping and year-round deal-seeking aren’t going anywhere. For brands, the challenge is to adapt without losing sight of their identity. For us, we’re looking ahead to the 135th anniversary of the sport of polo and building heritage campaigns to highlight both the sport and the brand, while elevating the customer experience.

My best advice for retailers is to think beyond the next sale cycle. Success lies in blending innovation with tradition, offering value without compromising authenticity, and connecting with customers in ways that make them feel like part of the journey – not just part of the revenue.

By focusing on these principles, your brand can thrive during the holidays and all year long. After all, the most meaningful way to earn loyalty comes from delivering value that goes beyond price.

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