



How to Hold Momentum
and Increase Retention

After BFCM



Table of Contents

Ground-Breaking 2023 BFCM Sales	03
Dig Into the Data and Ask Some Crucial Questions	06
- Ways to Move Your Marketing Metrics	07
- Ideas to Increase Conversions	08
- Enhancing Average Order Value (AOV)	09
Put Retargeting in Your Sights	10
Keep Nurturing Your New and Existing Customers	12
Seize the Opportunity to Increase Opt-Ins	14
It's About the Journey, Not the Destination	16
Know When to Push for Subsequent Sales	18
Don't Let Returns Be the Point of No Return	22
Reset Your Customers' Mindsets	24



Ground-Breaking BFCM Sales

Many retailers had high expectations for the 2023 Black Friday / Cyber Monday (BFCM) sales period. The National Retail Federation (NRF) revealed that **74% of US holiday shoppers** planned to purchase during the five-day Thanksgiving holiday weekend. 61% of those shoppers said they planned to buy because “deals are too good to pass up”.

In Australia, Research from the Australian Retailers Association (ARA) and Roy Morgan **forecasted sales** to reach an incredible AUD\$6.36bn over the four-day (BFCM) weekend, from 24 November to 27 November 2023. This figure represents a 3.0% increase over last year’s BFCM period.

Shopify data shows its merchants saw a record-breaking USD\$9.3bn in BFCM sales globally – a staggering 24% increase over 2022 figures. Australia ranked third among the top-selling countries, following the US and the UK.



USD\$9.3bn in global Shopify merchant sales over BFCM



AUD\$6.3bn forecasted spend during BFCM in Australia



24% increase in Shopify merchant BFCM sales



These BFCM sales figures remind retailers of more strategic shopping behaviours emerging throughout the year.

For example, the [CNBC/NRF Retail Monitor](#) showed US retail growth slowing in the 6 months prior to November. October figures revealed a 0.08% decrease from September – but a 2.57% increase YoY.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) told a similar story, with retail turnover falling 0.2% in October 2023.

The ABS notes, “It looks like consumers hit the pause button on some discretionary spending in October, likely waiting to take advantage of discounts during Black Friday sales events in November. This is a pattern we have seen develop in recent years as Black Friday sales grow in popularity.”





Shoppers have demonstrated that they are willing to hold out for sales events. In addition to BFCM numbers, [Australia Post reported](#) earlier this year that end-of-financial-year (EOFY) sales saw a 7.3% increase compared to the two weeks prior. ClickFrenzy also drove a 3.5% lift in sales compared to the week before.

Questions of how to make budgets stretch further and extend value are front-of-mind concerns for consumers right now. And although cost-of-living pressures continue to impact consumers' overall discretionary spending, merchants still have a significant opportunity.

How retailers deliver value (beyond BFCM) is critical to retaining and reconverting shoppers – particularly new customers attracted by sales periods.

This eBook delves into the top strategies to hold momentum and increase retention after BFCM.



Dig Into the Data and Ask Some Crucial Questions



With increased shopping activity over BFCM, you have a wealth of information to gain valuable insights. Take a moment to dig into your data about sales and on-site shopper behaviour data and ask yourself some critical questions.

Questions About Marketing Metrics

- Which email campaign headlines hit home to optimise open rates?
- Did some calls-to-action work better than others?
- Was there a specific marketing channel that attracted a higher percentage of shoppers?
- Which audience segment or cohorts showed the most increased activity?

Ways to Move Your Marketing Metrics

Consider A/B testing email campaigns to refine your headlines and see which CTAs create a click-through. Test one element variation at a time to gain accurate insights into which A/B test is successful.

Next, ask yourself why specific marketing messages hit home with different types of shoppers. By starting from your customer's perspective, you can uncover particular motivations that will inform future marketing campaigns.

Also, look at which marketing channels attract certain customer cohorts and how to segment your campaigns further to drive a more personal appeal to each cohort.



Questions About Conversions

- How did conversion rates perform – and did they achieve the goals of your BFCM campaign?
- Which product categories converted higher?
- What influence did the level of product discount have on conversion?

Ideas to Increase Conversions

Don't lead shoppers into a dead-end. A zero results page is one of the quickest ways to see zero conversion. Instead, look to turn these zeros into heroes.

Help customers continue their shopping journey seamlessly and increase conversion rates by making your zero results pages helpful and informative.

Google Analytics or Searchspring [zero results reports](#) give you detailed insights into terms that aren't showing results. You can then add synonyms and redirects to keep the shopping journey going - or add personalised product carousels of other products your shopper might like.

Next, consider how you're promoting products on your site. For example, are your top-selling products appearing higher on search results pages? Automated merchandising tools can save hours manually organising and pinning products on collection pages.

Social proof is also a powerful influencing factor in purchase decisions. [Gartner research](#) shows that 85% of shoppers trust online reviews as much as a personal recommendation. [REVIEWS.io](#) is one solution that seamlessly integrates reviews with products on search results pages, even helping customers [filter by star ratings](#).

Above all, make it quick and easy for shoppers to find what they want and add them to cart. See our in-depth article, [2023's Top Site Search Tips to Boost Website Conversion Rates](#), for more ideas about enhancing conversions.



Questions About Average Order Value (AOV)

- What on-site tools encouraged shoppers to meet minimum order values – and were they effective?
- How can you provide value to customers while enticing them to add a few more items before checkout?
- How can you draw attention to offers and collections to promote product discovery?

Enhancing Average Order Value (AOV)

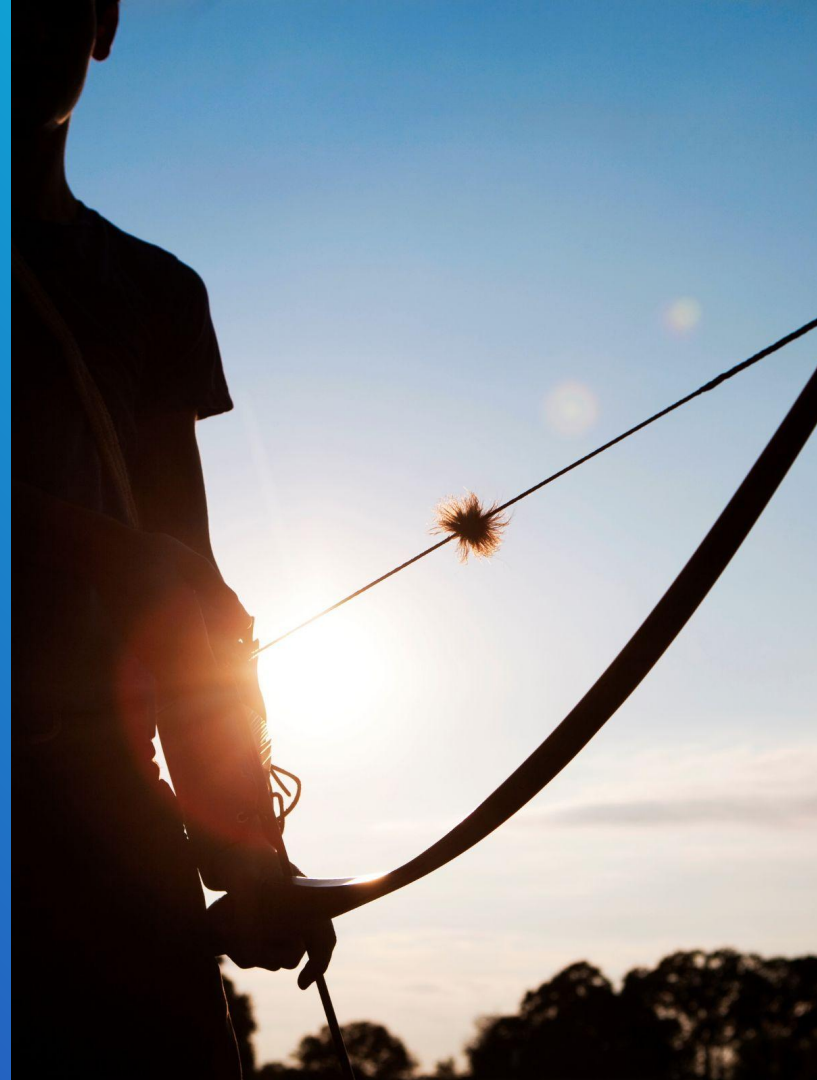
Offering shoppers free shipping when they reach a minimum order value can be enticing. But this is just the tip of the iceberg. Think about bundling products to make it easy for shoppers to buy multiple complimentary items.

You can also provide [personalised product recommendations](#) and cross-sells to keep shoppers adding to cart. Personalised suggestions, such as “you might also like” or “complete the look”, can be incredibly effective in helping shoppers find more of what they love.

[Inline banners](#) can also draw attention to new collections and promotions, increase product discovery, and deliver more engaging online experiences that enhance AOV.



Put Retargeting in Your Sights



If you've set up retargeting pixels pre-BFCM, you'll now have a massive opportunity to turn browsers and one-time shoppers into repeat customers. The marketing [Rule of 7](#) states that shoppers must see your message at least 7 times before making a purchase decision. In reality, it can take many more times in a modern digital landscape to convert site visitors. That's why staying front of mind by consistently retargeting visitors is a crucial tactic to convert browsers into buyers.

Keep retargeting your site visitors after the BFCM sales with highly-relevant ads. Segment your campaigns and continue presenting customers with your latest, most applicable products that fit their needs according to their demonstrated behaviours.



**Keep Nurturing
Your New and
Existing Customers**



Online shopping is now a well-cemented consumer behaviour. Globally, 56.7% of internet users purchase a product online each week, according to the [Digital 2023](#) report. Looking locally, the [Inside Australian Online Shopping 2023](#) shows that most households (60%) purchase 12 or more during the year.

Combine well-established digital buying habits with the biggest sales event of the year, and you're sure to have welcomed first-time customers in the BFCM sales. How you nurture these new shoppers (and your existing loyal customers) greatly impacts repeat purchases.

Don't stop the momentum of contact with shoppers after the big sales event. Stay front of mind post-BFCM by sending valuable, relevant communications.

Your post-sale communications don't need to be based on another discount or sales event. Think about how you're building your database over time and keeping those customers informed of value-based offerings.



Post-sale comms ideas include:

- Loyalty and rewards programs
- Early access to additional sales or new products
- Christmas shipping cut-offs
- Newsletter updates
- Improvements you're making based on customer feedback

The more you continue nurturing customers, the stronger those relationships will become over time.



Seize the Opportunity to Increase Opt-Ins



After taking advantage of BFCM sale items, your shoppers will expect to receive transactional communications, such as order confirmations, shipping updates, and customer service responses. If your customer hasn't opted-in to receive marketing communications during your sign-up or checkout processes, think about how you can leverage transactional comms to drive marketing opt-ins.

Can you entice your customers with exclusive promotions, tailored information about new products they're sure to love, or priority access to future sales events? If so, you'll then have their permission to nurture them year-round, and boost repeat purchases.

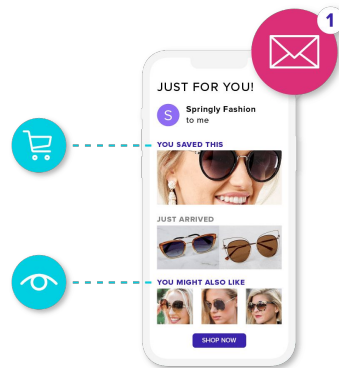
Personalised SMS and mobile-push communications can help you gain your shopper's attention at the right time. Klaviyo is one solution that can deliver the most relevant content to customers where they're spending their time - on mobile devices.

Bonus tip

Consider targeted email campaigns to anyone who didn't stock-up during BFCM. These shoppers may still be looking for the perfect presents leading into Christmas or waiting until post-Christmas sales ramp up. Personalised email promotions can be a powerful reminder to shoppers of items they showed interest in during BFCM but didn't buy.



Book your tailored demo to see personalised email recommendations in action.



**It's About the
Journey, Not the
Destination**



A critical component of setting up the proper nurturing sequences is understanding your customer's journey. Customer journey mapping creates a visual representation of your shopper's experience and can help identify what motivates or inhibits the actions of your shoppers. See [HubSpot's excellent video explanation](#) of the journey mapping process for more detail.

Importantly, the journey mapping process will give your online store a clear way to understand your customer's needs, when they're most motivated to buy, and the ideal times to reach out to them with offers and communications.

With more shopper data coming in from BFCM sales (and often lower activity after the sales period), it's the perfect time to build those journey maps. In addition, look for opportunities to automate aspects of the customer journey, such as email campaign schedules and triggers, and FAQs within your chat functionality.

To match your merchandising strategies more effectively to buyer journeys, also see our article [Merchandise for Every Step of the Buyer Journey](#).

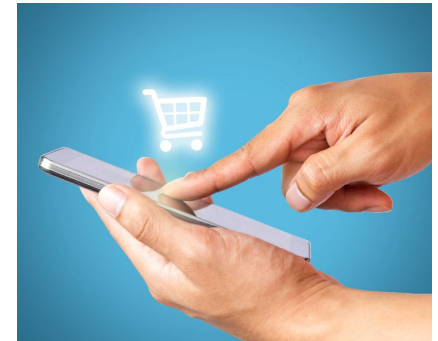


Know When to Push for Subsequent Sales



Timing is everything. Look at the customer data and journey mapping to identify the ideal time after BFCM to encourage another purchase. Use hard data about customers' average time frames between purchases to pinpoint the sweet spots for multiple purchase points throughout the year. Incorporate this data into automated email and SMS nurturing sequences to keep communications reaching customers at the ideal times.

Additionally, consider using a customer data platform (CDP) to consolidate online and offline transactions. Aggregated data will create an even more meaningful view of customer activity across multiple channels. Your cross-channel information will deliver a greater understanding of when first-time customers make subsequent purchases - whether it's online or in-store.



Keep Customers Informed of Key Cut-Off Dates



BFCM brings a surge of orders, which makes it challenging to uphold your standard order fulfilment and delivery time frames. It's not the last surge for the year, however, and it's vital to communicate year-end cut-off dates and remind shoppers of the additional peak periods still to come.

Keep your shoppers informed of shipping cut-off dates. CNET has an [excellent article](#) for the US outlining the major service providers' cut-off dates. Australia Post also publishes its [Christmas send dates listing](#) for Aussies, which details local and international key dates.

Of course, working closely with couriers, shipping platforms, or 3PL logistics providers is always advisable to maintain a clear view of the relevant cut-off dates for your particular shipping and fulfilment framework.



**Don't Let Returns
Be the Point of No
Return**



Peak trade also means peak returns. No matter how good the customer experience has been throughout the buying journey, a poor returns experience can undo all the hard work. 76% of first-time customers who have an “easy” or “very easy” returns experience say they would shop with that retailer again, according to [Narvar research](#). That’s a surefire way to keep customers returning.

Use this touchpoint as another chance to show customers that you care about them. Carefully review the performance of your reverse logistics processes to ensure customers have the best possible experience if they need to send back items. Look for opportunities to proactively answer returns queries, such as live chat facilities, FAQs, and returns information listed on order confirmations and delivery updates.

Additionally, make it easy for customers to find your returns policy. Queries about returns information are commonly seen in on-site searches. Redirect these search terms to your policy pages to make it even faster for shoppers to access the information they need.



**To Stay Seen, Stay
Social**



According to the [Digital 2023 report](#), there are now 4.76 billion active social media users worldwide, accounting for 59.4% of the population. The average person spends 2h and 31m per day on social media. Logically, social media is the ideal place to stay seen and keep communicating with customers after BFCM.

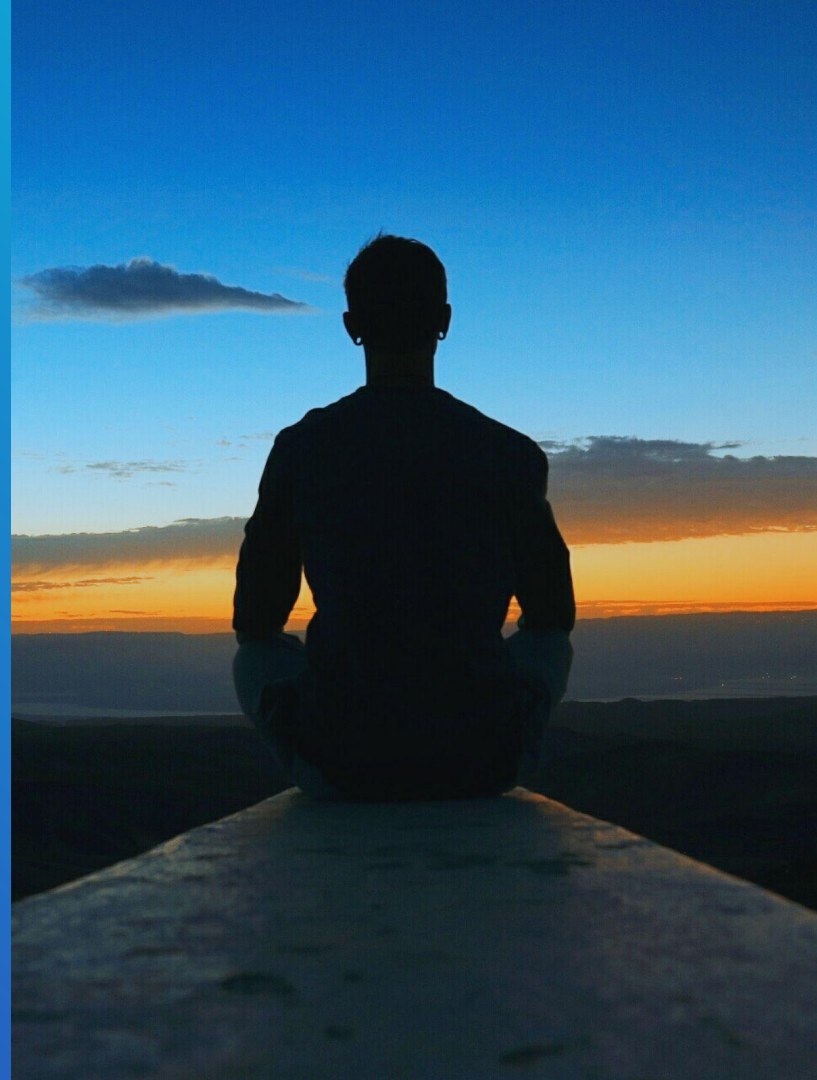
With many retailers reporting significant spikes in paid social media advertising costs over the BFCM period, budgets don't always stretch to the remainder of the year. However, a solid organic social strategy can ensure you stay front of mind with shoppers after the sales period – without paying the big bucks.

Map out your organic social strategy to incorporate a variety of posts and updates, including:

- New product releases and information
- Contests and giveaways
- Loyalty and rewards programs
- Cross-channel campaigns to drive online-to-instore traffic and vice-versa
- Surveys and quizzes to learn more about your customers
- Encouraging opt-ins to keep building your contact lists
- Company and team information and updates that familiarise shoppers with your brand



Reset Your Customers' Mindsets



Although shoppers have displayed a heightened sense of strategic shopping throughout the year, sales are not the only way to get your shoppers' attention.

It's time to help shoppers move out of the 'digging for deals' mindset to the benefits and fit of your products and brand. What are your customers' shoppable moments beyond BFCM? Are they still looking for the perfect presents for friends and family leading into Christmas? Are they thinking about their return-to-work needs in the new year? Or perhaps they're already thinking about products they need for getaways and holidays in the year ahead?

By leveraging information from your customer journey mapping and aggregated CDP data, you can mould your messaging around moments that matter – right now and well beyond BFCM.



Stop Searching, Start Converting

Searchspring is the #1 search, merchandising, and personalisation platform built exclusively for ecommerce, enabling brands to get the right product, to the right person, at the right time.

With Searchspring's advanced features and intelligent automation, you can deliver the ultimate digital shopping experiences that turn browsers into buyers - all year round.

There are even more ways to refine the search experience and increase revenue. To hear additional ideas, book your no-obligation chat with a trusted search, merchandising, and personalisation expert.

Start Converting

