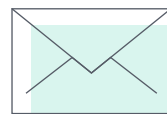
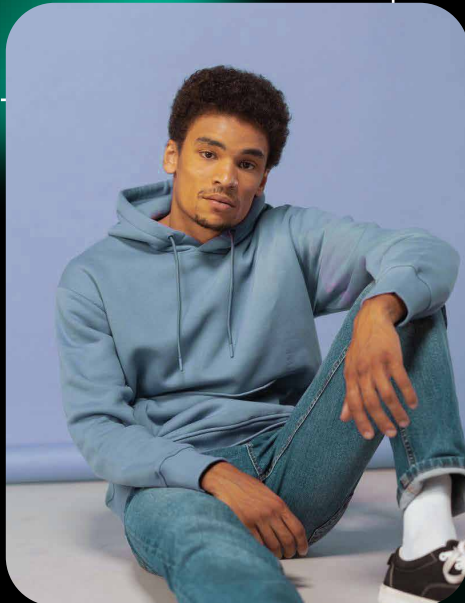


omnisend

2021 Holiday Email Marketing Lookbook:

# Black Friday and Cyber Monday



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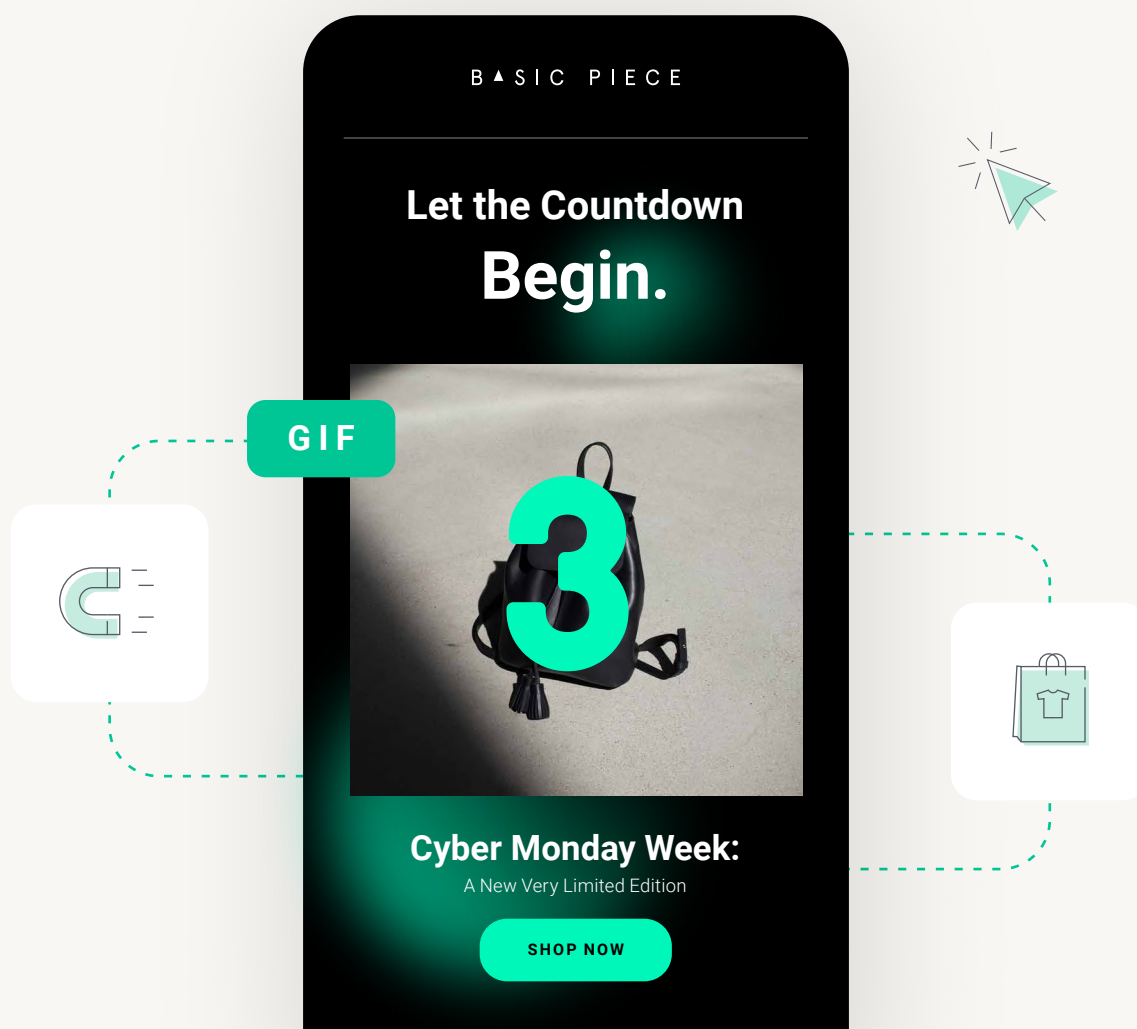
# Intro

Breaking through the ecommerce noise around Black Friday and Cyber Monday is tough. That's stating the obvious.

Even with the rise in social media platforms and ecommerce marketplaces, email remains one of the most economical and effective means for reaching shoppers and jumpstarting sales. In 2020, **one of every eight subscribers** who clicked on an email during Black Friday and Cyber Monday made a purchase.

So as ecommerce brands rev up their plans, we advise they pay a little more attention to their email promotions.

Start with our lookbook. It's full of tips and examples on timing, creative sales ideas, standing out with a distinct voice, special content and value-adds. We also dig a bit into SMS, another channel you shouldn't ignore.

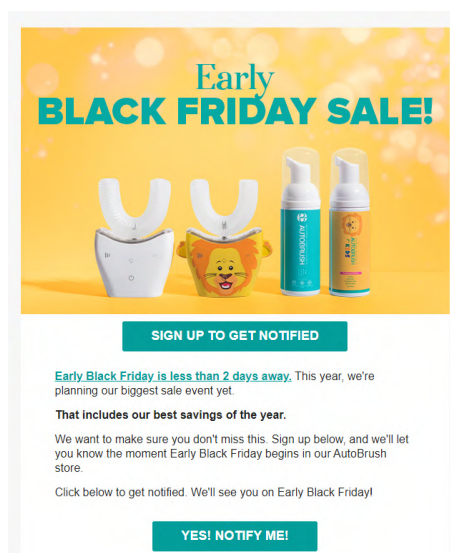


# A Gray November to Remember

If this lookbook is focused on Black Friday and Cyber Monday, then why are we talking about the entire month of November?

We can't ignore that Black Friday's stance as the kickoff to the holiday shopping season is slowly disintegrating. For at least five years, brands have been offering holiday discounts earlier and earlier, giving rise to the month-long "Gray November."

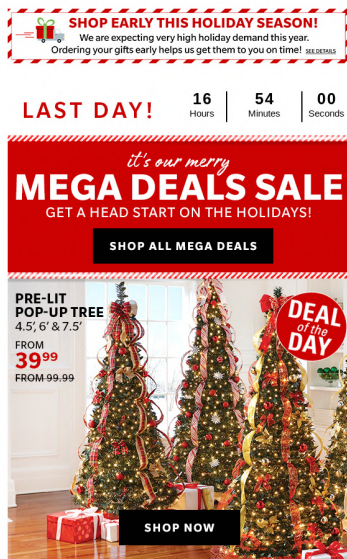
Consumers spent \$3.5 billion on Nov. 11<sup>1</sup> in 2020, slightly more than they spent on the day before Thanksgiving. (With that stat in mind, prepping a holiday promotion that hits inboxes in early November doesn't seem as crazy as it once did.)



 AutoBrush

**What we like:** This email was delivered on Nov. 4, so *AutoBrush* is certainly early to the party at three weeks ahead of schedule. We like that the special sale has a bit of exclusivity to it—subscribers need to sign up to get the deals.

<sup>1</sup> Adobe, 2020 Holiday Shopping Trends, January 2021



 **Brylane Home**

**What we like:** *Brylane Home* started its promotion before trick-or-treaters even hit the streets. Its Mega Deals campaign, featuring a deal of the day, began running on Oct. 26 and ended Nov. 8 by our accounts. Nice touch with the “Shop Early this Holiday Season” box, which began appearing Oct. 29, to nudge subscribers toward a purchase.



**Shop Every Friday in November**

We want to give you ample time to shop with reduced crowds this holiday season. Out of an abundance of caution and care for customer safety, we are giving you Black Friday savings every Friday in November!

 **Pandora**

**What we like:** *Pandora* decided that because of pandemic jitters in 2020, the world could use four Black Fridays. Health-related concerns or not, it's not such a bad way to translate the Gray November angle into consumer terms.



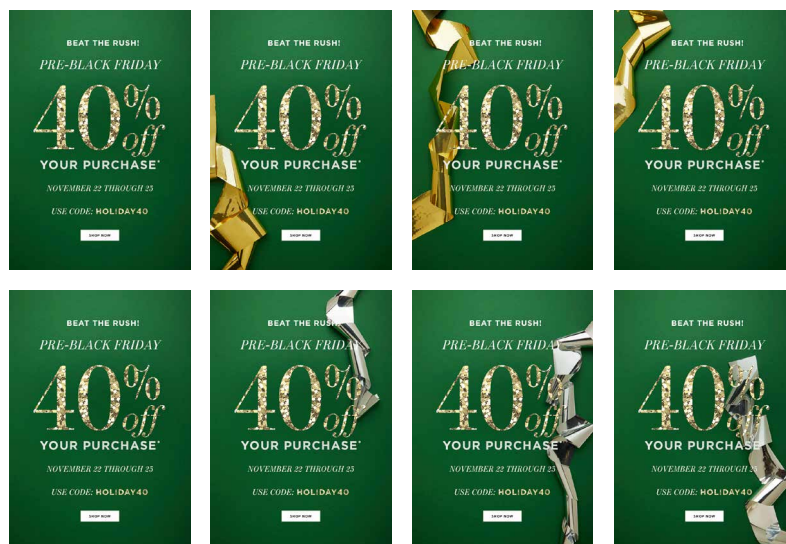
### Our Gray November tips:

- Even if you personally cringe at holiday promotions arriving before ghosts are swapped out for turkeys, set your reservations aside because people are buying all through November and earlier
- Encourage early shopping—and even self-gifting—especially after last year's shipping delays and this year's uncertainties
- Take liberties with Black Friday terminology; everyone else is

## Make it a Black Friday (or Cyber) Week

Black Friday technically begins at 12:00 a.m. and ends at 11:59 p.m. on Nov. 26 this year. But Gray November examples showcase how it can be—and often is—more than just one day on the calendar.

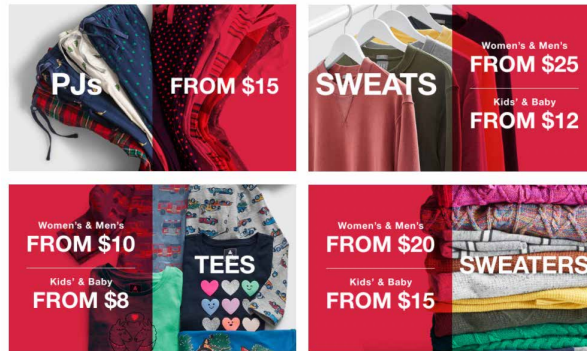
Black Friday and Cyber Monday can extend into an extra-long weekend, otherwise known as the Cyber 5 (the five days between Thanksgiving and Cyber Monday). Or, create your own Black Friday or Cyber Monday celebration week on your own terms.



 **Vince Camuto**

**What we like:** *Vince Camuto* opted for a special pre-Black Friday sale. The four-day event began the Sunday before Black Friday and ran right up to the day before Thanksgiving. (We're also a sucker for a nice animated GIF—[see the above frames in action.](#))

TGI-Black Friday — 50% OFF EVERYTHING. ALL. WEEK.



**What we like:** Gap's communication is very clear from the get-go about its sales promotion, starting with the subject line. We also dig how Gap features a categorized section of products, making it easy for subscribers to go directly to what interests them.



**What we like:** It doesn't always have to be about Black Friday. Break the mold and run with Cyber Week as an alternative—it might be a slightly quieter time. We love how Mudpie shows what goes on sale each day of the week.



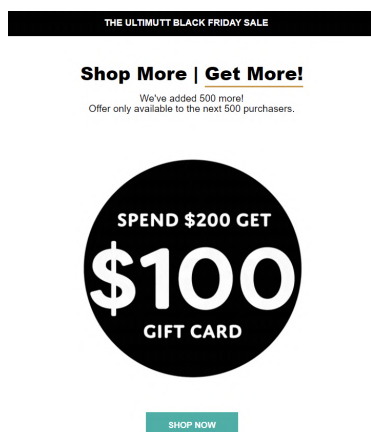
### Our Black Friday (or Cyber) Week tips:

- Take liberties with Black Friday and shape it into the timeframe you want
- Ensure your sale start and end dates are defined clearly, and that your wording doesn't cause confusion; e.g., does "Black Friday Preview EXTENDED!" mean I start shopping now, or am I just getting a peek at the deals?
- Show some love to Cyber Week, too

## Get Creative with the Sale

The average consumer is flooded with emails on Black Friday and Cyber Monday, and the days between and surrounding them. No doubt that many will earnestly search their inboxes and junk folders, hunting for deals and gift ideas for the hard-to-buy-for folks on their lists.

We all expect massive reductions on these two shopping days in particular. These two pinnacle shopping days are the right time to go big and do something that deviates a little from the norm. Spice it up with a fun element that intrigues.



**What we like:** When you reward customers with a gift card, you potentially give a gift to yourself. Some recipients will take advantage of the offer and make a purchase that exceeds the gift card amount. The static image at left doesn't show it, but we like how *Hungry Bark* starts doling out incremental gift cards once spending hits \$25 (as defined in a [rotating GIF](#)).

[➤ Hungry Bark](#)



[➤ Fruit of the Loom](#)


**What we like:** Finding a buy one, get one free sale for Black Friday or Cyber Monday was surprisingly difficult. Then we stumbled upon *Fruit of the Loom*. BOGO is an attractive offer if you can swing it. Free shipping sweetens the pot.

NEW DOORBUSTERS DROP IN: 00 : 00 : 59 : 28

### Final Hours To Save

The lowest prices of the year won't last much longer.  
Don't miss deals up to **80% off** PCs and electronics!

[Shop PCs](#) [Shop Tech](#)



9 PM ET Featured Doorbusters

**Yoga C740 15" - Iron Grey**

**22% OFF**

**Price \$799.99**  
Savings \$200.00

- Processor: 10th Generation Intel® Core™ i7-10510U
- Memory: 8 GB DDR4 2666MHz
- Storage: 512 GB PCIe SSD

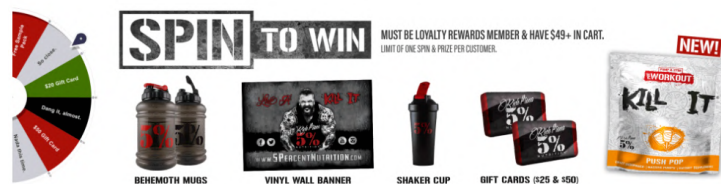


## Tomorrow's PC Doorbusters

09:00 AM ET	<b>ThinkPad X13</b> \$949.99 - You Save: \$959.01	<a href="#">Add To Calendar</a>
09:00 AM ET	<b>IdeaPad 1 11" Laptop</b> \$169.99 - You Save: \$70.00	<a href="#">Add To Calendar</a>
09:00 AM ET	<b>ThinkBook 15 Gen 2</b> \$739.99 - You Save: \$499.01	<a href="#">Add To Calendar</a>
09:00 AM ET	<b>ThinkPad L490</b> \$699.99 - You Save: \$1,159.01	<a href="#">Add To Calendar</a>

## Lenovo US

**What we like:** *Lenovo* popped up in subscriber's mailboxes throughout the day on Black Friday. Their flash sale tactic featured the release of various doorbusters every couple of hours, with a handy countdown clock building anticipation—and heightening the FOMO (fear of missing out) effect—for the next doorbuster release. Extra: a handy calendar notification option for those who didn't want to miss the next day's doorbusters.



### The Black Friday sale gets even better!

Fill your cart with at least \$49+ worth of supplements, gear, or apparel and you'll be prompted to play a session of spin-to-win!

Combinable with **BFCM 20% OFF EVERYTHING** sale. [Start Shopping](#)

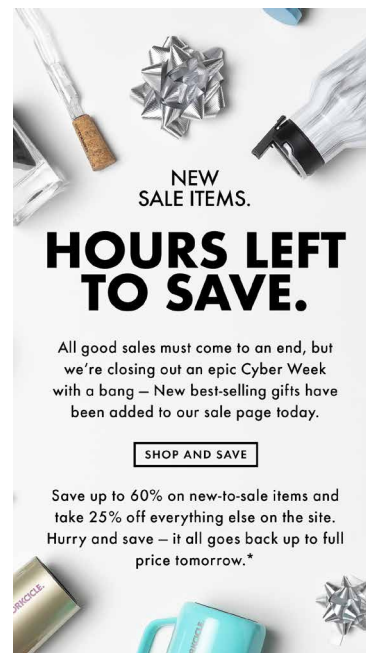
## 5% Nutrition

**What we like:** If you're going to create an incentive to push shoppers toward a spending threshold, why not make it fun? The spin-to-win concept seems like a great idea to us. It's a twist on the "spend X amount and get a free gift," introducing an interactive element with a dash of mystery.



### ➤ STRONG self(ie)

**What we like:** Smooth move, *STRONG self(ie)*. Bundling items that go well together makes for a great cross-selling technique that subtly encourages higher spending.



### ➤ Corkcicle

**What we like:** *Corkcicle* takes *Lenovo's* FOMO approach and raises it a level. Which best-selling products have been reduced? By how much? You only find out when you visit the site.



Our tips for adding a layer of creativity to sales:

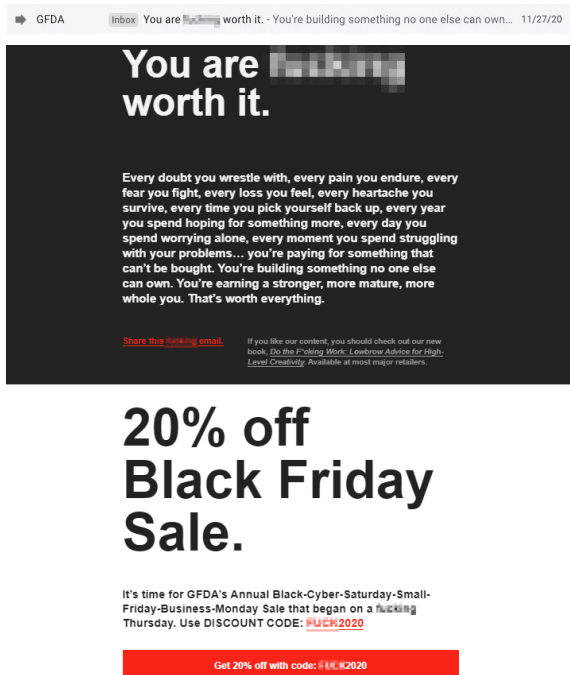
- Think outside the box to grab attention
- Pair together related items that naturally go together and offer them at a reduced price
- Add some mystery to your events to keep subscribers on their toes and waiting for the next announcement
- Offer incentives to encourage a certain spending threshold or, if you're feeling generous, toss in an inexpensive gift with every purchase

## Weave in the Unexpected or Unique

It's super easy to stick to the holly jolly mode of red and green, gold and silver, and sparkles, supported by seasonal taglines like "deck the halls."

We're not knocking any of those approaches. They work for many brands.

But the holiday shopping season is when you want to separate yourself. So if your brand is associated with a distinct voice, let it shine through subject lines, email copy and visuals. Merchants without a well-developed persona can still experiment with a bold or unexpected message.



**What we like:** A company name containing the f-bomb has got to have a cheeky attitude to support it. (We're obscuring it in both examples due to our editorial standards.) Granted, *GFDA* is a creative agency, so we have high expectations that its emails will live up to its edgy persona. And it does, with both its subject line and email copy.

**BLACKEST FRIDAY**  
Instead of participating in the traditional "Black Friday," we take that time off to be with our family and friends. We believe in the importance of spending time with the people you care about most. You know us, we wouldn't pass up an opportunity to release some awesome sh!t so we bring you our BLACKEST FRIDAY.

We like to stray away from the ordinary, so we put our own dark metal twist on it. Tons of new arrivals and killer prices, this will be a Blackest Friday to remember.

**Two NEW flannels + a bunch of other EXCLUSIVE Blackest Friday items go live at 10 AM PDT / 1 PM EDT on Friday, November 20th! Set your alarms!**



**What we like:** *Dixon Flannel* plays on Black Friday linguistically, putting quite the unexpected spin on it. The brand also speaks to those who place high value on spending time with loved ones, by shunning the traditional shopping day in favor of celebrating it one week early.



## KISS THIS SALE GOODBYE

20% off your entire purchase of \$20 or more

Use at Checkout:

**CYBER**

Our Cyber Monday sale end soon! Save 20% off your entire purchase of \$20 or more! Act fast because you only have a few hours. Ends at Midnight Tonight!



**What we like:** Everything about this email makes our inner marketing voice shout, "How clever!" It's easy to figure out the product and there's no question about what's dangling overhead, out of view. Tie in a play on words, and you've won us over.



**What we like:** When your product is aimed at fighting the stink of bodily emissions (read: No. 2), we're guessing that creativity is a necessity. *Poo-Pourri* clearly enjoys broaching a taboo subject head-on and doesn't take itself too seriously.



## Our tips for weaving in the unexpected or unique:

- Be you; if your customers are accustomed to a certain voice, let it do the talking
- Give yourself permission to stray from the typical holiday look and feel
- If your brand's tone is kind of on the vanilla side, now isn't the time to go all out with a different vibe; instead, ease your way in with some wordplay or smart artwork
- If your message is unique, make your subject line match

## Inspire with Extra Content

Creating special content around your brand is a great tactic for building your clout. It's a fantastic avenue for showcasing your products. Like any marketing collateral, it should be developed with the customer in mind.

The goal here is to provide something extra, presented in a different form, that will motivate subscribers to buy. Find other ways, aside from email marketing, to announce your creations to the world.



 Michael's

**What we like:** When we say we like content that inspires, that can go for getting your customers' creative juices flowing, too. So a craft hub with "holi-DIY" projects, constructed of materials sold by *Michael's*, is a logical brand extension.



 **Clark's**

**What we like:** We love a good gift guide. It's a great marketing tool for showcasing your products. Assembling any type of guide requires substantial effort from your team, so don't put it to waste. Make it stand out in your emails, like *Clark's* does, to entice the window shoppers or those low on ideas.



### Our tips for inspiring with extra content:

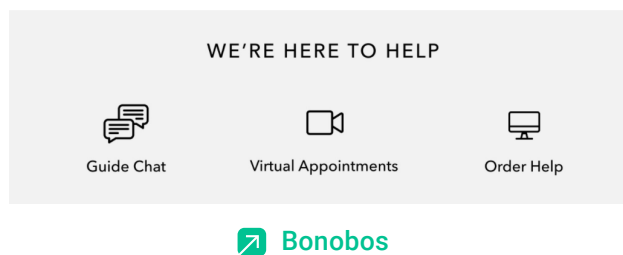
- Before you dash off to develop content, think about how your customers will use it; take that perspective to guide the project
- Make a gift guide that is easy to browse; make multiple ones for different collections, price points and other categories if you have the bandwidth
- Account for your expertise when designing content; for example, a holiday recipes collection featuring ingredients you sell might be more valuable than a gift guide

## Call Out Your Value-Adds

It's important that customers are aware of the perks that come along with a purchase. It could be the difference that wins their business over a competitor.

Highlight the non-product stuff that builds consumer confidence—features like free shipping, price matching, curbside pickup, extended and hassle-free return policies, and live chat or 24/7 customer support.

Now is not the time to be shy in making your competitive differentiators known.



**What we like:** Crystal-clear customer service options. *Bonobos'* callout is non-complicated. A few icons and minimal text do the trick. Bonus points for the variety of options. The "virtual appointments" choice, in particular, humanizes customer service.



**What we like:** *HSN* highlights not one, but two attractive value-adds. First, free shipping. Of course a customer is more willing to buy if they don't have to spend extra for delivery—80% are more likely to make the online purchase if free shipping is included<sup>2</sup>. Second, *HSN's* reminder of its FlexPay option might sway financially strapped shoppers who could benefit from an installment plan.

<sup>2</sup> MediaPost, "The Free-Shipping Catch: Brands Have To Offer It If They Want The Order," July 2021

## Extended Holiday Returns

Go ahead and shop.  
You can return any item  
through January 31, 2021.



**What we like:** *HSN* is rocking the value-adds category. This extended holiday returns policy is especially generous. Shoppers have plenty of time to make up their minds. And they can let the holiday hangover pass before lifting a finger.



**What we like:** If you haven't noticed, we appreciate icons paired with short explanations. *Avenue USA* rolls its value-adds all into one noticeable pack, hitting on free shipping, free gifts, automatic reorders, and customer service.



**What we like:** A company's ethics can be a powerful persuasion. Consider that 40% of consumers self-identify as purpose-driven<sup>3</sup>, meaning they seek products aligned with their values. *GUNAS New York* does a great job of communicating what matters to them and how it influences their products.

<sup>3</sup> IBM, "Meet the 2020 consumers driving change," June 2020



### Our value-add tips:

- Promote value-adds in all emails, not just during the Black Friday and Cyber Monday timeframe, including in automated messages like cart abandonment
- Icons with short, descriptive text! Need we say more?
- If free shipping on every order is not financially possible, toss in free gift wrapping instead

## SMS

We would be doing a disservice if we neglected text marketing, even if it's technically outside the scope of email.

SMS marketing prompted **2.5% of the orders placed** across all channels on Black Friday 2020. The **conversion rate for the first half of 2021 averages 2.44%**. We anticipate rates will increase during Black Friday and Cyber Monday, just as they did last year.

SMS is an additional communications avenue worth exploring. Start collecting numbers if you're not already.

**Divatress: Our Biggest Black Friday Sale Ever Is Live! Save UP TO 80% OFF Wigs, Lace Fronts, And Braids!**

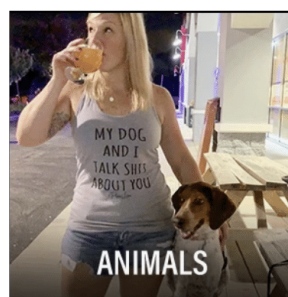
Stop Here:  
[0snd.com/lc/XXXXXX](https://0snd.com/lc/XXXXXX)  
 Reply STOP to opt-out



**What we like:** *Divatress* is direct. SMS allows for 160 characters. So communicating efficiently, on the busiest shopping day of the year, is key.

Piper Lou Collection: Hi Elizabeth! Our 50% OFF Cyber Monday sale is LIVE! Including the Dogs Collection

SHOP NOW>>



**Animals**  
 piperlou.co



**What we like:** A few nice things are happening here. *Piper Lou* inserts a little personalization by including the recipient's name. It takes SMS up a notch by featuring an on-brand photo through MMS. And it ties in a collection that, we're guessing, is one of its best sellers.



NanaMacs: Don't Miss Out On Another Facebook Live! More New Arrivals Just Launched! Shop The Sale Now

**What we like:** *NanaMacs* scores one point for an itinerary-based MMS. They score another for creating excitement and building anticipation with a Facebook live feed schedule of product drops. Another brand playing on our FOMO inclinations.

 **NanaMacs**

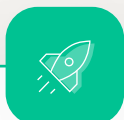


### Our SMS tips:

- Incorporate SMS into your email campaigns as well as automated workflows—such as abandoned cart, browse abandonment, and welcome messages—for more personal outreach
- Send time-sensitive messages like flash sales or low-inventory notifications
- Offer your VIPs a special promotion
- Use MMS to visually pack a punch

## That's a Wrap

We're going to say it again because it's worth repeating: one in eight people who clicked on a Black Friday or Cyber Monday email last year made a purchase. Seems like motivation enough to elevate your email campaigns.



Contemplate how you can:

- Time your promotions to make a bigger splash
- Design a sale that builds excitement
- Inject your voice or a distinguishable tone that sets yourself apart from the pack
- Provide useful content for the consumer
- Showcase additional features, like free shipping or extended returns, that add greater value
- Use SMS to your advantage

Now go get creating!

See how **Omnisend** helps over **70,000** ecommerce brands increase their holiday sales, not their workload

**TRY FOR FREE**

# Increase your sales, not your workload

Omnisend is an ecommerce-tailored email & SMS marketing automation platform built to help nimble teams drive more revenue without increasing their workload. One-click ecommerce stack integrations, pre-built workflows and intuitive drag & drop editing make it easy to get up & running without diving into the gritty details, unless you want to.

More than 70,000 ecommerce brands use Omnisend to grow their businesses on autopilot, converting their customers with quick-to-build, highly-relevant emails & texts.

70,000+ Nimble Ecommerce Brands Choose Omnisend



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