

Email marketing lookbook:

Black Friday & Cyber Monday



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Intro

Black Friday Cyber Monday (BFCM) is a crucial time for brands. It's like the Avengers assembling to save the world — but for sales, and instead of lasting the length of a movie, it lasts months. The challenge for brands is to find creative and compelling ways to design emails and SMS that keep engagement and sales high throughout the entire holiday shopping season.

Don't worry, you don't need to do it alone. As the Beatles told us, everyone needs a little help from their friends.

That's why we created this lookbook to guide and inspire your BFCM strategy and help you sell more this year. We'll cover when to begin your holiday marketing, provide visual subject line, email, and SMS inspiration, explain why automation is like having a friend who always knows what you need, and show you the perfect BFCM email template (it's so good, you can actually use it year-round).



When to start your BFCM promotions

In our 2024 BFCM report¹, we found that while overall order volume dipped compared to 2023, the average order value (AOV) jumped 55% year-over-year, hitting \$235.94. Shoppers might be placing fewer orders, but they're spending more per purchase. Combine that with the fact that major retailers pushed deals earlier than ever, and it's clear: inboxes stayed busy, and consumers were primed to start holiday shopping well before November.

By the time Black Friday rolled around, email-driven orders were already peaking early in the day, and sales momentum continued right through Cyber Monday.

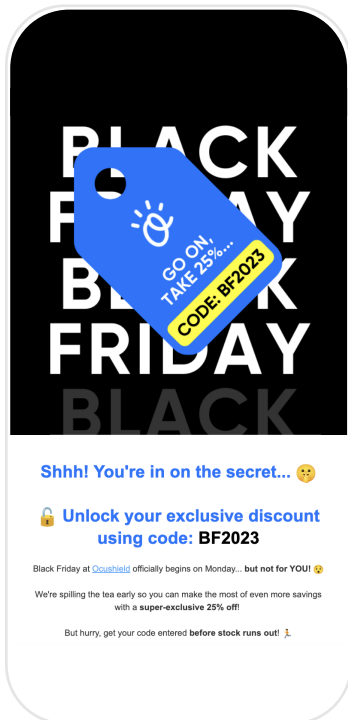
Brands looking to increase sales this holiday season need to rethink how their marketing calendars align with consumers' extended shopping behaviors. Here's what we suggest:

- Start by mid-October. These don't need to be the best deals, but shoppers will be buying.
- Treat Black Friday and Cyber Monday as week-long events. The era of standalone days has passed us by, just like the era of picking up your own takeout food.
- Don't stop on Christmas Eve. Shopping will stay strong through the end of the year.

→ Black Friday week:

For many brands, Black Friday Week begins on either the Sunday or Monday before Black Friday. This is becoming the new normal, and brands looking to capture early sales from eager shoppers are taking full advantage. Take a look at some email examples sent in the week leading up to Black Friday:

¹Early BFCM sales: A new norm in ecommerce



Ocushield

Type: Black Friday early access

Ocushield's email combines bold graphics with a cheeky tone to grab your attention. The headline — Shhh! You're in on the secret... — immediately makes you feel like an insider.

It offers a super-exclusive 25% off, giving its customers early access before the official Black Friday rush. By mentioning that readers should act before the stock runs out, Ocushield creates FOMO, making this deal even harder to resist.

Sent Friday, Nov. 17

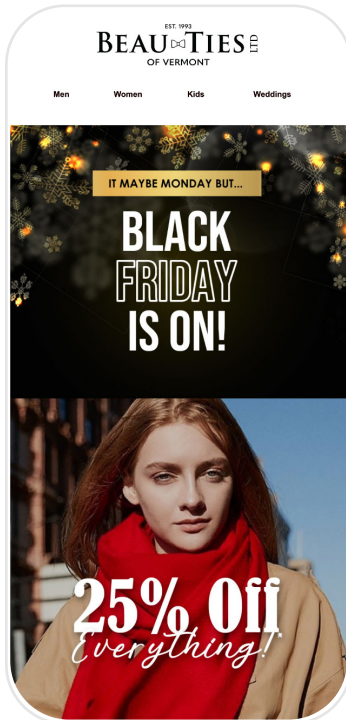


Molly Mutt

Type: Cyber Week email

Instead of doing just one day of Black Friday deals, brands have started running promotions earlier, leading to a rise in the popularity of Cyber Week. Molly Mutt utilizes a good old “buy more, save more” approach here and tops it off with an additional “Door Buster” deal during Thanksgiving, making its offers irresistible.

Sent Sunday, Nov. 19



Beau Ties of Vermont

Type: Black Friday week email

Who cares if it's Monday — you can live like it's already a (Black) Friday if you feel like it. And Beau Ties of Vermont did just that.

This brand started its Black Friday sales a week early, giving buyers a head start and leaving enough time to invite a friend and earn some 🍀 towards their next purchase.

Sent Monday, Nov. 20



Modkat

Type: Black Friday email

Modkat encourages you to be responsible with your holiday shopping by making a list and checking it twice. Of course, it might also be because your pet, whom you forgot to include the first time, is secretly influencing you... But for now, let's just appreciate Modkat for giving its customers time to make informed decisions.

Sent Monday, Nov. 20



Minga

Type: Black Friday email

Minga's Black Friday email captures its edgy, punk style right from the get-go. With a running line announcing that Black Friday is on, it offers an impossible-to-refuse 70% off site-wide and a free beanie. The images, fonts, and graphics chosen are perfect reflections of the brand — unapologetically cool and true to what it is.

Sent Tuesday, Nov. 21



Foldies

Type: Black Friday early access

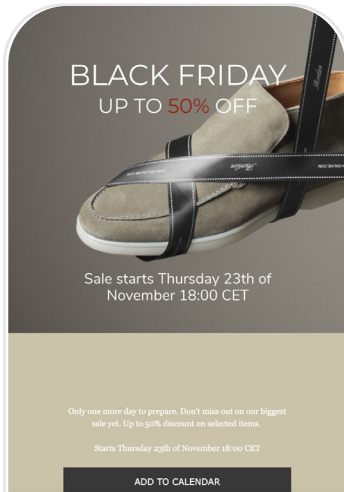
Foldies reinforces the exclusivity of its email program by offering subscribers early Black Friday access of 30%. We also love how this email promotes an impressive bundle of value-adds: free shipping, a two-year warranty, easy returns, and a payment plan. For even more perks, like early access to sales and special deals, Foldies Text Club is the place to be.

Sent Wednesday, Nov. 22

→ Other Black Friday examples:

Black Friday: It's "go time."

Just because offers can begin earlier, that doesn't mean brands shouldn't build excitement around Black Friday itself. Continue making Black Friday a marquee event, if nothing else, for nostalgia's sake.

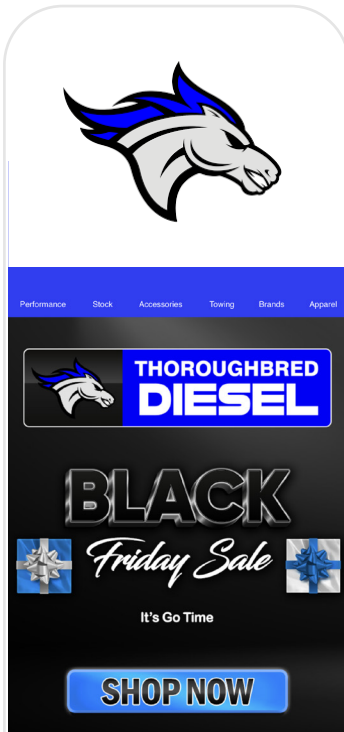


→ Aurelien

Type: Black Friday preview email

Aurelien's short and sweet email adds a touch of exclusivity — subscribers get the VIP treatment by being notified when the sale goes live. Luxurious treatment from a luxury brand, indeed, we approve!

Sent Wednesday, Nov. 22



→ Thoroughbred Diesel

Type: Black Friday email

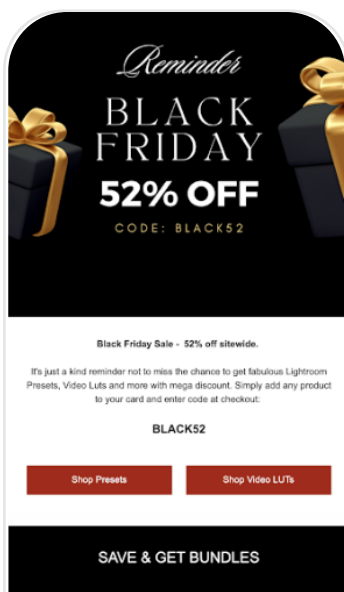
Thoroughbred Diesel's email might surprise you at first glance. It wasn't packed with product promotions and didn't provide any details about the sale — no discount percentages, no specific offers, and no deadlines.

Instead, it took a clean and intriguing approach with a clear call to action: "It's Go Time." And the results speak for themselves: a whopping 25.7% open rate and over \$17K in revenue — it seems "go time" truly was for them.

Sent Friday, Nov. 24

Black Friday last chance

No one wants to miss a deal and that's when last-chance emails come to save the day, like a news reporter emerging from a phone booth sporting a cape. Sending last-chance emails and SMS reminders is always a great idea.



→ 123presets

Type: Black Friday last-chance email

Who can resist a good bundle deal? It's a win-win if you ask us — customers get more bang for their buck and you keep those orders coming. And while most people use BFCM deals to get their holiday shopping out of the way, 123presets wants to make your festive photoshoots next-level fabulous.

Sent Sunday, Nov. 26



→ Rachel Riley London

Type: Black Friday last-chance email

We love how Rachel Riley's email masterfully taps into FOMO by urging subscribers to seize the final moments of the sale. And to make things easier for the readers, the email includes a handy section with product categories.

When you think about how many emails a person gets during the BFCM period, this move makes total sense! Rachel Riley aimed to help shoppers navigate the sale and find exactly what they're looking for.

Sent Sunday, Nov. 26



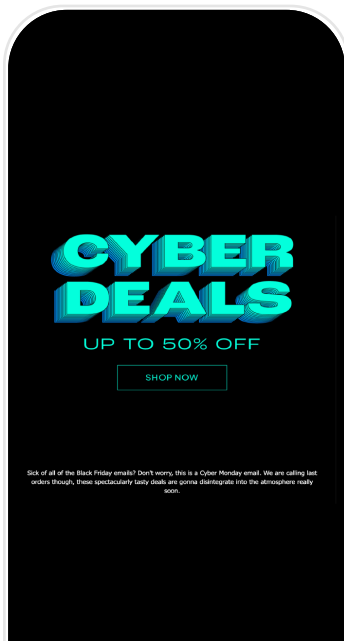
Aussie Gardener

Type: Black Green Friday flash sale

Aussie Gardener puts its own spin on Black Friday by calling it Green Friday. The brand's email is bursting with urgency and excitement — 99-cent deals for the next 60 minutes! This is a super limited-time offer, which you don't see often from brands outside of text messages.

Speaking of, you may want to send an SMS alert right after the email and combine two channels for maximum impact. To end things on an even brighter note, Aussie Gardener keeps it personal with the owner's cheerful sign-off. It's a green 🍏 from us!

Sent Friday, Nov. 24



EQVVS

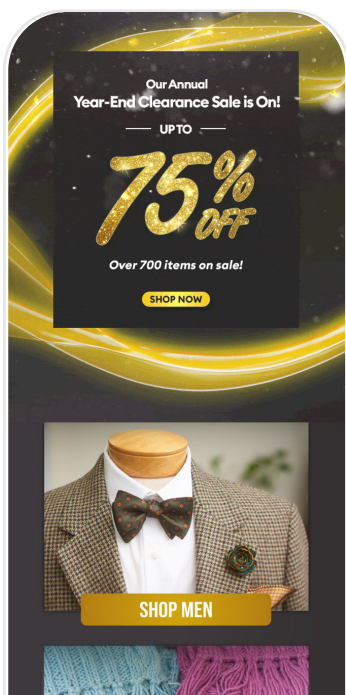
Type: Cyber Monday last-chance email

EQVVS men's clothing store takes a cheeky approach to its last-chance email by playing off of Black Friday email fatigue. It creates a sense of urgency by saying it's the last call for deals, although we wish the email made the expiration a tad more obvious. Even still, phrases like "deals are gonna disintegrate into the atmosphere" add a fun, edgy twist.

Sent Wednesday, Nov. 29

The deals don't stop

Just because Black Friday, Cyber Monday, and Christmas Day have passed, doesn't mean the deals have. Sales will remain strong for the rest of the year. Be sure to capitalize on the festive shopping mood. After all, no one ever gets everything they want for the holidays.



Beau Ties of Vermont

Type: Year-end clearance sale email

Here's another example from Beau Ties of Vermont. Like other brands, the tie between Christmas Day and New Year's Day serves as year-end clearance events. This email is straightforward but effective. It communicates the value well, provides visual secondary CTAs, and ends with a more personal way to say when the sale ends — no fine print needed here, just 22pt Arial font... or is it Helvetica?

Sent Dec. 26

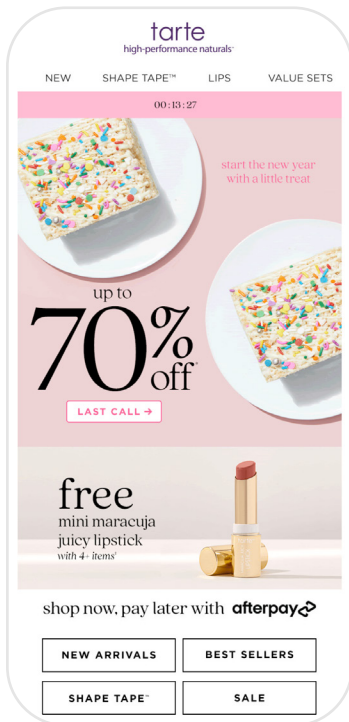


Sorel

Type: End of season sale email

This email from Sorel mentions self-gifting products you did not get for the holidays, a very common tactic. It does a nice job of showcasing specific items, but to take it up a notch, you could include sections for best-selling, top-rated, and almost sold out products.

Sent Dec. 26



Type: Last-call sale email

This email from Tarte does a lot of things well. The hero image is beautiful, the text is minimal and the offer is clear, and it offers a free gift with a purchase. The recovery CTAs are carefully selected and combine social proof, value, new items, and, presumably, the most popular product. The email ends with a bang by promoting value-adds.

Sent Dec. 26

Create compelling subject lines

The goal of any email is to stand out, but during BFCM this becomes more difficult as people's inboxes become as crowded as Times Square on New Year's Eve. The good news is that a crowded inbox doesn't mean your emails have to be ignored. In fact, during 2024's Cyber Ten, email performance held strong with average open rates at 27.94% and click-to-conversion rates at 8.22% — proof that even in a noisy season, shoppers still rely on email to guide their purchases.

Companies should use a wide variety of subject lines in their campaigns, but we recommend you:

- Use emojis and special characters. The added color and shapes can draw attention.
- Keep subject lines short. Because of mobile screen size, between 21 and 40 characters, or six or fewer words, will typically do the trick. Otherwise, you run the risk of having your subject lines get cut sho...
- Use preheader text to build upon your subject lines.

➔ **Need help creating subject lines?**

Free subject line generator

➔ **Want to check your subject line?**

Free subject line tester

Good use of preheader:

💎 **Black Friday Sale - 50% OFF** 💎 - [open asap] ➔ BodyCandy

Greg, News Have Landed - 50% OFF EVERYTHING ➔ Ann Taylor Black Fr.

20% off EVERYTHING - Ends tonight! - 🎆🎆🎆🎆🎆🎆 ➔ DAVIDsTEA

Black Friday starts early

(Notice how the preheader text supports the subject line by providing additional details):

♥ **Black Friday Sale Starts Now! ♥ - Everything 30% off PLUS up to 4 free gifts!** ➡ Inglot

Black Friday Deals Start Now! - Killer Deals on Snow, Moto and Off-Road Gear! ➡ Klim

Black Friday - NOW - Get 25% Off Everything ➡ Beau Ties of Vermont

🎁👤 **Black Friday Deals Start Now - Our biggest sale of the year is here! Take 20% off sitewide.** ➡ Modkat

!! **Black Friday Sale !! Up to 70% off !! - Save on thousands of styles.** ➡ Adidas

Good emoji use — in the subject line and preheader text

😍 **Our staff LOVES these! 😍 - Up to 60% off our faves** ➡ Etsy

Last Chance to Save BIG! 🛒🛒🛒 - Get 40% off \$200 or \$70 off \$300 on ...

! **E X T E N D E D ! Black Friday Deals - Up to 70% off + get \$20 SStack...**

Incorporate SMS for campaigns

Your neighbor, Fancy Footwear Gary, may say he doesn't like getting SMS from his go-to shoe store. But we're smart marketers, right? So we looked at the numbers. In November 2024, brands sent 28 million SMS messages — a 9% increase year-over-year. And shoppers responded. On Black Friday alone, SMS drove \$926K in sales, making it the single most lucrative day for text-based marketing. Turns out Gary might not admit it, but he's still clicking those texts.

With SMS now a major part of companies' marketing programs, here are some ways you can use them to increase both SMS and email sales:

- Remind people to check their email, especially on peak days like Cyber Monday
- Run time-sensitive offers, such as flash sales
- Announce sales early on SMS
- Use SMS as an alternative to reminder emails
- Promote last-chance items, like gift cards
- And if all else fails, send printed text messages via carrier pigeons with a beak-dropping deal 😊



Check out how the following brands combined email and SMS in their BFCM strategy:

SMS

Thoroughbred Diesel's Black Friday Sale is LIVE! Click below to start shopping.

<https://www.thoroughbreddiesel.com/holiday-deals/>

Thoroughbred Diesel

Thoroughbred Diesel used SMS to follow up on its Black Friday sale email. This combination resulted in an amazing 22% click rate and over \$32K in revenue just from this one SMS, or \$49K in total, if you include the initial email. We love such a smart, straightforward strategy, as it clearly works!

SMS:

Start saving now with our
Black Friday Early Bird Deals -
Up to 50% off.

Don't miss out.

Shop here: <https://www.vapesuperstore.co.uk/pages/vape-deals>

Vape Superstore

Vape Superstore's SMS campaign gets straight to the point with its Black Friday Early Bird Deals. The invitation to start shopping early really worked, as it generated 5x more sales than the day-of BFCM messages.

SMS:

B-Wear:

Black Friday Starts NOW! The
entire store is up to 50% OFF!

Find tees starting at \$6.99!

(online only) Shop: 0snd.com/lc/

B-Wear

SMS is all about immediacy and B-Wear understood that. Other channels can be utilized for building up the excitement, but when it's finally go time, there's nothing quite like getting a reminder straight to your phone. Also, pay attention to the strategic choice of all caps on the words 'NOW' and '50% OFF' — when there's a limited amount of characters available, you must get creative with communicating the main message.

SMS:

Foldies:

WE LIKE YOU!
So get a 1 day head start on our
Black Friday Deal.
BOGO 60% OFF. Code: ... or
click here:
0snd.com/lc/HdkDc Reply STOP
to opt-out

Foldies

Your phone is personal. That's why Foldies uses SMS to give its VIPs exclusive access to the brand's biggest sale... a full day before anyone else! It's Foldies' way of saying thank you for being a loyal customer.

SMS:

Pottery Barn:

You're in luck: The Black Friday Sale is still on! We're giving you an extra day to snag our deepest deals of the year:
[Exclusive Savings](#) | [Furniture & Home Decor on Sale](#) | [Pottery Barn](#)

Pottery Barn

In case you didn't have the opportunity to shop at Pottery Barn during the height of Black Friday, no worries – it offers an additional day to browse the deals. Wait, a Black Friday deal extended? Consider us shocked 😱.

SMS:

Lulus:
Black Friday Sale ends
TONIGHT! Don't miss out on
20-75% OFF
E-V-E-R-Y-T-H-I-N-G!
Use code BF20

In Style Dresses, Shoes, Skirts
& Other Trendy Women's
Clothing - Lul...

Lulus

Sending a message formatted this way is a bold move! By literally spelling out its deal (20-75% OFF E-V-E-R-Y-T-H-I-N-G), the brand catches attention immediately. Additionally, it plays into FOMO, suggesting subscribers should not wait to shop as the sale ends tonight.



FunctLAST CHANCE: Today is the final day of Seattle Sun Tan's Black Friday Sale! Save 40% when you try our Sunbeds, Spray Tans, Anti-Aging Red Light therapy, or infrared Wellness Pod. ☀️

Seattle Sun Tan

Seattle Sun Tan stands out with an MMS – a colorful visual with the essential info catching the eye first, and a text message below that gives more details about the offer.

Function of Beauty:
40% OFF, 30% OFF, 20% OFF
on ALL custom?
It's Black Friday and we
understood the assignment:



Personalized Beauty | Function
of Beauty

Function of Beauty

Function of Beauty offers a variety of discounts, as it, in fact, truly “understood the assignment” of Black Friday. We love a brand with a witty tone of voice that keeps its messages light.

Create automations

With the increase in signups and web traffic that BFCM brings, behavior-based automated messages are essential for increasing first-time and repeat sales. And when we say essential, we mean essential. In November 2024:

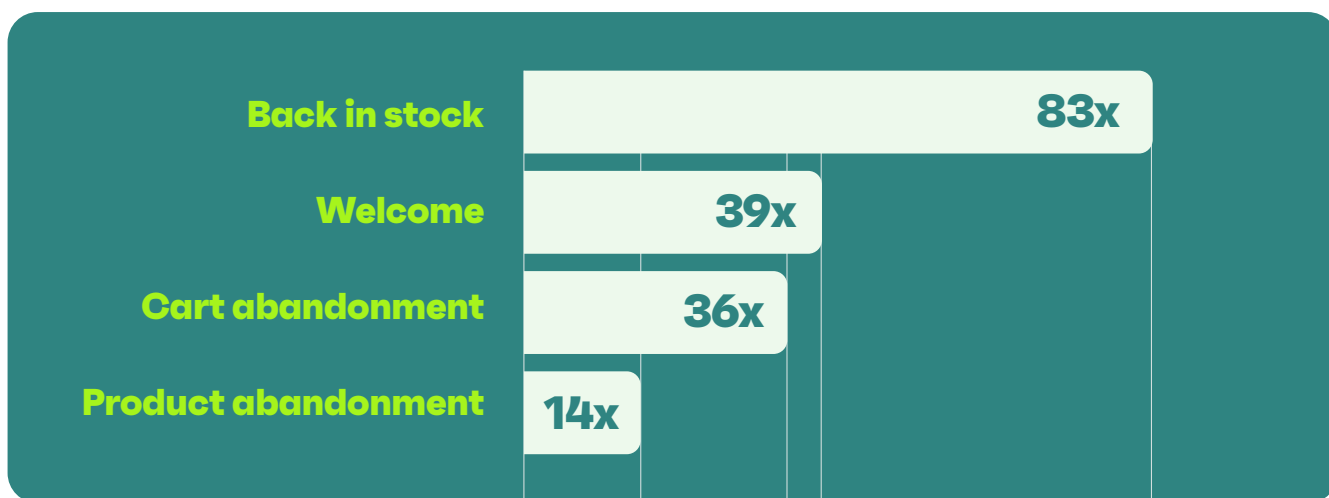
- Automations made up just 3% of email sends, but drove 30% of all email orders
- Nearly 40% of people who clicked an automated email went on to make a purchase
- Automated flows consistently outperformed campaigns, with conversion rates several times higher than manually scheduled sends

The takeaway: campaigns are great for reach, but automations are where the revenue multiplies.

Convinced?

The essential workflows to guide holiday shoppers to purchase are welcome, cart abandonment, product abandonment, and back-in-stock.

If you need help getting started, Omnisend pre-built all the messages, subject lines, and workflow settings for these essential automations, helping you set up your automated messages in minutes.



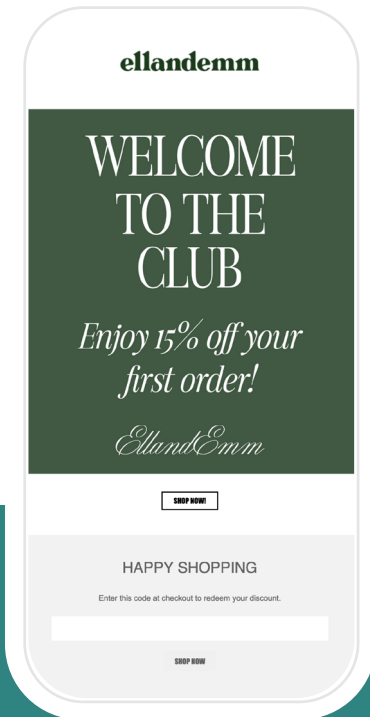
Here's how to use workflows during the holidays:

- **Welcome:** Introduce new email and SMS subscribers to your program. Introduce top sellers, customer favorites, holiday-specific products or gift guides, and showcase customer testimonials. (Conversion rate: 2.91%²)
- **Cart abandonment:** Retarget shoppers who did not complete their checkout. Remind people that products may sell out quickly and of your shipping and return policies. (Conversion rate: 2.04%)
- **Product abandonment:** Retarget online window shoppers by focusing on the products they were viewing, and entice them back to the store. Reinforce reasons they should shop with you, and offer a discount to sweeten the deal. (Conversion rate: 1.05%)
- **Back-in-stock:** Sent when out-of-stock products become available. Knowing they sold out once, shoppers will be motivated to purchase before it's too late. Use FOMO in your emails to encourage an immediate purchase. (Conversion rate: 5.34%)

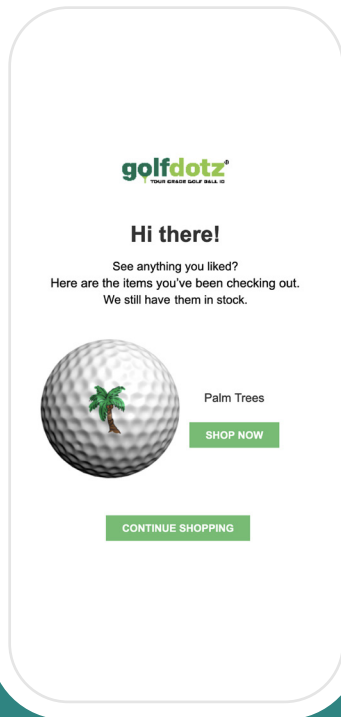
²Email, SMS, and push marketing for ecommerce in 2025

→ Top tip:

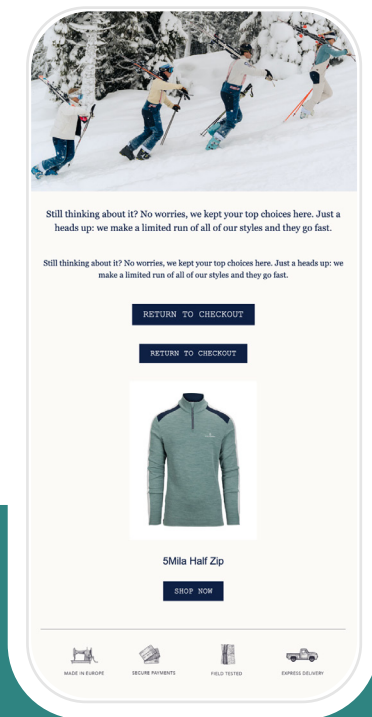
If you offer incentives in your messages, ensure they are either stackable or in line with your seasonal discounts. Offering a 10% discount while there is a 40% sale isn't helpful.



Welcome workflow example



Product abandonment example



Cart abandonment example

How to build an effective email:

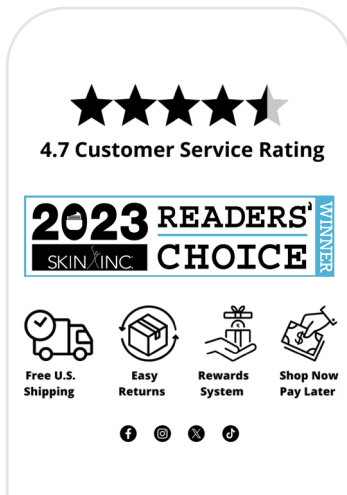
Key elements to include

To maximize sales this BFCM, brands should create the most perfect email possible — and we think we did it for you! This template incorporates best practices and gives consumers everything they may want from an email, from social proof to product recommendations. We've also included an example from Runway Rogue to show how it's put the template elements into effect:

The diagram illustrates five key elements for an effective email template, using a generic template on the left and a real-world example from Runway Rogue on the right.

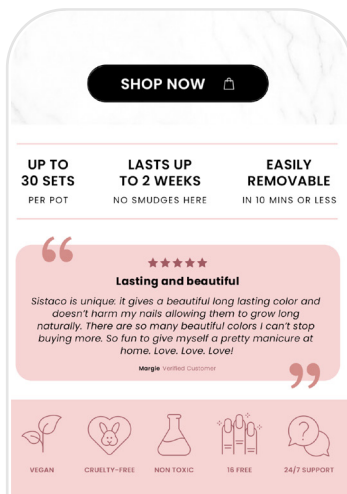
- 1. Promote the main offer**: The generic template shows a headline "Get 20% off everything this Black Friday" with a placeholder image. The Runway Rogue example features a large "15% OFF" discount code "1204-JR4G-2FGD" with a "REDEEM NOW" button.
- 2. Include a large CTA**: The generic template has a "SHOP NOW" button. The Runway Rogue example has a "REDEEM NOW" button.
- 3. Use social proof (feature top-sellers, customer faves, top-rated products, etc.)**: The generic template shows a section for "-BEST SELLERS-" with two product placeholders. The Runway Rogue example features a "RUNWAY ROGUE BEST SELLER" section with two product images.
- 4. Add product reviews/testimonials**: The generic template shows two product placeholders with star ratings and "SHOP NOW" buttons. The Runway Rogue example shows two product images with star ratings and "TAKE A LOOK" buttons.
- 5. Promote value adds (free shipping, guarantees, delivery info, return policies)**: The generic template shows a "FREE SHIPPING!" banner. The Runway Rogue example features a "CleanLuxeBeauty" logo with various icons (Vegan, Cruelty-Free, etc.) and a "FREE SHIPPING ON ALL ORDERS OVER" banner.

→ Value-add examples:



→ 7E Wellness

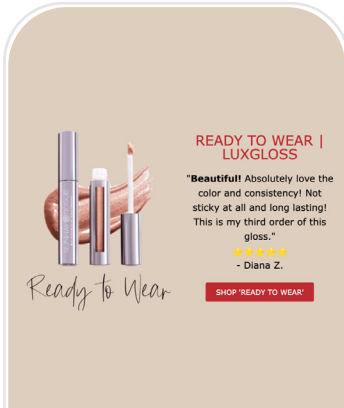
Offering more than just discounts is a smart way to stand out, and 7E Wellness knows it — free shipping, easy returns, a reward system, and an option to buy now and pay later is an exceptionally attractive package of value-adds. And a winner of the 2023 Skin Inc. Readers' Choice? Yet another reason to take out your credit card.



→ Sistaco

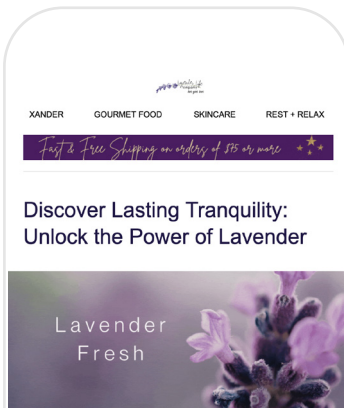
Consumers want to feel comfortable with the products and company when making purchases. Sistaco does a great job of this by mentioning how these products stand out (up to 30 sets, no smudges, easy removal), showcases a customer testimonial (great social proof!), and lets buyers know that its products are gentle on the environment — all while offering 24/7 support.

→ Value-add examples:



→ Runway Rogue

Social proof is a powerful tool, and a raving review can be the deciding factor in placing an order. With a five-star review and a mention that it's the third time a customer is buying the product, what more do you need?



→ Lavender Life Company

Lavender Life Company keeps it simple with the offer of fast and free shipping on certain orders. The banner is right at the top, making this classic value-add one of the first things that catches your eye.

BFCM checklist

To give yourself the best chance of success this year, you'll want to plan ahead instead of waiting until the week before and hurriedly putting some offers together. We've made this checklist so you know exactly what tasks need your attention. Get them done early and you can ease into the holiday season stress-free (well, sort of).

1. Realize BFCM is creepin' fast. A tiny bit of panic
2. Open this checklist. Panic goes away
3. Decide on your BFCM campaign schedule
4. Prepare your email and SMS campaign templates
5. Create a compelling subject line for every email. Put your subject lines to the test using our free subject line tester
6. Test your emails on mobile and desktop
7. Drink plenty of water and get enough sleep
8. Include SMS in your campaigns
9. Set up Welcome automation
10. Set up Cart Abandonment automation
12. Set up Product Abandonment automation
13. Set up Back-in-Stock automation
14. Make sure all active automations are up-to-date
15. Give yourself a short break! Go for a walk, dance to your favorite song, drink a latte
16. Make sure all signup forms are up-to-date
17. Ensure important info like shipping, returns policy, etc., is displayed on your store
18. Verify that your store loads properly on all devices
19. Make sure your offers, discounts, and messaging are consistent across your forms and automations
20. Have an "oops" email ready, just in case
21. Give yourself a pat on the back — you're ready to increase your sales!
22. Repeat next year



Increase your sales, not your workload

Omnisend is built for ecommerce teams who'd rather grow their business than babysit tools. Plug in your store, use the workflows and builder that are already waiting for you, and get campaigns out the door without wading through code or clutter.

More than 150,000 brands run on Omnisend — turning signups into buyers and buyers into repeat customers, without adding busywork to the to-do list.

LEGO[®]

GODIVA
Chocolatier

FABER-CASTELL
since 1761

Cuisinart

DUKE CANNON
SUPPLY CO.

INGLOT
CANADA

100,000+ nimble ecommerce brands choose Omnisend



With thousands of 5-star reviews on G2Crowd, Capterra, and GetApp, our **100,000+ customers love us**, and we think you will too.

 **omnisend**

