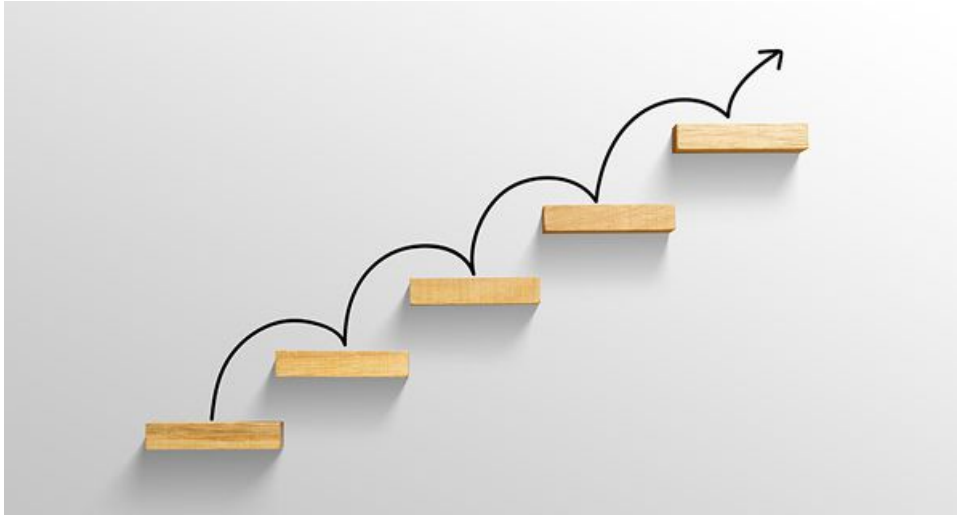


# Black Friday in retrospect

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*Meghan Ferguson, digital media manager for [Vizeum](#) in Cape Town, says marketers and retailers can learn a few things from the last couple of years of Black Friday in South Africa.*



This year, Black Friday falls on 29 November, which is after payday for most shoppers. It's an exhilarating time for brands that have spent months getting ready for the masses, both in-store and online, as well as shoppers looking to score big.

## Off to a shaky start?

In 2018, South Africans were disillusioned by Black Friday, judging by online sentiment, with many consumers calling it a marketing scam and lambasting retailers for shovelling measly 20% discounts under the Black Friday banner.

Over the last few years, some brands have also experienced the unpleasant side of the Black Friday frenzy, like Takealot's website crashing and both Checkers and Game having their storefronts shattered by shoppers in 2017.

Here are five lessons we can learn to help us revive the festive shopping season for shoppers, retailers and marketers.

### 1. Start talking earlier

We have noticed from our keyword research and performance-planning efforts that search volumes and social mentions relating to Black Friday begin to increase around September, which is why it is important to start pushing promotional messaging earlier rather than later in order to gain momentum and ensure top-of-mind awareness.

Online shopping makes up the majority of activity on Black Friday, which is why it's important to prioritise the online execution of your marketing efforts to create excitement and drive leads ahead of time.

### 2. Be direct and concise

With each passing year, the popularity of Black Friday grows and so too the competition for consumers' attention, which is especially short when it comes to creative and video content. Ask Facebook – they only count their video views from the three-second mark because after this point, users who weren't immediately engaged stop watching and move on.

Your message needs to be direct and concise for the consumer to quickly identify and decide on the purchase. In other

words, the price better be right.

### 3. Prepare for the influx

Early preparation can guard against website errors plaguing the highlight of the retail year, but a holistic strategy, which includes communicating with consumers during peak web traffic, can create an opportunity to grow future sales as well. A 'Sorry, we're very popular right now' can go a long way.

### 4. Remarket

Make sure that your remarketing strategy is in place to capture cart abandoners or in-store audiences for future communication with a more personalised message.

### 5. (Gift) guide your customers

Gift or collection guides are beneficial for consumers, especially those consumers who may find themselves on your site but who do not necessarily fall into your core target audience. For example, consider a 'Best gifts for her' page or add a 'frequently bought with' section to your product pages.

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