

December Shopping: Skyrocket your sales with WhatsApp

It's almost time for Christmas! That means Thanksgiving, Black Friday and Sinterklaas (for our Dutch readers) are almost here! Have you considered how you're going to get all the holiday shoppers to your store?

Basically, it all comes down to the 3 C's. First, you'll need the right Channel to reach shoppers, with strong Content to attract their attention. And finally, you'll want them to Convert into returning shoppers. Combining all 3 C's effectively, will lead to a more personalised experience for your shoppers which is particularly valuable since personalization is one of the key drivers of a successful customer experience strategy. Let me share some tips that will help you skyrocket your December sales!

1 Channel

“It's not just what you say, it's how you say it.” Sounds familiar? Before looking into which message to send out, let's not forget to look at how to reach your audience. When looking for ways to reach consumers with attractive offers, WhatsApp is a channel that's highly suitable for your December campaigns. Over 1.5 billion people in over 180 countries use WhatsApp every month. More than 1 billion of them use it every day.

But WhatsApp isn't just a popular peer-to-peer messaging channel amongst your customers. Consumers also prefer WhatsApp as a channel to communicate with companies. A good thing for businesses, as WhatsApp allows you to support any conversation with rich media, making it easy to make a lasting impression on your target audience.

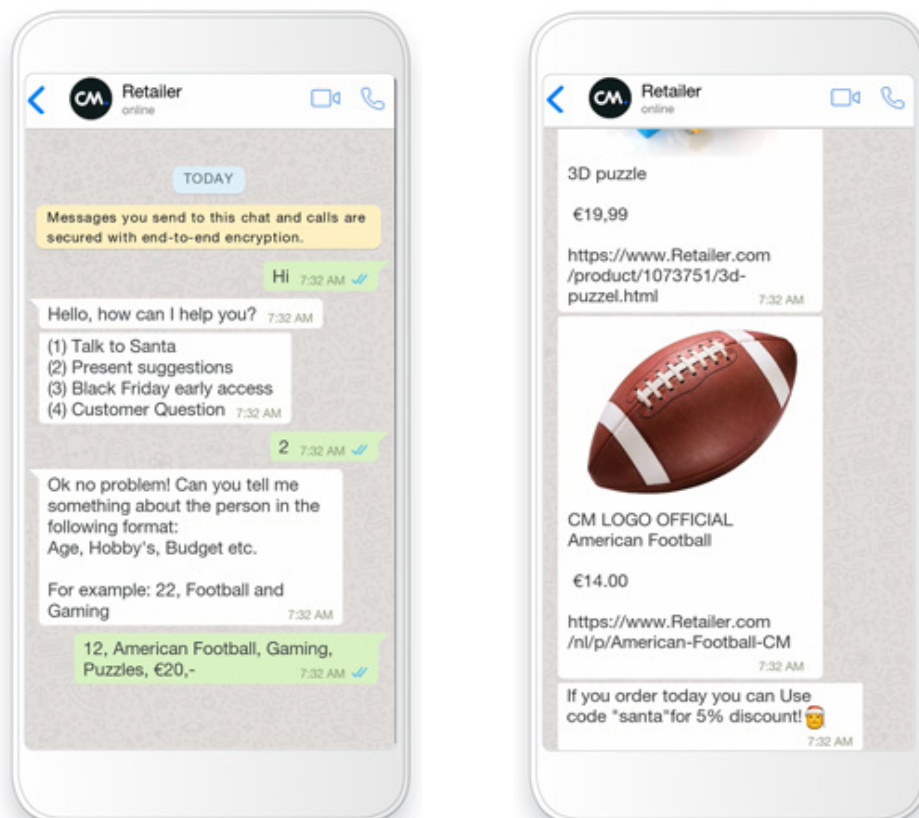
For world domination, ehm, I mean global reach: make sure you can truly reach all phones. That means that when customers can't be reached via WhatsApp, you can set up an SMS fall-back to ensure that your customers will always receive your messages.

2 Content

It's time to get creative with the actual message! The holiday season is a time of joy, happiness, and gifts. Lots and lots of gifts. For kids counting the days 'till Christmas morning, when they get to open Santa's gifts under the - undoubtedly beautifully decorated - Christmas tree, those gifts are about the most important part of the holiday season. We don't want to let them down, so we want Santa to get the perfect gift. But just what would that perfect gift be?

Santa's gift finder

Wouldn't it be swell if Santa's little helpers could help all secret Santa's find the perfect gift ideas? Just imagine how easy gift-shoppers would turn to you if your shop offered an accessible gift finder!

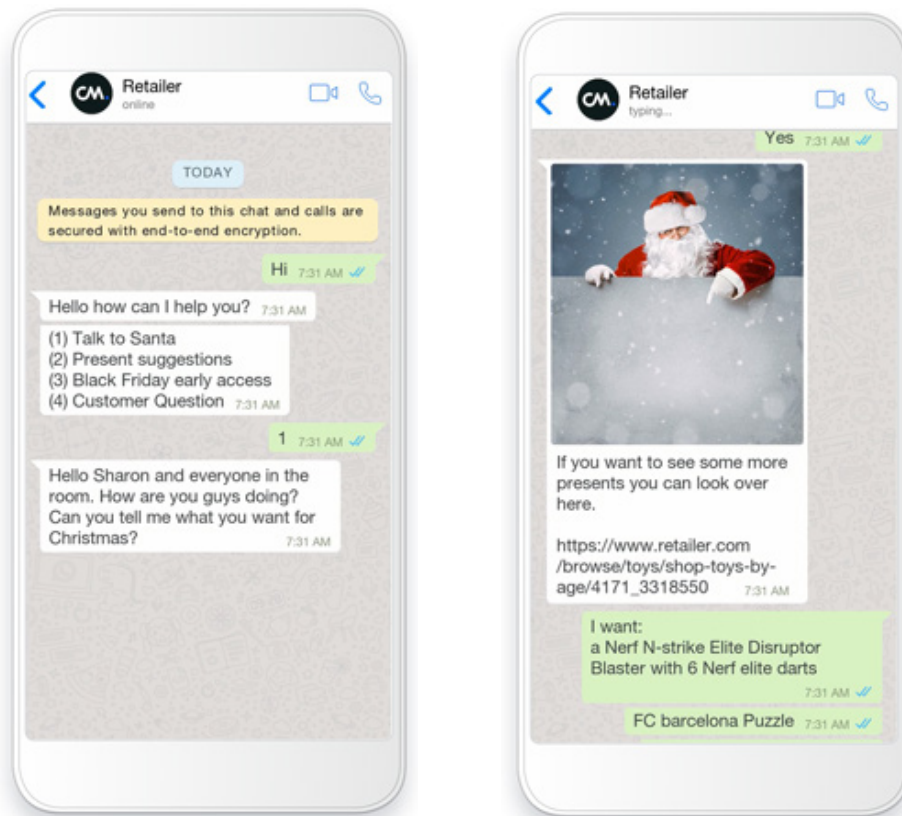


And as you can see, this isn't just a great idea for Christmas. Whether someone's looking for what to buy for Black Friday, or even a birthday, Bar Mitzvah or Thanksgiving; consumers can just start a conversation on their favorite messaging channel. By adding some information about the one they're shopping for, for example age, interests, hobbies, dislikes, budget, and so on, your automated flow can offer gift suggestions they may not have thought of themselves. That this is an opportunity for you to drive sales on specific products, is a nice bonus.

As you can see in the examples, WhatsApp offers the possibility to not only add pictures for product suggestions but also to add hyperlinks to the product page. In one click, you'll direct the consumer to your webshop where he can buy the perfect gift your gift finder found for him.

Christmas Wish List

Another way to make the life of the consumers a bit easier is by making use of something most if not all kids have: a Christmas wish list! Making a wish list with pen and paper is so 2009. Why waste paper when mobile can move the kids from the shopping list directly to the shop? Why not invite all kids (that haven't been naughty but nice) to chat with Santa Claus or Sinterklaas (for the Dutchies amongst us). We can only imagine how excited those kids would be if they're able to actually talk to their gift giving hero! And wouldn't it be even more awesome if they would get to see Santa in a thank you video after they've sung him a Christmas song?



Besides a great brand engagement campaign, this campaign is aimed to help parents find the perfect gifts for any budget. By connecting the mobile number used to chat with Santa to the webshop account, gifts from the wish list can be automatically added to the shopping cart. Just remove the gifts you don't want to buy or are above budget, confirm your order, and the order is ready to be shipped. Add an additional gift-wrapping service, and shopping (last-minute) Xmas gifts will be easier than ever! Might be a good idea to pre-select a pickup point close to the shoppers' homes, so they can sneak in all the gifts without being spotted.

If you offer a gift-wrapping service, why not offer this for free to all shoppers using this service? The gift for you will be the gift of rich customer profiles to use for future marketing campaigns! Not to mention sending all shoppers to your shop for that popular game or toy, instead of to the competitors'.

Shipment from the North Pole

Surely I needn't explain the shopping experience doesn't end at checkout. But did you know this holiday season combined with WhatsApp's rich features offers a great opportunity for brand engagement? If done right, the post-purchase process of sending the products to the buyer can make a long-lasting impression.

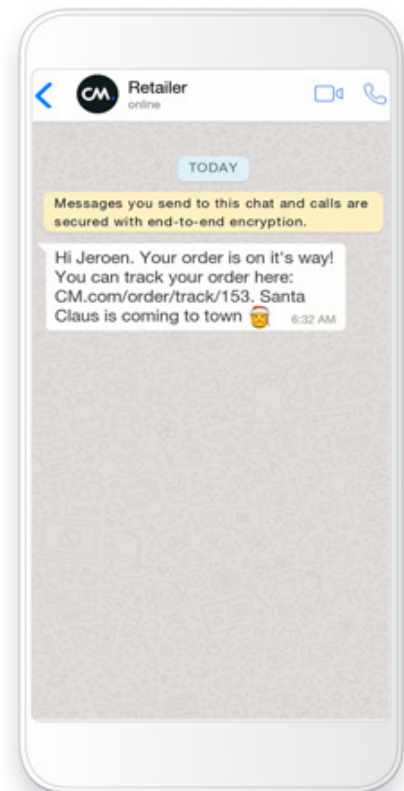
In this holiday season, you can use your imagination to make the anticipation of a parcel a truly fun one!

Even if this process does take a bit longer than usual, with everybody rushing to your store for their Christmas shopping.

Because this gift isn't shipped from the depot to the buyer's doorstep. It's not? No, this very special gift is handcrafted by Santa's troop of little helpers.

After wrapping it in colorful paper, Rudolph - yes, the one with the nose so bright - will rush through the sky to your roof.

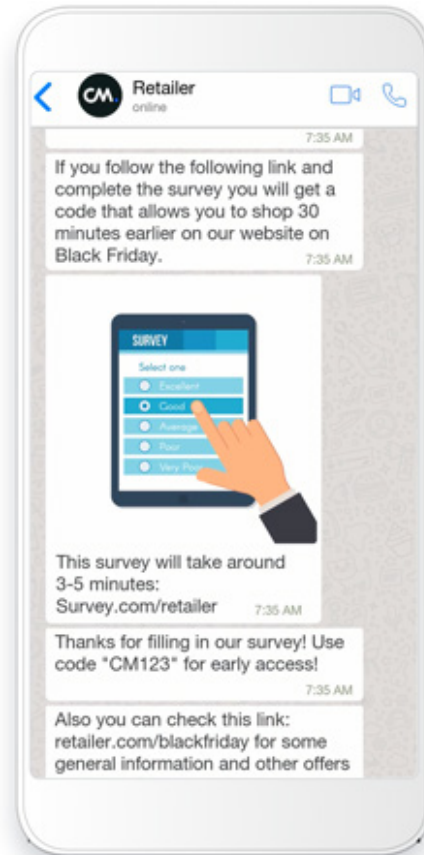
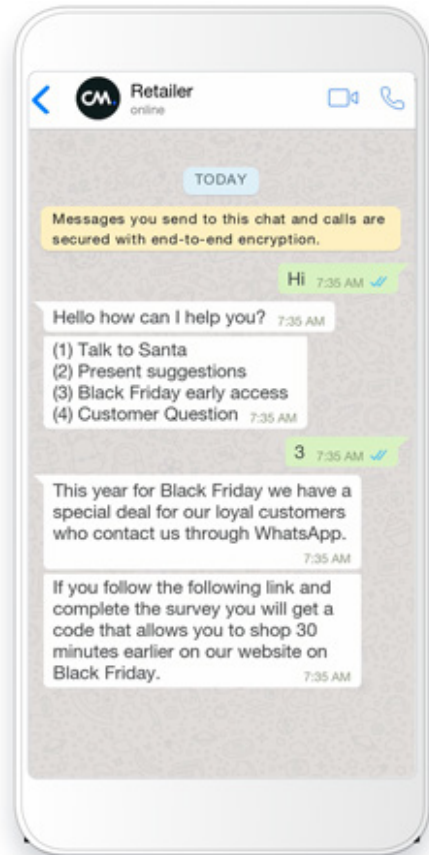
That's where Santa jumps out and hands over your parcel, disguised as your usual delivery driver.



Sure, you could also stick to the basics, sending one SMS message at the time the parcel is handed over to the courier. Or you could choose to ask your shoppers to opt-in for more regular updates. This will relieve any stress for the consumer, who wants to be sure his presents will be delivered in time. Once the order is confirmed, the little helpers start getting everything ready. Once the products are selected from the shelf, let the buyer know they're busy with gift wrapping. As soon as the delivery is ready to be handed over, say the sled is being polished to carry this special cargo. And once the courier picks up the parcel, share a video of Rudolph running through the sky. As soon as the exact delivery time is known, why not send a video of Santa saying 'Ho Ho Ho, your parcel will be at your door around 15PM or so!' It's all about managing expectations to prevent repetitive questions, and making the wait a bit more fun! And life on your customer care team a bit easier! 😊

Early access on Black Friday

By now, you can probably tell yours truly is quite the Christmas-enthusiast. But let's not forget all other important end-of-the-year campaigns all these tips are applicable on, with Black Friday as the true kick-off to the December Shopping frenzy! You don't want shoppers to go to the competitor for their Black Friday shopping. Luckily, WhatsApp offers great ways to make your shop stand out from the crowd. How about a WhatsApp early-bird campaign? The examples are endless. For starters, in return for filling in a short consumer-survey, you can offer early-bird access so your shopper won't miss out on his must-have products.



Major benefit: with the information you'll gather from the survey, you'll be able to create rich customer profiles for segmented marketing campaigns for Black Friday and all December holidays on your other messaging channels.

Hourly deals for the Black Friday weekend

In most stores, the Black Friday weekend offers great discounts on selected products. But who says those offers should stay the same throughout the weekend? To keep things interesting, you may want to consider using different types of discounts each day. Like: “20% off” on Friday, and a “Buy 3, Pay 2” on Saturday. Or a discount on shoes on Saturday, and discount on skirts on Sunday. If that’s the business you’re in, otherwise, that would be a bit weird...

OK, back to the campaign idea. If you’re offering variable discounts throughout the weekend, WhatsApp is a great way to keep your store and your offers under the shopper’s attention. Allow pre-registration for the daily or even hourly updates to let these people know exactly when to be at your (web)shop. Using your shopper’s favorite messaging channel, right on their mobile phone, you’ll have constant shopper activation and customer flow to your store. For example, ask customers to send you a message in the morning to disclose that day’s offer. That way, your store will be constantly top-of-mind, and in case of questions, they can just reply to your updates as they would to a friend.

Advertise your discount notification service on your website, in your brick-and-mortar store, and on receipts. That WhatsApp messages (read: your offers) are easily shared with friends, is just a nice added bonus 😊 Moreover, by throwing in some WhatsApp-only offers once in a while, everyone will want to subscribe for this service!

All good things come to an end

Though there are countless creative ideas on how to use the consumer's favorite messaging channel to boost sales, and offer a better customer experience, we've already reached the last of the examples in this whitepaper. Because even Christmas, however sad it is, doesn't last forever. The days after Christmas are an important time in brand engagement as well. Even though all gifts are bought with the best of intentions, we notice a spike in customers returning gifts and exchanging them for what they really wanted.

This means you will not get the initial shoppers in your store, but the receivers. Time to impress them! How about adding a QR code to your WhatsApp channel on the back of the receipt? Here, the shoppers or receivers can ask how they can return their gifts, what the return policy is, or get help in finding the perfect replacing gift. Using automatic replies, and pre-set advice on gifts in a certain price range, customers get great service while your customer care team gets some well deserved shut-eye.

How to get people to use WhatsApp? Tips for campaign awareness

- By offering - for example - a 5% discount on gifts bought from the gift finder, you'll see shoppers flocking to your WhatsApp service in no time.
- Advertise the service on your webshop, website and brochures. Or how about a pop up for webshop visitors that have spent some time on your website without clicking? The gift finder can help them out, no doubt!
- Have people spread word, saying they found their gifts via your gift finder, in return for a future-purchase discount.
- Thank people for shopping with you by sending a branded holiday greeting from your gift finder they can share with their friends.
- Amaze your shoppers with spot-on gift suggestions so Word-of-Mouth will create an oil-stain effect.
- Offer free gift wrapping for shoppers using the Santa chat
- Offering a rich experience that will amaze the little kids, will definitely improve brand engagement, brand awareness and customer satisfaction.
- Grow campaign awareness by advertising your WhatsApp services your shop, on your website and in brochures.
- Thank your young shoppers for their wish list with a personalized video from Santa. They're going to want to show this to all their friends! Who'll then tell their parents. And so on! 😊 Hello world!

3 Conversion

WhatsApp Business is one of those channels that play an important role in the Conversational Commerce proposition. Conversational what? Conversational Commerce means turning a conversation on a messaging channel into a successful conversion. In other words: not just chatting over messaging channels, but turning these conversations into successful sales opportunities.

The term Conversational Commerce isn't all that new. Back in 2015, Uber's Chris Messina already mentioned Conversational Commerce as the 'intersection of messaging apps and shopping'. The Uber experience now sets the new standard across the globe. That includes Christmas shopping!

The basis of Conversational Commerce is allowing customers to contact businesses and finish the path-to-purchase within their favorite messaging channel. We've already made a good start there, starting from the number one of most popular messaging channels: WhatsApp.

Customers expect relevant and personal messages. You can only do this by really getting to know your customers. Use smart data solutions to continue the conversation and offer the best service, whenever and wherever. With CM Data, you can connect multiple data sources to one unified customer profile. You will have real-time insights into your customers' data and behavior.

Finally, remove any threshold on the path-to-purchase and allow safe and easy payments to be initiated within the conversation. As a Payment Service Provider in Europe, we enable the implementation of the most popular payment solutions in your Conversational Commerce proposition to sky-rocket your conversion rates. Need payment solutions outside of Europe? No problem, you can easily add a link to your local mobile payment solution in other countries, for example WeChat Pay in China and SnapScan or Zapper in South Africa. Contact us and we'll think along with you.

It's time to get started!

With the holidays fast approaching, there's no time to waste! Luckily, setting up your WhatsApp Business account is quick and easy. If you know the use case you'll be using it for, request a WhatsApp Business account with your WhatsApp Business solution provider CM.com, and we'll get you set up within just a few days!



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