

What retailers need to focus on as the 'silly season' gears up for allsorts of promotional days and the importance of capitalising on purchase power



Mike Smollan
Chief Growth and
Innovation Officer
Smollan

Nailing the 'P' in promotional days

We have only just said Happy New Year and yet here we are. Ready to once again, like a well-oiled machine, roll out the red carpet for a myriad of promotional days. From Bosses Day to Black Friday, the chunk that is the Festive Season and the look ahead to Back to School 2023.

However, with the intensity surrounding inflationary concerns, unstable markets, revenue goals along with geopolitical global events that knock the supply chain pendulum, how do retailers find the sweet spot around which day(s) to focus on? Is it all or nothing relatively speaking? Or is it more about defining historical data as a basis for making the right decision?

The pandemic taught us so many lessons around being agile, fresh and to turn the expected on its head, that we may need to pause and instead of dusting off ideas, lean in for a considered view around which horse to back instead of trying to do everything.

In a recent Forbes piece it was suggested that, prior to even considering which day to participate in, retailers above all else would be wise to plan



for an extended ecommerce driven season. Based on 2021 US stats, holiday shopping was pulled forward by up to 17% in November and December as consumers spread buying behaviour. Chances are that this year may well be the same. Secondly, optimising all systems in anticipation of traffic surges is key to making sure that consumers are not met with out-of-stock items.

While the bigger picture serves to inform, home turf offers the relevance required to bed down strategies. Zuko Mdwaba Area Vice President at Salesforce SA, suggests that this year in preparation

for the 'silly season', over and above choosing which days to focus on, retailers will need to make sure that they develop data acquisition strategies, bridging the physical-digital divide, and build stronger partnerships. On a bigger scale, the industry will need to invest as heavily in the post-purchase experience as in the path-to-purchase, combining test-and-learn tactics with proven revenue drivers such as flash sales and special promotions.

The foundation, as one considers participating in all or a few promotional days, is historical data. Auditing last year's campaign performance will guide the process. Prioritising the campaign or channel that came out tops will allow retailers to double-down on what's known to work without necessarily putting all eggs in one basket.

The focus then, as retailers prioritise their promotional day strategies is to take into account current trends, emerging digital channels and the refreshed expectations of consumers going into the season.

In South Africa, as reported on www.bizcommunity.com earlier this year, we are reminded of the significant shifts influencing shopper expectations around ecommerce's firm foothold; privacy becoming a legal requirement; value becoming more than just a matter of price it's also about retailers showing quality and purpose; multi-channel and mobile shopping and making customer engagement a top priority.



As per the official blog post for Amazon Prime Day 2022, the games giveaway will be staggered.



"Take last year, with Amazon Prime Day 2022 selling over 300 million items at the rate of 100 000 items per minute amounting to over \$3B in profits."

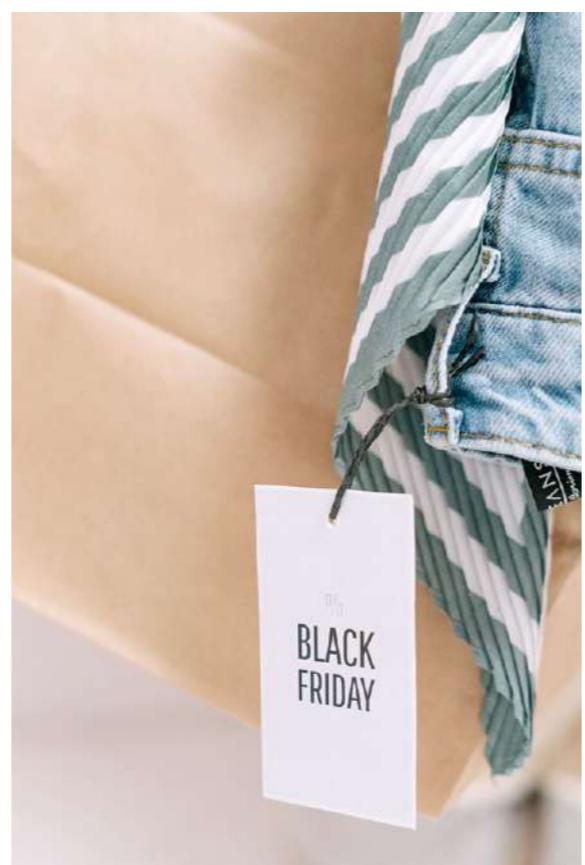
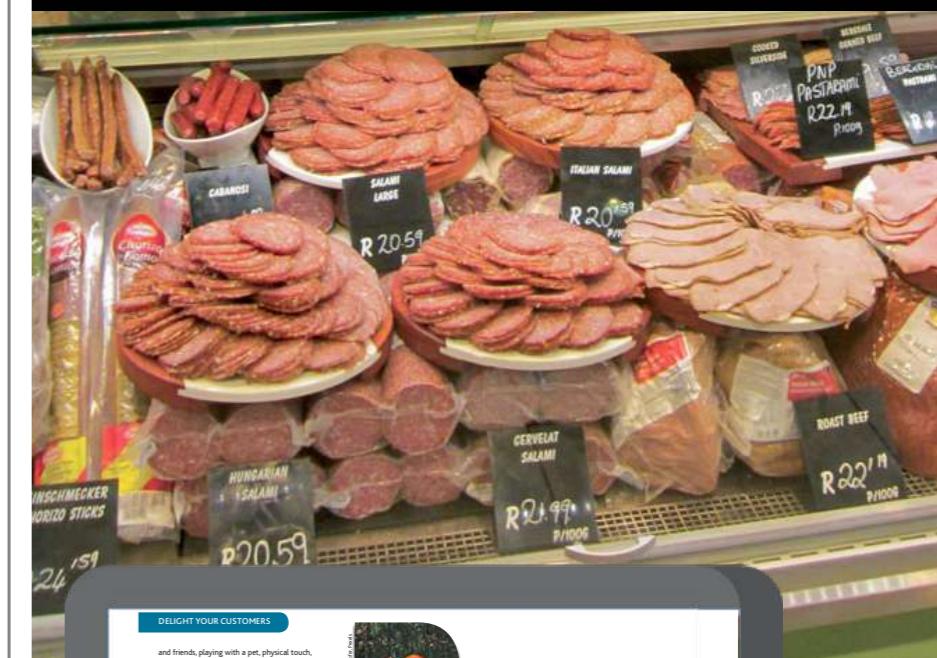


Image courtesy of Ivan Samkov, Pexels

That is a beautiful thing in of itself, considering that in the lead up there were concerns that it might be a rather beige day. Undoubtedly it comes down to solid preparation despite a complicated reality whether locally or globally that affects all paths to purchase. Whether retailers take a tailored approach to promotional days or instead cast a wider net, the golden key has to be about delivering excellent customer service where going the extra mile is everything.

Promotional Days undoubtedly revolve around increased sales and competitive pricing, however careful planning is required to target the correct event for the right return, where in addition you delight existing customers and attract new ones. **SR**

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DELIGHT YOUR CUSTOMERS

and friends, playing with a pet, a physical touch, (like holding hands and hugging) and giving compliments to others. It produces feelings of love and connection, and it's what binds human beings to each other.

But it should also be obvious to you that simple acts of generosity and kindness achieve the same, especially if they hit some problem – like dropping some of their shopping, or being unable to find something, or reach something. But there is one very important factor that plays a role in this. Obviously, the person on the receiving end feels good, and the person who does something nice also gets a hit of oxytocin (which makes it more likely that we pay it forward again). But even an *obligation* can trigger positive emotions.

To a lesser degree some fragrances or a massage also help. Once again, what you can do is obvious, and you can manage these things in your business without spending a fortune.

Now, one final word of advice ... unless you're like my dad whose need to understand the science was so important... don't get caught up in the terminology and try to identify which chemical plays what role. We've looked at a bunch of things that you can do to create positive feelings that result in loyalty. **SR**

And finally, endorphin, the pain killer chemical.

Endorphins trigger positive emotions

don't have to do it every time. The principle of occasional reinforcement – a little surprise out of the blue – can also be potent.

Image: right Tim Douglas, Pexels

"When we develop addictions – to gambling, eating, smoking, drugs, online gaming, likes on social media, and so on, it's the dopamine that makes it so hard to stop."

But you can also use dopamine effectively by celebrating things with your customers. Anything that you do to make them feel even a small win can trigger the release of dopamine.

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Why products need to go through product chemistry testing

Consumers are more aware of food safety than ever before, and are hyper-aware of what ingredients are used in the products they purchase. Together with this increasing consumer awareness, the regulations that govern food safety are constantly evolving to ensure public health and safety – which highlights the need for businesses to ensure that they remain compliant and adhere to the laws required, through rigorous product chemistry testing.

What is product chemistry testing – and when is it done?

Before any foodstuff can be sold, it needs to go through the product chemistry testing process, which assesses the quality and composition of food products to ensure regulatory compliance. This chemical analysis process confirms the contents of the food that is manufactured – including chemical composition, and potential contamination.

Why is product chemistry testing important?

Product chemistry testing is vital to ensure regulatory compliance, and to understand the quality and composition of the materials used in products. Elements that are analysed include nutrients (such as sugar, fats, and protein), levels of moisture (which can affect the shelf-life of the product) and toxic substances (such as mycotoxins and biotoxins).

“Without thorough product testing, brands can't provide consumers and regulators with the correct product information – and the exclusion of testing for elements such as allergens, could cause illness or death in consumers.

If the product is not adequately analysed and tested, additional risks can arise that affect the brand – including product recalls, legal action, and potential harm to consumers. **”**



Image courtesy of Olia Danilevich, Pexels.

Building trust in brands through thorough product chemistry testing

By ensuring that you partner with a reputable product chemistry testing lab – such as **Assurecloud** – testing can be done close to the source with minimal impact on transport and storage of samples; ensuring the quickest, most accurate result.



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Transparency and continued product chemistry testing will ensure that brands are compliant – and continually work towards building and growing a brand reputation on trust. **SR**