



Make Books, Make Bank

Your Guide to Holiday Success





The holiday shopping season is your opportunity to amp up your marketing efforts, sell more books, and connect with new fans.

With that in mind, we put together this guide to help you plan for the holidays. It's never too early to prepare! And with [57% of consumers buying online](#) last year, you've never had access to a bigger audience.



Got questions about Lulu Direct or need help getting set up? Our team is ready to help! Contact us at ecomm@lulu.com.

'Tis the Season to Sell Direct



Using Lulu Direct for Shopify®

Go to the Shopify® App store and [install Lulu Direct](#). Complete the installation instructions, then:

1. Create a [Shopify® product in your store](#) for your book.
2. Go to the Lulu Direct App and upload your book's interior and cover files.
3. Review the product page and place a test order.



Using Lulu Direct for WooCommerce®

From your WordPress dashboard, follow the [instructions to set up WooCommerce®](#). With the installation complete:

1. Create a product in WooCommerce®.
2. Sign into your Lulu account and add your WordPress site to the [Lulu Direct dashboard](#).
3. Upload your book and publish it on Lulu.
4. Add the published book to Lulu Direct and connect it to your WooCommerce® product.
5. Review the product page and place a test order.



Using the Lulu Print API

Connect Lulu's print-on-demand network to your site using our Print API. Start by reading the [Developer Documentation](#).

1. Create or sign in to a Lulu account.
2. Use your client key and a client secret to create a sandbox environment.
3. Register your web token authorization and make a test order.



It's the Most Wonderful Time(line) of the Year

Planning ahead is key! History shows that holiday shoppers spend the most around [the end of November](#), but you should be prepared for buyers well before then. We've put the points in this guide in a (loose) chronological order so you can use this guide as a rough timeline.

But you probably should have a real calendar so you can stay ahead of the season. Create a plan starting on Black Friday weekend. From there, work backward to determine when you need to have everything in place and what needs to be completed at each stage. This is called a 'work back plan' and it's a great way to develop your holiday sales and marketing calendar.

Despite the Black Friday weekend remaining the most popular shopping time, modern shoppers are starting earlier than ever. Half of consumers [start shopping before November](#)! Use our holiday timeline as an example for your own plan.



Inspiration

Get our [free holiday planning calendar & template](#)



Resources

- [Shopify®'s Retail Calendar](#)
- [Plan Your Timeline](#) [Video]



Publish, Print, Presents!

Your holiday goal is to sell your book, right? Which is tough if you've got fans who have already bought that book. To continue to reach existing fans, you need to offer something more.

During the holiday season, people want to buy books. According to the National Retail Federation, books were among the [top three gifts on consumers' holiday wish lists](#) in 2021. A gift edition of your best-selling book might include a new introduction, a sneak peek chapter to some upcoming project, or an alternate art cover. Anything that makes the book limited or unique is a potent selling point (and perfect fodder for email subject lines).

A special edition isn't the only option. You could [create a notebook or journal](#) based on your content (featuring your art, quotes from your other work, etc.). Or you could [make a calendar](#) featuring quotes from your books, artwork, or dates important to your audience. Both Shopify® and WooCommerce® have options to use apps for split-carts, allowing you to create bundles of products like a free ebook included with a printed book. Take the content you've already created and find new ways to make a product your fans will love.





Checklist

Special Edition Books

- Add an alternate cover or new format
- Include a special introduction
- Tease your next book with a free chapter

New Product

- Create a notebook or journal featuring your art, inspirational prompts, or quotes from your book
- Offer a calendar for the new year or just a season featuring your content, motivational quotes, and important dates
- Make a companion to your work including character bios, maps or art, or other reference works



Resources

- [Lulu's Design Guides & Templates](#)
- [DIY Holiday Gift Ideas](#) [Video]



Social Spice and Everything Nice

Social media is a critical sales channel. According to HubSpot, social media is the most popular way [creators reach their audience](#). And Shopify® estimates that sales through social media channels worldwide will [more than double by 2026](#). If you're not engaged in social selling this holiday season, you're missing a big opportunity.

Most social media platforms allow brands to sell products directly from their profile. According to Shopify®, 70% of Facebook users and 44% of Instagram users shop on those platforms regularly. Take advantage of platforms like Instagram and Facebook that allow you to set up shop pages on your profile.

When the holidays come around, promote your books (and any unique holiday products you're offering) to your target audience through organic and paid ad campaigns. Maybe even consider offering an exclusive discount for your followers, especially on new products or special editions of existing products. Advertising to your most engaged audiences shows that you value those fans. And it gives them an opportunity to get any unique holiday products you created just for the season!

It's also important to periodically update your campaign graphics and copy, especially if you plan on running specific ads or reusing specific posts for more than a week or two. According to [Reddit's Holiday Insights](#), "ad fatigue" can set in just 2-4 weeks into a campaign - don't alienate potential customers by bombarding them with the same content over and over!



Inspiration

Make sure your product page is easily accessible from your social media platforms by using the Link In Bio feature wherever relevant

Update your profile pictures and cover photos to holiday-themed graphics, graphics that showcase your best-selling products, or graphics that advertise your books as gifts

Plan and schedule organic social posts on your preferred platforms, teasing any holiday discounts, announcing new products, and promoting your books as gift ideas

Plan and schedule paid social campaigns, promoting your holiday discounts, new products, and/or targeting a new audience of buyers

Stay in touch with your fans! Share updates, announcements, shipping concerns, etc.

Be prepared for customer support questions on social media, even if that isn't your preferred contact method



Resources

- [Shopify® Starter Plan](#)
- [Holiday Social Media Strategy](#)
- [Holiday Marketing For Instagram](#)



Inboxing Day

Email marketing is an effective way to communicate with your existing customers and fans all year long. During the holiday season, sending an email will be the primary method for alerting your followers about new products and sales.

The holidays are a weird time for email: your fans are motivated to buy. Normally, a flood of emails would send your followers to the 'unsubscribe' button. But around the holidays, we expect and welcome that flood. According to Klaviyo, [60% of Cyber Weekend sales](#) came from consumers who previously engaged with a retailer's emails.

It's hard to stand out when everyone's inbox is getting bombarded. Put extra emphasis on crafting compelling subject lines. Tailor your email campaigns around your sales and discounts: that's what your fans want during the shopping season.

Before you start churning out those holiday emails, do some list upkeep by asking your subscribers to verify or manage their preferences. That way, you know which subscribers want your holiday emails and can focus on marketing to them.





Checklist

Contact List Clean-Up

- Send an email asking users to update their email preferences
- Be transparent about increased emails during the holiday season
- Update your email lists

Promotional Emails

- Outline the content, including subject lines, personalization, and emojis
- Test the email capture on your website
- Create promotional emails
- Plan campaigns & schedule emails
- Test your emails on desktop and mobile

Transactional Emails

- Check that transactional emails are working correctly
- Review existing copy and make seasonal updates (don't forget to change them back after the holidays!)



Resources

- [Build Your Subscriber List](#)
- [Email Marketing](#) [Video]



Deck the Halls With Discounts

As consumers, we love sales. In 2020, [88% of us used coupons](#) while shopping. Even if you rarely offer discounts on your books, the holiday shopping rush is the time to make an exception.

What really matters is why you offer discounts. Think about your goal: do you want to attract new customers, reward existing customers, or earn more revenue?

If you want to pull in new customers, a ‘first-time’ coupon for a higher discount might be the answer. For existing fans, you might offer a special edition at a holiday discount. Free shipping is always appealing—anything with free stands out. Free shipping is often less of a revenue cut than high percentage discounts, meaning you’ll actually make more money with free discounts than large cuts on the retail price.

Start your holiday planning by establishing sales and revenue goals. Then decide how much you can afford to discount your book. Do the math to figure out the best discount for your book.

Finally, you need to decide when and where to offer your discounts. Adobe’s [research revealed a spike](#) in sales during the entire month of November. In fact, according to [Reddit’s Holiday Insights](#), many brands have been pulling back from Black Friday through Cyber Monday sales weekend by dropping enticing deals throughout the month of November.

Think about where you’ll display your discounts too. Social promotions will reach a broader audience, but they might not be as engaged. Emailing your fans will lead to engagement, but will be limited to just those subscribers. Think about your sales goals, who you want to reach, how you’ll reach them, and what the message/discount will be.



Checklist

- Determine your target audience for your holiday discounts
- Calculate how much you can afford to discount your products while still making a profit
- Outline a discount schedule (recurring flash sales, an early bird special, a Black Friday - Cyber Monday sale, etc.)
- Set your discounts in Shopify® or WooCommerce®
- Test your discounts to be sure they're working



How To Discount



Shopify®:

- Go to your Shopify® dashboard and click Discounts
- Enter the required information
- Adjust available products and durations
- Read the [Shopify® discounting instructions](#)



WooCommerce®:

- Go to WooCommerce® > Coupons and click Add coupon
- Enter the required information
- Add usage restrictions
- Read the [WooCommerce® discounting instructions](#)



Resources

- [Discounting Best Practices](#)
- [Ecommerce Sales Checklist](#)
- [Boosting Book Sales](#) [Webinar Video]



Stay on Your Customers' Nice List

Providing your customers with excellent support will leave them satisfied and boost customer loyalty. Research has found that [89% of consumers](#) are more likely to make repeat purchases after a positive customer service experience, whereas [roughly 61%](#) say they would switch to a new brand after just one bad experience.

Plan how you'll interact with your customers: will it be through email, on social media, or with a chat tool right on your site? Test your preferred method to be sure it works!

Set clear expectations for customer service on your Contact page. Tell your customers how long it should take to get a response, make them aware of any delays or shipping issues, and link to your return/refund policy.

Finally, take some time to review policies: that includes Lulu, other partners/vendors, your ecommerce platform, and shipping providers. If you have a Frequently Asked Questions page, review that to be sure everything you tell your customers is consistent and accurate.



To Do

Create up-to-date FAQs

Make it easy for customers to contact you

Set expectations for how quickly you'll respond to any inquiries

Subscribe to Lulu for email updates

Monitor carrier sites for updates

Plan communication with your customers to keep them in the loop on their orders



Resources

- [Create Your Customer Service Strategy](#)
- [Customer Service Tips](#) [Video]



Ship, Ship, Hooray!

Shipping is a vital part of the retail process. It's the most important factor in selecting a retailer, according to the study from Reddit. Take some time in your holiday planning to review and update your shipping for the holidays.

The first step is to develop a unique message for your shipping receipts. Lulu Direct makes it easy to [white-label your orders](#) to include your own logo and message. Before the holidays, update that message with something specific (like 'Happy Holidays' or 'Thanks for the support in 2023').

You'll also want to review the shipping methods mapped to your store. Compare the methods you're listing on your site to Lulu's shipping options to be sure your customers are getting the best rates and delivery times available. [According to Shopify®](#), consumers are 69.7% less likely to buy from you again when their order is delayed and they aren't informed.

Finally, review and update any blog articles, pages on your site, or FAQs that deal with shipping. The holidays can be a crazy time for shipping vendors and you'll want to share the most up-to-date details with your customers. That means keeping an eye on vendors like FedEx and the USPS so you know when delays hit and can quickly alert your fans.





Checklist

Update white-label shipping messages for the holiday season in your Lulu Direct dashboard

Do a test order

Review shipping settings in your store

Be transparent with customers about shipping options (for individual products)

Order on-hand copies (we suggest around 50 books) for signed copies and last-minute rush orders



Resources

- [Lulu Direct + Shopify® Shipping Setup](#)
- [Lulu Direct + WooCommerce® Shipping Setup](#)
- [FedEx Holiday Shipping Deadlines](#)
- [USPS Holiday Shipping Deadlines](#)
- [DHL Holiday Shipping Deadlines](#)



Make a List

By now, you should have a sales goal in mind, a bunch of emails and social posts drafted, a discount schedule in place, and some unique products to offer. Before you share those discounts or new products with your fans, TEST EVERYTHING.

Open your website on a browser and click all the links. Do it again on mobile. Send test versions of your emails to yourself. Apply your coupon in your cart to be sure it adds the discount. Draft sample posts on all your social media platforms and make sure you're satisfied with how your copy, graphics, and links are displayed.

You want to experience everything you're offering this holiday season just like your customer would. That way, you'll catch any problems and have time to make updates before the season kicks off.



Checklist

Order proof copies of your products

Test your site/emails/social posts on desktop and mobile

Use our Holiday Prep Checklist (see page 18)



Resources

- [Why Proof Copies Are Important](#)
- [Shopify® Holiday Prep](#)
- [WooCommerce® Holiday Prep](#)
- [Tips For Your Website](#)



Check it Twice

Holiday Prep Checklist

Holiday Products:

Order and review proof copies

Check product pages for accurate descriptions and pricing

Site Pages:

Check mobile and desktop

Review your Home, About, and other important website pages

Do images load?

Do links work?

Any copy errors?

Email:

Check mobile and desktop

Use Gmail, Outlook, and Apple Mail apps

Review subject line and preview text to make sure they display correctly

Do images load?

Do links work?

Any copy errors?

Social Media:

Are your profile pictures and bio links up to date?

Do your scheduled posts look good?

Have you scheduled promotional posts for all your big sales, new products, or important announcements?

Shipping & Fulfillment

Update white-label shipping messaging

Review shipping schedules and updates

Additional Resources

Free Templates

- [Notebook & Planner Templates](#)
- [Calendar Templates](#)
- [All Book Templates](#)

Guides

- [Book Creation Guide](#)
- [Ebook Creation Guide](#)
- [Calendar Creation Guide](#)

Articles

- [Book Marketing Plan](#)
- [Free Social Media Promotion](#)
- [Print-On-Demand And Holiday Shopping](#)

Short Videos

- [Boosting Holiday Book Sales](#)
- [Optimizing Your Mobile Site](#)
- [Keeping Your Audience Engaged](#)

Recorded Webinars

- [Boost Fall Book Sales With A Stellar Marketing Plan](#)
- [10 Steps to Supercharge Your Book Marketing Toolbox](#)
- [Low & No Content Publishing to Boost Your Brand](#)

Tutorial Playlists

- [Lulu Direct for Shopify® Tutorials](#)
- [Lulu Direct for WooCommerce® Tutorials](#)
- [Book Creation Tutorials](#)

Got questions about Lulu Direct or need help getting set up?
Our team is ready to help! Contact us at ecomm@lulu.com.