

HOLIDAY

EMAIL LOOKBOOK

Get inspired,
see what worked,
and plan for 2018





Commerce marketers

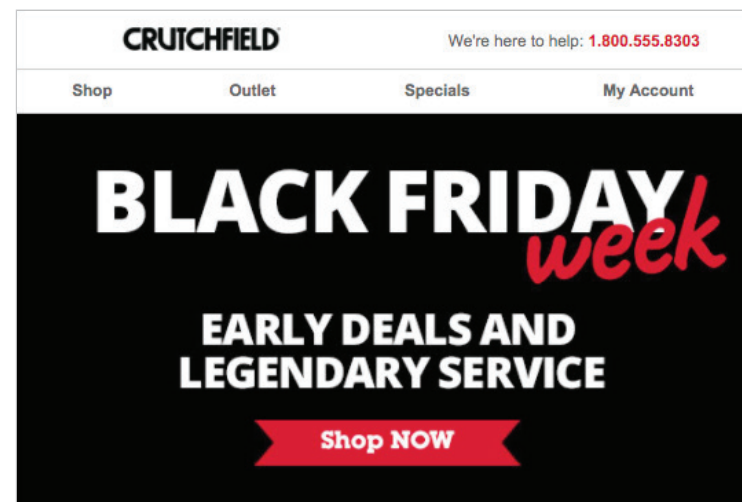
spend so much time and effort planning for the holiday season—creating send calendars, crafting promotions, critiquing subject lines and analyzing every pixel of an email's images. When the email works flawlessly, it's like a skater landing a triple axel. And when it doesn't? Well, there's a lot of ice on someone's rear end.

In looking forward to the 2018 holidays, it's useful to take a peek at what emerged from the 2017 holiday season. We did just that—subscribing to more than 250 retailers' emails to get a sense of what was going on. We saw some trends that we expect to continue this year—Black Friday is now a week, Gray November is established and multichannel merchants are exploring new ways to drive both in-store and online traffic. There were also some cleanly executed strategies and a few flops.

So grab a seat, and get some popcorn, as we highlight some holiday emails that inspire and intrigue—and a few that might even make you cringe.

A Week's Worth of Black Fridays

We saw an increasing number of emails, including these two, that touted a Black Friday week. They make much more sense than those confusing Black Friday emails sent earlier in the week. If the email arrives early, when is the promotion actually available? Is it valid all week, or do you have to wait until Friday?



Deck the Stores with Lots of Shoppers

Multichannel merchants are wising up to using email for driving both online and in-store traffic. These two messages from LOFT offer the location nearest the recipient. One is a dual-purpose email offering a discount for both online and in-store purchases. The one on the right specifically aims to drive traffic to the store for new styles exclusive to the store.

If you have physical stores, why wouldn't you do this?

COMING SOON

OUR BLACK FRI-YAY
COLLECTION IS ARRIVING
EXCLUSIVELY IN STORES

(and you're invited)

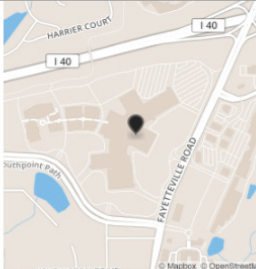
FIND A STORE ADD TO CALENDAR

**VISIT YOUR
NEAREST LOFT
STORE**

LOFT
The Streets At Southpoint
6910 Fayetteville Road
Durham, NC 27713
(919) 484-8224

MORE INFO ►

GIFT SHOPPING? SEE OUR HOLIDAY HOURS ►



SHOP NEW ARRIVALS

In stores & online

\$25 OFF*

DRESSES SKIRTS CARDIGANS

Select full-price styles only

**VISIT YOUR
NEAREST LOFT
STORE**

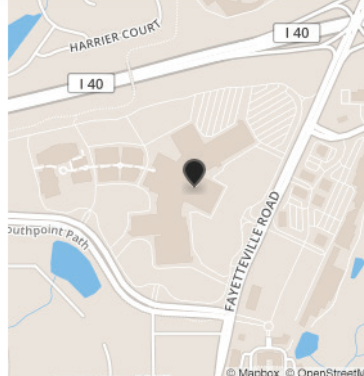
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MORE INFO ►

GIFT SHOPPING? SEE OUR HOLIDAY HOURS ►

f t i p

APPLY FOR A LOVELOFT CREDIT CARD ► LOVELOFT



Windsor encouraged in-store visits early in the day by offering free gift cards to the first 50 customers in line. It's a traditional doorbuster offer with the added flair of a countdown timer inside the email.

Bon Ton mixed its offers, providing customers with a choice. Discounts started early for online customers with a perk on select product categories to those coming in-store. Category-specific deals was a noticeable theme this season.

The Windsor email graphic features a black background with a silver confetti border at the top. The Windsor logo is at the top center, with links for 'New Arrivals', 'Dresses', and 'Sale' below it. The main headline 'Black Friday!' is in a large, orange, cursive font. Below it, in white, is 'DON'T MISS OUT ON OUR BIG IN-STORE EVENT'. The word 'FREE' is in large, bold, orange block letters, followed by '\$20 GIFT CARD!' in white. A note in white says 'FOR THE FIRST 50 CUSTOMERS IN LINE PRIOR TO STORE OPENING.' A white button with 'MORE DETAILS' and a right arrow is below. At the bottom, a countdown timer shows '00:00:00' with labels 'DAYS', 'HOURS', 'MINUTES', and 'SECONDS'.

The Bon Ton email graphic has a white background. The Bon Ton logo is at the top center, with the tagline 'BETTER BRANDS | BIGGER SAVINGS' below it. A navigation bar includes 'WOMEN', 'MEN', 'SHOES', 'BEAUTY', 'HOME', 'MORE', and 'CLEARANCE'. A red banner says 'FREE STANDARD SHIPPING* WITH PROMO CODE: BEAUTY'. The main headline 'BEAUTY BUZZ: BLACK FRIDAY EDITION' is in black, with 'BEAUTY BUZZ:' and 'EDITION' underlined in red. Below is 'TOP BEAUTY & FRAGRANCE DOOR BUSTERS' in black and red. A note says 'Shop online now • Starts in-store Thursday at 11AM'. A black button with 'SHOP NOW' and a right arrow is below. At the bottom, a section titled 'IN-STORE ONLY!' says 'RECEIVE \$25 SAVINGS CASH' in bold. Below that, in smaller text, is 'Receive \$25 Savings Cash with a \$50 or more cosmetics or fragrance purchase*' and 'Thursday, November 23 – 3PM Friday, November 24'.

Kudos to Barnes & Noble for creating a compelling reason to visit their stores: free coffee to start your shopping trip and a coupon. Later in the day, B&N email subscribers received a reminder to stop in for lunch that included a café coupon and a tease about Black Friday picks available only in stores. What a great example of using the resources available to you.

BARNES & NOBLE

[See All Black Friday Offers >](#)

We've been busy today;
we're guessing you've been busy too.

**Come in and refuel at
a Barnes & Noble Café.**

— TODAY FROM NOON UNTIL CLOSING —


**Enjoy Any Whole Sandwich
and a Cup of Soup**

ONLY \$5!

[GET CAFÉ COUPON](#)

**Black Friday Picks
You Don't Want to Miss**

IN STORES ONLY



BARNES & NOBLE

[See All Black Friday Offers >](#)

From bestselling books to educational toys and games,
we have great offers for you on Black Friday.

Black Friday Weekend

STARTS TOMORROW AT BN.COM & FRIDAY IN STORES

STARTS FRIDAY

Take an Extra

— 25% OFF —

YOUR CHOICE OF ANY ITEM[†]

IN STORES ONLY

[GET STORE COUPON](#)

May be redeemed only once per visit in stores. NOOK devices and NOOK Books excluded. In-store Hardcover Bestseller Program 30% off (40% off for Members) excluded. Other exclusions apply.

Come in early on Friday and coffee's on us!

**Enjoy a complimentary tall
handcrafted beverage until 10am.**



The Three Kings of Discounting

How do you cut through the many different offers out there and drive up your average order value? Three concepts were popular during the 2017 holiday season: free gifts with minimum purchase, tiered discounts and rewards based on purchases. These are all solid discounting strategies because they aim to increase average order value.

KitchenKrafts uses a simple tiered discount—although we would have preferred it without exclusions. Exclusions can encourage cart abandonment.

KitchenKrafts
YOUR PARTNER IN FOOD CRAFTING SUCCESS

BAKING CAKE DECORATING CANDY MAKING CANNING SALE

Pre-Thanksgiving Sale

10% OFF a \$50 order
Even before you eat the pumpkin pie, Start saving on holiday shopping!

15% OFF a \$75 order

20% OFF a \$150 order

SHOP NOW

*Limited time offer - Expires 11/20/2017
Some exclusions apply. See details below.

Use Code: THANKFUL

HerRoom
Lingerie We Buy for Ourselves, and More

BRANDS BRAS PANTIES DD+ PLUS-SIZE SWIM SLEEP SHAPEWEAR LINGERIE APPAREL ON SALE

\$20 Gift Card with \$100 Purchase*

SHOP NOW [Share Image](#)

Tis the Season
\$20 to spend at HerRoom & HiRoom
Nov. 01 - Jan. 18, 2018

REDEEM YOUR GIFT CARD IN A FEW SIMPLE STEPS

- *Your Redemption Code is:
- Select your items at HerRoom.com and HiRoom.com.
- During the checkout process, enter your redemption code on the payment information page.
- The \$20.00 gift certificate can only be applied to orders shipped within the U.S.
- The gift certificate expires on Jan. 18, 2018.

Questions? Please call us at 800.555.6779

Enjoy your gift!

3 Ways to Free

FREE SHIPPING with **\$70 Purchase***

FREE \$20 GIFT CARD with **\$100 Purchase***

FREE LINGERIE BAG with **\$150 Purchase***

So many options for free gifts in this email from HerRoom with a goal of driving up the order value.

People just love free gifts. After all, you've got stockings to stuff! Jack Rogers and White House Black Market have got it down with these clean, easy-to-read offers. We particularly like the customization of the navigation bar on the Jack Rogers email. They added an element designed to make gifting easier that they could include in every message without wasting additional design space to do it.



Philosophy and Bobbi Brown let you personalize your free gift. Both offer gift tiers based on minimum spends. The Philosophy email is particularly attractive and easy to follow.

philosophy

SKIN CARE FRAGRANCE BATH & BODY **HOLIDAY** OFFERS OUTLET

thankful *for* small
wonders
to customize your cleanse, peel, treat regimen.



spend \$60 choose 3 travel minis	spend \$75 choose 4 travel minis	spend \$100 choose 6 travel minis
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code: **yourpicks**

SHOP NOW

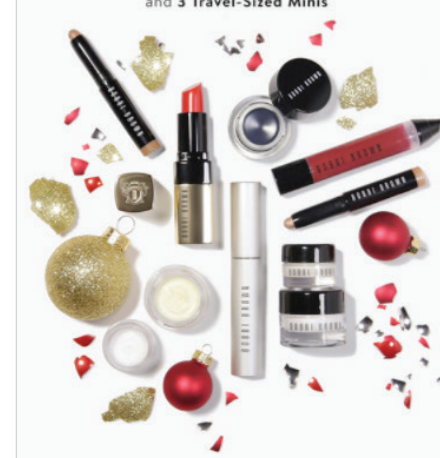
online offer only. offer ends 11/20/17.

CREATE **FREE BEAUTY SET WITH \$50+, SPEND \$75+ GET A FREE BAG**

BOBBI BROWN

FREE SHIPPING & GIFT WRAP ON ALL ORDERS


WHY WAIT FOR BLACK FRIDAY?
CREATE A (FREE) 5-PIECE KIT
Includes 2 Full Size Products
and 3 Travel-Sized Minis



Yours with any \$50+ order.

MAKE YOUR KIT

Plus, spend \$75+ & get a **cosmetic bag**—on us.



FREE SHIPPING + OFFERS **TALK TO AN ARTIST** **FREE RETURNS ON FOUNDATION** **AUTOMATIC REPLENISHMENT**

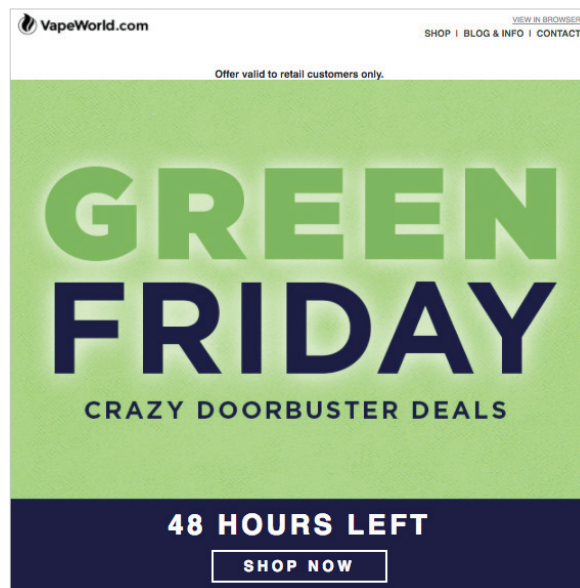
Six Sugarplums for Creativity

We didn't see a lot of exceptionally novel creative this season, but there were still plenty of examples that deserve a callout. This Fans Edge email isn't all that special to look at, but it does include personalized recommendations based on the customer's past purchases. As a whole, recommendations were underutilized this season. Given that research suggests roughly 25% of holiday purchases are a self-gift, it makes sense to use recommendations.¹

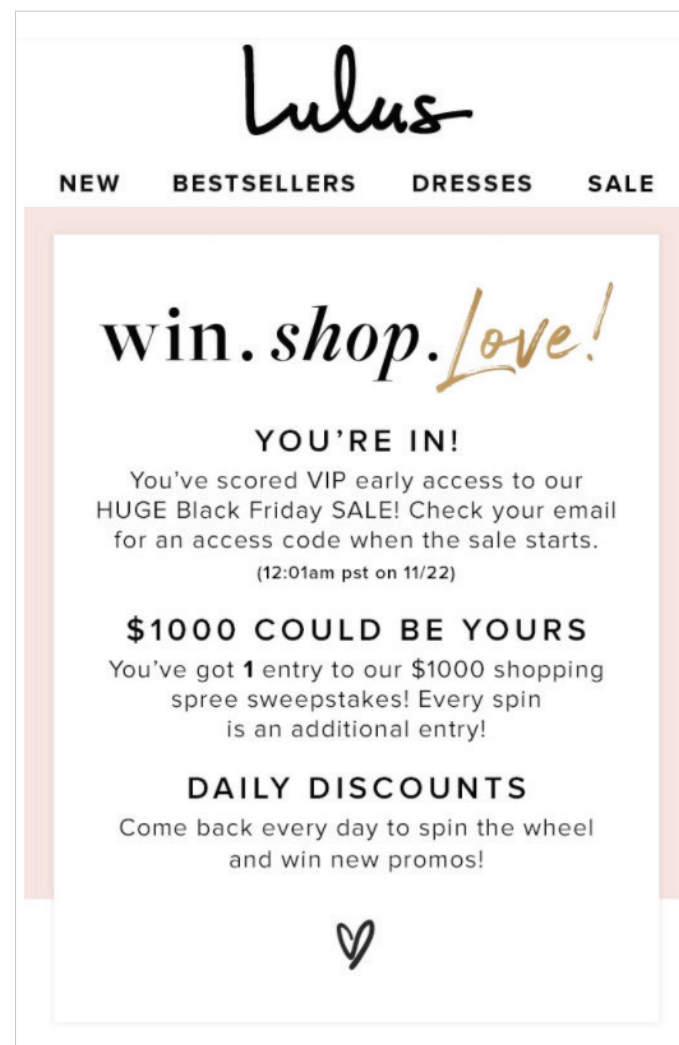
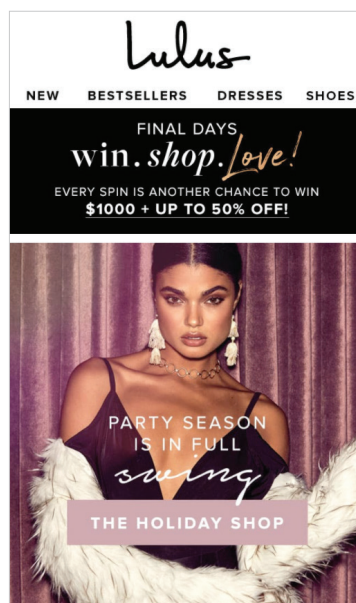
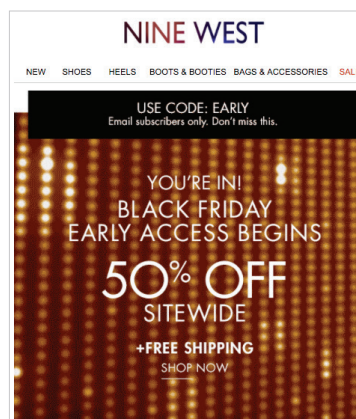
The image shows a promotional email layout for 'FANS EDGE'. At the top, the brand name 'FANS EDGE' is in white boxes on a black background. Below it, a navigation bar lists 'COLLEGE', 'NFL', 'MLB', 'NBA', 'NHL', and 'SALE'. A yellow banner reads '4 Hours Only - Ends Monday at 4PM ET'. Below this, 'CYBER MONDAY FLASH SALE' is written in yellow. The main offer is '35% OFF' in large white letters, with 'ALL ORDERS OVER \$40' in yellow below it. A yellow button says 'USE CODE: FLASH35' next to a lightning bolt icon. At the bottom, a section titled 'Personalized Picks' shows three items: a navy blue long-sleeved shirt with a 'FANS' logo, a black t-shirt with 'HAWKS' text, and a woman wearing a grey and white long-sleeved shirt with 'FANS' text.

¹ Emarketer, October 24th, 2017: Deloitte, "2017 holiday survey: retail in transition"

The color palette of holiday emails tends to stick to lots of blacks, reds, greens and winter pastels. Three cheers to these retailers that had some fun with color— and the copy to go along with it.

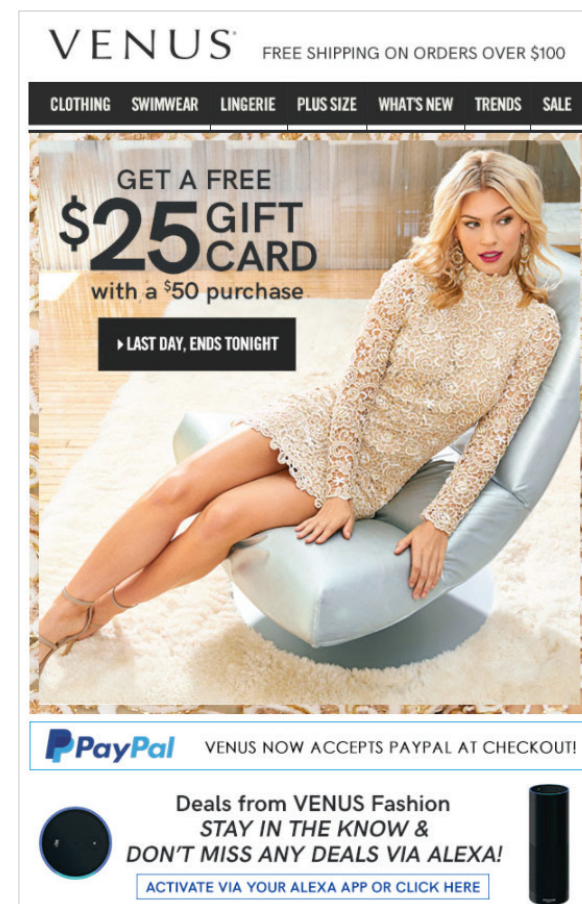


We also saw a few more discounts aimed exclusively at email subscribers. Nine West keeps it simple, while Lulus offers the opportunity to win a shopping spree and the chance at new discounts each day. (Keep opening your emails!) Both provide the impetus to avoid the unsubscribe button.



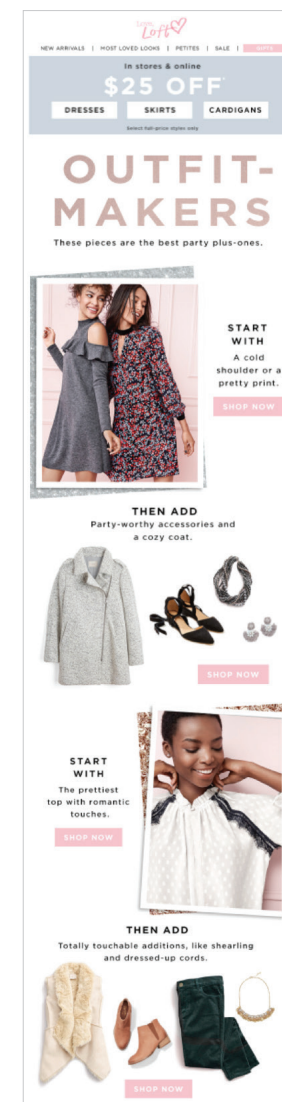
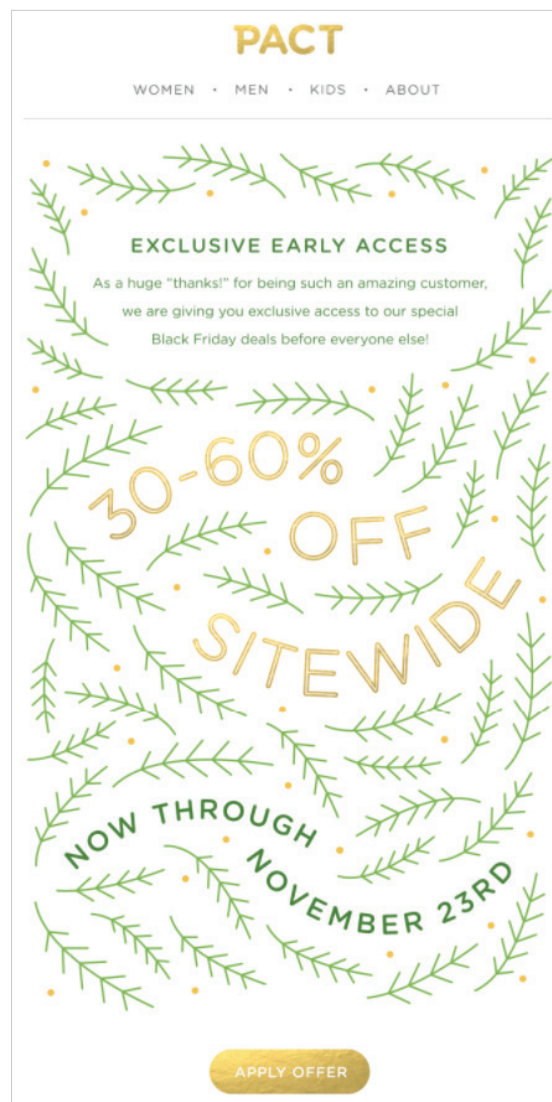
Francesca's has a robust text-to-join program, and they used this email to highlight it.

Venus earns the prize for originality thanks to its decision to devote valuable email space to encourage subscribers to activate deal notification via Alexa. Browserless commerce is coming!



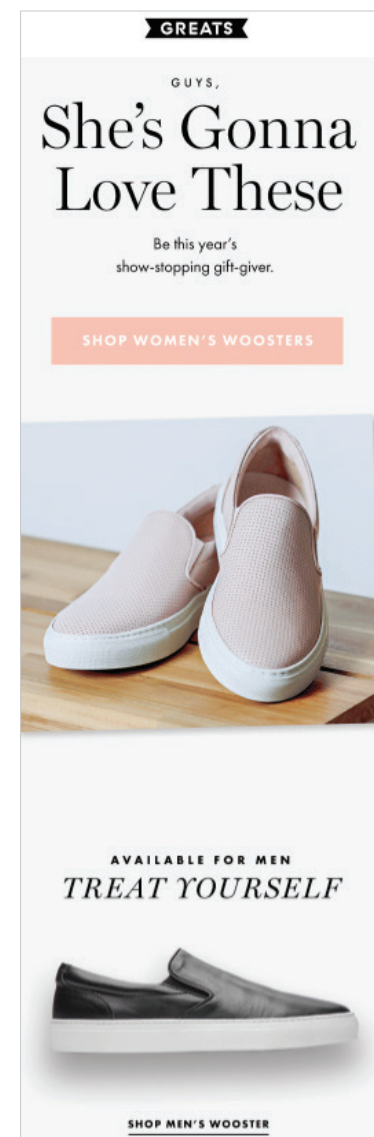
Design still matters. Pact's whimsical design is attractive and very different from the standard hero image approach. It also features exclusive early access to a sale. To reiterate the value of being an email subscriber, the call to action says "apply offer" suggesting this really is only available to email subscribers.

The LOFT gets points for this S curve email that helps shoppers pair items together. It's not just a discount offer—though they supplied one of those, too. Throughout the season, the LOFT consistently sent eye-catching emails, including a solid use of GIFs and anime.



Here's a terrific example of discounting select product categories from Mint Julep. What makes this one stand out? They skip the email header and just show the creative. This forces the main content higher up in the email message.

Greats has publically discussed its successful use of segmentation, and this a terrific example. The company recently launched a women's line, but it has a subscriber base that skews male. What better use of segmentation than to tell the guys about a shoe they might want to gift to the lady in their lives? And, if not, there's a self-gift callout at the bottom.

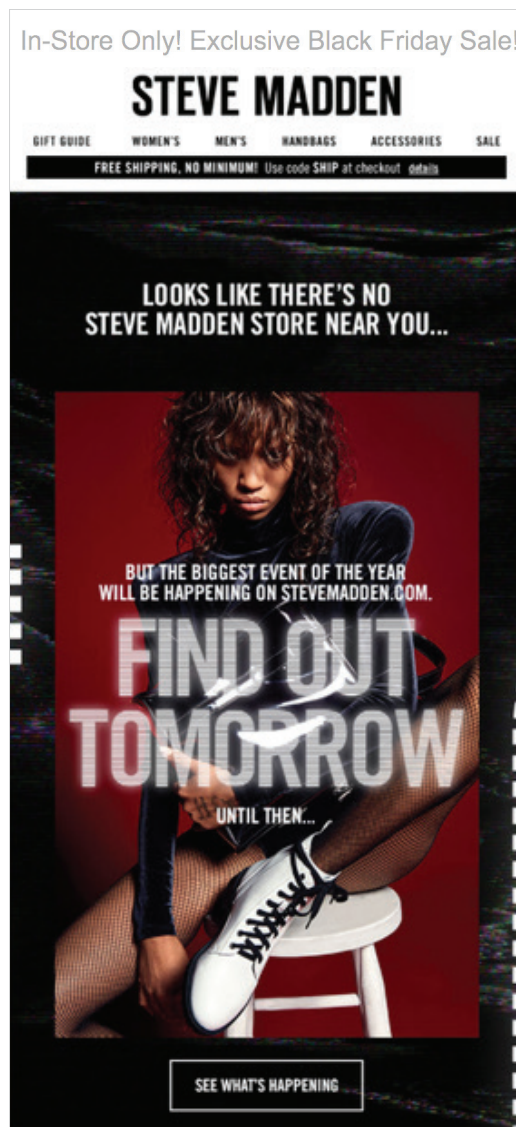


Lumps of Coal Collection

Steve Madden's subject line touted "In-Store Only! Exclusive Black Friday Sale!". But in the email itself, the spot reserved for the store locator at the top included default copy for those not near one of their 120 stores.

But that isn't the main issue with this email. The copy tells us the biggest event of the year is happening online, which is confusing as that isn't what the subject line said. It also tells us to "Find out Tomorrow." Does that mean we can shop today, or not?

Here's where creating two segments would have worked better. Send one message to those near a store (based on IP address, zip or geolocation) and a second to those outside a 50-mile radius of a store.



Be mindful of automated messages during this time of year. Our strategist did become a first-time customer one year ago and, normally, an anniversary email is a good thing. But buried in avalanche of Hollister email, it seems like overkill.

The other issue has to do with the timing of their promotion. They chose to make the incentive for this “thank you” email good for one day only—a questionable tactic as people often open email a day or two later.

Hollister also sent an email encouraging us to sign in to our account, add to our bag and check out on Black Friday. Don’t entice us and then discourage a sale.



We encourage companies to re-use creative, but Busted Tees took it a bit too far. Although, in their defense, they did write a new subject line.

Black Friday Alert: Get Your Discount Now!

BUSTEDTEES
WWW.BUSTEDTEES.COM

SHOP NOW

THE BLACK FRIDAY
SAVE • O • METER

50% OFF SALE ENDING SOON

50% OFF ALL SHIRTS	40% OFF ALL SHIRTS	30% OFF ALL SHIRTS
3PM THU - 3PM FRI	3PM FRI - 9PM FRI	9PM FRI - 11:59PM FRI

GET MY DISCOUNT

USE COUPON CODE **BF2016** AT CHECKOUT

ALL DEADLINES DISPLAYED IN EASTERN STANDARD TIME
FULL-PRICED TEES ONLY

It's Black Friday! 50% Off Literally Everything

BUSTEDTEES

THE BLACK FRIDAY
SAVE • O • METER

50% OFF SALE ENDING SOON

50% OFF ALL SHIRTS	40% OFF ALL SHIRTS	30% OFF ALL SHIRTS
3PM THU - 3PM FRI	3PM FRI - 9PM FRI	9PM FRI - 11:59PM FRI

GET MY DISCOUNT

USE COUPON CODE **BF2017** AT CHECKOUT

ALL DEADLINES DISPLAYED IN EASTERN STANDARD TIME
FULL-PRICED TEES ONLY

The Gap sent a number of emails that offered larger discounts for those buying online. Given the retailer's large store footprint, we're not certain why they took this approach. After all, in-store purchases often involve additional impulse buys.

We don't even get this email. Is it supposed to read like your aunt's stuffy holiday letter? Even if that's the case, most people these days open emails on mobile phones. You wouldn't even try to read this on a mobile device. The calls to action were rather random as well.

👉 You've obtained 50% off EVERYTHING + \$5 accessories (grab them ASAP!)

IT'S HERE EARLY

it's black friday



50% OFF
EVERYTHING
NO EXCLUSIONS
INCLUDES NEW ARRIVALS!

Online: Code **BLKFRIDAY**
In stores: Discount taken at register.

EMAIL EXCLUSIVE
EXTRA 10% OFF
EVERYTHING
Online only. Code **JUST4YOU**

Holy Cow.. The Holidays Are Here!

TMS TAHOE MOUNTAIN SPORTS

Yikes... it's here!

The holidays... first Thanksgiving then all the "shopping holidays" leading up to Christmas. It really snuck up on me this year.

First because we were still skiing into July. (I wanted summer to be longer!)

Or maybe because I was in Hawaii for a week followed by 5 days in yoga teacher training and now I'm like... what?! It's already Thanksgiving?!

And Dave's bugging me to send an email about all the deals and sales we're going to be having this weekend for Black Friday and Small Business Saturday.

Truthfully I don't even like Black Friday!

Standing in long lines, dealing with crowds, not able to find a parking place, pressured to shop on Thanksgiving (umm... no thank you to that!).

Plus I always feel like I'm missing out on the best deals because I couldn't be bothered to do all the research.

AND I'D RATHER BE PLAYING OUTSIDE THAN SHOPPING!

Do you feel like this?

If you do then I have the solution for you... Come shop with us at Tahoe Mountain Sports!

We'll have amazing deals all weekend long, great customer service, no special credit cards or coupons needed, lots of parking, no lines and every purchase qualifies for **Rewards Points!**

So what exactly are these great deals? Here are the specifics...

- 25% Off Patagonia and Prana
- Buy 3 pairs of Smartwool or Darn Tough Socks get 4th Pair Free
- 20% off Skis
- Up To 60% off past seasons skis & boots
- Buy any North Face Summit Series item and get a Free Gift w/ Purchase
- 30% off The North Face Endeavor Thermoball Jackets
- Buy any 3 Saxx Mens Boxers or Arcade Belts - Get 20% off all 3
- Free Black Diamond Spot Headlamp (\$40 value) with Black Diamond Purchase over \$100
- Plus all past season gear, apparel and footwear is on sale

The deals start on Friday morning at 10 AM and go through Monday, November 27 at 6 PM.

Then everything will be full price until after Christmas.

In case you are wondering... what the heck is the difference between Black Friday, Small Business Saturday and Cyber Monday?

Black Friday will have the best selection. As a small business we don't buy 10 of something, we buy one. If you want a certain size, style or color it's best to shop on this day.

Small Business Saturday will have the same deals along with Epic Bar and Cliff Shot Block tastings. Show your support by [shopping local](#) on Saturday and know that your money goes back into the community.

Cyber Monday is an online shopping day. Shop our Amazon Store by using this link <http://amzn.to/2hE2Jyt>



Looking forward

As you start thinking about the holidays, consider these lessons from 2017. Is your offer clear and concise? Does your design support your messaging? If you're a multichannel retailer, are your messages driving both in-store and online traffic?

Now is the time to make sure you have the technical capabilities to launch innovative email campaigns – whether it's finding the right graphic designer, GIF app or personalization software. The week before Gray November starts will be too late.

Oracle Bronto arms high-growth retailers with sophisticated marketing automation to maximise revenue opportunities. The Bronto Marketing Platform powers personalised multichannel content that generates the higher engagement needed for retail success. Keenly focused on the commerce marketer, Oracle Bronto continues its longstanding tradition as a leading email marketing provider to the global Internet Retailer Top 1000 and boasts a client roster of leading brands, Euro Car Parts, notonthehighstreet.com, Oak Furniture Land, Joseph Joseph and OKA. For more information, visit **bronto.com**.

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Bronto



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