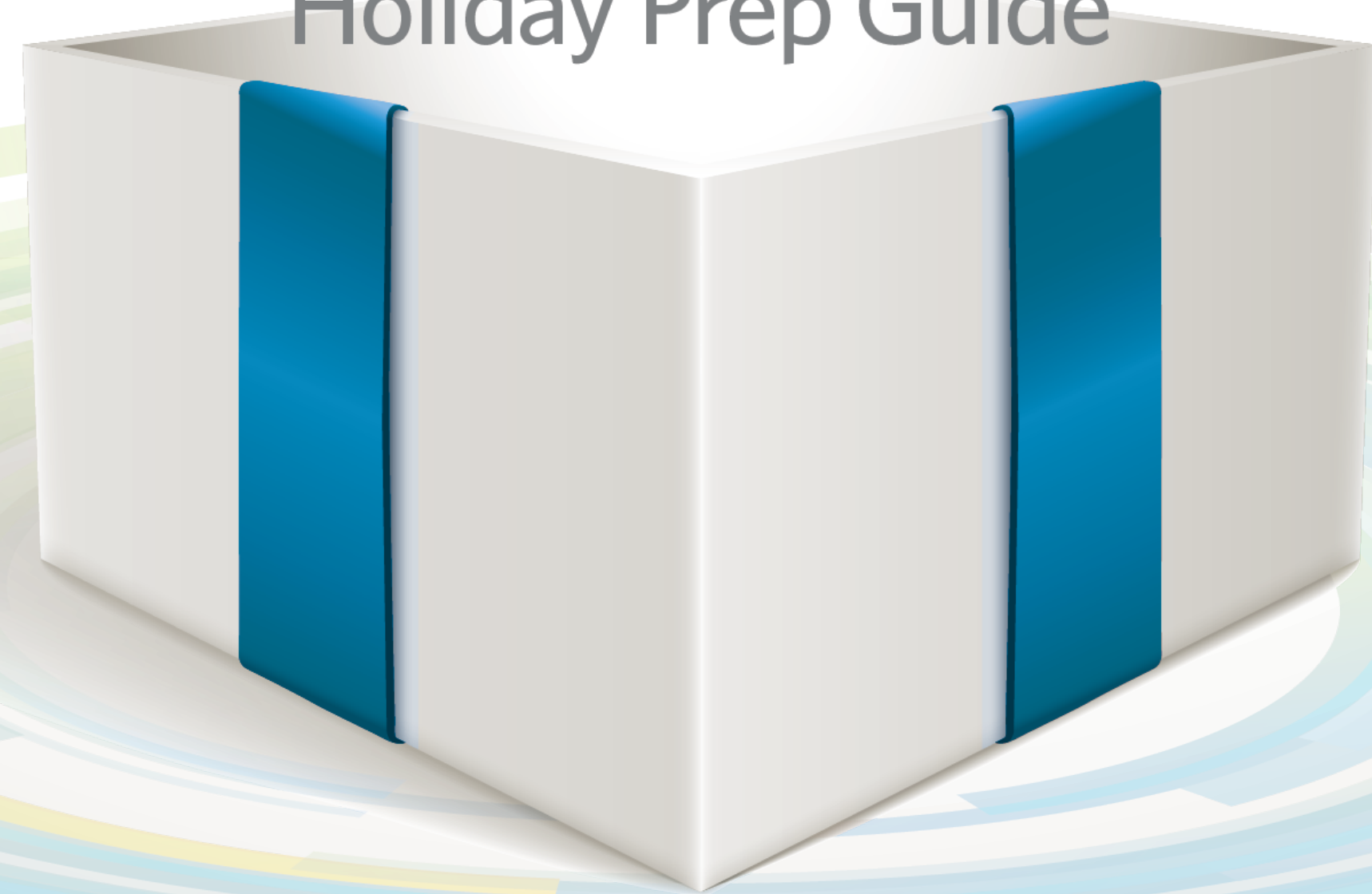


 monetate[®]

2016

Holiday Prep Guide





WELCOME TO THE 2016 MONETATE HOLIDAY GUIDE

This resource is your guide to success this holiday season. It includes an array of practical pointers to make sure your ecommerce operation runs smoothly during the holiday rush, plus advanced personalization and optimization tactics you can adopt to drive Q4 conversions.

We also answer:

- How often do those mysterious first-time holiday buyers turn into long-term customers?
- Should I test my website during Q4 or is that too risky?
- How can I optimize my mobile experience for holiday shoppers?

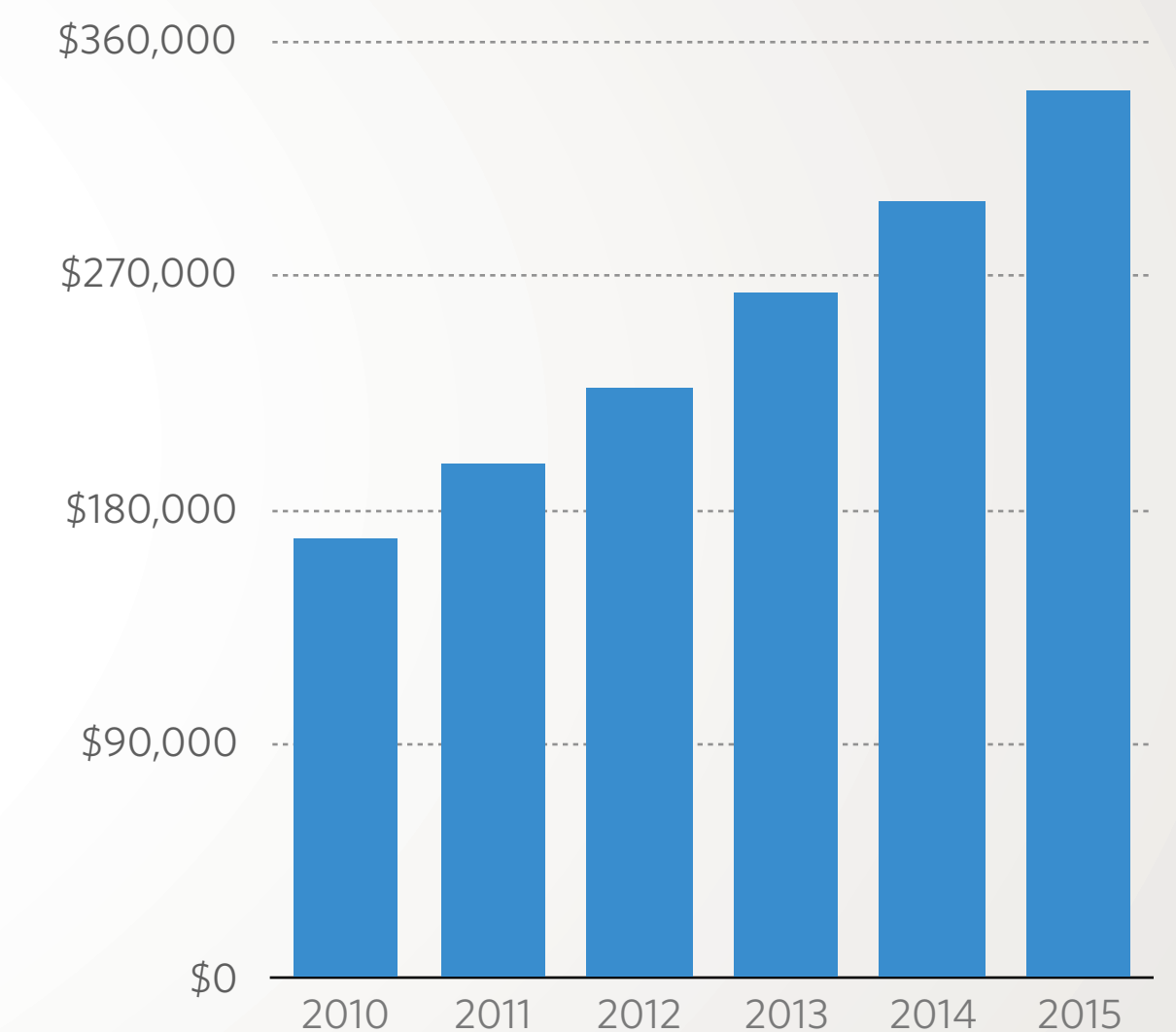


THE \$342 BILLION OPPORTUNITY

According to a recent report from Internet Retailer, total ecommerce sales grew 14.6% YoY in Q4 2015¹. In that same report, researchers noted that ecommerce made up 10.5% of retail sales in 2015, versus 9.5% in 2014.

Emarketer² predicts that total 2016 holiday sales (across brick-and-mortar and ecommerce) will remain roughly flat. But if the percentage-point growth of ecommerce sales from Q4 2014 to 2015 is similar this year, there will be plenty of room to improve Q4 results with a strong personalization strategy designed to capture conversions and drive positive business results.

YOY Ecommerce Growth (in US dollars)



Source: US Commerce Department

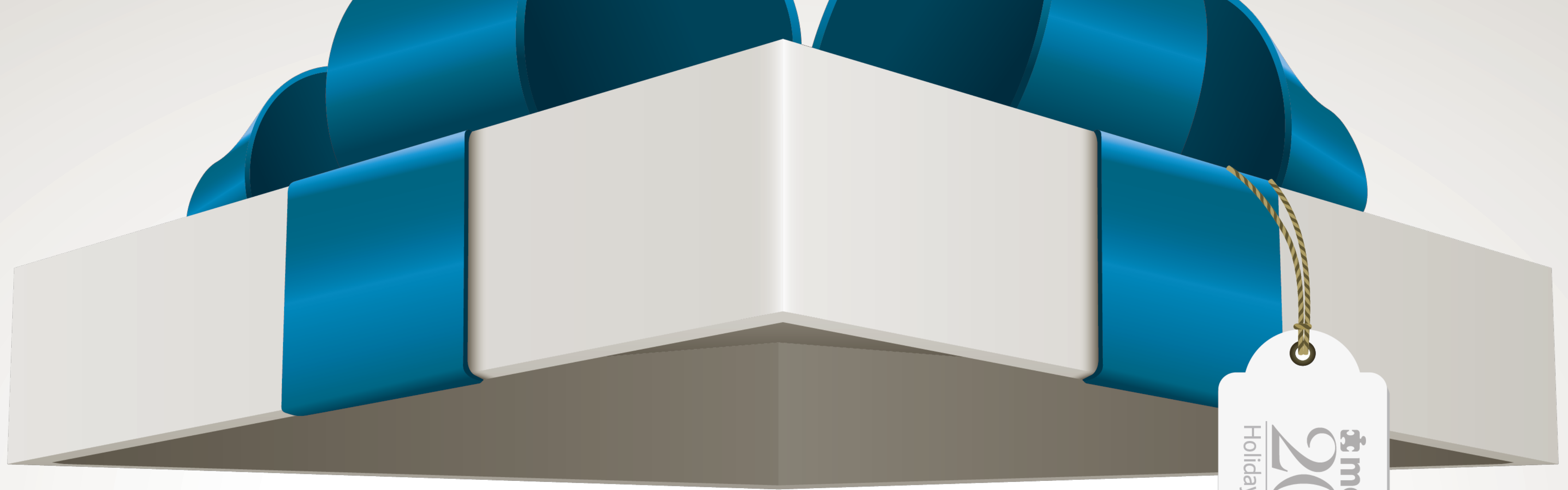
1. [Internet Retailer](#)
2. [Emarketer](#)



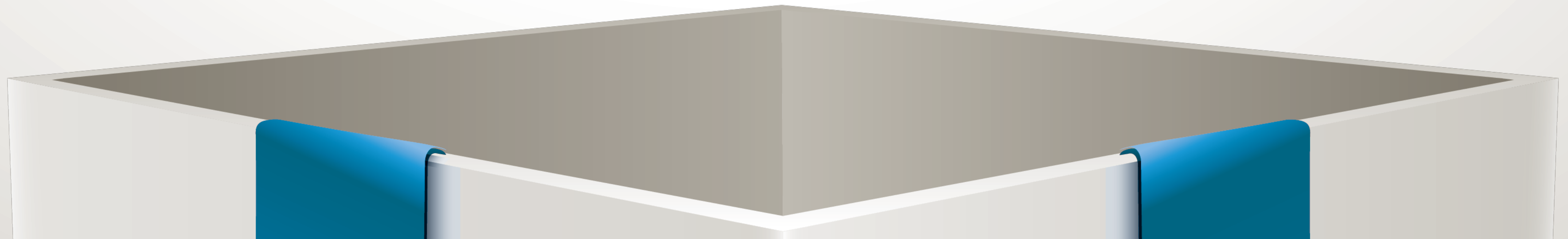
THE TOP THREE MISSION-CRITICAL Q4 QUESTIONS YOU MUST ANSWER:

- Should I run tests during the holiday season, or put those initiatives on hold?
- How can I best serve my mobile shoppers?
- Are holiday/Q4 shoppers really all that different from those I serve all the other times of the year?

Read on for the answers to the above questions, and more.



HOLIDAY PREP FOR TESTING





SHOULD I TEST DURING Q4?

Yes. Here's how to make the most of your holiday testing initiatives.

- Test the most important parts of your shopping experience (checkout process, product detail page, etc.) **early** in the season so you can roll them out (or roll them back) by early November.
- Ask yourself: “What’s my ultimate desired outcome?” Increase conversions? Increase retention? Improve performance for first-time buyers? Once you’ve answered that question, you can build out an effective testing strategy.
- What about multivariate testing? Same recommendations apply. Just make sure you have enough time for your tests to reach statistical significance, so you can learn from the results. Use audience and time calculators if your optimization platform includes them.



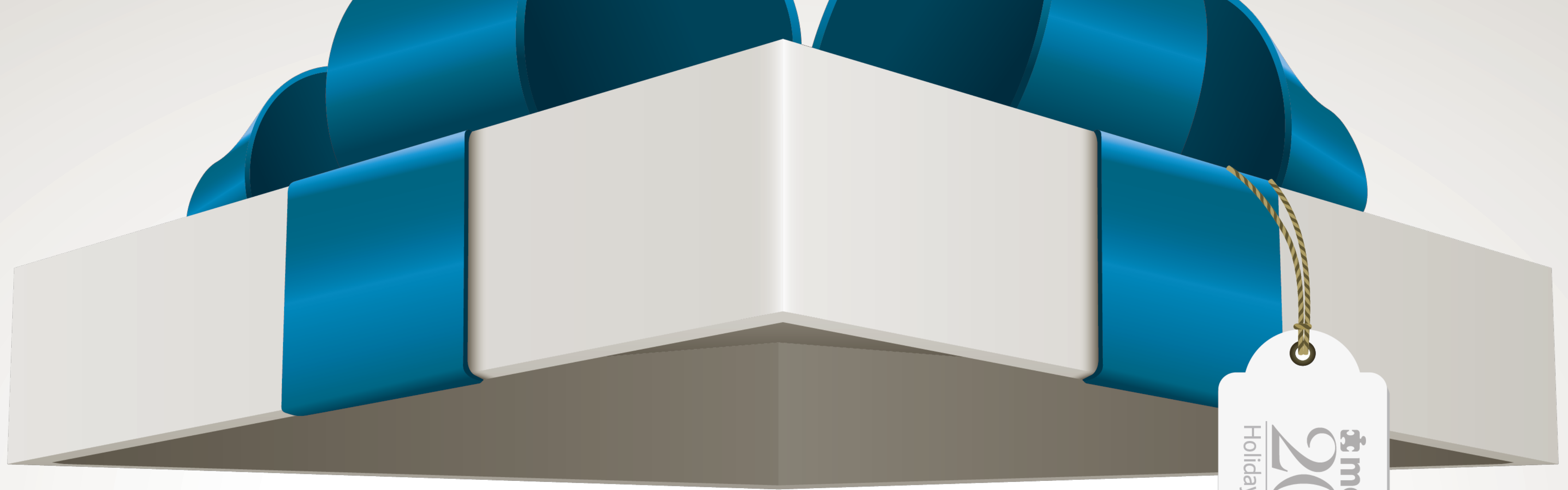
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OR TRY THE DYNAMIC APPROACH

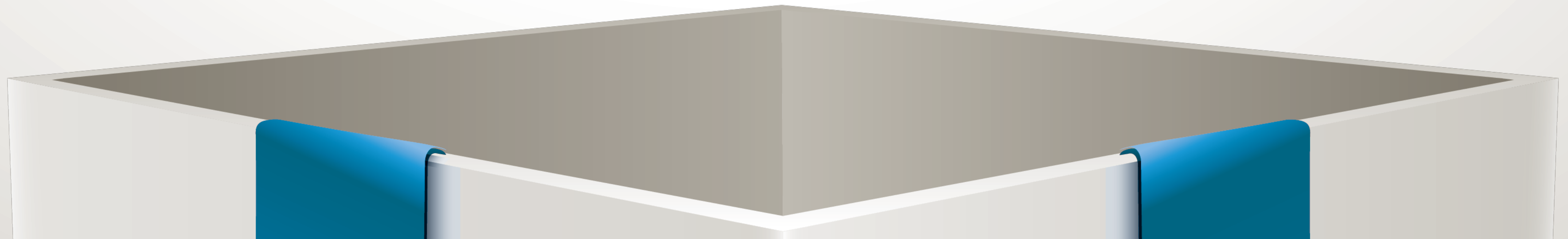
Recent advancements in machine learning enable faster ways to learn from tests and optimize your website, without waiting for statistical significance.

LOOK FOR A SOLUTION THAT ENABLES YOU TO:

- Get reliable and actionable results fast.
- Set flexible goals based on the metrics you care about, such as click-throughs, form submissions, or conversions.
- Reap the benefits of an approach that pairs machine learning and advanced algorithms with your professional knowledge and intuition.



HOLIDAY PREP FOR MOBILE





THE ELUSIVE MOBILE SHOPPER

How can you best serve mobile shoppers during the holiday season?

- Start with user intent. Why are your shoppers coming to your site? Are they looking for store locations or checking the status of an order? Leverage contextual behavior to anticipate their needs.
- Think through the user experience. Minimize distractions, highlight top items, and make the checkout process as easy as possible. This will help set you apart from the competition.
- Your shoppers don't think about your marketing channels as *mobile vs. in-store*; *in-store vs. catalog*. It's just you and your brand. Consider the different needs of shoppers visiting from a mobile device, but ensure that the transition across devices is seamless.

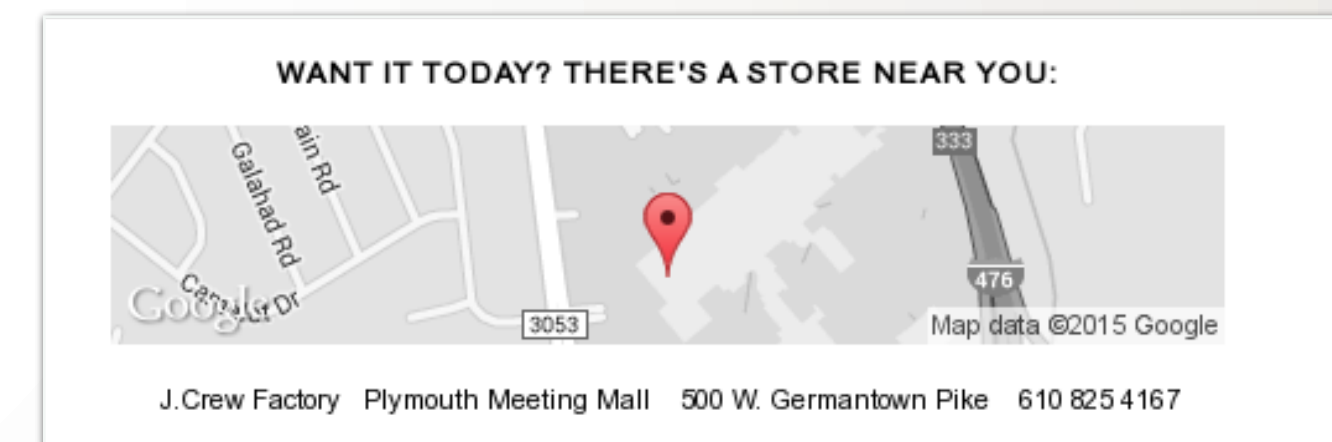


MOBILE MUST: LOCATIONS

Make it easy for shoppers to browse your site and find what they're looking for fast. Show them the nearest store, its hours, and any unique offerings that set you apart from the competition.

You might also want to feature nearby store details prominently when a shopper first gets to your homepage: in the header, banner, or with a lightbox that can be easily dismissed. Use location-based personalization to ensure you're not promoting retail locations or regional offers to shoppers who aren't located near one of your stores.

Location-sensitive emails are a great way to remind customers that there's more than one way to find the perfect holiday gift from your brand. Consider adding nearby stores, events, or special offers to your holiday email campaigns.

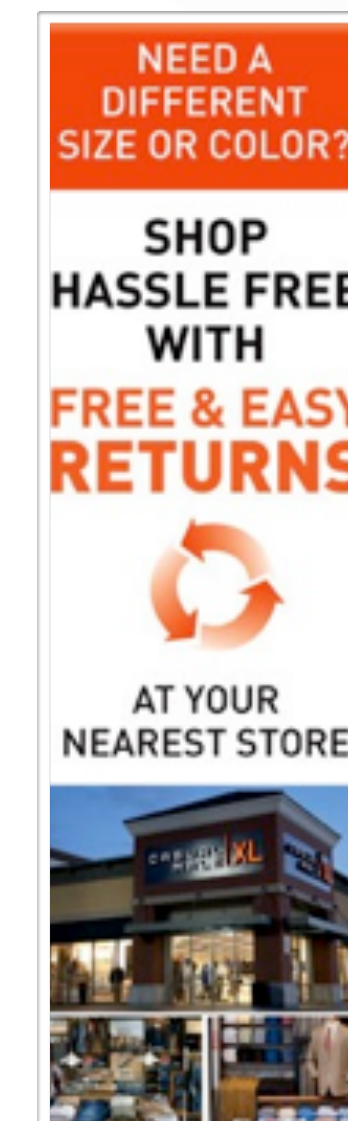


OMNICHANNEL OPTIMIZATION

Highlight synergies between your online and retail locations. Call out closest location, ship-to-store options, easy returns, and whatever else makes life easier for your customers.

As the shipping window winds down, promote your brick-and-mortar locations for additional last minute sales opportunities.

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Stores are still open! Mall of Millenia store open 'til 10:00 PM.

[Store Details](#)

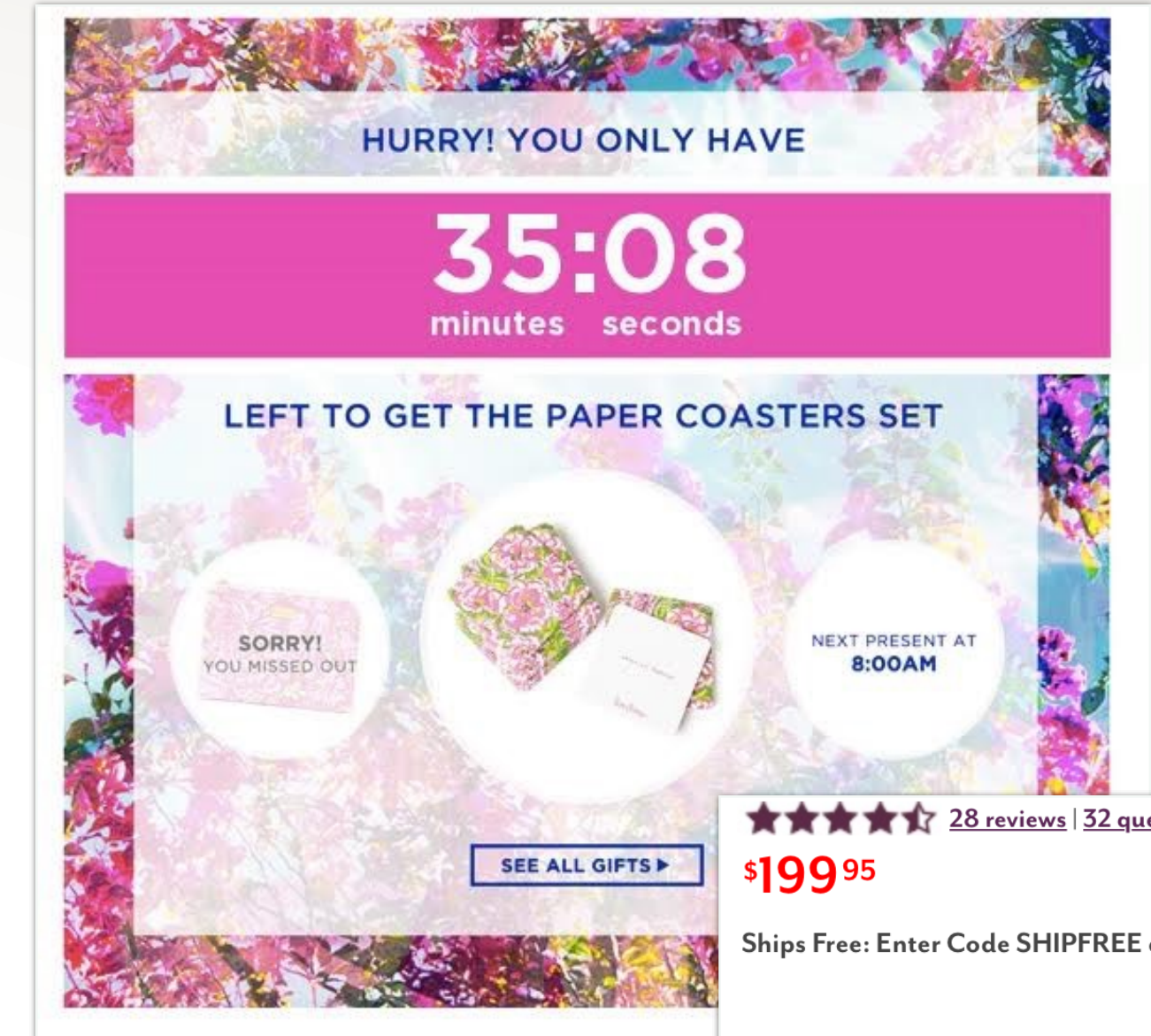


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MOBILE UX

The average time-on-site for mobile users is 5-10% less than the time on site for desktop users. Mobile users multitask and they move fast. They're not looking for that exploratory browsing journey that your desktop shoppers might crave.

Speed things up by ensuring the UX is mobile optimized. CTAs should be clear, with appropriately sized buttons (read: bigger than you think). Popups and interrupters should be kept to a minimum.



★★★★★ 28 reviews | 32 questions, 161 answers

\$199⁹⁵

Ships Free: Enter Code SHIPFREE at checkout



●●●●●●●●●● ZOOM

QUANTITY:

1

SKU: 1541135

IN STOCK: Ready to Ship

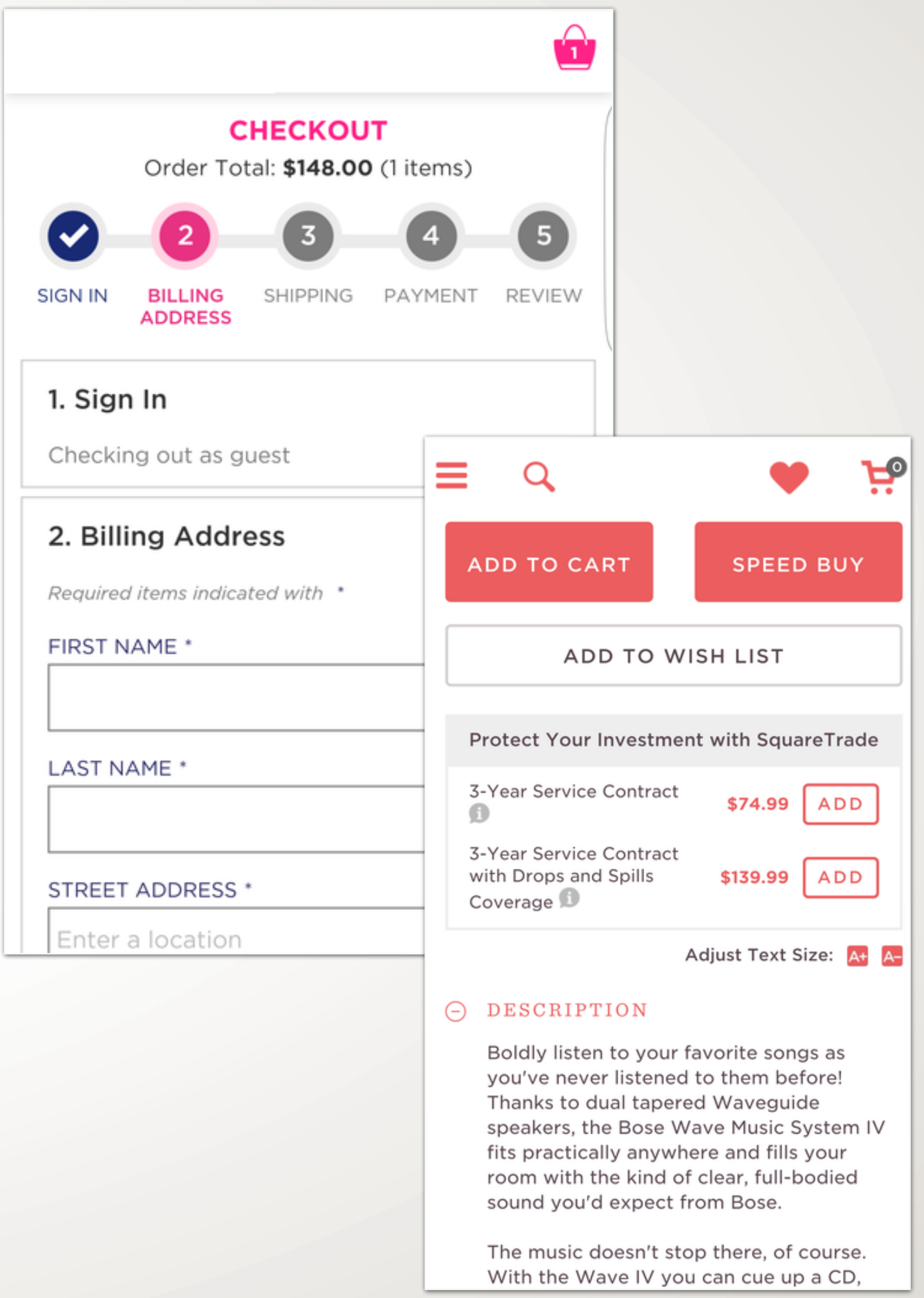
ADD TO CART



SCREEN SIZE MATTERS

You have a very small window through which to convey your value proposition, key product details, and checkout security—while providing a smooth buying process. Maximize your potential by using screen real estate thoughtfully.

Ensure clickable areas, social sharing buttons, and navigation are large and contain distinct interaction areas to mitigate shopper frustration. Keep copy succinct to keep messaging clear.



PUT A BADGE ON IT

Make the most of a small space with product badges. These little callouts, placed on product thumbnails, help shoppers find products faster. They can also increase sales: a Monetate report found a 55% improvement in conversion rate among websites that use product badges compared to those that don't.

Call out key holiday messages, such as:

- Holiday best sellers
- Shipping deadlines
- Good gifts for moms, kids, etc.
- Special holiday promotions

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OPTIMIZE FOR NEW CUSTOMERS

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OPTIMIZE FOR NEW CUSTOMERS

You'll probably see significantly more first-time shoppers who aren't familiar with your brand during Q4.

What's up with those new customers? Are they likely to turn into new long-term customers? What can you do to optimize the experience for them?

We analyzed 12.6 billion shopping sessions (88.1 billion pageviews) that occurred from Q4 2015–July 31, 2016. We found that:

- 1.9% of new customers converted in Q4 of 2015
- 86% of those customers made 1 purchase and **never returned**
- 6% will come back and make 1 more purchase
- 8% will come back and make 2+ purchases

One of the ways you can make the most of this reality is to prominently highlight relevant policies and promotions.

DON'T TAKE IT FOR GRANTED

New shoppers may not be familiar with your brand and what sets you apart from the competition. Here are some customer-centric policies you may wish to highlight:

- Shipping: Free or fast—you have to be one.
- Service/returns: Clearly explain all the options. Make sure you change up the messaging after the season.
- Pricing: Do you offer a price match? Price guarantee?
- Quality: You don't have to be the cheapest if you're the best! Explain how and why your product is better.

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NEED A
DIFFERENT
SIZE OR COLOR?

SHOP
HASSLE FREE
WITH
**FREE & EASY
RETURNS**



AT YOUR
NEAREST STORE



RISK-FREE GIFTING

Picky holiday relatives? With free returns on any order, you know they'll be merry. 100% satisfaction is guaranteed.

JAN
31

**EXTENDED
RETURNS**

FREE HOLIDAY
RETURNS EXTENDED
TILL JANUARY 31

[CLICK FOR DETAILS](#)



**HOLIDAY DELIVERY
GUARANTEE**

GUARENTEED
DELIVERY BY
DECEMBER 20

[CLICK FOR DETAILS](#)

GET CONSISTENT

Increase the impact of your holiday marketing spend by creating a consistency campaign. Start by auditing your marketing campaign calendars for the holiday season. Then ensure you have messaging campaigns set up to reinforce your acquisition *and* retention marketing programs.

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NEED HELP? CALL TOLL FREE: (866) 373-7472

WOMEN MEN EXPERT ADVICE

freshpair[®]
BUY UNDERWEAR IN YOUR UNDERWEAR[®]

WELCOME **EBATES** SHOPPERS

EARN **6%** CASH BACK ON ALL PURCHASES!
PLUS FREE SHIPPING

SHOP T-SHIRTS

THE 1-STEP TSHIRT FINDER

MODAL TEES & TANKS

WELCOME **EBATES** SHOPPERS

EARN **6%** CASH BACK ON ALL PURCHASES!
PLUS FREE SHIPPING

CASUAL MALE XL life's better when it fits

HOME FIND A STORE CUSTOMER SERVICE TRACK ORDER CHECK OUT CART CART IS EMPTY

SEARCH enter keyword QUICK ORDER Enter Item # MY ACCOUNT SIGN IN / REGISTER

\$7.95 FLAT RATE STANDARD SHIPPING
NO MINIMUM PURCHASE REQUIRED.

OR **FREE STANDARD SHIPPING**
ON PURCHASES OF \$290 OR MORE.

USE OFFER CODE (WORKS)

The Perfect Gift

INTRODUCING AUSTIN REED

NARROW YOUR SEARCH

Shop Now

altrec.com

Order Status My Account Help Returns Email Offers

All orders to **PHILADELPHIA, PA** ship FREE

search Search our Site GO 800-369-3949

ALL DEPARTMENTS

Person

Women's

Men's

Juniors'

Kids'

Pets

Activity

Camp & Hike

Climb

Cycle

Paddle

Running & Fitness

Surf & Skate

Ski

Snowboard

Snowshoe

Travel

NEW RAIN JACKET

STAY DRY >>

FROM TRAIL TO TOWN

CHANGE YOUR COLD WEATHER WARDROBE
New Fall Outerwear

SHOP NOW >

Outfit Yourself in These Bestsellers

Page 1 of 3



EMBRACE ALTERNATIVE PAYMENT METHODS

Since many new Q4 shoppers won't be coming back, they may be reluctant to enter their credit card data.

Make it easy for new shoppers to feel secure buying from you while speeding up the process with third-party payment options.

Prominently feature icons for customer favorites like PayPal and MasterPass, and highlight mobile-friendly options like Apple Pay and Android Pay that make checking out simple and secure.



NAVIGATE FAST

You don't need to rebuild your navigation to get people where they need to go fast.

Try adding banner-style navigation elements that call out gift promotions.

Personalize the gift-buying experience for returning customers by showing them a brand- or category-affinity promotion that highlights an item they viewed in a previous session.

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General

Top Holiday Categories



[Christmas Window Candles](#)



[Pre-Lit Greenery](#)



[Christmas Trees](#)



[Christmas Wreaths](#)



[Christmas Garland](#)

Brand Affinity





STREAMLINE THE FIND

Gift shopping ≠ hide and seek

Make it easy on new shoppers to find the best-selling products through messaging. You might even create a curated collection like a gift guide, and promote it on a specific on-site section or landing page. You might also want to add a *Gifts* section to the top nav.





SIMPLE GIFTS

Gift cards still rule

Some people just have it all. And for those shoppers who are checking out your brand for the first time, the total breadth of available products and potential gifts might be overwhelming.

Promote gift cards to new customers loud and often. But don't forget existing customers! Test different messages for each audience to see which approach works best.

Need a last-minute gift?

Send a **GIFT CERTIFICATE**. Instant delivery!

[ORDER NOW ►](#)

THE J.CREW E-GIFT CARD

Who'd you
forget this year?

[SEND ONE >](#)

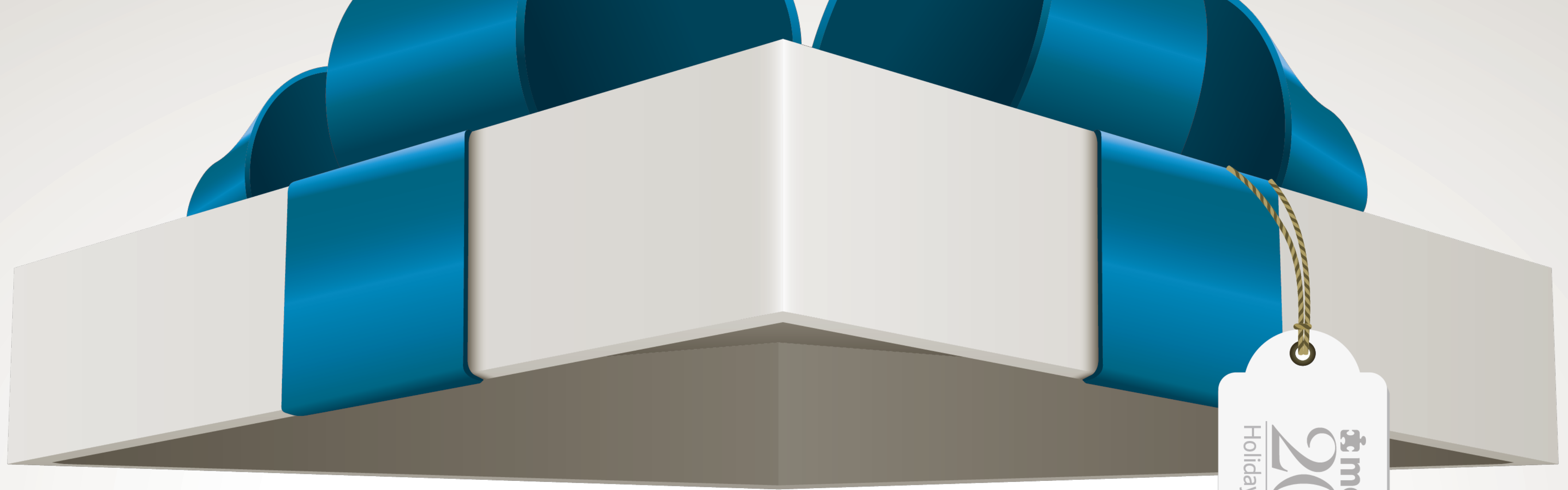


SOMETIMES *the*
BEST GIFT IS *the*
ONE THEY CHOOSE
THEMSELVES!

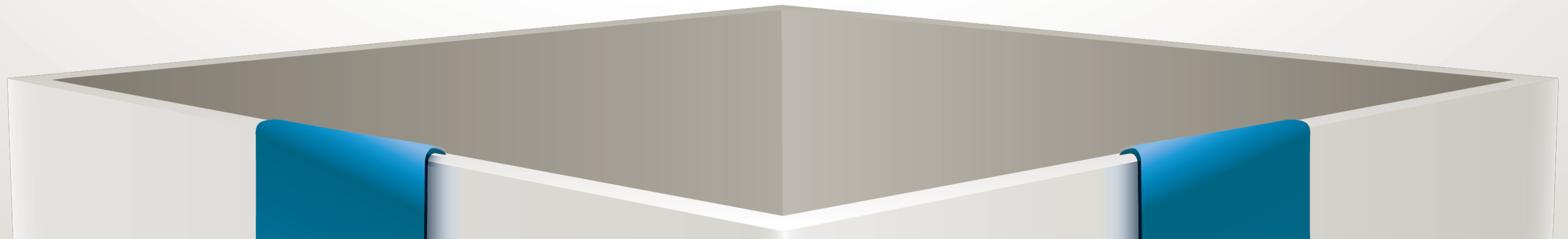


*e*Gift cards are
guaranteed to please.

[Order
Now >](#)



OPTIMIZE THE BRAND EXPERIENCE





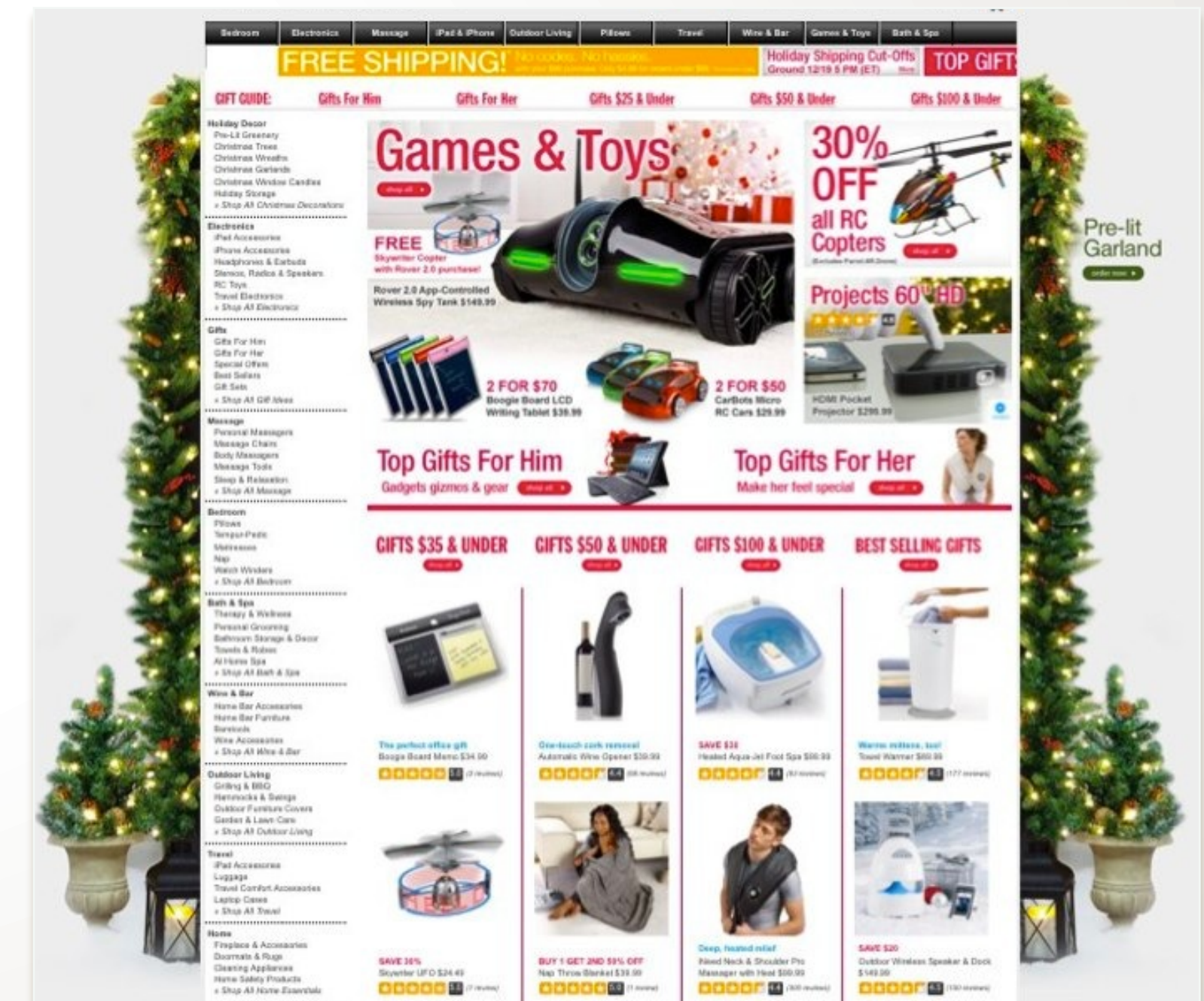
SEASONAL STAND-OUT


Have a holly, jolly... background?

The retail world pulls out all the décor stops starting in October (if not earlier!) Why should your *website* be any different?

Whether you use the same brick-and-mortar holiday style or create something exclusively for your ecommerce channels, ensure it's festive without being fussy and delightful without being distracting.

A seasonal background can help drive relevance while subtly reminding shoppers it's time to buy.



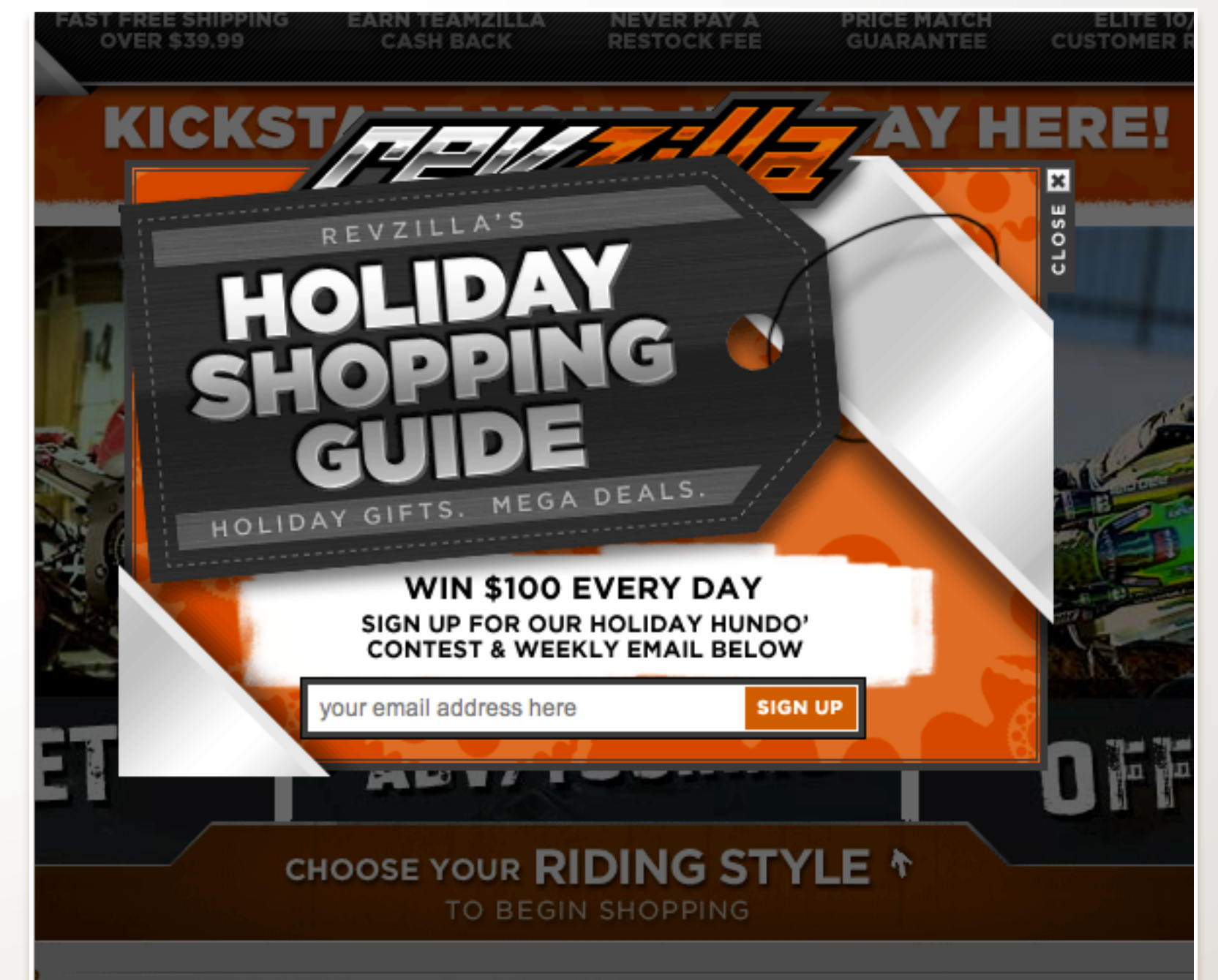
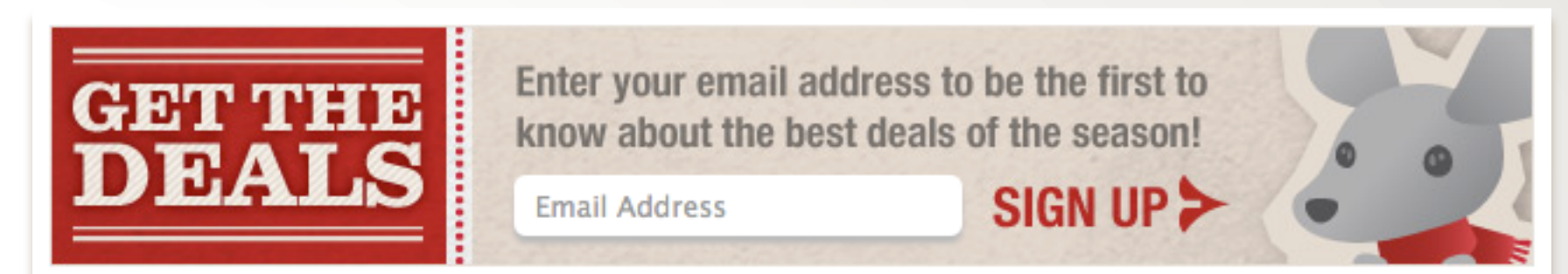


EMAIL ACQUISITION

The holiday season is the perfect time to ask shoppers to signup for your email newsletter.

Boost your signup rate by promoting exclusive access to new items or special offers. Update creative assets to support the new message and give it a holiday look and feel.

Make sure to make the CTA as clear as possible, so shoppers know right away that you're asking for an email address, not promoting a new offer.

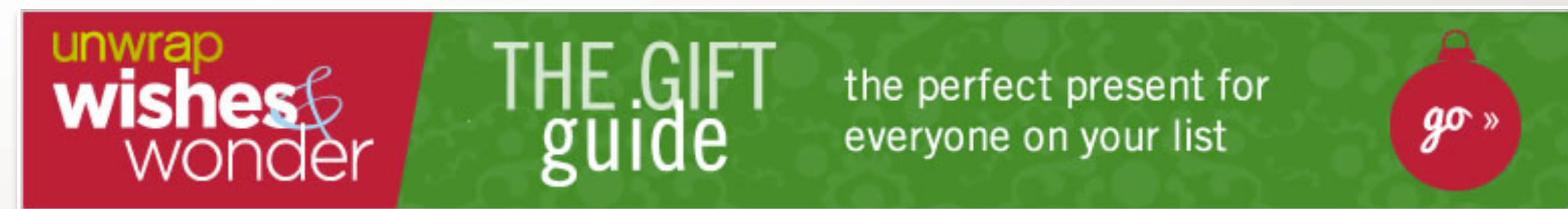




HIGHLIGHT NEW FEATURES

You've probably made significant updates to your ecommerce shopping experience since the 2015 holiday season.

Call out these changes, especially ones that will have a big impact on the experience, to returning holiday shoppers. Then highlight value-add features—such as a loyalty club or a new customer review interface—to all shoppers to encourage engagement.



Monetate pro tip: Create a target to limit the introduction to one-time per visitor for an optimal experience

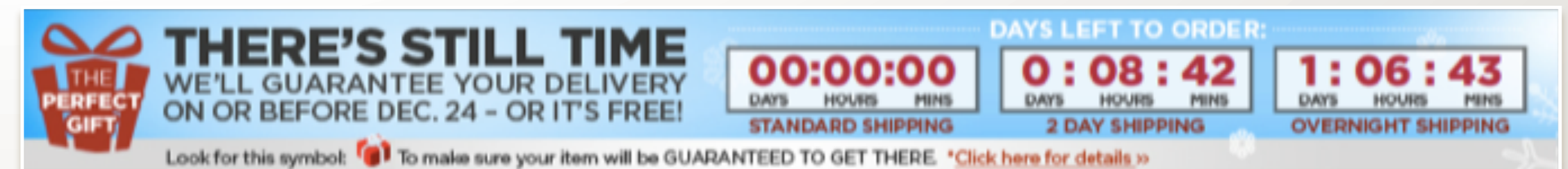


EMBRACE THE MOMENT

Flash sales and countdown times may no longer be new, but they still work. Leverage a flash sale to move inventory or to create a sense of urgency. Reward your best customers (or email subscribers, dormant customers, etc.) by providing them access to a gated flash sale with exclusive pricing.

Encourage additional sales with countdown timers by prominently displaying how much time is left in your site-wide sale, how much time a shopper has left to buy for guaranteed holiday delivery.

Get creative with a new spin on these holiday fixtures.





DELIVER HAPPINESS

Delivery speed is one of the top-five factors shoppers use to decide where to spend their money. Separate yourself from the pack by calling out holiday shipping deadlines clearly and prominently.

Add a countdown timer as key shipping cut-off dates approach to ensure shoppers are well informed. Make sure any delivery estimates you provide include a buffer for order processing and handling timelines, and can account for a spike of orders. Err on the side of over-communication on your FAQ and support pages to ensure customer happiness.

HOLIDAY SHIPPING DEADLINES

12/16
by 11am CST
for UPS ground

12/18
by 11am CST
for UPS 2nd day

12/20
by 11am CST
for UPS Next Day

FREE SHIPPING - 3 Days Only!* [*Details](#)

Free Standard Shipping on orders over \$75. Enter GETSTUFFED at checkout. Ends 11/29/2010 at midnight EST. U.S. Only. Web Only. Excludes Bike and Print Shops.

FREE SHIPPING - 2 Days Only!* [*Details](#)

Free Standard Shipping on orders over \$75. Enter GETSTUFFED at checkout. Ends 11/29/2010 at midnight EST. U.S. Only. Web Only. Excludes Bike and Print Shops.

FREE SHIPPING - Last Day!* [*Details](#)

Free Standard Shipping on orders over \$75. Enter GETSTUFFED at checkout. Ends 11/29/2010 at midnight EST. U.S. Only. Web Only. Excludes Bike and Print Shops.

LAST DAY FOR GROUND SHIPPING!

FRI 23 SEE THIS & KNOW IT'S **GUARANTEED TO GET THERE** ON OR BEFORE **DEC. 23rd** **OR IT'S FREE!**

[CLICK HERE FOR DETAILS](#)

ONLINE ONLY EXCLUSIONS APPLY

LAST CHANCE FOR CHRISTMAS! ORDER BY 1PM TOMORROW [FIND OUT MORE >](#)

CHRISTMAS DELIVERY ORDER BY 11/16 5PM

11 DAYS LEFT FOR GUARANTEED STANDARD DELIVERY

[VIEW THE SHIPPING CALENDAR](#)

search

1 days left to order for Christmas arrival



CUSTOMER ASSISTANCE

If a new shopper exceeds your average time-on-site or page-views, they may be having trouble finding what they're looking for. This is a great time to trigger a lightbox that asks them if they need assistance via live chat. You can also provide a customer service phone number, but ensure the message displays only if the lines are actually open!

Conversely, suppress live chat when wait times exceed your average wait time. Instead, ask shoppers to call customer service or reach out to your brand on social media for faster assistance.

CHAT US NOW

Customer Service Hours

Mon-Thu: 8am - 9pm EST

Fri: 8am - 7pm EST

Sat: 9am - 5pm EST

Sun: 10am - 5pm EST

CAN WE HELP?

QUESTIONS, PROBLEMS,
STYLE CONUNDRUMS

we're here 24/7

LET'S CHAT ▶

Need Help? Click to Call Customer Support

Chat with Support Now

CLEAR OUT INVENTORY

Schedule post-holiday promotions in advance to make the most of the holiday season. You can even target specific customer segments for a highly relevant experience that will help you stand out from the competition.

Inform shoppers that a particular category or product they viewed previously is now on sale. Segment campaigns based off of weather, geo-targeting, and past behavior for ultimate relevancy.



WINTER JACKET CLEARANCE

It's Citrus Season. All jackets will be shipped in citrus-scented boxes or regular-scented boxes.

Category	XS	S	M	L	XL
Women's	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available
Men's	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available
Kids'	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available

WINTER CLEARANCE EVENT

TAKE AN EXTRA 30% OFF THESE ALREADY-REDUCED ITEMS

**Save an additional 30% on items in our Women's Winter Clearance Event and Girls' Winter Clearance Event Clearance sections through February 10, 2013. Cannot be combined with other offers or be applied to prior purchases.*

You must enter code K3XKW61 in the promotion code box on the shopping cart page during online checkout.

DON'T FORGET TO...

- Setup your campaigns well in advance to make sure everything is working properly.
- Check your work. Make sure all tests and personalization campaigns are working as expected.
- Lean on an agile ecommerce personalization platform like Monetate for last-minute changes, updates, or website corrections when waiting for a code change isn't possible.



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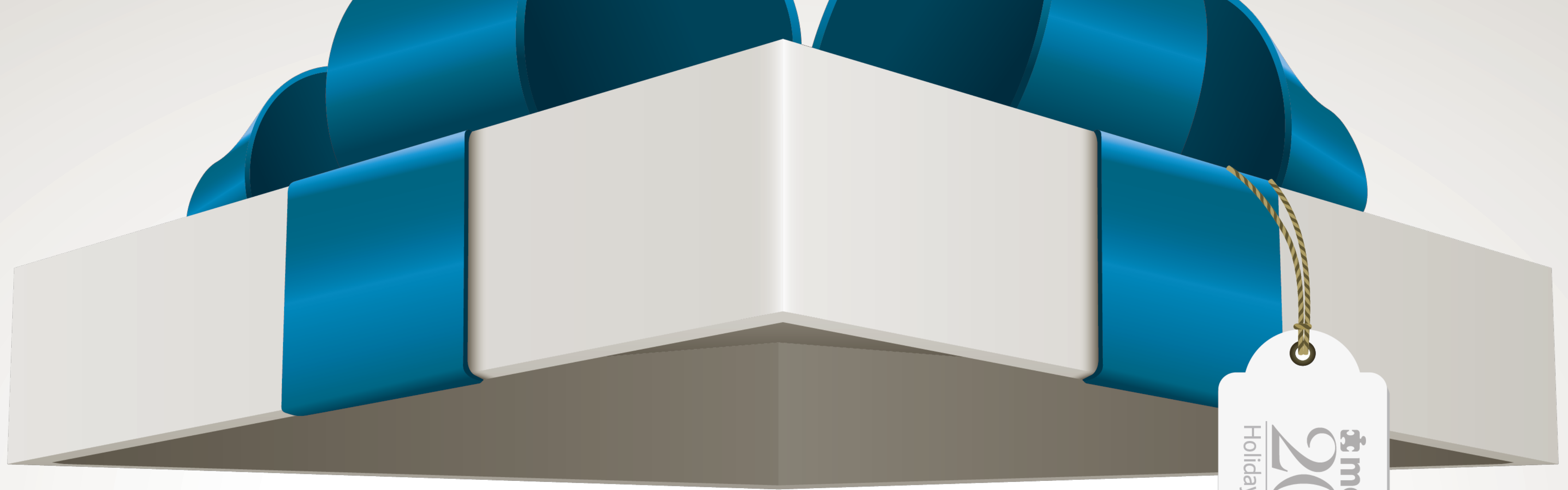
WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Monetate makes it fast and easy for marketers to test, target, merchandize, synchronize, and personalize experiences across channels and devices.

Our clients grow their businesses by delivering one-of-kind experiences to every customer at each moment of interaction. Monetate offers the only platform that combines marketer creativity with predictive models and machine learning to optimize each moment of interaction.

Monetate drives positive business results for the world's best brands, year-round. Schedule your free personalized demo or holiday assessment today.

[CONTACT US](#)



HAVE A
PROSPEROUS HOLIDAY!

