

5 Great Seasonal Marketing Ideas

1. Create "how-to" videos featuring holiday items from your store. For example, if you're a cooking store create a "how to" about making Christmas cookies or pumpkin party dip... then sample it in your store on seasonal party ware.

If you have a hardware or home improvement store, show your customers how to easily clean leaves from their gutters, or how to properly clean and shut down their central air conditioner units.

Put the videos on your website and add them to your Facebook Page and Pinterest Boards. You can also include your featured item or service in your email newsletter and offer a special deal on it.

2. Partner with a seasonal business. If you are a local sporting goods retailer, you could partner up with a local orchard or Christmas tree farm and cross-promote your products. For example, you can create a beautiful display featuring trees and wreaths from a local orchard and in turn they could set up a display using some of your outdoor gear at their checkout.

Go one better and give out each other's gift certificates as bag stuffers or attached to customer receipts.

3. Share information about community events. Promoting local seasonal events helps get people out and builds excitement in your community.

Create a list of upcoming local events with dates and a short description of each. Post it in your email newsletter and feature them on your Facebook Page. Some events might be: Oktoberfest, A Zombie Walk, Turkey Trot, or Caroling.

Think of ways you can get the folks who are attending those events into your store. Maybe anyone dressed as a zombie gets a free gift and their photo featured on your Facebook Page, or if you bring in your race number it's good for 20% off a purchase. Get creative and attach an offer to each event!

4. Give out gift certificates to volunteers who lend a hand at your local food banks. Call local shelters or food banks who plan to have a big food drive or who will be serving a turkey dinner on Thanksgiving. Offer them gift certificates to your store that they can give to their volunteers as a "thank you" for their help.

5. Create your own event. Grand Haven WhizBang! retailer Tonya Christiansen hosts an annual "Dogtoberfest" in her store, Must Love Dogs Boutique and Spa. There's a costume contest, fun activities, and special deals in her store during the event. Her customers love it and it not only gives them a special reason to come in, but Tonya has the opportunity to get lots of free publicity!

What seasonal event can you create for your store that you can "anniversary" each year? Get in the habit of continuously finding ways to promote your store and provide value to your customers and you're in for a great holiday season.