

Straight Talk on Holiday Gifting: Put a Bow on It - Make it Fun, Fast, Easy, and Special



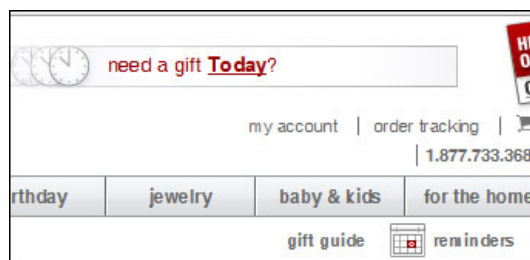
Yes, there are those people who make their Christmas shopping list in January, who look for the perfect holiday gifts all year long and buy them when they see them, because they remember you were looking for a silver necklace, wrapped it and have it waiting in their gift closet.

This is not for those people. **This is for the rest of us.**

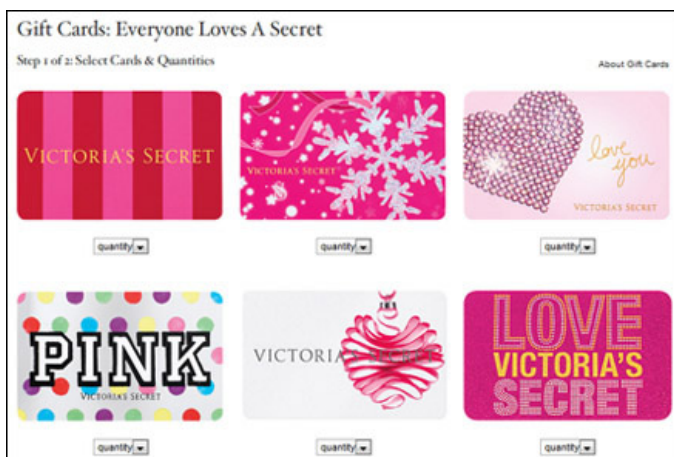
We meant to do all those things but... wait, seriously? It's December already? And I haven't bought anything? For anyone? Yikes.

We are your customers. We're stressed, we're behind, and we need help. Here are 5 of the many things you can do for your gift-shopping customers.

1. Give us ideas. Lots of them, in lots of ways. What to buy, for whom. **Eddie Bauer** points out their Gift Shop on the home page. And promotes their "limited time only" free shipping. **Red Envelope**, the go-to gift site, promotes gifts in several different ways, right on the home page – including "need a gift today?".



2. Give us options for the actual gift cards the way Victoria's Secret does. This makes the "gift" more fun and more personal. And has the added benefit of making us feel like we actually did put some time and effort into this.



3. Take away even more of our stress – give us "gift reminders". We don't just shop at Christmas. Neiman Marcus, known for amazing and unusual gifts, has reminders, their famous Christmas Book, and a "buy now, gift later" option (for that

Perspective



Presentation adds so much to the overall effect - of anything. Ask any top chef. Any hostess. Any

speaker. **Content is king**, but presentation is the crown. In the world of eCommerce, we are all working so hard, juggling so many aspects of the business, that perhaps we don't give presentation its due. Yes, on the design of the website, we do. And maybe with our product images. But once the sale is made?

During the holiday season, when people are shopping online, these presentation "niceties" can help you **make that sale** – they can be what causes a shopper to purchase a gift from your site rather than from someone else's. There are companies that have made their mark in knowing how to make gifts special.

In addition to ideas, gift cards and lovely packaging, entice your customers by giving them incentives (free shipping, promotions), by providing information (delivery dates, order and delivery status), having a generous return policy, and giving them easy ways to get help if things don't go as planned (clear return information, easily available customer service). The holiday season, while joyful, can also be stressful. Give your customers a little more "comfort and joy" and put a little more "jingle" in your cash register.

Bernardine Wu
CEO & Founder, FitForCommerce

For additional Perspectives on other topics, [click here](#).

Opportunity Corner

New Deals

- Pet Products Company (\$1m rev; lots of potential) looking for eCP + OMS, plus excellent service, to launch B2C site (with B2B down the road) ASAP.
- Travel Products Manufacturer (B2C) needs eCP + OMS - full international capabilities a must – ASAP. Budget \$250-\$500k for implementation.
- Printing Retailer (B2C, \$2m online), IR Hot 100 looking to grow to \$20 in 5 years. Needs eCP + OMS with integration capabilities. Timeline 3 months, budget \$50-100k.

See [all deals in play](#) or [post your own](#) requirements.

Check out [who won](#) which deals or tell us about [deals you've closed](#).

rare time when we did plan ahead!). And it reminds us that we also need to buy for our corporate "friends".

BUY NOW GIFT LATER
For selected items, buy now, and we'll ship them approximately the week of December 13 to arrive by December 17, 2010. You will also receive free shipping, free gift packaging, and a free alternate delivery address. [Click for details >](#)

WELCOME TO THE GIFT REMINDER SERVICE

Please enter the e-mail address you would like to have reminders emailed to below:

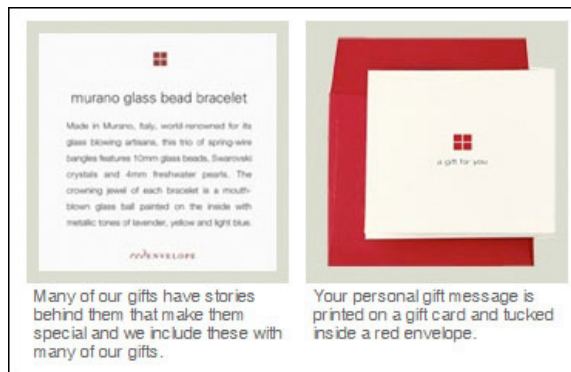
FIRST NAME: LAST NAME:

EMAIL:

FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	EVENT	EVENT DATE	GIFT TYPE
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	CHOOSE EVENT ▾	MONTH ▾ DAY ▾	CHOOSE GENDER ▾ [X]
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	CHOOSE EVENT ▾	MONTH ▾ DAY ▾	CHOOSE GENDER ▾ [X]
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	CHOOSE EVENT ▾	MONTH ▾ DAY ▾	CHOOSE GENDER ▾ [X]
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* Optional

4. Make it Special. We're probably not going to be there when they open their present. Make it look beautiful. Provide a description of the gift so the recipient will understand the significance and why it was a special purchase. **Red Envelope's** success is due, in a large part, not just to their product selection but to how well they do gifting.



Many of our gifts have stories behind them that make them special and we include these with many of our gifts.

Your personal gift message is printed on a gift card and tucked inside a red envelope.

5. Sometimes the packaging is (almost) everything. And nobody knows that better than **Tiffany**. There's not a woman whose heart doesn't skip a beat when they see that "Tiffany blue" box. Maximize your brand. Let us have the same gift options online as we would in your store.



THE TIFFANY BLUE BOX
All purchases arrive in the signature Tiffany Blue Box®, tied with a white satin ribbon.
[LEARN MORE](#)

Bottom Line: There are as many ways to make something better, more special, more appealing as there are gifts to buy. These may look like "littlethings" but they do mean a lot. To the giver, to the receiver, and to your bottom line.

For more Straight Talk on additional topics, [click here](#).

Expert Know-How CDC Ecommerce

5 Ways to Maximize Market Share in the Holiday Season From Gary Black, General Manager of CDC Ecommerce.

Also, check out their [podcast with MLB](#) about their eCommerce practices, with a focus on auction sites.

1. Provide Inspiration

By showing "Holiday Season Gift Ideas" or "10 Perfect Stocking Stuffers Under \$50". You can also use this concept to take advantage of post-holiday buyers with a "Holiday Gift Clearance" section.

2. When all else fails

Gift Cards are especially helpful for those who haven't a clue what to buy or who waited until the last minute – we've all been there. Use a clever image to display this option prominently.

3. Santa's Helpers

Give your customers all the information they need to take the stress out of their shopping.

- Clearly show the last time to place an order for priority or free shipping. Hint: this is a great way to nudge your shopper to complete the sale.
- Make it easy to find all gifting options.
- Reviews are great tools to let buyers find gifts that have high ratings and are less likely to disappoint.

4. Use Email Reminders

To re-engage shoppers who have created Wish Lists, or who have seemingly abandoned their shopping carts. As they may be comparison shopping, this is a prime opportunity to offer staged promotions that increase over time.

5. Mitigate the Risks

Of customer frustration and cart abandonment by offering live customer service. Click to Chat, Live Chat via email, or Get Live Help options will improve your customers' comfort levels and product knowledge, increasing the chances of making him/her a buyer.

For other Expert Know-How, [click here](#).

Don't Miss!

- Our [Blog](#) on the Mobile Shopping Summit
- [15 Mobile "Sound Bites"](#) that may surprise you
- Register for the [Retail Online Integration webinar](#) to hear Bernardine talk about "ecommerce tips, tricks and trends"

Interview

The Voice of the Retailer: SiriusXM



eCommerce Know-How spoke with Sonja Kristofferson, Director of Ecommerce and Direct Sales at SiriusXM.

www.siriusxm.com

Q. What is your company's main focus over the next 12-18 months?

A. We are looking to expand into mobile commerce. We have apps for Android, Blackberry, iPhone, and iPad.

Q. What are the eCommerce trends you find most intriguing right now?

A. Mobile, for sure. We feel there is a lot of potential there. Our customers can listen on their smartphones now so it's in our best interest to enable them purchase there as well.

Social, also. Not so much about facebook and twitter but more about customers interacting on our site with reviews and forums. We think it is very important for them to talk about plans and installations, what is easier, where they're listening. For example, a lot of people don't know how to find SiriusXM on their own: "It was in my rental car ... how can I get it in my car? On my phone?" Subscribers are good and valued sources of information and assistance for other subscribers and potential subscribers.

Q. What would be the best piece of advice you'd give someone looking to build an eCommerce business?

A. Know who your customer is. It is easy to get caught up in what you know about your product and what you think your customers are doing.

Q. What is your approach to "gifting"?

A. Holidays and Father's Day are our biggest times of the year. We offer various packages – for example, a radio with a pre-paid subscription gift. This year, we are offering hardware packages that include discounted service. It is called the All-Access plan, as it allows the gift recipient the ability to listen on the radio as well as the internet and smartphone.

Q. How much do you promote "gifting"?

A. We promote it quite a bit; via emails, SEM and within affiliates. While we have gifting options all year long, we promote it quite heavily during the holiday season and around Father's Day, particularly for women to buy for men.

Q. What are some of the most important tips and tricks you've learned about improving "gifting"?

A. We've learned to keep the price point lower, especially over the past 2 years. It needs to be manageable for your customer base.

We've also found that the exclusivity of "limited time" offers tend to have higher rate of success.

Lastly, make sure you have plenty of inventory to support your offerings.

Q. What was your first job?

A. Scooping ice cream – I built up a Popeye-sized forearm.

To hear the Voices of other retailers, [click here](#).

Stories or tips on holiday gifting?

Let us know!

SHARE YOUR
KNOW-HOW

Send to a Friend

Don't keep all this great info to yourself. Tell your friends!

FORWARD
KNOW-HOW