

Everything HOLIDAY

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Email Marketing Tips for Small Business Saturday

Small Business Saturday falls on the Saturday after Thanksgiving, and it's the perfect hook for your small business marketing efforts. Here's everything you need to know about it, and how your business can participate.

What is Small Business Saturday?

American Express launched the first Small Business Saturday in 2010 to create buzz and demand for local businesses, and to recognize the benefits they bring to their communities. National retailers may own Black Friday, and the online giants may claim Cyber Monday; but in only five years, Small Business Saturday has become a beloved, wildly successful retail tradition in its own right. It's been fully embraced by the Small Business Administration, the federal government, and elected officials in every state. This year, Small Business Saturday falls on November 26.

Why should I participate?

For a tradition less than a decade old, Small Business Saturday has been an enormous success for local restaurants and businesses. In 2015, more than 95 million customers took advantage of the day, to the tune of \$16.2 billion spent at local businesses in their communities. That was an increase of 8 percent over the previous year. With even more awareness and small business participation, Small Business Saturday 2016 promises to exceed all expectations.

How do I get started?

Getting involved in Small Business Saturday isn't difficult. The first step is deciding how your business will recognize the day — that is, what will entice your audience to spend

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some time (and money) with you? Here are a just a few ideas for Small Business Saturday events and promotions:

- Specially priced merchandise, appetizers, drinks, or desserts
- A coupon or discount for every customer
- Free refreshments for store visitors
- Matched donations to a local charity
- A free gift with certain purchases
- A contest or raffle
- A limited-time-only item or entree
- A sidewalk sale (weather permitting)
- Personalized shopping service
- Free shipping or gift-wrapping
- Extended hours

Even if your business doesn't hold a special event or promotion, you can still remind your customers via email and social media to "Shop Small" and "Dine Small" on November 26. To make doing so even easier, American Express provides free Small Business Saturday [logos and graphics](#).

Holiday Tip

Last year, online shoppers using a tablet tended to spend more (\$136 on average) than online shoppers using a computer or phone. Another great reason to mobile-optimize your site if you haven't already.

How should I market Small Business Saturday?

Email is our favorite method, of course! Not to mention it's one of the most effective ways to get your customers' attention, even when they're on the go. Follow these steps to create buzz for your own Small Business Saturday festivities:

- Send your first Small Business Saturday email about two weeks ahead of time. Friendly and informative emails work best. This is your initial opportunity to let your audience know that you're celebrating Small Business Saturday, and to create awareness for those customers who aren't familiar with it.
- Send a reminder email during Thanksgiving week. Travel, cooking, and family time create a blur of activity this week, so plan to send the reminder early on.
- Send a second reminder on Black Friday, or even early on Small Business Saturday itself. This is particularly important if your business isn't typically open on Saturdays. Otherwise, you may want to skip this step.
- Thank your customers after the fact! Send one last email to everyone who helped make Small Business Saturday a success. If you raised money for a charity, this is the perfect

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time to let your contributors know how much money was raised. Thank you emails are a personalized touch that connects with your customers and keeps them coming back — the kind of benefit only a small business can provide.

Don't forget social media

While you're sending the emails above, post regularly about Small Business Saturday across all your social accounts. Use hashtags like #ShopSmall, #DineSmall, #SmallBusinessSaturday, and #SmallBizSat to make your event searchable.

With just a little bit of planning, it's easy to take advantage of the publicity and excitement surrounding Small Business Saturday.

BONUS CONTENT

Small Business Saturday Inspiration

Looking for a little inspiration for your Small Business Saturday email campaigns? Here are some subject lines to help get you started, plus additional subject lines that work for the rest of November too. And we've put together three Small Business Saturday example emails for you to draw ideas from, or adapt for your own business. All created in VerticalResponse, of course!

November and Small Business Saturday Subject Lines

- Gobble Up These Deals Before They're Gone
- Be Festive on Black Friday...Free Wine for Every Shopper
- Big Fat Black Friday Discounts
- Pre-Thanksgiving Pre-Sale
- Gifts for Every Football Fan
- Think big, shop small!
- Kids eat free on Small Business Saturday
- Caring for our community on Small Business Saturday
- We're open late on Small Business Saturday
- Beat the Black Friday hangover by shopping small!

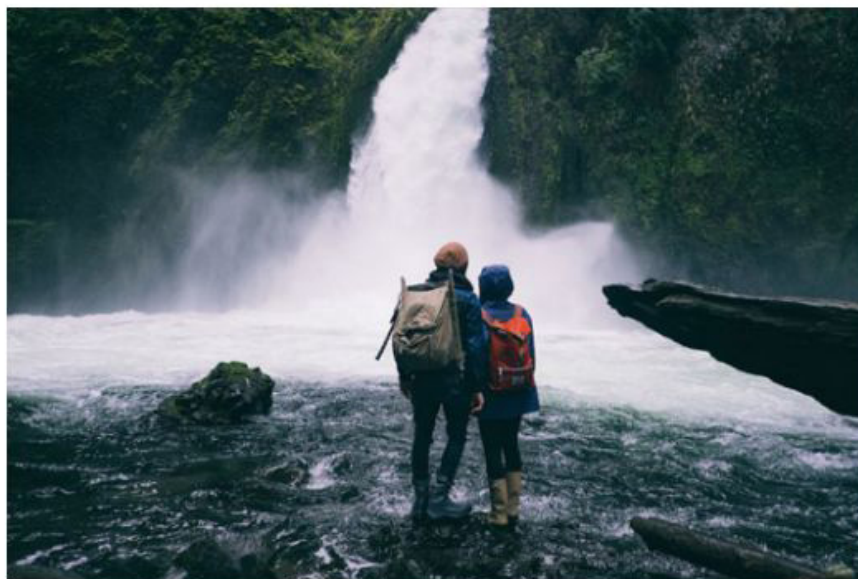
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Example 1 - Small Business Saturday Promotional Email

Shop Small...for Huge Discounts! November 26 only!



Black Friday Is So Yesterday. Shop Small Business Saturday Instead.

To thank our loyal customers for shopping small all year long, Forest Finds is celebrating Small Business Saturday by discounting our entire store. Come find gifts for everyone on your holiday list — all at 25% off or more!

Don't wait, this incredible sale lasts one day only! Don't miss it on Saturday, November 26!

SHOP NOW

Example 2 - Small Business Saturday Event Invitation Email

For VIP Clients Only — Get a Free Fashion Consult on #SmallBizSat!

fashionforward

Free Fashion Consultations for our VIPs on Small Business Saturday



*Reserve Your Free Fashion Consultation
Now*

After the Thanksgiving dishes are put away, after the doorbuster deals are done, we invite our VIP clients to an exclusive event celebrating Small Business Saturday. We'll be offering free one-on-one fashion consults with members of our team, discounts on select winter must-haves, and delicious refreshments. Hurry, spots are limited!

**Small Business Saturday VIP Party with
Free Fashion Consults**

Saturday, November 26, 11a to 6p

Fashion Forward, San Francisco, CA

Example 3 - Small Business Saturday Thank You Email

Our Two Favorite Words to Say



THANK YOU For Dining With Us All Year Long

During this time of giving thanks, we wanted to take the opportunity to tell you how much we appreciate your business at The Wooded Barrel. We know our diners have a lot of options, so it means a lot to us that you choose to #DineSmall, not just on Small Business Saturday, but every day. We're so grateful to have been a part of this community for eleven years and counting.

Thank you, and we hope to see you and your family again soon!

[MAKE A RESERVATION](#)