

Get ready for BLACK FRIDAY



YOUR GUIDE TO THE ULTIMATE
PREPARATION FOR THE ULTIMATE
SHOPPING HOLIDAY



bambora



By now, you're probably well aware of that Black Friday is approaching with giant leaps.

For those of you that still haven't jumped on this trend: Let us explain. Black Friday is the day following Thanksgiving in the US (yes, it's another one of those American crazes that we adopted), taking place on the fourth Friday of November. It started out as the (un)official marking of the first day of the holiday sales, but quickly grew to become a thing of its own.

During the last few years, merchants have started to extend the Black Friday sales throughout the whole week creating **Black Week**.

So, what does this mean for you?

It means that this is one of the year's top weeks for your business. Are you ready?

Well, with this e-book you will be more ready than ever!

Here you will find 10 tips to what you should have in place before opening your (virtual) doors to this crazy week.

Are you not convinced by this yet? Let us tell you some really interesting facts!

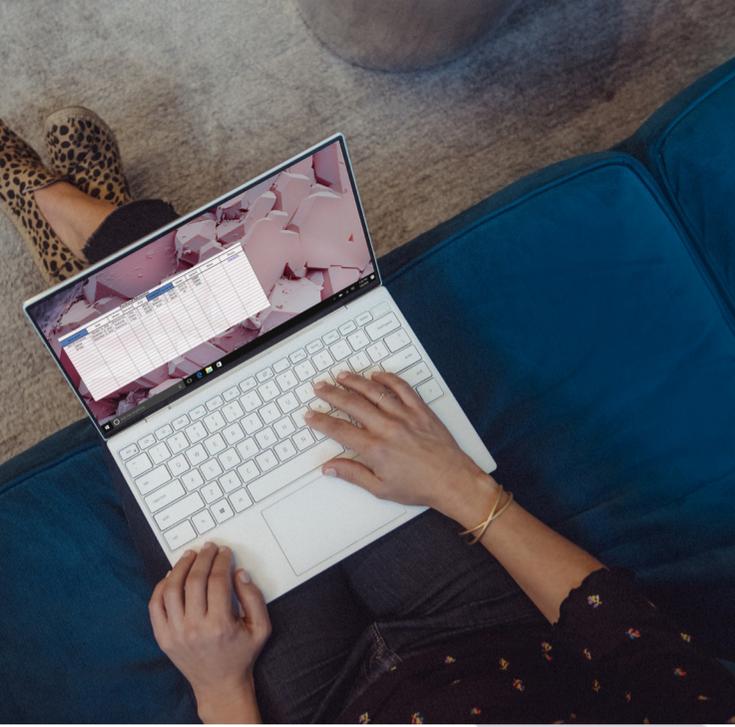
Two-thirds of those who shop on Black Friday buy Christmas presents, making it the starting signal for holiday sales that you don't want to miss out on.

According to Bambora's data the following segments saw the largest increase in sales in-store during Black Friday 2019: Furniture (37%), Accessories (26%), Electronics (16 %) and Clothes (12%). For online, Furniture saw an increase of a whopping 91% and clothing retailers an increase of 84%.

During 2019, Swedes shopped at a total value of **7.1 billion SEK** on Black Friday.

In the US, Black Friday generates sales of about **50 billion dollar** each year and it's just getting bigger...

In 2019 in the US, Cyber Monday online sales totaled **9.4 billion dollar**, which outpaced Black Friday's total online sales of 7.4 billion dollar.



1. Look back at last Black Friday

Do you remember last year's Black Friday sales? Are the memories a bit blurry? No worries, we understand you. However, you should take the time to look back on last year's performance to learn and prepare in the best way for this year.

But where can you find the information about last year's sales and performance?

With a physical store you can get very useful information from your checkout system and payment solution. With Bambora's reporting tool you can see all your transactions from Black Friday last year meaning you can get information about what time and day you had most of your sales.

By analyzing customer behavior from previous years, you can see which of your campaigns had the best effect. Look at which keywords, which content and which types of offers have given the best results. Did visitors get to your e-commerce via Google, social media, SMS or newsletters? You can find all this information in [Google Analytics](#), [Google Ads](#), [Google My Business](#), [Facebook Audience Insights](#) etc

With last year in mind it's time to get prepped! Now you should have a good idea of what marketing strategies and campaigns you should go with this year. **Preparing, planning, and starting** well in advance are the keys to a successful Black Friday. Whether you sell goods or services, online or offline.

PS. If you have not already installed [Google Analytics](#) and a [Heat Maps tool](#), now is the time to do so! With these tools you can both continuously and after the season get information about what your customers clicked on, what they read and in what order. You can also see where the traffic to your online store is coming from and which ads have given the best results. With these tools installed you will be better prepared for next year!

Online | **In-store**

2. Adjust your marketing efforts

First and foremost - you need to be smart about your advertisement. Regardless of the size of your advertising budget, you need to be prepared that almost all advertising will be more expensive, and you will have more competition.

What can you do then?

- 1.** You need to consider whether to turn up your ad budget (to even be visible during this time), or whether to just turn them off completely. There's no point in being in between.
- 2.** You also need to be more disruptive than before in order to be seen or heard through all the noise.
- 3.** For large campaign weekends such as Black Friday and Cyber Monday, it is especially important that your ads are tailored to the campaigns you are currently running. Customize the ads with a clear message. "Act now, the promotion is only valid on XX November".
- 4.** To be cost effective, make the best of your own channels, and use all the information you have. For example, communicate Black Friday-offers to your customers through SMS, e-mail or your own social media channels.
- 5.** You could also make a Facebook-event, where you communicate all the cool stuff you will be offering on Black Friday.
- 6.** As for visitors on your page: To ensure that they don't get lost on their way to the next site (because they will go through a LOT of pages to find the best offers), set up some retargeting ads to remind them where they need to go.

Does it sound expensive and cumbersome? The upside is, though, that more people are actively searching for good offers, and thus they tend to be more receptive to advertising. And hey, hopefully all the money you put in will pay off when the big day comes!

PS. To get some buzz and expectation from your customers, you can send newsletters and make posts on social media with sneak peeks on what will happen in your store or web shop during Black Friday.

3. Take advantage of free advertisement!

Did we just talk about increasing your budget and now we are telling you there are free advertisement? Free? It's like music to your ears, right?

Well, this is actually the sweet irony of Black Friday advertising. As it turns out, advertising is not only more expensive - it is also offered for free. Confusing, we know. But it makes total sense.

Many websites, magazines, newspapers and so on actually benefit from collecting all the best Black Friday-offers as a value service for their readers.

Meaning: Many of those you would normally pay a sweet pile lot of money to advertise for you, are practically begging for permission to mention your company along with a link to where they can find your offers.

It's a classical win-win situation really.

Make sure you communicate your Black Friday offers wide and broad to all relevant websites you can find. The chances are pretty high that they will present it to their readers - free of charge for you.



1. Make a list over the most relevant mediums for your industry/niche/target group.
2. Reach out to the whole list - and remember to follow up if you don't get an answer. It's worth the extra work.
3. If you are using links: Use dedicated UTM-codes to track where most of the traffic came from for future Black Fridays.

4. Make sure your stock is full

The upcoming months could probably be your best months of the year so make sure that you are ready for increased sales.

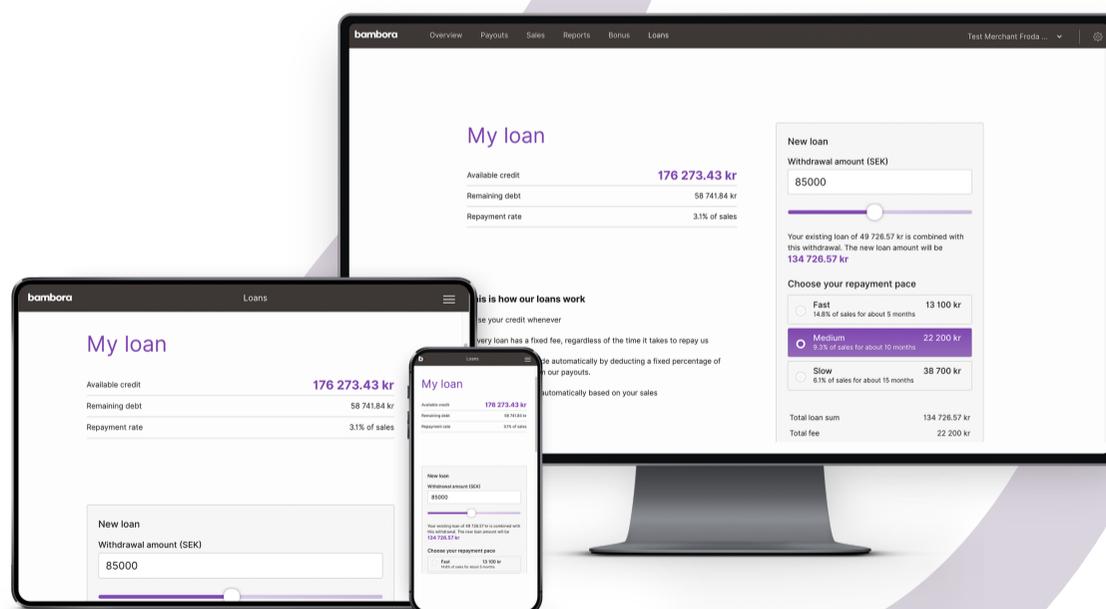
One of the worst things that can happen is that you run out of stock of what you are marketing as an offer. Then there is a risk that your customers will be dissatisfied, and you want to make your customers **SUPER HAPPY**, right?

But what if you don't have the money to invest in your stock before the high season because then is when most of your money will come in? Then we have the solution for you.

With Bambora's loan service Growth Finance you can take a simple business loan based on your card sales without complicated applications and long waiting times. Taking a loan is done completely digitally in just a few minutes and the money is in your account within 24 hours. The refund then adjusts to your own sales; larger installments in good times and less in difficult ones.

See your loan space and apply for the loan [here](#).

1. Go through your stock and plan so that you have enough, both in terms of quantity and product types, for the whole period from Black Friday to January.
2. Decide what needs to be purchased, which products usually sell best? Buy more of those.
3. If there's not enough money, consider taking a business loan in order to improve your sales.



5. Staff and prep

One of the most crucial areas in your business is your staff and Black Friday is no exception. The earlier you start planning out the human logistics of this day, the better.

In-store



Map out stations

Start by mapping out all the major stations of your store: Cash register, dressing rooms, storage, shop floor, entrance etc. Then, staff up according to what you think you might be needed for each station.



Distribute roles

Make sure everyone has a very dedicated role and knows what to do and when.



Plan for breaks

Make sure you have a clear plan for when everyone is taking breaks for reloading and food (you need the energy!).



Ensure extra help

Find someone who can be standby during the most critical hours, so that you know whom to call in case you need some extra help.



Set an action plan

Prepare (perhaps together with some of your most trusted employees) an action plan with how the routines will work for this specific period.

Online



Website

Make sure your web platform and systems can handle the pressure. There are multiple tools you can use to test your website, such as [k6](#) or [GTmetrix](#).

You can also use programs like [Hotjar](#), [Mouseflow](#) or [Lucky Orange](#). These programs show how your users move on your web shop and what they click on. Then you can learn how to optimize it.



Customer service

A fast and good customer service is a must during Ecom high season. With more traffic to your web shop and increased sales, you will also get more questions.

Put lots of efforts on your customer support and make sure you have adequate staffing for increased load. There must be people there to help your customers with any questions or problems they may have. Otherwise they will just move on to the next website.



Shipping

One of the most critical areas during times with many transactions, will actually be the packing and shipping part. This is a source of great delay and frustration for those unprepared. But that's not you, right?

Be realistic about your capacity, and if needed, hire some extra people to help you out. How you solve this, is really up to you. Just don't let your shipping be the bottleneck.

6. Reward early shoppers

How many times haven't we seen people standing in long long lines outside stores to be the first one to buy a product, simply because "the first X visitors will get X"? The human brain likes to be rewarded and that is something you should take advantage of.

Ideally, when it comes to the traffic on Black Friday you want to:

- Streamline and spread out as much as possible
- Avoid "clogs" and last-minute overloads causing your systems to crash
- Get a flying start with people knocking down your doors

So what better way, than to give an incentive to early shoppers? This year, this could be more important than ever to avoid large gatherings.

In-store

Offer a special discount, an additional item, a price or even just food or snacks as an early bird-reward. Maybe the first 50 customers will be competing for a special price, or receive a goodie bag upon arrival?

Online

You can also reward your loyal customers by sending them a code by e-mail which they can use during a certain time to get an extra special discount.



PS. Another way to avoid that last minute "Hail Mary"-situation, is to join in on the popular tendency of extending the offer to last throughout the whole Black Week instead of just one day.

7. Customize your store

Regardless if you have a physical store or an online store, you need to make sure it's all set for a massive increase in traffic.

In-store

- **Functionality trumps esthetics** – Adjusting your store arrangement for a high increase in traffic, will in many cases mean that you might need to lower your visual requirements just a little bit – and just as a rare exception.
- **Easy to find promotional items** – Move the store interior around in order to create more space and make room for larger quantities than normal in the shelves.
- **Safety first** – Make sure to customize your store so that a good distance can be kept between people, both customers and employees. Put marks in the floor of where people should stand in line etc.
- **Take a walk around** – Ask yourself, is the path intuitive, can distance be kept at all times and are the promotional items easy to find?

Online

The digital equivalence to your store arrangement, is of course the structure and look of your website.

- **Navigation menus are critical** – It's all about the user-friendliness. Go through your menu items and clean up where it's needed.
- **Easy to find promotional items** – Make sure your customers know in just a second where on the site they can find the promotional products.
- **Have a look around** – Ask yourself, is the path intuitive and are the promotional items easy to find?

8. Make sure you have the right payment solution

Don't worry. This is not a sales pitch.

But you need to be aware that your checkout flow is one of the most crucial parts of the customer journey, after all that's the "make it or break it" part.

Make sure the payment experience is fast and simple. That way you will not only sell more (and faster) – you will also give your customers a better shopping experience.

Imagine that long, long line of impatient customers. Now, imagine your terminal is slow. Really slow. A customer wants to pay with contactless. Another one has a Mastercard. Customers start to get frustrated. This scenario does not have to be the reality.

Just go through this checklist beforehand to make sure you have the right payment solution for the big day!

- Is your terminal updated and fast?
- Does it accept all the common payment cards?
- Can you accept contactless payments?
- Is it prepared for mobile wallets or other mobile payments?
- Do you know who to call if you have any problems?

Consider if you need to look into [short term rental](#) for an extra terminal - just for a period.

For your web shop, the checkout flow is even more crucial. Think for yourself, it is much easier to abandon a shopping cart online than in a store where you actually took the time to go to.

Did you know, that in 2019, as many as 71% abandoned an online purchase due to the lack of payment options? You don't want that to happen so make sure you can accept all of the most popular payment methods. In Norway and Denmark, the most preferred payment method online is card while in Sweden it is invoice, and in Finland it is online banking.

Does your checkout tick all these boxes?

- Make sure it is intuitive, fast, and responsive both for laptops and mobile devices.
 - Is it stable and can handle the large increase in traffic?
 - Does it offer the most preferred payment methods (credit cards, mobile wallets, invoice etc.)?
 - Does it have the "save card" functionality?
-

Are you unsure of which payment methods you can offer your customers?
[Contact us](#) and we'll tell you more about it.

9. Don't forget the mobile!

Mobile, mobile, mobile, are you tired of hearing it all the time? Well if you've got it covered you can be calm. If not, consider putting some effort into it.

Did you know that in 2019, the total e-commerce purchases completed on a mobile device was 41% in Sweden, 39% in Norway, 32% in Denmark and 31% in Finland? Meaning that about one third of your sales will come from a mobile device. One third – that's a lot!

This means that you must think **mobile first**. Is your mobile website easy to understand? Is it responsive and works in all devices like mobile and iPad? Is your web shop easy to shop from with a mobile? Are there too many steps in the payment stage?

But don't forget, your physical store should also be adapted for mobile. More and more people are paying with their mobile in the stores as well. In Denmark, 18% uses the mobile to pay in-store weekly, in Sweden it is 14%, in Norway it is 11% and in Finland 6%. For your own sake, double check that your terminal can accept mobile payments.

In 2019, 58% of all Black Friday traffic in the UK came from a mobile and 36% of all purchases.



10. Analyze and learn

You made it! You survived the most hectic season of them all. **Congratulations!** Maybe you just need to breath for a couple of days before you relive the whole thing. But when you are well rested, it's time to analyze and learn in order to become even better for next year. Because we always want to get better, right?!

- **Have a look at your stock**
Did you sell out or should you have purchased even more goods beforehand in order to sell more? Make a note of that to next year.
- **Have a look at your advertising, where did you get most bang for the bucks?**
Put even more money into that channel next year.
- **What was successful and what was not?**
Maybe it's time to kill your darlings next year.
- **Analyze your transactions**
At what time did you sell the most? Were you under staffed at that time?
Could your systems handle the pressure?
- **Did you have any conversion killers?**
Was there anything special that made some of your visitors to not convert? Lack of payment options, too expensive freight, technical problems etc.? Analyze your data and try to see if you can find a pattern.
- **Were you optimized for mobile?**
See how much traffic you got from a mobile device. Did many of them convert? If not, maybe focus on that until next year. The "mobile first" thinking is important all year around.

We hope this guide has...

...given you some good insights and tips to help you get ready for a massive increase in sales, traffic and good times.

Still feeling a bit insecure of what to come? Don't worry. You're not alone.

Here are some relevant articles that can help you succeed with your Black Friday sales – both instore and online.

[Adapt your store to the customers' needs](#)

[Get a clear overview of your business](#)

[Go Omni to reach more customers](#)

[Why you should offer mobile wallets as payment option](#)

[5 tips for driving in-store sales](#)

[5 terminal features that can help your business grow](#)

So now, we wish you the **best of luck with your Black Friday sales!**

Should you have any questions, feedback or need some advice around your payment solution – don't hesitate to reach out!

You can always contact us at

sales.sweden@bambora.com or +46 (0) 10 10 66 000.

Best regards,

Bambora

Did you know:

The **BLACK** in Black Friday actually has its origin from an accounting-perspective? It represents the black ink that companies used to mark the profits, while they used red ink to mark the losses. This practice has been modernized and continued in modern accounting software, and so the term lives on.