

INTERNET

Chanel, Wedgwood nab last-minute shoppers with incentive emails

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By RACHEL LAMB

Luxury marketers including Chanel, Cartier, Saks Fifth Avenue, Diane von Furstenberg, Benefit Cosmetics, BMW and Waterford Wedgwood Royal Doulton are emailing their customer databases with enticing shipping offers to nab last-minute holiday shoppers.



Using headlines such as “Free Shipping!” and “You’re Running out of Time,” marketers are playing into guilt, impulse and last-minute holiday frenzy to incentivize consumers to buy. However, with so many last-minute emails being sent, marketers must stand out from competitors to get consumers’ attention.

“In the run up to the Christmas period, consumers will be receiving a multitude of marketing messages from businesses, so sending blanket messages to your customer base is unlikely to set you apart from the crowd,” said Nick Heys, founder/CEO of Email Vision, New York.

“Understanding your customers and sending messages tailored to their needs is the best way to get their attention,” he said. Email not only enables you to get your customers attention but also moves them along the buying process.

“As more consumers are shopping online for Christmas, email is an incredibly cost-

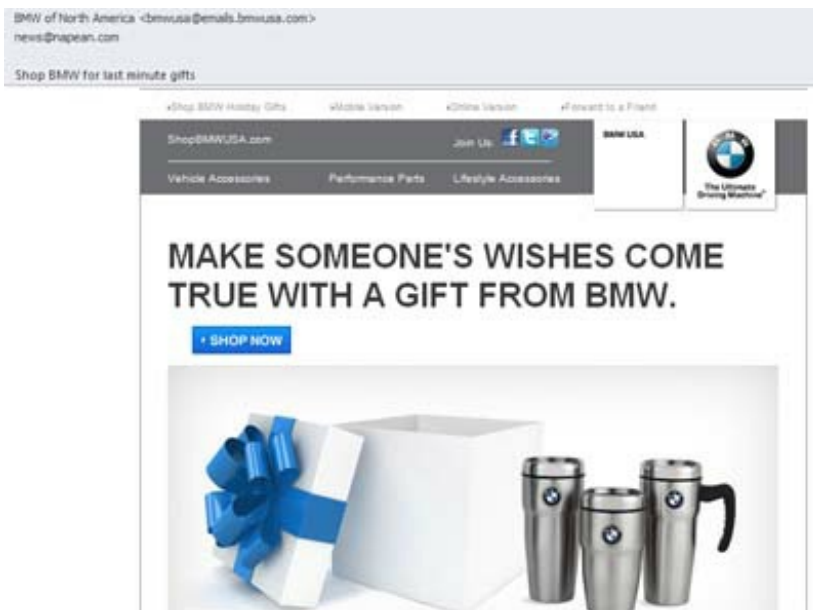
effective way to direct them to your Web site where they can purchase your products.”

Timely emails

Since many consumers leave holiday shopping until the last minute, email is a cost-effective and quick option for luxury marketers looking to snag 11th-hour shoppers.

Many marketers are taking advantage of this in varying ways.

For example, German automaker BMW and jeweler Cartier soothe and comfort shoppers with headlines “Shop BMW for last-minute gifts” and “Still time to find the perfect gift,” respectively.

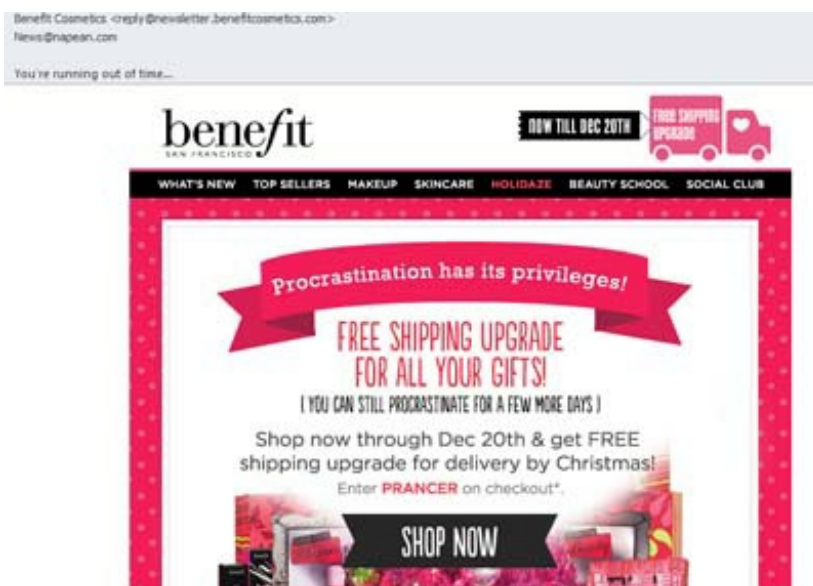


BMW holiday email

Both emails have high-resolution images that link to their ecommerce sites.

Other brands take a more hurried, rushed approach.

For example, LVMH’s Benefit Cosmetics’ email reads, “You’re almost out of time...”



Benefit Cosmetics holiday email

When consumers open the email, it reads, “Procrastination has its benefits,” and offers

recipients a code for free shipping.

Some marketers just cut right to the chase and offer incentives right in the headlines.

For example, Waterford, Wedgwood and Royal Doulton had headlines that read, “Two-day shipping rate reduced. Order by Wed. for Christmas delivery.”



Wedgwood holiday email

Additionally, an email from Chanel promoting its Coco Mademoiselle fragrance alerts consumers of two-day shipping in the headline.

Relationship building

So long as brands are careful about how they plan to differentiate themselves while still maintaining a unique voice, reduced or free shipping is not the only offer that brands can promote.

“Recipes ideas over the holiday season or outfits for New Year Eve are always popular,” Mr. Heys said. “If your products help consumers to solve their problems, they are more likely to buy from you, and they’ll tell their friends, too.”

“Also, sharing your knowledge and tips with your customers is a great way to build trust,” he said.

Since email is instantaneous and portable, it is an effective marketing tool in which to personalize relationships with brands.

Marketers can also easily change campaigns when trying to figure out the strategy that works best during both the holidays and other times of the year.

However, email may not be the easiest way to gain new consumers.

“Email is primarily a retention tool,” said Judy Loschen, vice president of digital analytics at Aspen Marketing Services, Lafayette, CO.

“So if you are looking to acquire a lot of new customers during the holiday season, a different digital channel should be your focus for acquisition.”

Final Take

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