

RetailDoctorGroup<sup>®</sup>

CONSUMER AND RETAIL TRANSFORMATION EXPERTS

# Get fit for Christmas



Helpful tips for a  
prosperous Christmas  
– Our gift to you!

So much is counting on a strong Christmas trading period for retailers. Months of planning has gone into bringing in the right stock and staff, and a great deal will be invested in marketing to drive traffic into the store, amongst many other things.

So what is happening when all this hard work delivers the all important customer and how do we know we are maximising our sales opportunities and being 'Fit for Business'<sup>TM</sup>?

Not sure where to start? Well, here we bring you a quick check list to help you become 'Fit for Christmas'.

*Happy 'fit' retailing!*

**The Retail Doctor Group Team!**

# Are you 'fit' for Christmas?

As we know, up to 30% of all retail trade is done in the Xmas New Year period for many retailers, and equally we are now playing in the "Grand Final" of retail.

And of-course the goal of this campaign is to extract (in the most positive way) increased sales and profit. Sounds simple enough.

So first of all, lets understand the following in order to fill the Christmas stocking with sales...

## Who is buying what, when?

**We have compiled some research findings from our partners to help explain the profile of shoppers we will see in our stores this year, and have added fitness tips to help you reach and sell to these customers.**

*The majority of online Christmas purchases are made in October and November to ensure delivery by Christmas.*

*(IbisWorld Christmas report)*

IbisWorld concludes that majority of online shoppers this Christmas are women. Women being the typical nurturers of the family and the primary purchasers are most likely to have planned emotionally relevant and meaningful gifts for their loved ones much sooner than the final Christmas rush, making online a great purchasing channel for them.

*60% of men will not start Christmas shopping until 2 days before Christmas.*

*(IbisWorld Christmas report)*

We can expect to see more men rushing around the shops in the final days. Men are also typically less organised in their Christmas shopping and will make many of their purchase decisions in store. For these customers, providing relevant gift ideas will be of great benefit as they often just want to get in, get what they need and get out.



*73% of consumers plan on giving gift vouchers this year.  
(ARA consumer survey)*

We see yet another rise in purchases of gift cards this year. A recent survey by the National Retail Federation (USA) found that the biggest reason people buy gift cards (46.4 percent) is that it lets the recipients pick what they want. About 20 percent of gift card buyers said they find gift cards provide a faster and easier way to shop during the often hectic holiday season. Selling gift cards by promoting the benefits of customers being able to choose for themselves will be a great way to build sales and provide convenience for those last minute shoppers.

**Imagine as a consumer, walking into a store and being presented with ideas to solve all your gift giving ideas. While many retailers actually have all the solutions, finding them can be somewhat of a challenge in a busy store.**

**Keep reading for fitness tips to help reach your Christmas shoppers in these final days.**

## KEY STAFF ROSTERED ON FOR HIGH TRAFFIC TRADING TIMES

Rosters must change during the Christmas trading period to reflect the shift in trading hours and customers buying patterns. Play to your team's strengths and



make sure you have your 'gun' sales people on the floor selling and those that are quick on the register processing the sales. In your busiest stores, place a meet and greeter on the door to welcome and farewell. This is a great security measure as well as being good service practice.

## MAKE SURE YOU LOOK YOUR BEST

Make your store really shine and attract attention. If this is not your strength then get some help and advice to make sure you stand out from the crowd, this is called the 'the silent salesperson.' Look after the customers who prefer to browse alone by ensuring your store is merchandised effectively. Belts on jeans, socks with shoes, bookmarks with books are all obvious adjacencies and there are countless more in every category.

## STOCK UP BEFORE AND AFTER TRADING HOURS

You want the team to be 100% focused on selling, not tasking. Stock up before and after store trading hours; efficient processes for product replenishment on key product lines should be in place by now but be aware of lead times on backup stock and place orders in time to avoid customer disappointment and hence missed sales opportunities. Plan for the worst, ensure you have a plan of attack should things get tricky, after all, 'the show must go on!' Have a 'no cartons rule' during trading times which keeps the store clean and team focused on customers.

## ORGANISE YOUR STORE ROOM

Make it as easy as possible for the shop floor to be restocked and know what to re-order before it runs out. If you don't have an IT system to handle in store inventory, a simple exercise book listing stock in storage with quantities adjusted when stock is removed can do the trick.

### HAVE A FEATURE ADD ON SALE PRODUCT AROUND THE REGISTER

An easy strategy for this season is placing small add-on products around the register, making it as easy as possible for your team to mention add-ons during conversation. Select items that complement the majority of your product range, are at lower price points, you have plenty of in stock and will appeal to impulse buyers. These add-on products should be a nice little surprise for the customers as they reach the register and offer something to bring them back in the New Year.

### GIFT PACK PRODUCTS

Gift pack products are another easy way to raise your average sale price and make Christmas shopping a little easier for your customers. Also use gift packs as an opportunity to create inspiring gift solutions to help engage your customer's imaginations and allow them to become immersed in the performance. Having a few options based on different price points allows for a broader appeal however be cautious of marketing your business as a discounter. Customers buy at Christmas on emotion as well as budget. It is far more effective at this time of year to push their emotional buttons and provide inspired and convenient gift solutions rather than entering into a price war.

### ENGAGE IN MYSTERY SHOPPING

Inform staff to ensure quality and compliance to standards is kept in this busy period. Make sure you share the results, reward the performers and call poor performance – it only takes one team member to bring down the morale of a team. Don't accept mediocrity and only keep champion service providers.

### BE FIRST TO OPEN AND LAST TO CLOSE

Imagine if you opened at 8.30am when all your competitors opened at 9.00am. Be there when the customers are there and adjust your rosters accordingly. There is nothing worse than a roller shutter being pulled down on a customer.

### IT'S AN OMNICHANNEL CHRISTMAS

Digital marketing experts estimate that most consumers are exposed to thousands of ads during the holiday season. If retailers don't have something appropriate to show consumers within three or four seconds of visiting a site, they risk losing a sale—particularly on mobile devices where screen space and time is restricted. To capture attention during this brief window of opportunity, it's important to have a solid discovery strategy.



The key is personalization. Nothing says “we get you” like recommendations based on a consumer’s unique qualities. Before a customer can buy online, they need to discover what they’re looking for, and that all begins with the search and discovery experience. Therefore, retailers require site search tools that can intelligently manufacture personalised search results that meet both their brand needs and their customers’ wants

### HAVE FUN!

Find a way to bring your store to life in a way that other retailers can’t or aren’t! The festive season is an opportunity for you as a retailer to bring even greater emotion and connection into your offer. The most successful retailers are those that bring the magic and sparkle of Christmas into their stores, inviting customers young and old into their space not only for the product, but for the experience.

### SUPPORT OFFICE NEED TO BE ON BOARD TOO

To be a truly ‘fit’ omni channel retailer, the support office must be available throughout the Christmas trading period to support those serving the customers on the shop floor. This is not the time for HO to take leave. UK department store John Lewis actively encourage all HO staff to work in their local store for one day over Christmas trading so that the whole employee network feels like one supportive team, increasing team morale throughout the company and allowing the HO staff to appreciate the hard work of the shop floor employees.

### KEEP EVERYTHING IN CHECK

Keep your business your management or yourself in check and held accountable with a good mentor. This can be a fellow retailer in another business that you trust or a professional that has years of experience.



## DAILY CHECK LIST

A good tool, especially but not only through the Christmas trade, is to put some quick and easy guidelines in place for every store team to follow on a daily basis. This can be as simple as a daily 'set up' check- list which covers the most important focus for the type and location of the business.

The types of actions around promotional product could include:

- Is the latest promotional material positioned in agreed place?
- Are the promoted product lines in a prominent and agreed position?
- Are all products in stock, faced up and well presented?
- Have all rostered team members been briefed on promoted lines and product benefits?
- Do we have enough stock to exceed sales targets?





# Be the best retailer you can be.

We hope that these operational tips help you and the team in getting "Fit for Christmas".  
For this and other retail operations insights visit [www.retaildoctor.com.au](http://www.retaildoctor.com.au)  
Happy 'fit' retailing!

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