

# Bettering your CX through first-party data collection

Article

2020 was all about survival. Marketers had a scant moment to take stock of what they were doing and reprioritize. For many brands, 2021 will be the year where that critical evaluation will occur, and as a result, brands will reinvest in anything that allows them to own and strengthen the direct customer relationship rather than going through intermediaries.

Now, increasing restrictions on data collection, changes to Apple's Identifier for Advertisers (IDFA), and the death of the third-party cookie will mean that winning brands must reduce their dependence on third parties, and place a greater focus on first-party data and owned channels. In short, they'll need more direct-to-consumer (D2C) marketing, and less (though still plenty) advertising.

Here are a few ways successful brands will double down on owned channels and first-party data in 2021:

- **Improving the purchasing experience.** Many brands and retailers drove conversions with existing and fresh calls to action last year. Click and collect, in particular, grew 60.4% year-over-year in 2020 as the pandemic turned the service from a convenience into a necessity almost overnight, especially for essential goods and groceries.
- **Investing in email marketing.** Email marketing was another success story of 2020. Open rates soared during the early days of the pandemic. Acoustic, a marketing tech firm, found a 23.8% jump in open rates worldwide between February and March. In 2021, marketers will build on this growth in an intentional manner, keeping in mind that customer-centric emails often perform the best, and improving in areas such as personalization, testing, measurement, and acquisition.
- **Launching SMS programs.** And though email works, inboxes are crowded—which will lead to SMS marketing's rise in prominence in 2021. Some consumers aren't yet comfortable with receiving SMS messages from brands, but that is rapidly changing. December 2020 data from Omnisend showed that SMS conversion rates went up dramatically in 2020's holiday period vs. the year prior, including jumping from 0.8% to 2.5% in the November 1st-21st time period.

#### Average Holiday Season SMS Performance Metrics Worldwide

	Clickthrough rate		Conversion rate	
	2019	2020	2019	2020
Nov 1-21	13.3%	12.6%	0.8%	2.5%
Black Friday	11.6%	8.6%	1.0%	3.5%
Cyber Monday	9.9%	7.7%	1.2%	2.9%
Cyber 5*	11.0%	9.1%	1.6%	3.6%
Cyber 10**	10.8%	9.4%	1.6%	3.8%

Note: represents activity among Omnisend clients, broader industry metrics may vary;  
\*Thanksgiving through Cyber Monday; \*\*the Sunday before Black Friday through the Tuesday following Cyber Monday  
Source: Omnisend, "BFCM 2020: Email, SMS, and Push Message Statistics," Dec 9, 2020

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Strategies to leverage first-party data is just one of five trends we'll discuss at length in our upcoming live Meet the Analyst Webinar, "5 Customer Experience Trends to Watch."

*Join us to hear more from Jeremy Goldman, eMarketer principal analyst at Insider Intelligence, as he covers the top trends in the CX world that winning brands will embrace in order to stay ahead. [Click here to reserve your seat.](#)*