Holiday Promotions Idea Book

A guide to making the most out of the holiday season
Summary

It’s that time of year again. The summer is coming to an end and for marketers, the beginning of fall marks the start of the ever-loomining “holiday promotion season”.

With the holiday season right around the corner, there’s no better time than now for companies to invest in an employee or customer incentive program or campaign - especially when you consider the holiday season can account for as much as 30 percent of annual sales!

In this ebook, we’re going to take a look at some holiday season incentive ideas to boost employee effectiveness as well as some engaging client incentive programs that make an impact over the holidays.

DCR works with a growing network of over 500 brands across the globe and manages over 1B in transactions, with 7 million cardholders - in over 27 counties around the world. Bolstered by industry and cardholder data, our analysis reveals actionable insights on how companies utilized incentives in 2017 and what to look forward to in 2018.

Based on findings in 2017, here’s what to expect this holiday season.

1/ Get your strategy started early!
The early bird gets the worm, as they say. According to data from Google, shoppers start looking for deals and rewards as early as October.

2/ Your employees are your number one asset.
Unfortunately, far too often companies allow the holiday season to fly by without offering recognition or rewards to their number one asset: their employees.

3/ Personalization is on the rise.
Personalization is not just a marketing buzzword. Thanks to technology and digitalization, consumers now expect more from the brands and companies they purchase from. This season, ensure your rewards and incentives are as unique as your recipients.

4/ Immediacy is key.
Incentives are based on a moment. The moment you displayed work excellence, the moment you debated on purchasing a product, the moment you shared a deal with a friend. Moments in 2018 will become more pivotal than ever.

5/ Specialized shopping days will keep growing!
Ecommerce and omnishopping have fundamentally led to new patterns in retail seasonality. When building a holiday rewards program for customers or employees, shopping trends come in to play.
The early bird gets the worm.

Get your strategy started early!

Although the holiday season doesn’t “officially” begin until after American Thanksgiving, companies continue to get more aggressive in their marketing and promotions, with some introducing advertising or markdowns in September or October. The Christmas Creep is here, and so is the time to start gearing up for the holidays.

Holiday shopping has expanded beyond traditional timeframes and so too should your rewards strategy.

According to RetailMeNot, 70 percent of retailers started promoting Black Friday offers before Thanksgiving.

Last year, Walmart, Best Buy, and other big players started promoting incentives and deals in early November - instead of waiting until the official Black Friday. That prompted a cascade effect that we’re sure will continue in 2018.

This is contributing to a bigger trend: A rolling month of deals, incentives, rebates and more - instead of a specific day. This year, put these findings to work, by offering month long incentives, rebates, and loyalty rewards.

DCR Quick-To-Market Programs

Consumers always love getting a little extra cash during the holiday season. DCR’s Quick-to-Market Programs enable marketers to offer easy-to-distribute incentives that contribute to more desired shopping behaviour. Use DCR Customer Incentives early in the holiday season and start reaching new customers as they are beginning to think about giving gifts to their friends and loved ones. Attract consumers to your products by offering an easy-to-use, custom-branded incentive over the holidays... but don’t wait too long.
Circle these dates in your calendar:

- **Halloween (Oct. 31)** Fourth largest online sales holiday
- **Thanksgiving (Nov. 22)** Average online spending of $400 per person
- **Black Friday (Nov. 23)** The Friday after Thanksgiving
- **Black Saturday (Nov. 24)** The day after Black Friday
- **Cyber Week (Nov. 22 - 28)** The 7-day period beginning with Thanksgiving
- **Cyber Monday (Nov. 26)** The Monday after Thanksgiving
- **Cyber Monday II (Dec. 11)** eBay coined the term Green Monday in 2007 because historically it was one of the e-commerce giant’s best sales day.
- **Super Saturday (Dec. 22)** The Saturday before Christmas
- **Christmas Eve (Dec. 24)** Great chance for last-minute shopping sales
- **Cyber Week II (Dec. 25 – Jan. 1.)** The week spanning Christmas to New Years

**Holiday Incentive Program Checklist**

**Thinking of a Holiday Promotion Program?** Consider the purpose behind your program and your ultimate objective. There are many different incentive options to choose from, so understanding your specific goals will help create a program that achieves the desired results. Before you begin, consider the following:

1. What kind of incentive do you want?
2. Is it one-time use or a recurring reward?
3. What kind of branding or form factor would best suit your clients?
4. Do you need it quick and easy, or bold and beautiful?
5. How frequently will you be disbursing incentives?
6. Is this a one-time promotion or an introduction to your loyalty program?
7. Are you looking to acquire new customers, increase purchase size, retain your existing clients, motivate employees, increase referrals?
Look right under your nose.
Your employees are your best asset.

During the holidays, companies typically look outward, offering incentives, campaigns, rebates and more for increased purchase activity. But the truth is, your employees are the best place to start for a simple, yet immensely effective, holiday program.

Without incentives, or to be more precise, the right incentives, your competitors can steal your top talent - or even worse, slack time over the holidays dramatically increases. Disengaged workers cost the economy $300 billion or more per year.

90% of business leaders believe that an employee engagement strategy could positively impact their business, yet only 25% of them actually have a strategy in place.

But Why Do Incentives Matter?

Incentives help create a culture, and your company's culture is what separates you from the competition. It can make the difference between a sale and a fail, a happy customer and an irate one, or a positive experience and a negative one.

DCR Incentive Module

Open-loop employee incentive cards have emerged as the ideal reward. They are simple, secure, and can be used anywhere Mastercard® or Visa® is accepted, including online. A reloadable card, unlike traditional gift cards, can also have additional funds loaded any time that you want to reward employees.

Payments can be sent out to thousands of cards in minutes, and can be made as often as required. Your card can also be custom-branded, so when an employee uses their card, they remember exactly where it came from.

Regardless of which incentive you choose this holiday season, the fact is that most employees are going to appreciate this unexpected reward.
Here are the facts:

- 83% of employees said they would feel more appreciated, work harder, feel motivated, and have more loyalty towards the company if they received a holiday incentive.

- A 5% increase in employee retention can generate a 25 to 85 percent increase in profitability.

- More than 4 out of 10 (42%) employees consider rewards and recognition program opportunities when seeking employment.

- 39% of employees feel underappreciated at work, with 77% reporting that they would work harder if they felt better recognized.

- 41% of customers are loyal to a brand or company because they consistently notice a positive employee attitude, while 68% of customers defect from a brand or company because of negative employee attitude.

- Companies using incentive programs reported a 79% success rate in achieving their established goals when the correct reward was offered.

- Annual revenue increases are 3x higher in companies that use a tangible sales incentive over those that don’t use an additional incentive. When incentive programs are working, the potential for growth is much, much higher.

DCR Holiday Incentive Ideas

Still trying to come up with a holiday incentive program for your employees? Here are a few ideas to help you get started on the right track:

Try something new this season:
- Single use incentive cards
- Reloadable incentive cards
- On-the-spot recognition
- Performance programs
- Thank you holiday cards
- Employee holiday bonus programs
- Points-based loyalty and engagement programs
- Achievement rewards, and more!
As with any type of reward, personalization and relevance are paramount.

Thanks to technology and digitalization, consumers now expect more from the brands and companies they purchase from. This season, ensure your holiday rewards and incentives are as unique as your clients.

Currently, the majority of consumers are unimpressed or displeased with the lack of personalization in their shopping experiences, according to a survey by Segment.

Just like personalized experiences, choosing the right incentive that fits the needs of your audience is key to a successful rewards program. Incentives come in many forms, but the majority do not cater to diverse lifestyle needs across a large number of recipients. So how do you make rewards relevant and personalized in 2018?

Tips for effective rewards in 2018:

- Ensure rewards are immediate
- Ensure rewards are personalized with recipient’s name
- Ensure flexibility in redemption to guarantee the reward fits
- Ensure rewards are promoted heavily during key dates

DCR Customized Open-loop Incentives

Offer choice and convenience this holiday season with open-loop prepaid incentives. They are simple, secure, and can be used anywhere Mastercard® or Visa® is accepted, including online.

Don’t settle for retail gift cards that pile up over the holidays, stand out with a TruCash prepaid incentive card.

A reloadable card, unlike traditional gift cards, can also have additional funds loaded any time. Rewards can be sent out to thousands of cards in minutes, and can be made as often as required. Plus... did we mention that you can use them to purchase pretty much anything, anywhere.
The statistics don’t lie:

In a recent guide by Retail Touch Points, they found personalization to be a key point of differentiation over the holidays:

- 91% of consumers are more likely to shop with brands that recognize, remember, and provide relevant offers and recommendations - Retail touch points

- Personalization delivers as much as a 6X ROI increase compared to non-personalized engagements – A.T. Kearney;

- 83% of shoppers are willing to share personal data to enable a personalized experience – Accenture;

- 80% of consumers are more likely to do business with a company if it offers a personalized experience – Epsilon; and

- Emails with personalized subject lines are 26% more likely to be opened. – Campaign Monitor.

90% of consumers indicate that they find personalization appealing.

— Epsilon

This season, ensure your holiday incentives are as unique as your clients.

Design Tips:
To use when designing your personalized holiday incentive card!

Client Logo Area

Personal Account #

Expiration Date

Personalization Area

Banking Logo

Customized Background

Card Network Logo (Visa®/ Mastercard®)

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Good Thru 00/00
When creating moments that count
Immediacy is key!

Well thought out incentives are based on a moment. The moment you displayed work excellence, the moment you debated purchasing a product, the moment you shared a deal with a friend. Recognizing and acting on these key moments will become more pivotal than ever in 2018.

Consumers are now able to connect to great products whenever they want, wherever they are — in just an instant. Marketers must also react in the same fashion with instant rewards that take advantage of that pivotal decision making moment. The same is true for your employees.

Especially during the highly competitive holiday shopping season, consumers are actively looking for engaging promotions, incentives, rewards, messaging and interactions from the brands they love.

“This holiday, make more moments that matter by recognizing and rewarding the actions that impact your business - this is true for both your customers and employees”

Are You Holiday Ready?

With the holidays a few months away, now’s the time to start thinking about end-of-year gifts for both employees and customers.

Try DCR Virtual Incentive Programs for the quickest in open-loop rewards. With no cards to print, they can be delivered in less time than traditional incentives. Simple, Effective, and Easy To Use Online!

If you already have a program in place, we have a few holiday suggestions for you too:

- Do you have year-end rewards, appreciation, or incentive programs in place
- Check your existing inventories by contacting your Program Manager
- Consider upgrading to a new custom-branded card program
The case for Immediate rewards:

According to researchers from Cornell University in the US, people who got a bonus earlier were more motivated. Compared with a delayed reward, an immediate bonus led to an almost 20% increase in the number of people sticking to the task after the reward was removed.

Stay Relevant
It’s important that your business knows what your customers value. When it comes to incentives, the reward must be enticing, relevant, meaningful, unique, and, perhaps most importantly, valuable.

Millennials Want More
The largest working force in the United States and the first demographic to be entirely digital, Millennials are important trendsetters and a demographic that your business needs to pay attention to. Offering an updated rewards/incentives program that can be used in person, online, and via mobile is an important step to landing this forward-thinking and savvy consumer base.

“Compared with a delayed reward, an immediate bonus led to an almost 20% increase in the number of people sticking to the task after the reward was removed.”

- Cornell University
Specialized shopping days will keep on growing!

During the holidays, the weekends see the bulk of consumer traffic. The 10 biggest shopping days during the holiday season are on the weekend, making up approximately 40% of all traffic. As a retailer, you need to be ready.

While the big holiday days are obviously important, the two Saturdays before Christmas in December 2017 (Dec. 16 and Dec. 23) eclipsed Super Saturday 2016 (Dec. 17), the second-busiest day of that year, in terms of total traffic. During the holiday season, traffic is slow on the weekdays, and hectic on the weekends, so it’s important for retailers to focus their attention on the days that matter.

Consumers’ relentless desire for door crasher deals, incentives, sales, and shopping holidays offers an exciting opportunity for brands and businesses to promote timely, unique and personalized experiences to stand out from the competition.

Demand more from your incentive programs this holiday season.

DCR Prepaid Incentive Campaigns

Simplify the incentive process by offering flexible incentive campaigns that appeal to a larger audience. With prepaid you can offer incentives that everyone can use. Give a little or a lot at any time, the choice is up to you. The rewards can be used around the world, both in-store and online.

Demand more from your incentive programs this holiday season:

- Develop brand loyalty amongst customers
- Generate insight on consumer purchasing behaviour
- Create a platform to cross-sell and up-sell
- Differentiate from competitors
- Increase sales and customer satisfaction
- Track and manage multiple concurrent promotions with ease
Offer customers more this holiday season!
The In-Pack / On-Pack Holiday Incentive Program is perfect as an incentive pilot program. This program has been proven effective for CPG companies, manufacturers and retailers.

Electronic incentives are quicker and more rewarding than other forms of rewards or thank you’s. They offer added security and flexibility, meaning your customers can spend them where they want, and on what they like!

How it works:
• Simply include an incentive in your packaging, as a purchase incentive, a thank you or a seasonal gift.
• Our rewards can be co-branded, providing you with reinforced branding exposure and additional marketing opportunities.
• Give a little or a lot - electronic incentives can include varied amounts, allowing for a truly rewarding relationship.

TIP: Include an incentive in your packaging or as a thank you gift with purchase this holiday season!

Thank Your Clients, Customers And Employees

Everyone Loves A Thank You!
Motivated people work harder, and if you create a solid rewards program, it’s easy to foster loyalty amongst your customers, and create a culture of excellence amongst your employees.

No matter the industry - incentives can play a large role in the profitability of your business. Let your customers and business partners know you appreciate them with a value added incentive during the holiday season.

Here are a couple of great thank you ideas for the holidays:
• Offer a co-branded incentive to your staff as a seasonal gift
• Offer an incentive as a thank you for any extraordinary efforts, or as a holiday thanks
• Include an incentive in your Christmas mailings as a thank you for past business
Customer satisfaction is the life-blood of any business. Your best salespeople are the customers you just sold to!

When you have customers who are ready to recommend your brand, why not reward them for doing so?

The DCR Referral Module can help enhance brand loyalty, foster an on-going relationship with your clients, and increase your sales numbers.

While electronic incentives are a preferred gift, they are also valuable as a referral rewards and incentive tool. The secret here is that they allow you to send an incentive to a client as a thank you, and then continue to reward them for future referrals – or provide other incentives - using a single platform.

Benefits Include:
- Flexibility to create multiple custom programs designed to drive specific behaviours
- Enhance brand loyalty
- Provide on-the-spot motivation
- Offer additional incentives for leaving an online review

You may have seen it before! “Purchase new tires and receive a $100 rebate”, or “Purchase a new fridge and receive a $250 Instant Rebate”. These promotions work their way into every industry during the holidays, and there is good reason... They work!

Rebates work to help move product inventory, especially during the holiday season. Offer a value-added reason to choose your brand over your competitors’.

Branded incentives are easy to distribute, easy to use and can be tracked to help identify customer preferences and purchasing trends.

As a preferred holiday reward, customized prepaid incentive cards also provide an instant advertisement every time they are used.

Benefits Include:
- Easy-to-administer electronic rebates
- Increase sales while reducing costs
- Streamline distribution of rebates and lower related costs
- Offer choice and value to customers
- Provide an opportunity to promote a custom marketing message
- Build brand awareness with each usage
About DCR Strategies | TruCash

DCR Strategies | TruCash works with a growing network of over 500 brands across the globe and manages over 1B in transactions, with 7 million cardholders - in over 27 counties around the world. Recognized as a leader in the payments industry, we deliver creative incentive & reward solutions, unique loyalty programs, and efficient disbursement systems, along with comprehensive marketing and support services for businesses, financial institutions and government departments. DCR Strategies has offices in Canada, USA, UK, Ireland and China. You can learn more at www.dcrstrategies.com.

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Resources


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