



## What Today's Small Business Owners Are Doing to Succeed



**Bob Sillick**, senior researcher, report writer and content manager

Being a small business owner has always been challenging and rewarding. For media sales reps to gain their trust, it's critical to understand their challenges and what they are doing to overcome them. Constant Contact surveyed 486 of them during June 2023: 70% were executives, owners or partners, 42% had 9 or fewer employees and 45% were B2C marketers.

When asked about their level of marketing sophistication, only 24% described it as advanced or expert while almost three-quarters said it was basic (30%) and intermediate (43%).

Unsurprisingly, "attracting new customers" was their greatest challenge and much more for 70% of those with 1-9 employees, compared to 57% for those with 10-49 employees and 50% for those with 50 or more employees. Not only is this small business owners' greatest challenge but also it's the one that requires the most time and attention, according to 31% of survey respondents.

Many of the others are opportunities for local media sales reps to step forward and be the marketing consultants most of these small business owners need.

### Other Challenges That Require Most of Small-Business Owners' Time and Attention, 2023

Challenge	Percent
Converting leads to sales	14%
Marketing to target audience	11%
Complicated and/or ineffective digital marketing	7%
Lack of expertise in digital marketing	6%
Improving the customer experience	6%

*Constant Contact, September 2023*

These challenges are mirrored in the B2C marketing strategies small business owners would like to improve. Social media marketing is first at 59%, followed by Website experience at 41%, email marketing at 30%, online ratings and reviews at 19% and SMS/text marketing at 12%.

Local media reps and ad agencies can find virtually all they need to address these challenges on the Media Group Online Website and be recognized as a valuable marketing consultant. Pair the insights from the hundreds of reports on retail verticals with matching co-op dollars in the Co-op Advertising Directory and presentations/pitches are more likely to make a positive connection.

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# How to Improve Advertisers' Holiday Season Email Marketing

Media Group Online's annual Holiday Shopping Season Special Report is now available and it's stuffed like Santa's sack with information, insights and strategies (on page 8) to help local businesses prepare for and have a jolly holiday season of more foot traffic and sales.

Marketing emails are one of the most important marketing tools/platforms for promoting holiday sales and specials. In its new report, *The 2023 Playbook for Effective Holiday Marketing*, Marigold analyzed many of last year's holiday campaigns to reveal what made email marketing more effective.

The peaks for emails sent by brands were Black Friday, Cyber Monday and the week before Christmas. The analysis found that more emails don't improve engagement as the average number of emails sent during peak days was two and the maximum was six. When holiday marketing emails are sent is extremely important to penetrate the target audience effectively.

## Brands' Preferred Times to Send Marketing Emails During the 2022 Holiday Season

Times	Percent
Between 8:00 am and 12:00 pm	61%
Between 4:00 pm and 8:00 pm	25%
Between 8:00 pm and 12:00 am	9%
Between 12:00 am and 4:00 am	5%

Marigold, September 2023

Writing email subject lines with as few words as possible is a constant challenge for brands and retailers. During the 2022 holiday season, 38% of brands had subject lines of eight words or less: 15% eight words, 13% seven words and 10% fewer than 5.5 words. Short, succinct subject lines are critical because so many shoppers use their smartphones.

According to a June 2023 survey of American moms from MediaPost, 94% intend to do their holiday shopping on a mobile device, which emphasizes the importance of crafting holiday emails that resonate in the mobile environment. Marigold reported:

- "52% of mobile content included the mention of short codes, such as SMS opt-in and -out."
- "36% of the emails contained an incentive for app downloads or in-app purchases."
- "12% of the emails included both mobile content (SMS) and app-related incentives."

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September 2023

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- Toy Market
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- Halloween
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- Banking Industry



## Newest and Future Special Reports



Audio: The Constant Companion (July 2023)



Holiday Shopping 2023: Counting on a Retail Boost (August 2023)



Navigating the New Era in Sales (September 2023)

## Make the Holidays a Monster Sales Season

Auto Sales Are Coming Back – The September 2023 Automotive Update Report shows a substantial increase in August sales as inventory and incentives improve.

Halloween 2023 Profiler – Help local businesses experience the start of a profitable fourth quarter with the latest trends for this year's October celebration.

Retail Sales Patterns Report – This year's report shows which retail verticals are gaining and losing sales, revealing those that require the expertise of Media Group Online members.



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## An Unbeatable Combination



There's no better combination for understanding retail, media and the numbers behind them than being a subscriber to Media Group Online, Inc. and The Media Audit.

For additional information about a subscription to The Media Audit, please contact Philip Beswick, CEO at **832-521-1000**.

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