The 2022 BFCM Returns Checklist

How to leverage returns to retain more customers during BFCM.

Introduction

Black-Friday Cyber-Monday (BFCM) is just around the corner. If you're like most brands, you've spent the summer planning to drive as many new sales as possible this year. You've got your inventory stocked, your discount sales ready, and your ads all planned out. You're ready to kick off the big season.

But have you thought about how returns will factor into your BFCM success? The obvious concern is that returns spike big time between November and January, and you want to make them as easy to manage as possible. What's less obvious is that returns have a huge impact on customer retention. In fact, 57% of consumers say that they've stopped shopping with a brand after a bad return experience, so getting returns right is really important.

That's why we made this checklist. So you can wow! your new BFCM customers with a delightful return experience that'll have them coming back to shop again and again.

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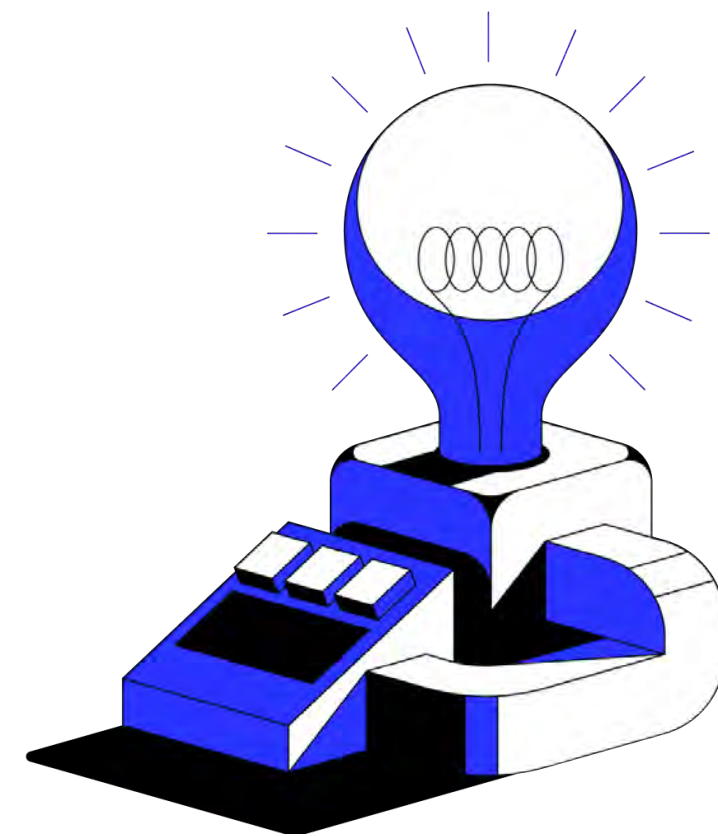
01.

Create an **unforgettable** return experience

Find a returns platform that works for your business

If you're still processing returns manually, you're wasting too much time. And spending too much money. Many of the tips shared here will be a lot easier with a return app.. If you need help cutting through the noise to select the best one, [read more here.](#)

Offer refunds, exchanges, and/or store credit

Flexibility is huge when it comes to returns. If your current return policy doesn't support a wide range of return options, consider expanding it to give all of your customers a return option that makes sense for them.

### Make exchanges easy for customers to process

If you're still relying on support emails for exchanges, this ones for you. Set up a streamlined system in your store to let customers process their own exchanges. It'll save you time and money. And it'll ensure your customers get a second chance to buy something they love.

Let customers exchange for anything in your store – seriously

Don't just offer exchanges for a different size or color of the same item. Let customers shop your entire product catalog during an exchange. Not only does this let them find a product they love, it also gives you more upsell opportunities.

Send exchanges back instantly, even before you get the returned item

Shoppers love instant gratification. Boost customer satisfaction by sending exchangers their new product before they send you the old one. Reduce risk by placing a hold on their card for the product they still have.

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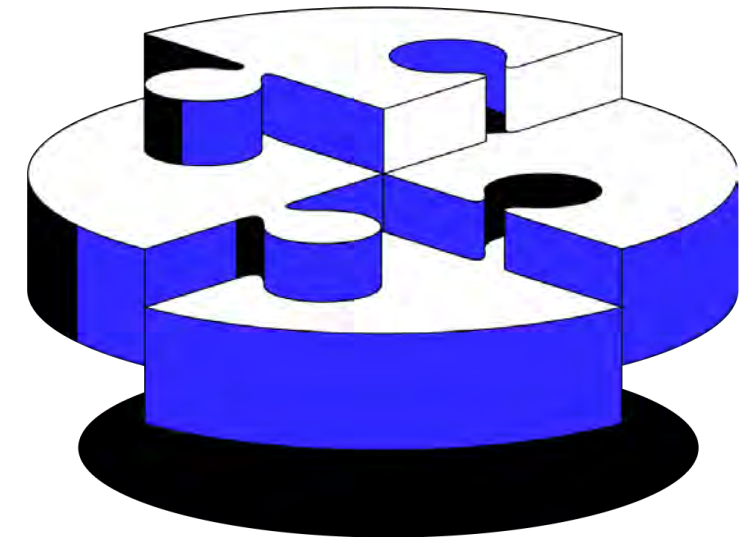
02.
Treat each customer **uniquely**

Create detailed segmented return audiences

You probably have customer segments for marketing. Think of returns in the same way. Create lists of VIP customers, new customers, fans of specific products, etc., so that you can tailor the return experience to best suit each segment. The more detailed, the better.

Offer data-driven product recommendations

Some products are more troublesome than others. Maybe a shirt's running too big, and a specific pair of shorts keep getting returned. Use past purchasing data to recommend the right product during an exchange. Or if they're a new customer, recommend your top performing products.

Give extended return windows and other incentives to VIP customers

Your repeat customers treat you well, so return the favor. If you have a 30-day return window, consider extending it to 90-days for VIP customers. Additionally, when your best customers do return, consider enabling a 'keep item' option to really show them some love. The possibilities, and customizations, are endless.

Set up retention-focused incentives for new customers

It's important to create a good first impression with a first-time customer. If they go to return a product, consider offering them a bonus to go through with an exchange rather than a refund. If not, you could offer store credit – so they get their money back but you retain the future revenue. A win-win.

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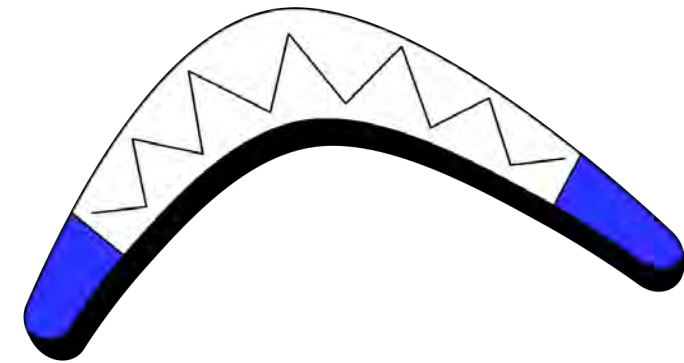
03.
Offer a **super simple** physical return process

Offer free shipping on returns and exchanges

Pretty self-explanatory, but here's a stat to help convince you why: did you know 54% of consumers say they're unlikely to make a purchase from an online retailer that doesn't offer free returns? Don't be that brand. Especially during BFCM, when first impressions matter even more.

Partner with multiple national carriers

USPS, FedEx, UPS, the more, the merrier. Make sure you're finding the right balance between affordability and customer convenience for each return.

Offer multiple return options

Having to print a label and go to the post office is not the most customer-centric return process. Consider adding at-home pickup or label-free dropoff options to make it really easy to get a product back to you.

Let customers keep certain items

Whether a product can't be resold or it's just not worth the return shipping, sometimes it makes sense to let a customer keep a product they wanted to return. This can help you save on costs, improve your sustainability, and is a really nice gesture on the customer's side.

### Review returns data and lean into options your customers like best

You should be watching returns data to make product and store enhancements, but you can do the same thing with physical returns. Which options do customers like the best? Identify the top performer and really lean into it as a benefit of shopping with you.
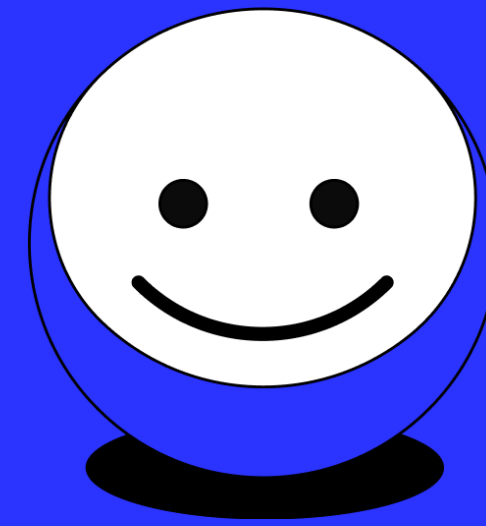
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Next Steps

Find out why **over 1,800** of Shopify's most-loved brands trust Loop to deliver their ideal post-purchase experiences. Yes – especially during BFCM.

BOOK A DEMO →
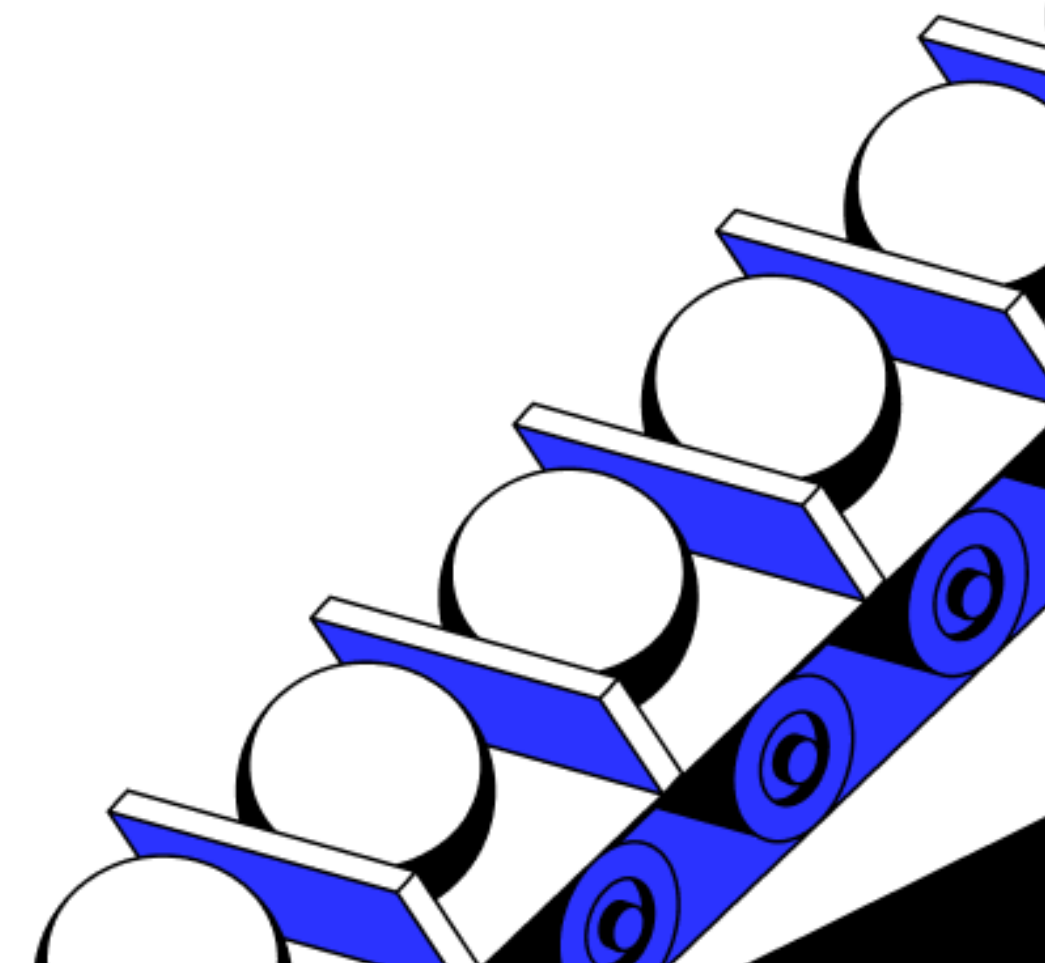
Still not convinced returns matter?

Read our new consumer report to learn more about how returns impact customer retention in a big way.

READ OUR REPORT →