



Top tips for online gifting

Enhance your online gifting & fulfilment experience

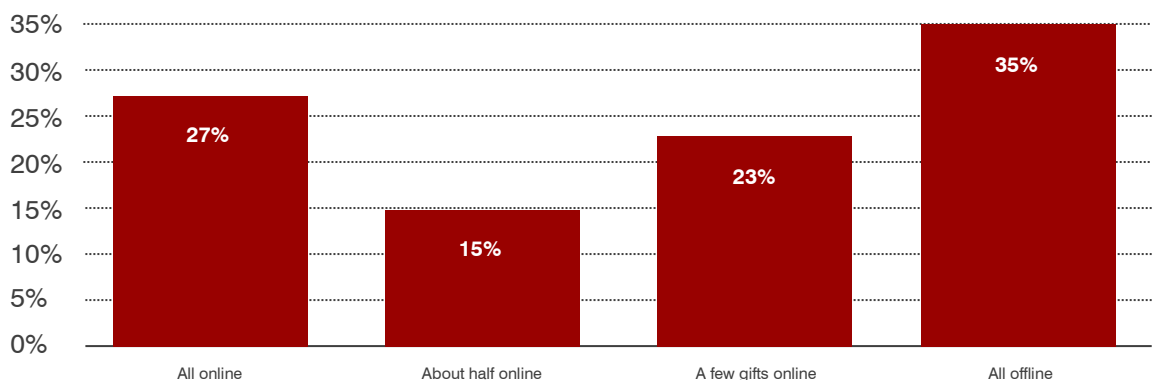


Gifts

People give gifts all year round with several events providing significant spikes in the trading calendar. You'll often see countless promotions and adverts highlighting various religious holidays and celebrations such as Christmas, Easter, Valentine's Day, Mother's Day, Halloween etc... In fact merchants are keener than ever to latch on to any popular event and have even gone as far as creating their own, such as Black Friday and Cyber Monday. Aside from those national occasions, people will also have their own personal celebrations for birthdays, anniversaries, weddings, births, graduations etc.. The list is almost endless.

Bearing in mind the average British household spent £604 on *just* Christmas gifts last year, it's easy to see why retailers are desperate to win a slice of all these lucrative markets. The graph below illustrates that 65% of people buy at least some of their Christmas gifts online, so whilst merchants are quick to embrace these events with promotions and advertising, are they providing the types of gifting functionality online that their customers would want and expect, and are they replicating and joining those experiences with their store estate? In this guide we will look at some example of the types of services you should be offering.

Percentage of Christmas gifts consumers purchased online in the UK, 2014





1. Gift Wrapping

Seems obvious but it's essential and not everybody offers it. You should offer the same experience that you would in-store (if applicable) which means multiple gift wrapping and packaging types — bags, boxes, hampers, wrapping paper, bows, different patterns or styles etc... These should be available on every single line item of an order, as well as groups of products within an order, or the entire order as a whole, meaning buyers can order a gift or gifts as part of a larger order. If you are predominantly a gift retailer then perhaps offering these services for free can further incentivise customer and add value to your products. If not, it's a nice and easy way of increasing your average order value.

2. Gift Receipts



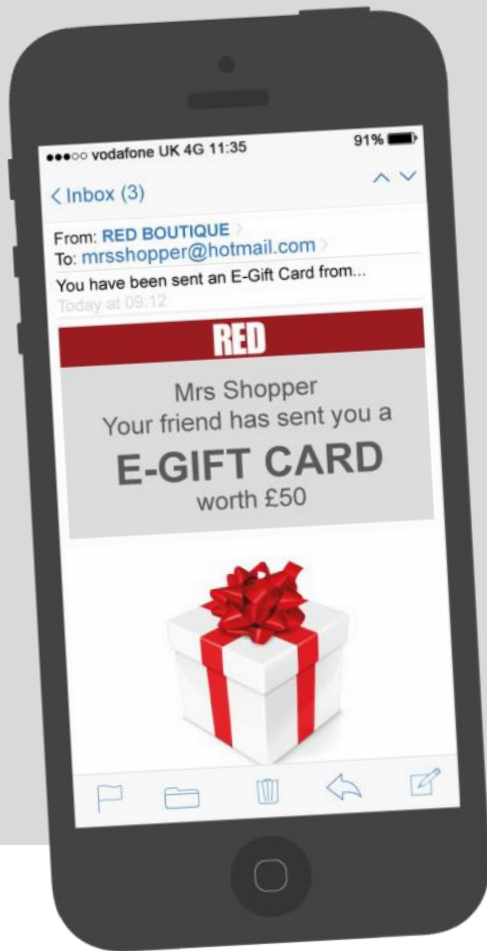
Another obvious one but online retailers need to allow customers to specify that their order/part of their order is a gift, and therefore any paperwork/receipt that is sent to the recipient, should not contain any pricing. It still needs to allow them to make a hassle-free return or exchange when returning these items to the local store (if applicable) or via a collection service are essential add-ons.

3. Gift Messages/Personalisation

Gifts are personal so you must enable your customers to send personal messages. Messages must be able to be applied on an item, group or basket level and should also include the option of 'Do not open until...' with a selectable date. If relevant to the products you sell, you should also include other personalisation options such as embroidery, labelling or engraving. These extra details always help elevate the uniqueness of the gift and your proposition.



4. Gift/E-Gift Vouchers & Cards



The Popularity of gift cards and vouchers continues to grow. In fact, the UK Gift Card and Association estimates people will spend over £5bn on these services this year^[3]. With that in mind you would think all retailers should offer them in some guise or other, whether that is generic multi-store gift cards or preferably ones that tie a consumer to your brand. Ideally they should be purchasable and redeemable across any, and all, channels including both online and in-store. These should also include both physical and e-gift cards, as 77% of consumers prefer the choice^[4], with the ability for customers to check balances, top-up the account etc... both online via their account, as well as in-store — potentially via a mobile device. These vouchers/cards should also include personalisation capabilities so they can be sent as gifts.

5. Send Anonymously

Ok, so this is obviously aimed at Valentine's Day and those mysterious deliveries, but it's also useful for customers wishing to send surprise gifts to friends or family by ensuring that the sender's information is always removed. Definitely worth offering, particularly if Valentine's Day is one of your biggest trading periods.

6. Gift Packs

Not exactly cutting-edge, but selling pre-packed/pre-wrapped items that are sold as such, and ready to be sent as gifts is a simple and easy way to entice consumers. People have more and more things to occupy their time, so providing a ready made, ready packaged gift for them to send save them time.

7. Dedicated Gift Categories & Menus

Make your gift items and categories stand out by including them in your navigation. Perhaps have a main category of GIFTS and add and remove different sub categories depending on the time of year and approaching different holidays or events. Also ensure that your on-site search brings back all necessary and relevant results for gifts and your gift services.

SEND A GIFT	VALENTINE'S DAY GIFTS
Shop by Occasion	
Best Selling Gifts	Engagement Gifts
Valentine's Day Gifts	Good Luck Gifts
Easter Eggs & Gifts	Graduation Gifts
Mother's Day Gifts	Housewarming Gifts
Anniversary Gifts	New Baby Gifts
Birthday Gifts	Retirement Gifts
Commiseration Gifts	Sorry Gifts



8. Gift Fulfilment & Delivery

The fulfilment and delivery services that you offer could be the key to gaining more gift business. You wouldn't queue up multiple times in the same store to buy gifts for different people, so why expect your customers to do it online? Allow single orders to be split on a line, group or basket level, and be delivered to multiple recipients. Then offer multiple fulfilment methods for each element of that order, including specified delivery days or maybe Sunday delivery. If you have physical stores, it's essential that you provide Click & Collect/Reserve services

and perhaps Rapid Fulfilment where orders are taken from store stock and delivered, often within 90 minutes of being placed, to the local area. Having multiple fulfilment options is essential in giving your customer as much flexibility as possible and gaining an advantage over your competitors. You might want to also consider giving in-store purchasers the option of having their gifts delivered from there too.

✓ 10. Gift Lists

Commonly used for weddings and the like, these are essentially an extension of a Wish List but with distribution functionality and a shared login. I'm sure you all know how it works - users should be able to set up a list of items they would like from your store in the same way they create a normal Wish List. Where it differs is the capability to then distribute that list (which should be available via online login and at any store if applicable) which people can then make purchases against — unbeknownst to the person(s) who created it. When the requested purchases are made, the items should be instantly removed from the Gift List with that information updated across all channels.

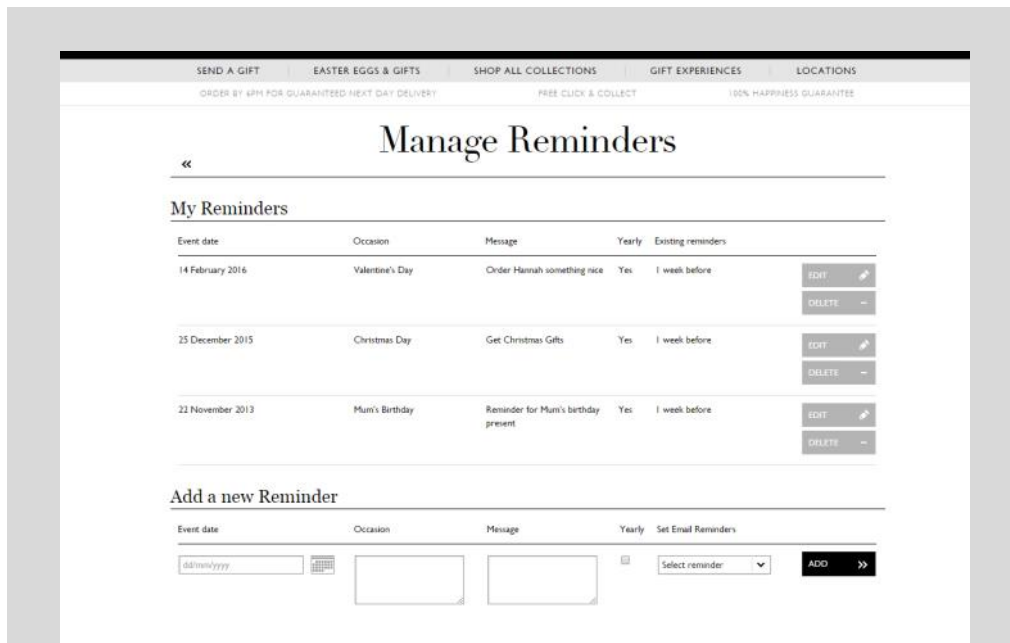
9. Gift Subscriptions



Subscriptions are always a popular gift and great for ongoing revenues. If you offer products that are required regularly then a subscription service, which can be sent as a gift, is a great idea. Items such as food & drink (particularly of the luxury variety), magazines, and health & beauty products all make ideal subscription gifts.

✓ 11. Corporate Gifting

If it suits your product range, an easy way to sell in volume is to offer corporate gifting with volume-based discounts and bespoke/branded packaging. Ideal for your customers to offer as staff incentives or for promotional launches. Gift cards are also ideal for company incentive programmes too.



12. Gift Reminder Service

Keep your customers coming back to you, year on year, by offering a gift reminder service enabling them to receive an email from you (at a set time before the event they want reminding about — i.e. 1 week before) to remind them of an upcoming event. This can all be stored and administered in their account and even include who they sent gifts to last year, what they sent and suggestions of what to send this year.

13. Promotion

Ok, so this is Last but not least, is ensuring you promote your gifting capabilities across your website, store estate and via other marketing activities. It's not just the actual gifts or gift experiences that are worth shouting about, but the complimentary services that you provide

alongside them too. Making your users aware of the services you offer could be the key to gaining their business. Somebody looking for a last minute gift might be swayed by your 90-minute fulfilment from store service, or may like the fact that they can order lots of gifts, for different people, from you in one go, so it's vital that you promote these capabilities wherever possible.

We work with some of the UK's leading retailers to help them enhance their gifting & fulfilment proposition online, contact us to find out more.

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Chocolat.

Crabtree & Evelyn
LONDON

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— JEWELLERS SINCE 1856 —

sass & belle
for the little things in life



Bowers & Wilkins



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Outlet**

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GAMES WORKSHOP

maxi muscle

[1] <https://yougov.co.uk/news/2014/12/03/british-households-plan-spend-821-christmas-2014/>
 [2] <http://www.statista.com/statistics/369102/christmas-present-purchases-online-uk/>
 [3] <http://www.ukgov.co.uk/>
 [4] <http://www.incomm.com/blog/the-results-are-in-digital-gift-card-popularity-is-rising>

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