

MOOD: MEDIA

THREE "C'S" TO SUCCESS & SURVIVAL



Like this article?
Please share!



Performance this holiday season could determine your long-term survival. **Here are "3 C's to Success."**

Here it is. The holiday season is upon us. Halloween pumpkins have turned into turkeys and Christmas displays. Holiday tunes and earworms will start burrowing into our consciousness. Consumers will be bombarded with emails and ads across all channels as the desperate battle for mindshare and share of wallet ensues. So it always is, as we have come to know it in our modern world.

But this year, it's different. Very different.

This year, a global pandemic has thrown a major wrench in the works. This year, the world is on edge, as anxiety and uncertainty abound. And this year, performance during the holiday season could determine which businesses survive and which ones close up shop forever.

There's a lot at stake to be sure. According to a recent consumer sentiment survey, 71% of **consumers feel comfortable going back to physical stores**, and that number is expected to increase during the holiday season. That's great news for everyone - retailers, restaurants, hotels - all stand to gain this holiday season and make up some lost ground.

So, against the swirling backdrop of an exceptionally hectic 2020, how do businesses navigate what is traditionally the most wonderful time of the year and make sure they take every advantage of the increase in shopper traffic? For starters, buckle up and hold on tight, as it's sure to be a wild ride. On top of that, here are "3 C's to Success" to consider as you approach the holiday season.

CARING

As the pandemic continues to impact our daily lives, it remains important to show your customers and employees that you care. Despite a broadening range of COVID patience, sentiment and concern, businesses have to stay on top of their efforts to ensure a safe environment. No matter where a customer may fall on the scale of comfort with COVID, everyone will appreciate your efforts to maintain a clean environment, so put your caring strategy into practice and on full display this holiday season.



Make every effort to show you customers you care by revisiting your new operational procedures, and make sure that your efforts are apparent. Customers need to see your employees practicing your policies - wearing masks, washing hands, cleaning surfaces, maintaining social distance. Make sure that you build trust by creating awareness of these efforts across all touch points and in all of your messaging on your website, via email, social media, **digital signage**, on-hold and overhead audio messaging.

Don't forget - showing you care is about your employees as well. Make sure to let them know how much you care about their health and safety. Provide them with the training, tools and support they need to work with confidence. Speaking of..



CONFIDENCE

Let's face it. To some degree or another, we're all a little scared, or at the very least, everyone has some level of concern and uncertainty. Bottom line, we could all use a little boost of confidence as we close out the year. In years past, we may have even called this show of confidence "holiday spirit." Now 'tis certainly a season of all seasons for us to shine our own little bit of positive light on the world.

Explore opportunities to create small "moments of joy" that make the shopping experience - and the shoppers' spirits - a bit brighter. Your customers will appreciate it, and it can have a lasting impact on their perceptions of your brand.

The simple things go a long way. Smiling employees. Hustle. Anticipating a customer's needs. Creating a positive vibe with energetic music. Incorporating a subtle scent that creates memorable associations with the holidays. When a customer steps into your business, make sure they sense your happy confidence that all is well, and all will continue to get better as the world heals and adapts to whatever the "new normal" may hold.

CONTINUITY

Yes, the world has changed forever. You've had to make some significant adjustments and necessary investments in how you operate your business, but be mindful not to do so at the expense of the brand you've worked so hard to build.

This holiday season make a concerted effort to maintain continuity with your core brand values. Don't completely sterilize the shopping experience. Major shifts that come across as "off-brand" can create confusion and diminish the equity you've already established. Use this time to reaffirm what is most important, and double down on your efforts to ensure that your brand is on point across the full spectrum of your customer experience.

In short, in every way that's feasibly and responsibly possible, stay true to who you are and get back to the basics. Strive to create memories and those moments of joy, and use this time to reinforce and realign around your inherent strengths.

Caring, Confidence and Continuity. As the pace of the holidays gets ready to shift into overdrive, set aside some time to reflect on these 3 C's to success. Ask yourself and your team:

- + What are we doing to show we care?
- + How are we going to ensure we exude confidence?
- + Are we maintaining continuity with who we are as a brand?
- + How do we achieve a balance between the 3 C's?

As you discuss and answer these questions, you're likely to generate some good ideas, identify some gaps, and reestablish a firm foundation for creating an experience your customers will trust, appreciate and remember well into a much anticipated new year.