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# Getting your data holiday-ready

For most, the holiday season seems like a long way away—but as retailers, you know that it's right around the corner. Achieving a successful holiday season is the lynchpin of success for the whole year. And here at Experian, we know that data is your secret weapon to attaining holiday success. That success is contingent on having reliable data that you can trust. So how do you get your data in great shape in time for the holiday season? We're here to help you figure it out.

1.  **Clean your existing data.**
    As you prepare for the upcoming holiday season, it's important to make sure that you have accurate contact data for your existing customers. If you collected customer information without verifying it last year (or even further back), one great way to get your data ready for the holiday season is by doing a batch cleanse of your database. A one-time batch cleanse can do a clean sweep of your email, address, and phone data to verify that the information is accurate and help ensure your messages reach your customers.

2.  **Collect accurate customer information moving forward.**
    Having the right information to reach your customers is obviously important all year round. Whether for email marketing campaigns, delivery of orders, or your loyalty programs, you want to be sure you are collecting accurate contact data from your shoppers. Using real-time verification both in-store and online is a great way to ensure that the contact information your customers provide is correct, without requiring them to re-enter their information. Intuitive typedown features also speed up the process by reducing the number of keystrokes necessary to collect contact information for guests in your store or on your website. In the rush of the holiday season, this can help expedite the checkout process in-store, and remove friction from the digital or mobile experience, leading to happier customers.

3.  **Gain additional insights.**
    Once you have accurate information on who your customers are and how to reach them, you can also learn more about them through data enrichment. Data enrichment allows you to append additional attributes to your existing information. Let's say you want to simplify the sign-up process for your loyalty program to make sure you can enroll even more shoppers for the holidays without adding more friction to their experience. You could offer a text-to-enroll option and then append the other information you need (like an email address and mailing address). But that's just the tip of the iceberg. Experian's enrichment solutions enable you to append up to 900 data attributes to learn who your customers are— everything from the size of their household and discretionary income, to their preferred modes of communication or whether or not they're coffee drinkers (in-store coffee promotion for those tired shoppers, maybe?)

4.  **Personalize your marketing.**
    Your customers have come to expect highly targeted, tailored messages from retailers. Especially during the buzz of the holiday season. The more your emails and offers resonate with shoppers and their unique tastes, the better your chances of attracting their attention— and their business! In order to really stand out in today's competitive retail environment, it is not enough

to merely segment your database; now you must really achieve 1:1 personalization to optimize the experience for each and every customer. To achieve such individualized marketing campaigns, you need to have a single record for those customers that allows you to quickly pull demographic information, psychographic information, and behavioral data, including past purchases.

5. Achieving a single customer view.
One of the best ways to be able to truly personalize your marketing is by achieving a single customer view (SCV). SCV provides a 360-degree picture of your customer and helps you derive insights from their behavior to know how to best serve them and market to them. Achieving SCV requires you to be able to view information across your databases and to combine customer data into a single record. If, for example, you have a database for Ecommerce purchases and a separate database that collects in-store information, you would need to integrate the data. You would also need a way to combine records if a single customer is in your system under different names, like Jen Smith and Jennifer Smith—who can easily be identified as the same person when other pieces of contact information, like email address or phone number, match up. Combining records from within and across databases will paint the most complete picture of your customers, and once again, you can enrich any necessary information that may be missing. For the holidays, this insight can help your customers feel like you really understand them and help you stand out from the competition.

6. Forecast with confidence.
Accurately forecasting your sales for the holiday season is essential to managing your inventory to ensure you have the right quantities and the right assortment of goods in your stores and fulfillment centers. Once again, your data from last year's holiday season, and throughout the rest of the year, will play an important role in helping you to forecast for the holiday season to come. The ability to easily pull the information you need and synthesize reports helps you to draw conclusions from your existing data to inform your forecasting this year.

Data drives retail success throughout the year, but it is especially important for gaining a leg up on the competition as you prepare for the holiday season. The sooner you look at your data needs and get your information in order, the better you can plan for the season to come.

Experian helps retailers like you make their data fit for purpose.
Want to get your data holiday ready? Let's get started.

**Learn more**