

# M LOCAL BUSINESS MARKETING

*The Marketing Guide for Local Business Owners*

December 2016

*LinkedIn  
Marketing Guide*

**5 Ways to Get  
Referrals for  
More Sales**

**7 Email Ideas  
to Keep  
Subscribers  
Engaged**

**Five Easy  
Steps to  
Dominate  
the  
Market**

**Infographic:  
2016 Holiday  
Shopping**

*How to  
Successfully  
Market for the  
Holiday Season*

**How to Land  
Press for Your  
Business Before  
the Holidays**

*How to Use  
Custom  
Hashtags to  
Promote Your  
Business*



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Welcome to this month's edition!

December is here, which means that 2016 will soon be over. What are your plans for 2017? What new marketing platforms will emerge in the coming year, and how can local businesses take advantage of them?

While we all work to finish up the year strong, we should also be looking ahead. There is no doubt that the marketing landscape will continue to evolve at a very fast pace. We can expect more changes from our current platforms, such as Google and Facebook, and we'll need to watch the evolution of mobile and video marketing. You can trust that we will continue to provide informative articles on all of these topics, along with others that can help you grow your business.

If you find the magazine helpful, and know other local business owners that could benefit from receiving our magazine each month, please do us (and them) a favor by forwarding a copy to them.

Have a topic that you'd like to see us cover? We welcome any suggestions, comments or questions you might have. Of course, we always welcome the opportunity to explain how we've been able to help businesses just like yours increase their revenue by using our effective, yet affordable marketing solutions.

To Your Success!

David Akers  
President / CEO  
LMS Solutions, Inc.

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# A Little About Us

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# Marketing Calendar

Plan your marketing messages around these upcoming holidays and proclamations.

## December

World ALDS Month  
National Write A Business Plan Month  
National Tie Month  
Tomato and Winter Squash Month  
Universal Human Rights Month  
Worldwide Food Service Safety Month  
Awareness Month of Awareness Months

December 24th-Jan 1st - Hanukkah  
Dec 25 - Christmas  
December 26th-January 1st - Kwanzaa

1st - World AIDS Day  
1st - National Day of Giving  
2nd - National Mutt Day  
3rd - International Day of Persons With Disabilities  
4th - National Cookie Day  
7th - National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day  
10th - Human Rights Day

12th - Gingerbread House Day  
15th - Bill of Rights Day  
16th - National Chocolate Covered Anything Day  
16th - Free Shipping Day  
17th - Maple Syrup Day  
17th - Wright Brothers Day  
16th - National Ugly Christmas Sweater Day  
18th - Answer The Telephone Like Buddy The Elf Day  
21st - Crossword Puzzle Day  
21st - Humbug Day  
21st - Winter Solstice  
22nd - National Re-gifting Day  
23rd - Festivus  
26th - National Whiner's Day  
27th - Fruitcake Day  
28th - National Chocolate Candy Day  
30th - Bacon Day  
31st - Make Up Your Mind Day  
31st - New Year's Eve

## January

Cervical Health Awareness Month  
Eye Care Month  
Family Fit Lifestyle Month  
Financial Wellness Month  
Get Organized Month  
International Brain Teaser Month  
March of Dimes Birth Defects Prevention Month  
National Glaucoma Awareness Month  
National Staying Healthy Month  
National Volunteer Blood Donor Month  
Thyroid Disease Awareness Month  
Walk Your Pet Month

January 1 - New Year's Day  
January 16 - Martin Luther King Jr. Day

1st - Polar Bear Plunge Day  
1st - World Day of Peace

2nd - Science Fiction Day  
9th - Law Enforcement Appreciation Day  
9th - National Take the Stairs Day  
14th - Dress Up Your Pet Day  
15th - Humanitarian Day  
17th - Ben Franklin's Birthday  
18th - Winnie the Pooh Day  
19th - Popcorn Day  
20th - Inauguration Day  
21st - National Hugging Day  
23rd - Pie Day  
24th - Compliment Day  
24th - Peanut Butter Day  
26th - Spouse's Day  
27th - Chocolate Cake Day  
28th - Chinese New Year  
28th - Have Fun at Work Day  
29th - National Puzzle Day  
31st - Backward Day

# How to Land Press for Your Business Before the Holidays



If you want to end the year with a profit surge, there's a way to do so that will cost you absolutely nothing: land press. Follow these easy steps to raise brand awareness and generate sales before the holidays.

## Think Local

The first place to start is with the media personalities in your community. No outlet is too small. Make a list of every blogger, newspaper columnist, radio host, and television reporter that covers your area. The list could easily number in the hundreds. Focus on 10 people from your list, and then craft a personal email to each one. Your subject line should read "Feature Idea" and then the name of your business. In the body of your email, compliment the media personality on their work and cite a specific example to show you truly are a fan. Be sure to provide a brief description of your business. Finally, ask to be featured and suggest a story angle. Press send, and be sure to follow up

with a phone call within two days.

## Go Back to School

You have a network of millions, thanks to the schools you attended. Introduce yourself to them! Begin with your high school. Contact the principal and ask if you can speak to business classes about what's involved in launching and running your own enterprise. Reach out to your college alumni office and request that your business be profiled in their next communication, preferably both online and in print. Create a special discount code (your mascot or the name of a favorite place on campus) and share it with your high school and college communities to use when they order from your website.

## Renew Your Affiliations

Think of all the organizations you've been affiliated with during your lifetime. Examples include a charity, a sports league, a fraternity, a gardening club, a school

board, a volunteer fire department, and a place of worship. There's a good chance that each one of these organizations has a governing board that publishes regular communications to their memberships. Contact the editors of those publications and pitch your business as an article idea. Go a step further and become a sponsor of an upcoming initiative, one that is meaningful to you and aligns with your company's positioning.

To secure press quickly, it's essential that you contact three groups: local media personalities, the schools you attended, and organizations that you've been affiliated with both as a child and as an adult. Explain why you think your business is newsworthy, particularly to each of their communities. When you establish an authentic connection it will lead to press that will grow your business in expected and unexpected ways.



# LinkedIn Marketing Guide

Many people are conversant with LinkedIn as a career networking platform, and use it to stay in touch with prospective employers. Unknown to many is that, due to its professional appearance, LinkedIn is ideal for sales presentations and can boost your marketing drive if properly leveraged. Follow these five steps to boost your LinkedIn marketing.

## 1. Craft a professional profile

Just like a great resume, having a LinkedIn profile that stands out is essential. There are hundreds of prospective clients who form their first impression about your business based on how professional your profile appears. LinkedIn is a multidimensional marketing tool but your profile is the first opportunity to win clients.

## 2. Make use of Show Case pages

A Show Case page is a gateway to converting

prospective clients to actual buyers. A stand-out profile piques visitors' interest, but it can only go so far in winning you customers. A Show Case page, which replaced the products tab, enables viewers to study your products in greater detail.

## 3. Update your account regularly

LinkedIn updates are communicated to contacts instantly. Use the opportunity to keep clients and visitors updated on developments in your business such as upcoming offers, new products, business expansion and any other relevant marketing product. Old content and little updates projects your business as 'dead' to prospective buyers.

## 4. Incorporate your Blog's RSS feed

Does your business have a blog or website? Streamline your energies by incorporating an RSS feed in your LinkedIn account.

Any fresh content posted on the site appears on LinkedIn as well. You won't need to generate multiple marketing content for different platforms. The fact that your posts can be longer than LinkedIn updates is also an advantage.

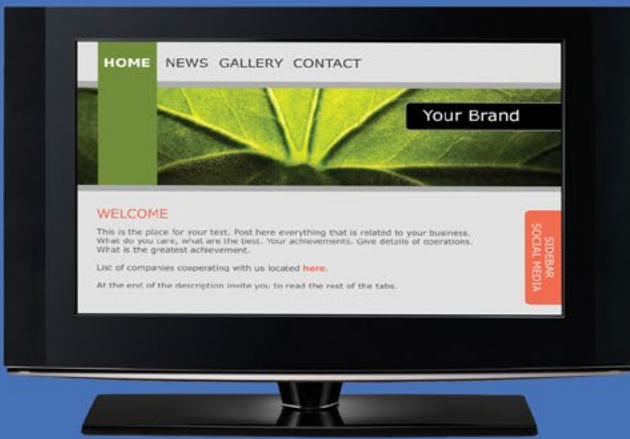
## 5. Join a LinkedIn group

A LinkedIn group makes it easier to target a specific audience for your product. You can register with up to 50 groups from hundreds available. Ensure the group you join fits your business needs and is managed proactively. Stay active in the groups for maximum influence and gains.

LinkedIn is one of the most overlooked business marketing platforms. However, it possesses great potential to give a business visibility and consequently a rise in sales volumes. Investing adequately in a working LinkedIn profile puts you ahead of other marketers and could just give you that much needed edge in business.

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# 7 Email Ideas to Keep Subscribers Engaged



Among the many benefits of email marketing is the potentially high returns from low costs. While the amount you spend on gaining subscribers will vary, the cost of maintaining your list can be relatively inexpensive. You can quickly build a strong relationship with readers, offer value, and earn steady income from promotions.

A common problem, however, is keeping subscribers engaged. Lists can be burnt out quickly through excessive promotion, leading to lower open rates. The key to good engagement is to avoid predictability, offering a variety of email styles that keep people guessing. The following seven email ideas can be rotated to provide a regular flow of interesting, incisive, and unexpected messages.

## How-To Tutorial

A how-to email is typically a short tutorial offering some practical help. You could include all details in a single message, though longer tutorials might need to be spread across an email series. An alternative method is to create a long blog post, taking a short segment of it for an email. When you offer more detail on your blog, your email click-through rate should be high.

## Story

A story helps to build rapport, improving the relationship you have with readers. Stories can be used to promote products, drive visitors to your blog, or simply to impart some wisdom. Successful salespeople understand the power of a good story, so

starting to integrate them into regular emails is a way to improve your conversion rate.

## Survey

Surveys will provide valuable information about your list, but you can also use them to engage readers. Providing a summary of the results will be of interest to many readers, particularly if they can be weaved into an interesting narrative. Not all surveys need to be extensive, with a simple question often helping to spark conversation.

## Social Media

Social media and email are often used separately, but you can cross-promote effectively with email. One option is to collate the best social media posts of the week or month. Many businesses have

Facebook groups for product owners or niche fans, so you could recommend the best discussions found within the group.

While social media messages can be effective, using them sporadically is recommended as anyone with a strong interest will already follow you closely on the social sites.

### Roundup Post

A roundup post gathers together news, articles, videos, or a combination of them all. Readers might not have the time to look through multiple blogs and news sites, so they could come to rely on you to curate content. A regular roundup post also helps forge strong industry relationships when you include other influencers in your collection.

### Free Gift

A free gift could be a sporadic event that keeps subscribers opening messages. It is important to make the gift valuable on its own, but it could also be used as an enticement into a premium product. If you don't want to create your own gifts, partner with other businesses to offer discount codes, ebooks, and subscriber benefits.

### Promotion

Promotions are an inevitable part of email marketing, whether you are promoting your own product or as an affiliate. As long as you believe in the product and can convey this well, there is no need to feel uncomfortable about trying to sell products. Subscribers are often glad to

find out about new products, particularly if there is a discount or bonus included.

These seven ideas should be enough to keep most lists engaged, with enough variety within each idea to avoid repetitiveness. Most lists won't receive messages on a daily basis, so each idea won't appear on too frequent a basis. It is, however, natural that a certain portion of your subscribers will stop opening your emails. While you have to accept there is always churn in email marketing, you can try more direct tactics to try and reignite interest. For most subscribers, though, a steady flow of interesting emails, without too much repetition, should be enough to maintain an engaged list.



## MARKETING

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## 5 Ways to Get Referrals for More Sales

When it comes to referrals, many sales professionals are stumped as to how to get them. After all, it's not quite an easy thing to. But it can be easy if you know the right techniques to use. Use the following methods to get brand new, qualified referrals for your business and watch your sales grow.

### 1. Revisit Your Power Base

The first and most powerful

way to get more referrals for to increase your pipeline is to leverage your power base. Who is your power base? They are all of the people who are close to you in some capacity and want you to do well.

This includes your friends, family, coworkers, clients, classmates, and anyone who you have a positive relationship with. So the first step in gathering referrals is to make a list of all of the people

in your power base. Think long and hard about who is included in it. Scan your social media friend list as well, as you might have even forgotten all of the people you know.

Once you've defined your power base, you're ready to start collecting contact information for them. Write down their phone numbers, emails, or home addresses and store the info in a digital document somewhere in the

cloud so you don't lose it (after all, you're doing a lot of work to gather it in one place).

Next, you want to actually contact the people in your power base. The first preference here is to see them in person somehow. If you can, swing by their office, home, or favorite lunch spot. Then set up a video call, phone call, or another meeting. Your goal for this first meeting is just to touch base, to get back into their lives. You are not going to ask for a referral at this point.

You will ask for the referral after asking them about what they're doing, where they're working, how things are going, etc. Naturally, they will ask you questions about what you're doing and that is when you can mention your career or business and ask them who they know that could benefit from it.

Remember, your power base is your most powerful asset. They are people who want to hear from you and see how you're doing. Don't be nervous about contacting them. If you truly believe in your product and service, then you are actually doing the right thing. And one final tip on your power base referral strategy: try breaking up this task in

small pieces. For example, make your list of contacts the first day, then put in their contact info the second day, and finally contact them on the third day so the task is more easily attainable. Do this and watch your referrals explode.

## **2. During the Sale**

One of the biggest mistakes you can make when trying to get referrals is to wait too long to ask for one. Sure, there are ways to do it after a sale (more on that later) but when you have a prospect in front of you, getting ready to buy your product, you have a golden opportunity to tap their network.

For example, if you're selling cars. When your buyer is at your desk, getting ready to sign the paperwork, you ask: "So, Mr. Buyer, who else do you know that could benefit from our service and great prices here at ABC Dealership?" If you've done a good job of building a relationship with the buyer, they will be happy to offer some names because they trust that you can help their friends just you helped them. Always try to get referrals during the sale, when emotions and excitement run high.

## **3. Offer an Incentive**

Whether you are offering an online service, in-person service, or any kind of solution to your buyers, you can provide incentives for referrals. Think of it as an ethical, legal bribe. For example, if you are selling ecommerce products, you can send your current customers an email that says something like "Refer 5 friends to our company and we'll send you a \$20 gift card for your next purchase!" People love to get rewarded for their actions, and if they truly love your products it will be a double bonus because they can share the happiness with those they know!

## **4. Ask for Help**

This method of obtaining more referrals may be surprising to some. Ask them to help you out. Say something along the lines of: "Ms. Client, over the last few months, we've taken really good care of you and helped you solve your problems. I would like to ask you to do me a personal favor, which can really help me grow my business. Can you please think of at least three people who you know that are in the market for a product like ours? Can you help me out?"

People are inherently good and want to help others. It's not going to seem desperate when you ask for help. It's quite the opposite. Your confidence to ask your client for such a thing will demonstrate your commitment to helping people.

## 5. Overdeliver

The previous four ways mentioned in this article to get referrals all involve actively asking for it.

However, this method is all about making it to where customers feel obligated to send referrals your way based on how much you add value to their lives. You do this by overdelivering on the products you offer. Always strive to delight, not just satisfy, your customers. If you truly take this to heart and put it into action, you'll find that your customers can't wait to tell their friends about you.

If you want more referrals to boost your pipeline and

sales numbers, look no further. Review the methods above one more time and then actually put them into action. By leveraging your power base, asking for referrals during the sale, using incentives, asking directly for help, and overdelivering on your promises, you can have more referrals than you ever imagined possible.

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## How to Successfully Market for the Holiday Season

Christmas is fast approaching and we all know that this holiday season is as much about the food, presents, and celebrations as it is about being with your loved ones. The holiday season can be a massive boon for businesses but you'll get yourself a lot further with a good holiday marketing campaign. You need to appeal to the warm and giving feelings that come with the Christmas season whilst also creating a unique campaign. Let's take a look at some of the dos and don'ts of effective holiday marketing:

### **Do: Host Contests on Social Media**

Social media contests and giveaways are an integral

part of holiday marketing, helping new customers find your brand while engaging your existing community. With research suggesting that up to sixty percent of non-successful contest entrants go on to purchase the product, you can grow your platform beyond the holiday season while bringing increased seasonal revenue by encouraging people to like, share, retweet, and follow you for an entry to your contest.

### **Don't: Be Inconsistent Across Platforms**

You must create a consistent marketing experience across all of your platforms, including your website, mailing lists, various social media accounts,

and in stores. This means using the same images, slogans, hashtags, offers, and any other holiday-branded content on all platforms that your business uses to advertise or build your community. Inconsistency makes your campaign forgettable and confusing so keep your holiday marketing harmonious.

### **Do: Make Your Product Holiday-Relevant**

The secret to successfully marketing for the holidays is making your business and product holiday-relevant, allowing you to market it as a great gift or a wonderful addition to the home during Christmas. Get your colleagues

involved in brainstorming and if you absolutely can't find a way to make your product seem seasonal, make sure to include it in branded holiday content such as "Happy Holidays from Everyone at MadeUpBusiness" images and your seasonal competitions.

### **Don't: Be Cynical About the Holidays**

That is, unless you're very, very funny! In making your product holiday-relevant, it's best to avoid being cynical or picking out unfavorable aspects of the holiday season. While some bigger marketing campaigns can manage this pessimism with finesse and charm, it's more likely to come off as whiney and tactless for the majority of your customers who most likely do enjoy the season. Studies have shown that positive holiday campaigns do much better than those that pick on holiday annoyances, so aim to be upbeat.

### **Do: Get Your Staff Involved**

There tends to be very little connection between corporate social networks and their employees, with research showing an average overlap of between 2 and 7 percent. By engaging your employees in your holiday marketing you can increase your reach and promote holiday-

appropriate community spirit, so encourage them to like and share. Customers also respond well to expressions of seasonality and community from businesses, so consider playing holiday music in stores or taking a group photo in Christmas jumpers to post on social media.

### **Don't: Forget to Show Gratitude**

Your customers and followers want to see that you are appropriately engaged in the holidays too, so don't forget to show some genuine holiday cheer across your various platforms. A post expressing your gratitude to your supportive customers in the run up to the holidays won't go awry either, and it will engage your customers in a manner that makes them more likely to consider doing business with you again in future.

You can make yourself and your customers happy by following these tips to successfully marketing for the holiday season, deepening your connections and spreading brand awareness. It's your job to make sure that everyone is feeling the holiday spirit so follow these tips and see the benefits for yourself.



- Promotional Products
- Online Company Stores
- Trade Show Giveaways
- Executive Gifts
- Stress Relievers
- Team and Collegiate Items



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- *You're Confused*
- *What You're Doing Isn't Working*
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# Five Easy Steps to Dominate the Market



The amount that some entrepreneurs spend on advertisement campaigns is beyond ridiculous. These can range from small banner ads on high high-traffic sites like Google or YouTube, to full-blown billboards along roads and highways. Most major companies even use television and radio sponsorship to gain just a few more customers.

While established corporations and rich business owners can afford to flush money down these advertising avenues, startups are usually strapped for cash. To accomplish

their advertising goals, new entrepreneurs need to find cheap yet effective ways of reaching the highest number of people possible. Thankfully, such a method exists. The following steps detail this marketing magic bullet.

## **Step one: Realize that a customer needs to experience what you're selling first**

Visualizing an item is not enough to convince a customer to buy it. They need to try it out. The first step in creating a successful, low-cost

marketing campaign is to realize that you cannot just sit back and expect people to pay to experience your product. You must take the initiative and offer them something for free. No matter how good your service is, being secretive will get you nowhere.

## **Step two: Identify the most valuable part of what you are selling**

Every business owner has something that differentiates his or her product from the competition. The second step in this marketing strategy is

to hone-in on the specific detail that makes your product stand out. What does your product have that offers the greatest value to the lives of your customers? It should be something that they can try out immediately, and something that really works. This is not a cheap giveaway; whatever you decide on needs to be worth a significant amount of money if you were to sell it.

### **Step three: Distribute it in massive quantities**

After you have decided on the item of value, you need to figure out how to deliver it to your prospects in the cheapest way possible. Usually, this is in the form of educational content such as audio, video, or e-book. Thanks to the Internet, these three media are relatively cheap to create and circulate, as they can be distributed electronically to prospects around the world much quicker than physical products. If you are selling a service, another option would be to offer a free consultation. For example, a proofreading company might offer to edit five pages for free as a trial run. Whichever area you specialize in, there is usually a way to provide high value to a large amount of people at low cost.

### **Step four: Follow-up with a customized message and another offer**

After a week or so, follow-up on the prospects who tried your free sample with a customized message thanking them for their time. Asking for feedback on whether or not the product met their needs should be incorporated into this message. If you want to take this step to the next level, you could also include another free sample, providing even further value to the customer.

Personalizing your approach allows you to develop meaningful relationships with clients. Offering a second free sample also convinces them that you are genuinely trying to help them. This approach goes a long way toward creating a dedicated customer base. Going above and beyond is a trait that most people admire, especially if they are on the receiving end of the benefits.

### **Step five: Make sure to streamline your sales and catalog page**

The vast majority of customers who have experienced your free sample are likely to view your website to browse

your catalog of products and services. Make sure that everything is laid out in a professional and attractive manner that highlights the benefits of the purchase. If your free sample was of high quality, your prospects will have no concerns about the trustworthiness of your business. They will also be more willing to commit to a purchase if their trial run was worth it.

Giving is much more profitable than taking

The enduring question for any new entrepreneur should be "How can I provide value to my customers?" It is human tendency to hoard our blessings, especially those that took significant effort to acquire. However, in an age of cheats and liars, a person who sincerely wants to help others is a breath of fresh air. Following the five steps above all but guarantees a purchase. It is the most cost-efficient way for a budding business owner to break into the industry, and the best part of it all is that you'll be making friends while you're at it.

In the long run, giving away free stuff truly does make you richer.



# #hashtag

## How to Use Custom Hashtags to Promote Your Business

Hashtags are used on many social media platforms, including Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest and Instagram, as they enable users to follow active discussions, organize content and find relevant messages. Custom hashtags are useful tools for businesses looking to build their brand, market their products and publicize their promotions. To use custom hashtags effectively, you need to follow a few simple rules.

### Research the Platform

Each social media platform operates on a different set of rules, including rules for the use of hashtags. The best way to discover how your chosen platforms work is by spending time observing how people interact with each other. Research the type of hashtags other people use and how they choose them. For example, users of image-based social media platforms, such as Instagram, will often use hashtags that reflect the image subject, type of graphic or photographic technique used on the

images they share.

### Choose Targeted Hashtags

General hashtags that cover a wide subject area are usually saturated with content. Some of the most popular hashtags receive hundreds of messages every minute, which means that your content will be buried in the middle of thousands of other marketing messages. Choosing specific hashtags that target a niche audience is an effective marketing strategy that will produce better results than using general hashtags.

### Limit the Characters

Hashtags should be memorable and easy to spell, as users will need to type them into their messages. Limit the characters used in your hashtags, keeping them as short as possible, as this makes it easier for users to remember them. However, if you want to portray a professional image, avoid using abbreviations or substituting numbers for words, as this can appear

amateurish and sloppy to potential customers.

### Avoid Overuse of Hashtags

One of the biggest mistakes businesses make when using social media to promote their products is to fill their messages with different hashtags. Each message should have a maximum of two hashtags, as more than this can be seen as spamming by other users. In addition, avoid adding hashtags to every message, image, video and other type of content posted on social media. Only tag messages that offer value to your followers.

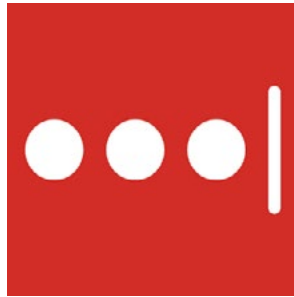
Custom hashtags can be great tools for businesses looking to build their brand and promote their products on social media. Researching your intended platforms, choosing targeted hashtags that are short enough for users to remember and using your hashtags sparingly helps to increase the effectiveness of your marketing campaign.

# APP Watch

## LastPass

Price = Free  
(offers premium option  
\$12/year)

Availability: Android &  
iPhone

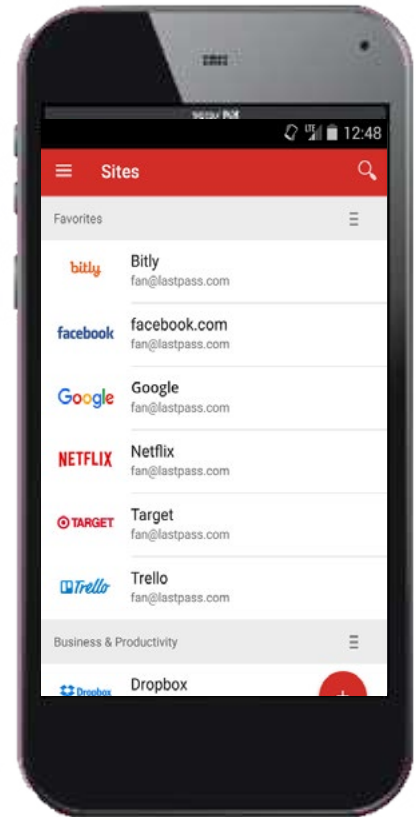


LastPass is a password manager and password generator that locks your passwords and personal information in a secure vault. LastPass autofills web browser and app logins for you, and generates new, secure passwords instantly.

One password is all you need with LastPass – your LastPass master password handles the rest. Store passwords and logins, create online shopping profiles, generate strong passwords, track personal information in photo & audio notes, and more.

App Features Include:

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- Private notes
- Password Keeper
- Finger Scan Lock
- Data manager
- Password Sharing
- Secure Password Keeper
- Emergency Access
- Password Generator
- Password Audits



## LOCAL BUSINESS MARKETING

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# 2016 HOLIDAY SHOPPING FACTS

## When Consumers Start Shopping



## Top Factors For Choosing A Retailer



Free Shipping



Easy Mobile Site



Sale and Discount Prices

**\$23 Billion**

more than last year will be spent on Holiday sales

The average number of people that a person will buy gifts for:

**8**



**56%**

of consumers will shop online this holiday season

**60%**

of consumers will shop local to support the local economy



**56%**

of consumers will shop local to find one-of-a-kind gifts



# Today's Marketing Platforms Have You Not Sure Which Way To Go?

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