

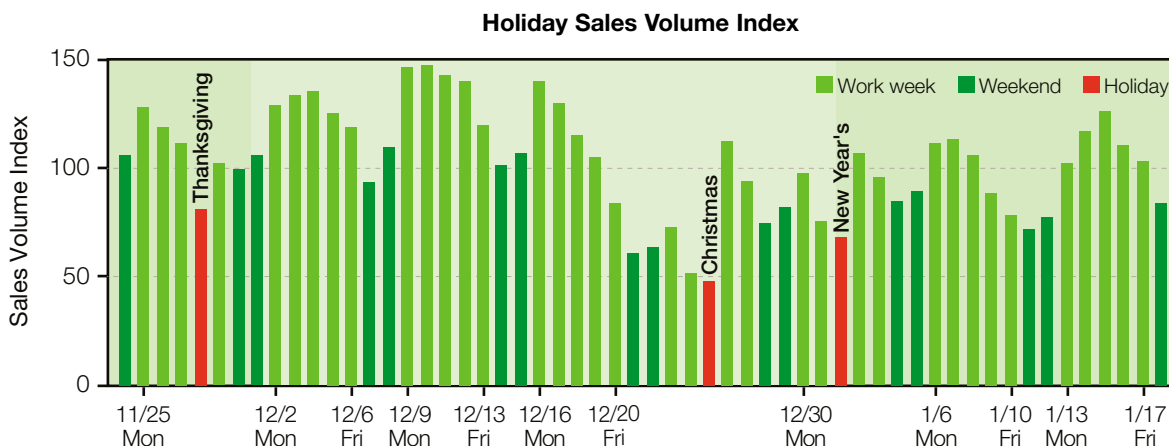
## 2002-2003 Online Holiday Shopping Patterns

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The biggest shopping days of the year take place the weekend before Christmas. Unless, that is, you are talking about online shopping.

In an effort to understand online holiday shopping patterns, Atlas analyzed anonymous shopping behavior from November 24, 2002 to January 18, 2003. These data represent almost a billion impressions and millions of sale transactions across 14 leading e-commerce companies whose online campaigns are managed using the Atlas Digital Marketing Suite. Our goal in this annual study is to understand the trends of online holiday shopping and inform marketers' resource allocation during this critical time.

Completing this study several years in a row yields insight into long-range trends. Most importantly, we have discovered that online shopping is highest during the work week and tends to reach a maximum approximately 10-14 days before Christmas. This leads us to predict that online shopping in 2003 will reach its peak during the week of December 8<sup>th</sup> to December 12<sup>th</sup>.



In this chart, an index of sale volume is charted by time for the 2002-2003 holiday season. A score of 100 indicates a day of average sale volume for the period. The busiest shopping days are during the work week, with a significant lull leading up to Christmas.

### What We've Learned

This study produced the following key insights:

- 1) **Front-load your impressions for December campaigns.** Online shopping peaks approximately 10 to 14 days before Christmas, meaning marketers should focus their energy on the first two weeks of December. Using creative messaging to emphasize ease and speed of shipping, always worthwhile, becomes even more critical during this time.

- 2) **Tailor holiday online advertising messages to people who are at work.** Weekdays remain the most active online shopping days during the holidays. Online shopping activity peaks between noon and 3 p.m. EST. Purchase day-part placements, when possible, to target online shoppers during the middle of the workday and find publisher sites with a high concentration of the at-work audience.
- 3) **Mondays were the most popular shopping days during the 2002 holiday season.** This seems indicative of customers who shop offline during the weekend and then go online for comparison or bargain shopping.
- 4) **January 2003 was much weaker than in 2001 or 2002.** Last year January's activity was equal in volume to the pre-Christmas rush. This year January was about 25 percent less active than the first two weeks of December.

### About the Atlas Institute

The Atlas Institute is the research and education arm of Atlas, a provider of accountable marketing tools and expertise for agencies, marketers, and publishers. The Institute publishes Digital Marketing Insights, a series of publications by Atlas senior marketing analysts and digital marketing experts that help our customers improve their digital marketing effectiveness. Many of these findings are also made available to the digital marketing industry at large. Each Digital Marketing Insight report is designed to help marketers more successfully build value with their customers, throughout the customer lifecycle: from awareness to acquisition and from retention to growth. The Atlas Institute also provides education in digital marketing to Atlas customers and partners. To view a full listing of the Atlas Institute's Digital Marketing Insights, please visit [www.AtlasSolutions.com/insights](http://www.AtlasSolutions.com/insights).