



district m

Get ready for the madness:  
Black Friday 2017 digital strategy.

# intro.

In 2016, Black Friday was projected by Adobe to reach \$3.05 billion in online revenue – in actual fact, this projection was surpassed by nearly \$300 million and hit an all-time record of \$3.34 billion, making it the first year to generate more online sales than in-store. This represents a 21.6% year over year growth from 2015.

But the primary takeaway from last year's holiday frenzy comes from sales made on mobile devices: the total revenue summed up to 1.2 billion, the first year to ever cross the 1 billion bar. 2016 was a record-breaking year and there are no signs 2017 being any different. Indeed, this year, Black Friday is expected to generate \$3.52 billion in online sales.

It is safe to say Black Friday 2017 will be an online game and predictions already show that the in-store frenzy won't be as heavy as in past years. This year, district m wants to help you get the best out of the holiday madness by giving you some pointers for an optimal digital programmatic strategy for the Thanksgiving weekend.



# district m

# first things first.

Before getting into the campaign planning, there are two things that need to be hashed out: your campaign objectives and your budget. Not necessarily in that order.

Planning a campaign can be tricky because when you determine your budget, you need to have your goals in mind, but it can be difficult to determine those goals without a realistic budget.

To start figuring out those two elements, here are some questions you need to answer:

## Who will you target?

Who is your primary buyer? Who is generally interested in your products?

This will allow you to define your audience and better segment it. Audience segmentation is crucial in the early stages as it will help you target different demographics for example and see which ones gives you the best response. This information will be useful going forward once you start investing more in your campaigns.

For retargeting segments, you want to segment your audience more on temporality, meaning targeting users that have visited your website in the past month, week and so on. Again, this process will give you valuable information that will come in handy in later phases.

In the end, those segments are for you to decide based on the reality of your business, but are nonetheless important to your campaign.

## How do you define success?

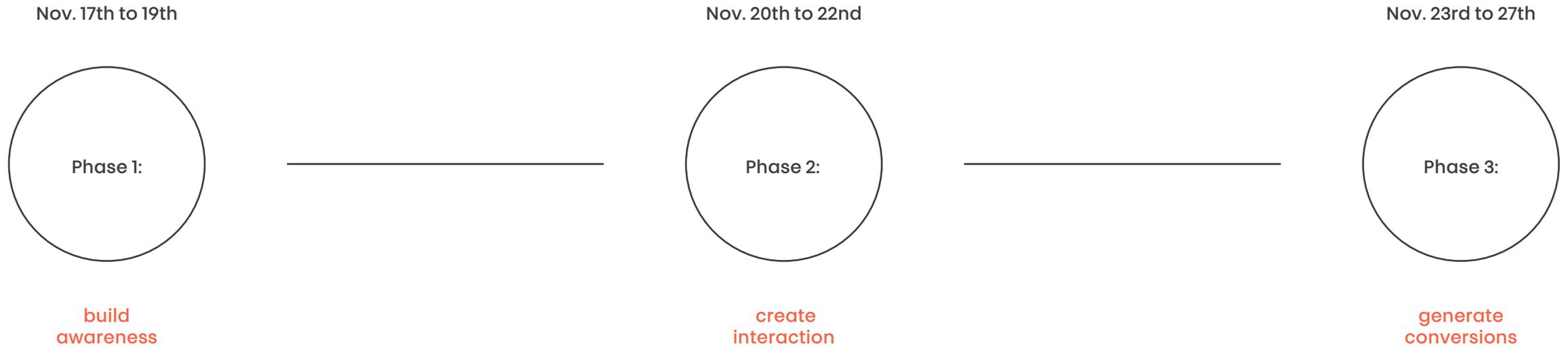
What is your end goal – do you want users to buy? if so, what product? or do you want them to subscribe for a trial?

Depending on the answer, you will be looking at different metrics to define success: total purchases, revenue, number of subscription etc. Once you know which metric you will look at, it becomes easier to set a goal. Most campaigns launched during Black Friday are around conversion and customer retention.

# mark your calendar!

This year, Black Friday will fall on Friday November 24th. We put together an optimal programmatic strategy so you don't miss the mark on this crucial day.

This plan was put together on an 11-day period, or from Friday November 17th to Monday November 27th. Of course, you know your business better than anyone : this strategy was built by our experts but some elements, like budget proportions and duration, may vary according to the reality of your industry. Let's dive in right away!





# phase 01

## Budget: 20%

Our experts suggest starting off with 20% of the budget you planned for your Black Friday programmatic campaigns for a simple reason: people are not ready to buy right now - they are waiting for the Black Friday sales, so there is no need in going full speed. What you want to do is create awareness around your brand and products.

## Duration of phase: 3 days : Nov. 17th to 19th

Starting your Black Friday campaign too early is a waste of time and money. First off, because people are not ready to buy, and second because they will forget about your offer. By starting a week before, you can inform your targeted audience of your products and their features and start building a top-of-mind awareness.

## Type of campaign:

### Prospecting: 90%

As mentioned before, the goal during those three days is to peak the interest of potential customers, not necessarily existing ones. This is why it is important to define your audience from the beginning. Also, by investing in prospecting, you drive new users to your website, which will make your later retargeting campaign more effective

### Retargeting: 10%

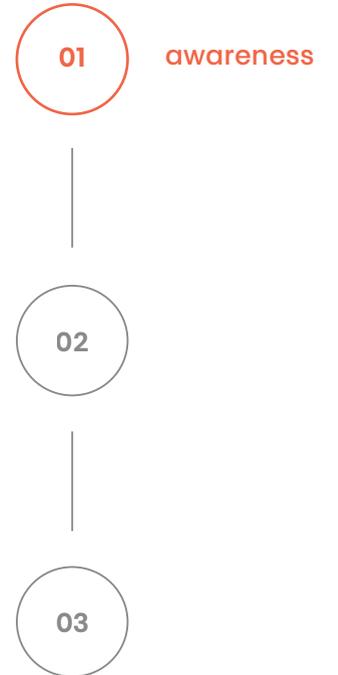
You always have a bank of loyal customers that are only waiting for a good promotion to buy from you. Using retargeting at this stage will engage them with your upcoming offers and make sure they remember you when time comes.

## Formats: High-impact

For phase 1, you should use the formats that will give you to most visibility and the largest reach. Here are the three most popular formats our experts recommend:

### Responsive Skin

Skin is an unparalleled format to create awareness - it allows you to dress the borders of a website with your brand's offer. The major benefit is the guaranteed 100% viewability that this format offers. On the creative side, the large format allows for more creativity in the design and thus, enables you to immerse your targeted user into your brand's universe.



# phase 01

## — Video billboard

Since this phase is all about awareness, you want to make sure your message is delivered in the most optimal way. Video billboard offers the same advantages as Skin with the addition of creating a stronger experience for the user. This high-impact format is a great way to generate awareness by bringing your brand to life and delivering a powerful message with a video.

## — IAB standards

IAB standards are always great formats to leverage as they are globally accepted amongst publishers and can be delivered on all types of devices (desktop, mobile, tablet). Considering online users spend 50% of their online time on mobile devices, IAB standards are the best way to expand your reach.

## Tone and message

In the spirit of awareness, you want your message to be informative - you want your targeted audience to learn more about your brand and products. Your message should be built around specific features of your products or major benefits your customers can get from them.

## Metrics

### — Number of impressions

Your primary goal in this phase is, of course, to be seen - that's why number of impressions will be a solid metric to consider when reporting on your campaign. It will give you a good idea of your reach and help you improve your strategy for the later phases.

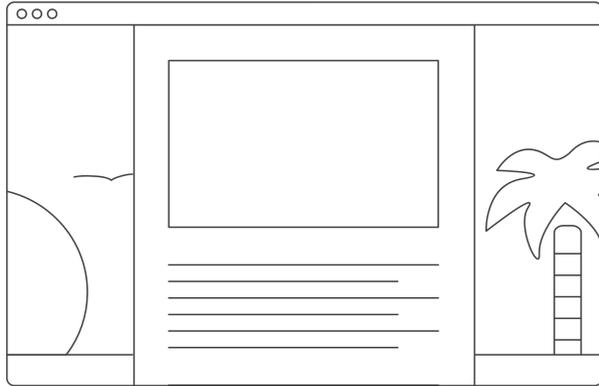
### — Click-through-rate

CTR should also be considered because it will give you an idea of the volume of people you will be able to retarget later.

phase 01

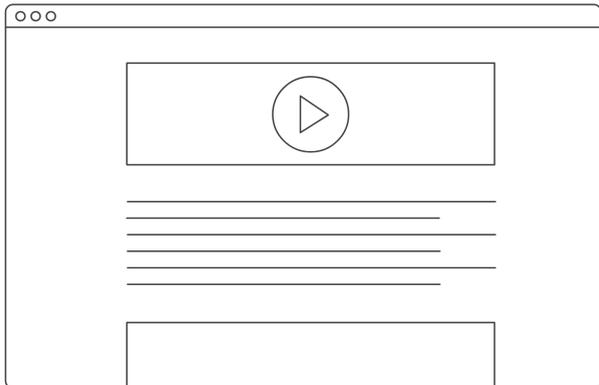
# high impact formats

## responsive skin



Skin is definitely our most impactful format. Perfectly suited for awareness campaigns, the skin format lets you dress the borders of a website page with your brand's colors! Each creative is 100% custom-made to suit all your marketing needs and generate the most impact for your brand with guaranteed visibility!

## video billboard



Video billboards are available in multiple formats. You can now blend your promotional message with a banner-integrated video player. Plus, don't limit yourself to traditional 15s and 30s ads! With video billboards, you can display 2-minute videos or longer, which will be activated by the user!



# phase 02

## Budget: 20%

At this stage, you will be continuing your awareness phase, but you now want people to start visiting your website - this is why you are entering the interaction phase. Again, no need to go full speed right now by investing a huge chunk of your budget. With the right targeting and the right formats, you can reach your engagement goals.

## Duration of phase: 3 days: Nov. 20th to 22nd

Phase 2 is about getting people excited about your products before Black Friday. This time, with more interactive format, you can pique their interest one step further. Our experts estimate that three days is sufficient to reach your target enough times to engage with your ads and drive them to your website.

## Type of campaign:

### — Prospecting - 50%

At this stage, it is still time to get new targets interested in your brand. This is why we suggest that you keep prospecting. Phase 1 should have given you good tips on what targeting options worked best, so you should definitely base your new prospecting phase on those results.

### — Retargeting - 50%

However, you also want to remind customers that have shown interest in your brand in phase 1 of the products they liked. It's all about staying top-of-mind in the few days prior to Black Friday so that they remember you when it is time to purchase.

## Formats: Interactive

A great way to generate engagement and lead your targeted audience is through interaction. district m offers some strong interactive formats that will help you stand out from the masses:

### — Touch

Touch is a new format that combines an interactive yet non-intrusive experience and a high-impact video. As the user scrolls down, a reactive element at the bottom of the screen is activated - the user can then decide to click the banner, leading them to the video, or to a landing page. The playfulness of this format generates engagement from the user as well as ensuring great visibility.



interaction



# phase 02

## — Reveal

This format is fit for this phase as it allows you to blend a strong message and a powerful ad: on the top layer, you can catch your user's attention with your offer. Your message invites them to reveal the bottom layer, where you can wow them with a beautiful creative. Plus, advertisers only pay when the banner is revealed, and not just seen.

## — Swipe

The main advantage of Swipe is being able to display two offers in one banner. Moreover, it invites your audience to interact with it by alternating between the two images, thus generating more engagement. The format works as a simplified A/B testing: since you can track the interaction users have with the banner, you can see which of the two products displayed is most popular. Just like Reveal, Swipe is an eye-catching format that stands out of the mass, thus improving your visibility.

## Tone and message

Since Black Friday is getting closer, you want to start hooking your targeted audience's attention. In this phase, it is time to use more of a promotional tone - get them really excited about your offer by reminding them that it is coming soon and of what they can expect.

## Metrics

### — Interaction with banners

When using formats like Swipe, Reveal or Touch, you can track how many people interacted with your banners, like how many people revealed the ad, swiped across the banner, etc. These metrics will give you a very good indicator of what format works better for which products, how engaged your audience is, but more importantly, that your banner has actually been viewed by your audience.

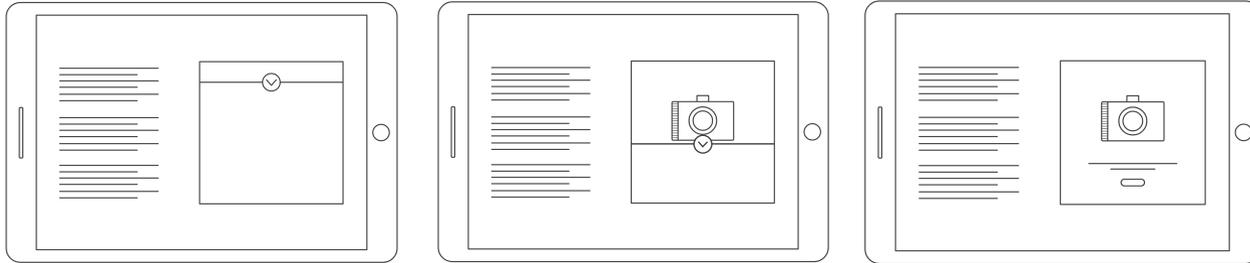
### — Click-through-rate (CTR)

At this point, you should start looking at conversions - again, it will give you a good idea of the volume of people you will reach with your final retargeting campaign.

phase 02

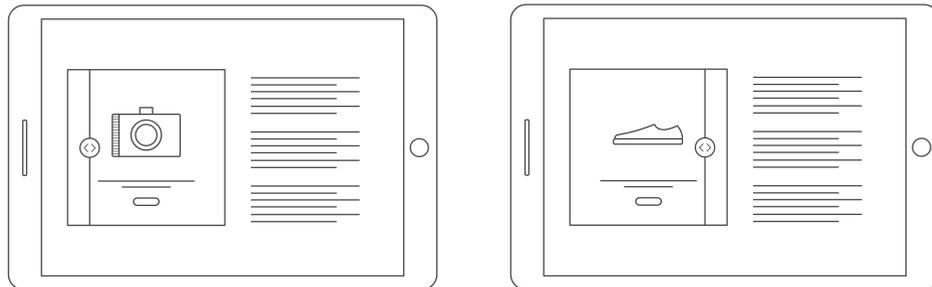
# interactive formats

## reveal



Get 100% viewability on your ads with this district m exclusive format. Reveal generates more engagement from users with a partially hidden banner that is revealed when the creative is moused over. As an advertiser, you do not pay per impression, but only when your creative is completely revealed.

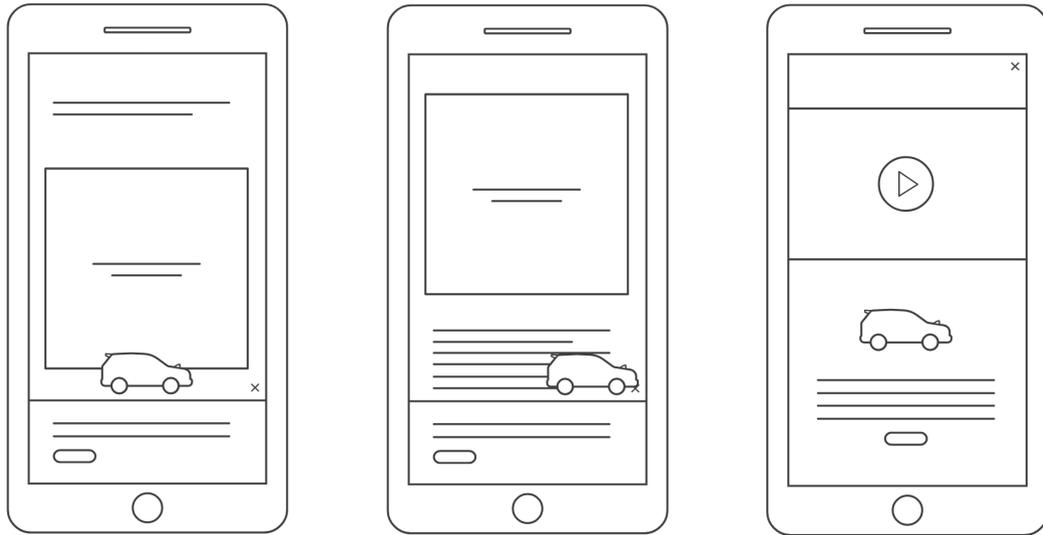
## swipe



A district m exclusivity, Swipe is an interactive format compatible with all types of devices! It offers multiple creative opportunities: display two offers on the same banner and let the users interact with the creative to display one or the other. This format helps you learn more about your targeted audience, thanks to our detailed reports on audiences' engagement with your creative.

# district m exclusive

## touch



district m is proud to offer touch, a new high-impact and user-activated mobile format. touch is a perfect blend between a seamless experience and an engaging ad.

As the viewer scrolls down the page, the reactive part of the format will come alive at the bottom of the screen, making it highly interactive while staying non-intrusive. The user can then decide to click the ad and be directed either to a landing page or another high-impact format like video. 100% compliant with [betterads.org](http://betterads.org), touch is the new way to get the most out of your mobile advertising.



# phase 03

**Budget: 60%**

Alright, now it's show time! Black Friday is tomorrow so it is time to go all in with your budget. During this phase, the advertising market becomes saturated, this is why it was important to get your customers ready during the two previous phases. With a heavier budget, you can heavily reach back and get them to convert.

**Duration of phase: 5 days: Nov. 23rd to 27th**

The reason we suggest starting the day before Black Friday is if you offer in-store deals - that way, you can invite your targeted audience to travel to your store on Black Friday. In this scenario, the campaign lasts up until Cyber Monday, but some brands decide to extend their deals for a few more days - it is for you to decide how you want to scale it.

**Type of campaign**

At this point, you need to have a clear idea of your performance during phase 1 and 2 to get the right balance between prospecting and retargeting. If you have massive volume of visits on your website, you can invest heavily in retargeting, driving your targeted users back to your website. If the volume is less than expected, you should continue prospecting efforts. Here is what we suggest:

—— Retargeting - 75%

Now you have entered the offensive phase of the strategy. The past several days were spent getting your customers ready, informing them of your promotions, now it's time to drive them back to your website.

—— Prospecting - 25%

Even if D-day rolled around, it doesn't mean you can't still attract new customers. Phase 1 and 2 helped you figure out which targeting options and audiences reacted the best to your prospecting campaigns. Leverage this data to get the best results during phase 3.

**Formats: Customized and wide-reach**

—— Dynamic creatives

On Black Friday, you rarely only have one deal on one product - chances are you have numerous offers. With dynamic creatives, you don't have to build tons of different creatives, but instead build one template that will dynamically look at the offers on your website to target your audience according to their preferences. That means, you can have 50% off on Friday and 75% off on Monday, the banner will automatically update itself, saving you a lot of time on creation.



01

02

03

conversions

# phase 03

Dynamic creatives also ensure that your audience will always be retargeted with an offer that is relevant to them, reminding them of products they have shown interest in. This gives you a major advantage over shopping cart abandonment.

## — IAB standards

IAB standards are always good formats to leverage, for the reasons we presented in phase 1. At this stage, if you are still doing prospecting, you want to get as broad of a reach as possible. Phase 1 and 2 helped you figure out what products are most popular and to what audience. You can use IAB standards to showcase those products with a bold message about the offer.

## — Tone and message: Urgency

Up until now, you have given your customers all the necessary information and peaked their interests with your products - now, you need to drive them in. Your message needs to include your offer but also create a sense of urgency by setting a deadline on the promotion.

## Metrics to look at

### — Number of purchases/subscription

Now is the time to report on the goals that you set for yourself at the beginning of the campaign - Whether it is in term of revenue, number of online vs. in-store purchases or number of subscriptions, those numbers are the ones you will use to evaluate if your campaign was successful.

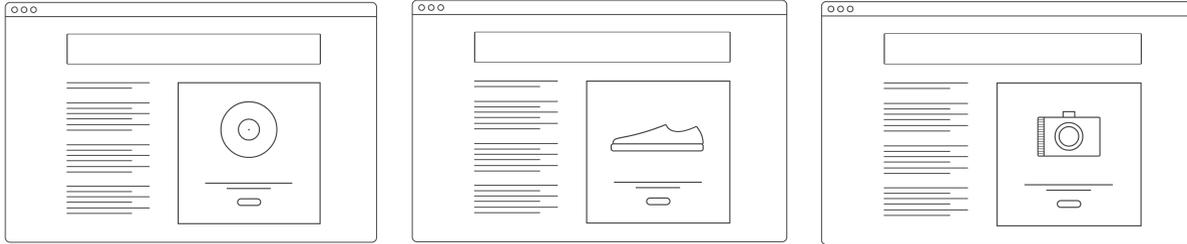
### — Number of visits on the website

Even if your ultimate metric to look at is number of purchases or revenue, looking at how many visits your website got can give you a set of key indicators such as your conversion rate.

phase 03

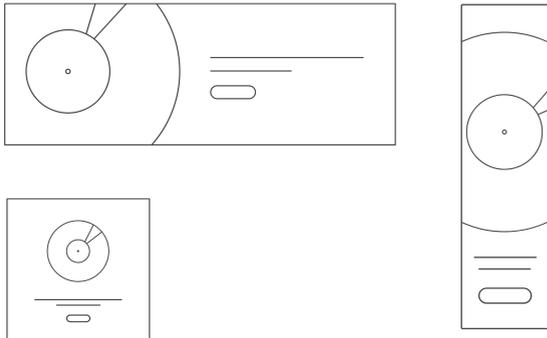
# standards formats

## creative dynamics



Dynamic creatives let you display banners that are automatically customized for the person seeing the ad! Imagine getting creatives built and tailored to your users' tastes, interests, and online behaviour or even to the weather! The possibilities are virtually limitless - all you have to do is set up your business rules and we take care of the rest.

## IAB standards



Standard formats are established by the Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB) and are accepted on all types of devices (desktop, mobile, tablet). They are compatible with all websites and offer great flexibility with their targeting options (contextual, data, weather, retargeting, etc.).

# The perks of a programmatic campaign

It comes as no surprise that the perks of online campaigns is the amount of data you can collect on your audiences, but more importantly on the reporting you can do throughout your campaign. Yes, it is important to report on your campaign's performance every step of the way as it give you important information to optimize your campaign. This data can be about your targeted audience, the formats you used, the language or time of the day that worked best and more.

But moreover, reporting is especially important at the end of the campaign as you will have information on the same data but in a much broader spectrum, which will be useful for future campaigns.

Don't forget that any campaign launched with district m comes with a free access to our reporting platform CAMP, giving you access to all the data necessary to a successful campaign. And, of course, unlimited support from our team of experts to make sure you reach the goals you set for yourself while staying in your budget.

If you are ready to give our Black Friday strategy a try, contact us so we can help you get ready for the holiday madness!

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