



The BFCM Email + SMS Survival Guide

Last-Minute Strategies
to Win the Biggest Sales
Weekend of the Year

Jimmy Kim &
Chase Dimond



Why Email + SMS Are Your Lifeline

Black Friday and Cyber Monday aren't just another sales weekend, they're the eCommerce moment of the year. Inboxes double in volume, SMS buzzes nonstop, and shoppers are hunting for the best deals with wallets wide open.

Here's the reality: ads get expensive, attention is scattered, and only the brands that cut through the noise get remembered. That's where email and SMS shine. They're the direct line to your customer when the competition is screaming for attention.

Even if you're late to the game, you're not out. With the right messages at the right times, you can still make BFCM your biggest weekend of the year. This playbook is your last-minute crash plan to win Black Friday and Cyber Monday without months of prep.



Why it matters during BFCM:

Shoppers expect exclusivity during Black Friday and Cyber Monday. They're primed to sign up for "VIP" lists if it means early access to limited deals. Your SMS list becomes your VIP club, and the earlier you can position it as the gateway to BFCM perks, the stronger your weekend will be.

Checklist

- ☐ Add a pop-up: "Black Friday Early Access via SMS Only."
- ☐ Update your homepage banner with "BFCM Codes Released by Text."
- ☐ Send a dedicated email: "Want early access to our Black Friday sale? Join SMS → 📱."
- ☐ Promote SMS on social: "We're texting the first Cyber Monday codes – don't miss it."
- ☐ Automate a welcome text promising BFCM timing: "Your early access code drops Friday. 🔥"
- ☐ Tag SMS signups as a segment for exclusive BFCM drops.
- ☐ Test compliance and opt-in flows, last-minute traffic will spike.
- ☐ Suppress non-SMS subscribers from early access emails (to highlight what they're missing).
- ☐ Add an SMS CTA to order confirmations: "Want Cyber Monday perks? Sign up here."

Step 2: Awareness (T-5 to T-4 Days)

Why it matters during BFCM:

The BFCM inbox is a war zone. Customers see 2x the usual email volume, and lock screens are crowded with flash sale alerts. If you're not showing up consistently with "Black Friday starts soon" and "Cyber Monday is coming" reminders, you'll be invisible when it counts.

Checklist

- ☐ Send one teaser email per day with a BFCM countdown ("Black Friday starts Friday").
- ☐ Send one SMS teaser per day with short hype copy ("Cyber Monday in 3 days 🔥").
- ☐ Add countdown timers to every email.
- ☐ Keep subject lines blunt: "Friday. Midnight. Don't miss it. 👁️"
- ☐ Tease categories: "Your Cyber Monday favorites are almost here."
- ☐ Format mobile-first: short copy, bold text, thumb-friendly CTAs.
- ☐ Cross-link: emails push SMS signups for "early BFCM access."
- ☐ Suppress VIPs – they'll get exclusive Black Friday early access campaigns.
- ☐ Track opens/clicks to retarget "warm" shoppers right before launch.

Engagement (T-3 to T-2 Days)

Why it matters during BFCM:

Exclusivity is the engine of Black Friday and Cyber Monday. This is where you separate the insiders from the crowd. Customers want to feel like they're getting first crack at deals that will sell out fast.

Checklist

- ☐ Send VIP email: "Your Black Friday early access is live now! 🥳"
- ☐ Send non-VIP email: "Want early access to Cyber Monday deals? Join SMS."
- ☐ Text VIPs their early access code/link.
- ☐ Tease perks: "VIPs get free shipping during BFCM, don't share 🤫."
- ☐ Preview limited-edition Black Friday bundles.
- ☐ Share behind-the-scenes prep in email/SMS to make it feel like an event.
- ☐ Run a poll: "Which Cyber Monday deal should we drop first?"
- ☐ Automate early access reminders to VIPs who haven't clicked.
- ☐ Segment loyalists with personalized perks (like double rewards points).
- ☐ Use urgency framing in SMS: "Only the first 200 VIPs get this Black Friday perk."

Why it matters during BFCM:

Shoppers are comparing 10 different Black Friday carts at once. If you don't address doubts in advance, you'll lose to a competitor who did. Almost half of all abandoned carts come from surprise costs, and BFCM buyers won't wait around for clarification.

Checklist

- ☐ Send FAQ email: "Yes, Black Friday orders ship before Christmas. 🎄 "
- ☐ Cover shipping speed, return policy, checkout ease.
- ☐ Add sticky banners with BFCM guarantees ("Ships free + arrives on time").
- ☐ Send SMS reassurance: "Your Cyber Monday shopping is risk-free: free returns + fast shipping."
- ☐ Include testimonials: "5 stars ⭐ arrived in 2 days, perfect gift."
- ☐ Share social proof: "10,000+ happy BFCM shoppers last year."
- ☐ Retarget clickers with testimonial-heavy emails/SMS.
- ☐ Segment first-time shoppers and emphasize trust factors.
- ☐ Segment repeat buyers and frame it as loyalty rewards.
- ☐ Double-check deliverability, don't risk your big pre-BFCM email hitting spam.

Conversion (Day-Of: Black Friday + Cyber Monday)

Why it matters during BFCM:

This is it, the most competitive 48 hours of the year. Everyone is flooding inboxes with flashy graphics. The brands that win keep it simple: blunt subject lines, plain-text style emails, and urgent lock-screen texts that say exactly what customers need to know: the sale is live, and it won't last long.

Checklist

- ☐ Schedule 3 emails on Black Friday:
 - **Morning:** Launch ("It's live - shop now").
 - **Midday:** Reminder ("Going fast! don't wait.").
 - **Evening:** Final call ("Ends at midnight 🕒").
- ☐ Schedule 3 emails on Cyber Monday (same cadence as Friday).
- ☐ Pair each launch + final email with an SMS send.
- ☐ Keep SMS <20 words for instant clarity.
- ☐ Automate cart recovery SMS within 30 minutes of abandonment.
- ☐ Equip live agents with scripts for VIP cart saves ("We'll upgrade you to free express shipping if you checkout now").
- ☐ Segment VIPs with stronger urgency ("Your early-access perk ends at midnight").
- ☐ Send plain-text versions of emails to cut through crowded inboxes.
- ☐ Monitor hourly performance and resend to non-openers mid-day.
- ☐ Keep an eye on deliverability, high volume means higher spam risk.

Post-Purchase & Retention (T+1 Day → Beyond)

Why it matters during BFCM:

BFCM shouldn't be a one-night stand. The real money is in turning bargain hunters into repeat buyers who stick around in December, January, and beyond. Post-purchase emails consistently drive higher engagement than promos, and fun SMS updates can turn a one-time order into lasting loyalty.

Checklist

- ☐ Send a thank-you email within 24 hours (personal tone, gratitude).
- ☐ Follow up with a product education email 48 hours later.
- ☐ Deliver fun SMS updates: "Your Black Friday order just left Santa's workshop 📦."
- ☐ Run an encore "Cyber Week" campaign for BFCM buyers only.
- ☐ Segment BFCM purchasers for future launches/promotions.
- ☐ Invite buyers into your loyalty or referral program.
- ☐ Share UGC from BFCM shoppers (unboxings, hauls).
- ☐ Encourage reviews/testimonials, prime them with a small incentive.
- ☐ Automate replenishment SMS if your product is consumable.
- ☐ Spotlight BFCM buyers in your community content ("Here's how our Cyber Monday shoppers styled theirs").

Last-Minute ≠ Lost Cause

Black Friday and Cyber Monday don't reward the prettiest campaigns; they reward the brands that show up consistently, with urgency, across inboxes and lock screens. Even if you're behind, you can still:

- ✓ Build your SMS list as the VIP gateway to BFCM.
- ✓ Tease and hype your sale with countdowns and blunt messaging.
- ✓ Make customers feel special with early access.
- ✓ Crush objections before they derail carts.
- ✓ Go hard on urgency during the two most competitive days of the year.
- ✓ Delight new buyers with thoughtful post-purchase touches.

BFCM is chaotic, but it's also the single best chance to grow revenue and relationships at scale. Treat this checklist like your crash plan, and you won't just survive, you'll leave Cyber Week with momentum that carries you through the holidays and into the new year.

What's next?

Want to Go Deeper?

If this playbook gave you a taste of how powerful email and SMS can be, imagine what you could do with a full framework, real-world case studies, and proven campaign templates.

That's exactly what you'll find inside eCom Email Certified, our flagship course for eCommerce retention marketers who want to master email + SMS beyond the big sales weekends.

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