



UNWRAP Q4's GOLDEN MOMENTS



Your guide to planning and activation across the Premium Web

Welcome to our latest Ozone insights paper, your essential guide to planning and activation across the Premium Web in Q4. This two-part guide is designed to help you add some festive flair to your digital advertising plans, enabling you to make the most of the season's golden opportunities with Ozone.

WHAT TO EXPECT IN Q4 2024

Q4 is always the golden quarter, but each year from October to December brings its own unique circumstances. In recent years, we've witnessed a global pandemic, celebrated a winter World Cup, and faced economic strain due to the cost of living crisis. So, what can we expect to see in 2024?

With the UK General Election and a summer of sport behind us – at the time of writing, England's men's football team had just lost their second consecutive European Championship final and the Paris Olympics has just wrapped – the fourth quarter promises to be packed with significant events.

Reasons to be cheerful

The 2024 election brought a new Labour Government under Prime Minister Keir Starmer, with the slogan 'Change begins'. While change won't happen overnight, there's a renewed sense of optimism after a prolonged period of political disillusionment.

This positive outlook should be further boosted by a strong performance from Team GB at the Paris Olympic and Paralympic Games. Combined with the usual festive cheer, this will create an ideal environment for more emotive and creative advertising, resonating well with consumers. According to the Advertising Association's 'Value of Trust' research, 'Enjoyment' is the top reason consumers trust advertising, making Q4 the perfect time for memorable ad campaigns.

Christmas without the crunch?

In Q4 2023, UK inflation was at a staggering 9.4%, the highest since 1990. By May 2024, inflation had dropped to 2.0%, reaching the Bank of England's target for the first time since July 2021. Despite a much-welcomed cut in interest rates in early August, sticky inflation may keep prices high for food, household bills, and transport later in the year.



So, what does this mean for consumer confidence? With budgets tight, second-hand gifting or regifting should remain popular, yet the urge to splurge could also emerge, especially on little luxuries. Just as consumers have prioritised holidays during the cost of living crisis, they're likely to do the same with their festive spending. Expect Black Friday, Cyber Monday, and other sales events to play a crucial role as consumers hunt for deals.

In 2023, high inflation and interest rates dampened consumer confidence, leading to a near 50% drop in reader engagement with Online Shopping content from June to September. However, interest in major online sales like Black Friday remained strong, driving high levels of engagement. From Q4 onwards, Online Shopping activity has consistently been five times higher than average, a trend we anticipate will continue in 2024.

Black Friday, in particular, remains resilient despite economic challenges. We expect strong engagement again this year as our publishers tap into this eager audience and share top shopping tips for savvy consumers.

America votes

Although outside the UK, the US Presidential Election in November will undoubtedly have global repercussions. The fiercely contested campaign has already ruled incumbent president, Joe Biden, out and seen Democratic nominee Kamala Harris go viral thanks to Charlie XCX's Brat endorsement. Whatever the outcome, the geopolitical impact will attract significant attention in the UK, with premium publisher coverage likely to captivate online readers.

During the November 2020 election, Presidential Elections page views accounted for nearly a quarter of all Politics engagement across our platform – 63 times higher than usual. We expect similar levels of interest this year.

In other US news, Netflix has secured global rights to broadcast the NFL's two Christmas Day games. Given the growing popularity of the sport in the UK and the public's fascination with the Travis Kelce-Taylor Swift relationship, Christmas 2024 might have a distinctly American flavour.

More time to get away

With both Christmas Day and New Year's Day falling on a Wednesday, those with remaining annual leave can enjoy a 16-day break by taking just six days off. This extended time off provides an opportunity for quality time with family and friends, potentially leading to an increase in both UK staycations and overseas holidays during the festive period.

With over-tourism protests seen in popular summer destinations, those opting to travel in the quieter winter months may enjoy European destinations at a more relaxed pace. Travel Tuesday, the popular US holiday booking day in November, could also become a key festive booking opportunity for British consumers this year.



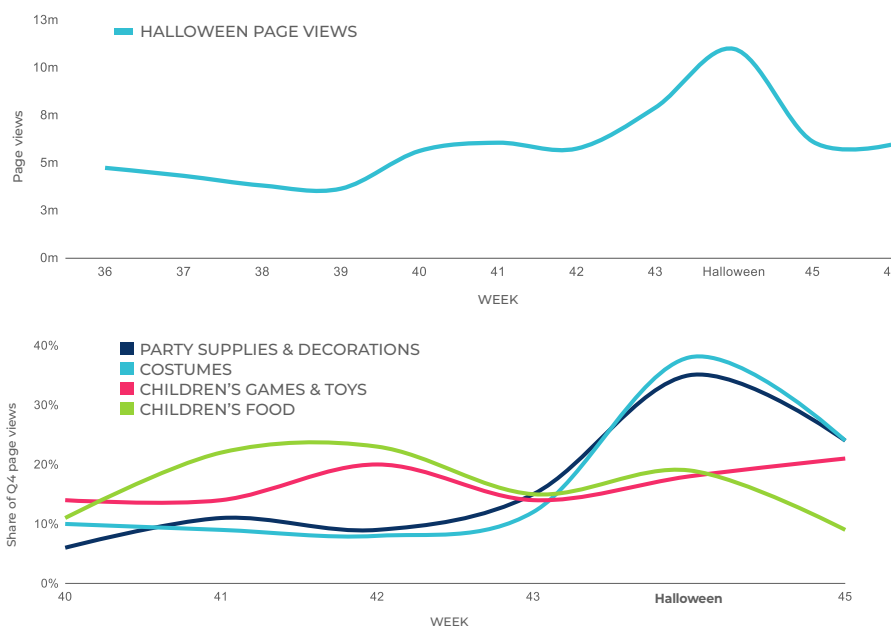
Q4's sparkling seasonal moments

In this guide, we'll also explore the key seasonal moments where reader engagement is set to surge throughout Q4. Part two will focus on the content areas that will see sustained interest from October to December.

Halloween's a party starter

Like other one-off seasonal events, such as Valentine's Day and Mother's Day, reader engagement peaks during Halloween week. Content related to Costumes, Decorations, and Children's Activities can generate up to 10m page views.

Reader engagement with Halloween content and topics

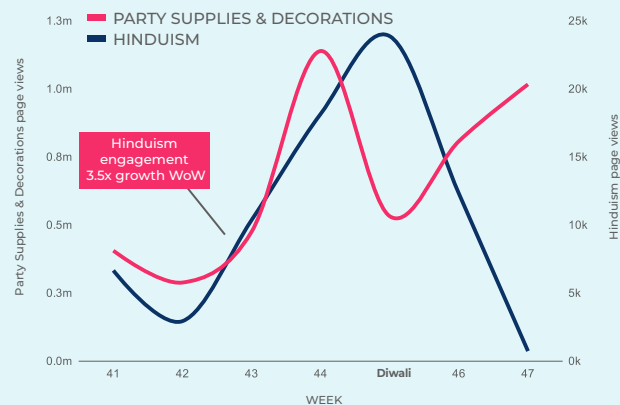


The critical trigger for Halloween engagement occurs about four weeks prior, in early October. Brands should aim to reach audiences at the start of this research phase to maximise impact.

Diwali lights the way

Ozone's commitment to supporting diverse publishers enables advertisers to connect with a wide range of audiences across the UK. We reach 76% of ethnically diverse readers, about 5.2m people each month, with 80% engaging weekly and two-fifths daily.

Diwali is a prime example, driving significant engagement with Hinduism content. Interest begins to build two weeks before Diwali, with engagement increasing by 3.5 times. Party Supplies and Decorations sees the greatest growth, particularly one week before the celebration, with a 2.5x increase in page views.



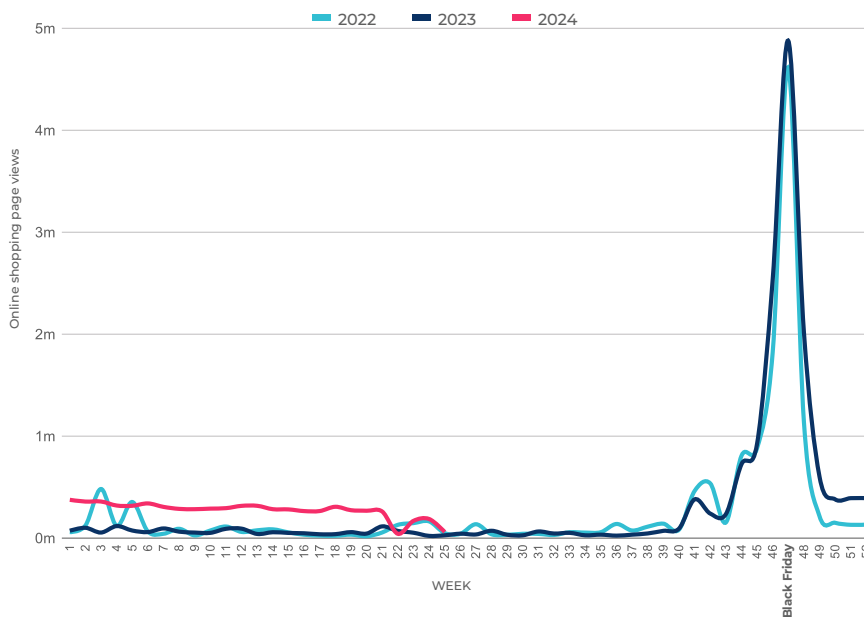
With Diwali starting on 31 October this year, brands should begin their campaigns by mid-October to be part of the crucial preparation period.



Black Friday fuels shopping

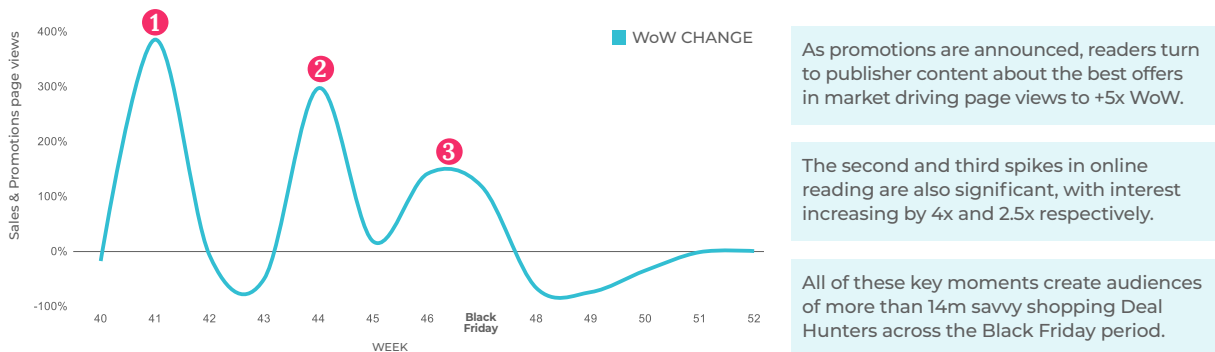
Online Shopping content faced challenges in 2023, with engagement falling by 48% from June to September due to high prices and tight budgets. However, interest in key sales events like Amazon Prime Day and Black Friday remained strong, driving high volumes even during periods of low consumer spending. From Q4 onwards, Online Shopping page views increased by five times on average, a trend likely to continue in 2024. Black Friday, in particular, remains resilient, with engagement expected to match previous years as publishers maximise audience reach.

Big sales impact on online shopping interest



There are three key trigger moments for Black Friday engagement, starting as early as mid-October when discounts are announced. The first spike in engagement increases by nearly five times week-on-week, with subsequent spikes also significant. These moments create audiences of over 14m deal hunters across the Premium Web.

While Black Friday is the key day for consumers to remember, nowadays brands go live with their promotions in October to maximise the opportunity for increased sales.

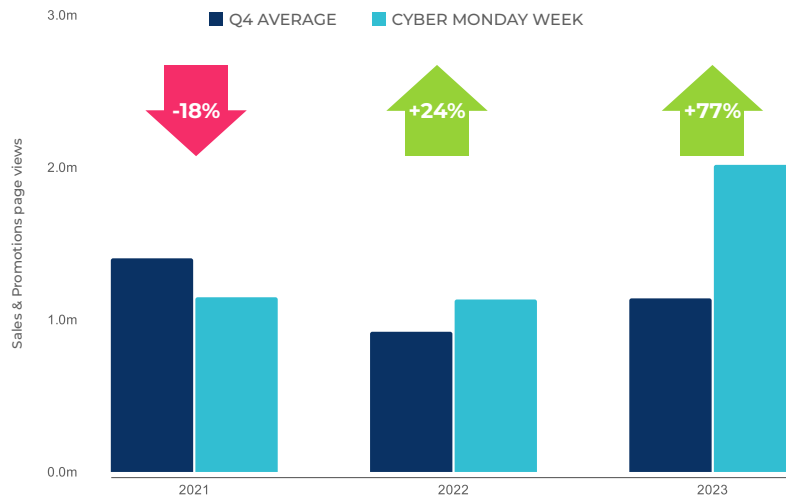


Gifting trends differ from online shopping, with interest in gift inspiration building steadily through Q4 and peaking at Christmas. The last days of October see the most significant growth in gifting engagement, up nearly 50% week-on-week, making it a crucial period for brands targeting gift shoppers.

Cyber Monday powers tech

Cyber Monday, though smaller than Black Friday, continues to grow in significance. Despite the cost of living crisis, engagement with tech deals on Cyber Monday increased by 36% in 2023 and 56% last year. This trend is expected to continue in 2024.

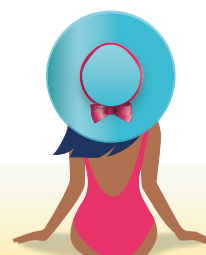
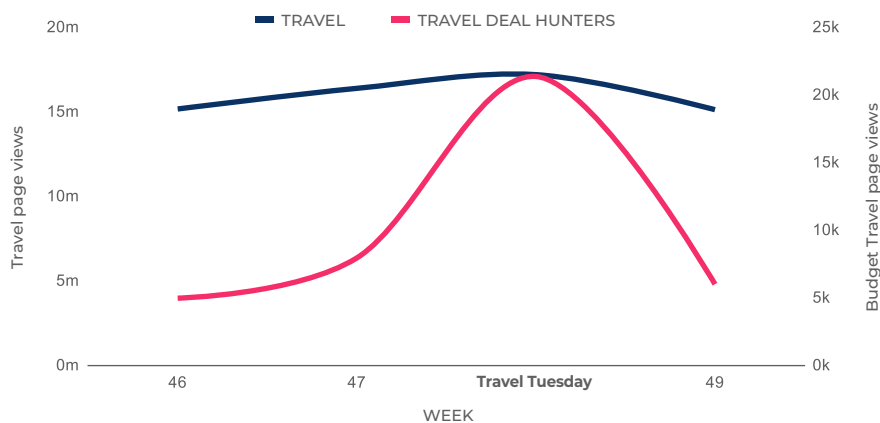
Reader engagement with Sales & Promotions content



Brits embrace Travel Tuesday

Travel Tuesday, originating in the US in 2017, is gaining traction in the UK. While November sees modest travel interest growth (up to 8% during Black Friday week), Travel Tuesday drives a 170% increase in reader volumes for Budget Travel content. This presents a valuable opportunity for travel brands to connect with audiences keen to secure holiday bargains, potentially reaching beyond their usual target audiences.

Reader engagement with Travel and Budget Travel



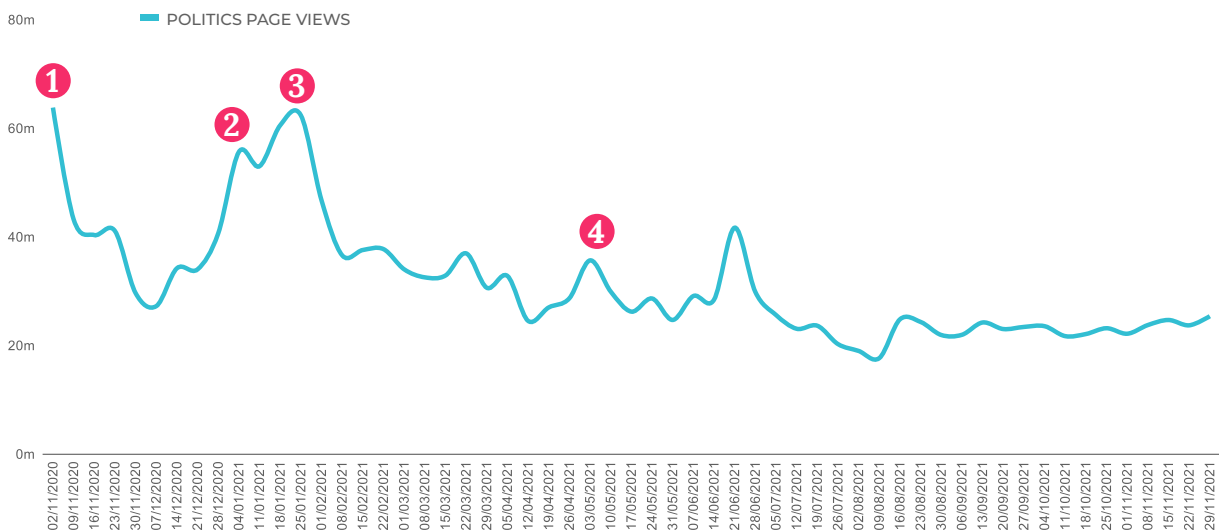
And finally, America votes for change

The 2020 US Presidential Election generated the third-largest spike in political engagement in Ozone's five years of data collection. Following the election, over 1 billion Politics page views were recorded, with 40m views by 6m unique readers each week from November through President Biden's first 100 days.

In the 12 months following the election, four of the five largest spikes in reader engagement were driven by key moments in US politics:

- 1 Joe Biden's election as the 46th US President – weekly page views peaked at 64m
- 2 Congress certifying Biden's victory and the Capitol riots – 56m page views
- 3 Biden's inauguration – 62m page views
- 4 The end of Biden's first 100 days – 36m page views

Reader engagement with Politics content 2020-2021



While UK elections typically generate higher spikes in engagement, the impact of significant US political events should not be underestimated. In 2024, with growing concern over fake news, publishers can expect increased traffic from readers seeking reliable information, creating a substantial opportunity for advertisers.

