

HAPPY DIGITAL

HOLIDAYS

**TECHNOLOGY, CULTURE AND
EMERGING HOLIDAY TRADITIONS**

Our behaviors, expectations and rituals during the holidays are being transformed by the influence of digital culture. The digital culture continues to shift — how we interact with one another and how we behave as individuals. At Sequence we are fascinated with this transformation and explore its possibilities everyday with our clients. We know that consumers want a balance between the digital and physical and that brands need to build effective bridges to span those distinct consumer experiences.

During the holidays, among the most popular gifts will be smartphones, tablets, gaming consoles and devices, HDTVs and other gadgets. These are gifts that will be enjoyed throughout the year, but how are consumers using technology specifically during the holidays? Technology can help consumers improve their shopping experience, communicate with friends and family, manage their hectic holiday travel, reduce stress and save time.

**CONSUMER INSIGHTS:
SECOND EDITION**

In this second installment of a new series of consumer insights, Sequence set out to explore how technology plays a role during the holidays, how it impacts existing holiday traditions, and if it has the potential to create new ones. We looked at how people spend time with their friends and family, and how technology can help them better enjoy the holidays as well as manage the scheduling, shopping, travel and logistics that can sometimes be overwhelming during the busy season. We also looked at the balance between digital and physical worlds — where the boundaries are clear and where they are become blurred.

We hope you find some value in these insights about emerging holiday traditions and connected consumer experiences. We wish you and yours a wonderful holiday season. Tweet us your feedback at [@sequenceSF](https://twitter.com/sequenceSF).

JOJO ROY
Chief Executive Officer
Sequence

CLASSIC HOLIDAY TRADITIONS MAKE WAY FOR NEW TECHNOLOGY TRADITIONS

BACK TO THE FUTURE: HOLIDAY TRADITIONS IN 2015

HOLIDAY CLASSICS THAT STAY IN STYLE



50%

Of **consumers** say they watch holiday specials like The Grinch, Charlie Brown Christmas, Miracle on 34th St., etc.



44%

Of **consumers** say their family plays board games or other games (e.g. cards) together after the holiday meal.



37%

Of **consumers** say they watch sports as a group.

MAKING QUALITY TIME COUNT



39%

Of **consumers** say they prefer to call their family and friends to schedule a time to meet up.



35%

Of **consumers** say they make time for meals with friends or family when they are out doing errands or shopping during the holiday.



21%

Of **consumers** enjoy shopping at stores and shopping areas because it is a tradition to spend time with friends or family.

PREPARING THE FESTIVE FEAST



83%

Of **consumers** say regardless of the time of year, they always go shopping at the grocery store.



29%

Of **men** say they are more likely to go shopping at the grocery store during the holidays because it is festive during that time of year.



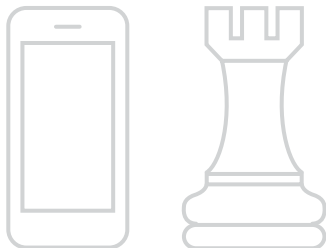
15%

Of **women** say that their smartphone or tablet is essential for planning and preparing holiday meals.

CLASSIC HOLIDAY TRADITIONS MAKE WAY FOR NEW TECHNOLOGY TRADITIONS

I'M DREAMING OF A DIGITAL HOLIDAY

HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT 2.0



40%

Of **consumers** prefer to play a game on a mobile device with friends and family that involves more socializing and playing in a group; 56% of millennials agree.

22%

Of **consumers** say all ages in their family play mobile or video games together.

10%

Of **consumers** say their family plays video or mobile games as a group, instead of board games, after a holiday meal; 16% of millennials agree.

28%

Of **consumers** say they binge watch TV or movies on Netflix as a family; 37% of millennials do the same.

HOLIDAY GIFTING 2.0



42%

Of **consumers** say technology makes it easier to create a gift wish list.

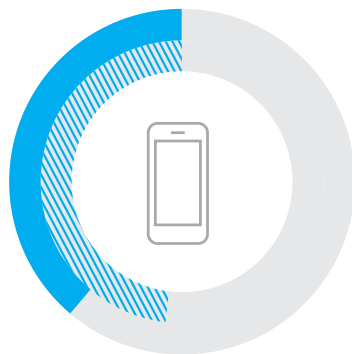
53%

Of **consumers** say they enjoy shopping online for holiday presents because searching and shopping online helps them find the right gifts; 60% of women agree.

CLASSIC HOLIDAY TRADITIONS MAKE WAY FOR NEW TECHNOLOGY TRADITIONS

I'M DREAMING OF A DIGITAL HOLIDAY

TEXT THE HALLS



38%

Of **women** say they text each other all the time instead of talking on the phone.

48%

Of **millennials** say with group texts, it's easy to schedule time to meet up with multiple friends.

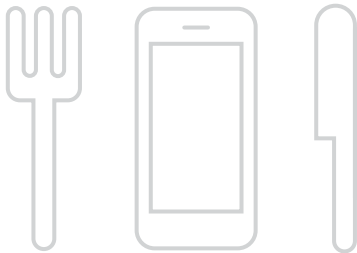
WHAT WE'VE LEARNED

Holiday traditions continue across generations – from watching classic holiday movies and playing parlor games after dinner to shopping in stores and connecting with friends and family over the phone. But as technology plays a stronger role in our culture, these traditions evolve. From Netflix binge watching and mobile/tablet game play to online shopping and texting friends and family, and new ones emerge. These emerging traditions are even more evident in the increasingly influential millennial generation. Brands that are listening and focused on growing with the next generation of consumers will find these newer traditions and use of technology as a inspiration for designing and developing new connected experiences for consumers.

TEXTING MISS MANNERS: TECH ETIQUETTE AT THE HOLIDAY TABLE

CONVENIENCE OR DIGITAL DISTRACTION?

TEXTING AT THE TABLE?



36%

Of **consumers** say their family or friends are good about keeping their smartphones away so they can enjoy each others' company.

44%

Of **consumers** say it's never appropriate to have your smartphone at the holiday table; 54% of baby boomers agree.

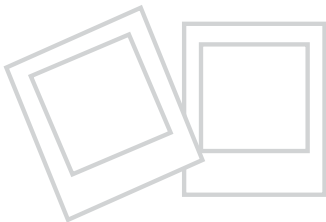
34%

Of **consumers** say their family or friends are increasingly distracted with looking at their smartphones.

31%

Of millennials say smartphones at the holiday table aren't a big deal; yet 35% of millennials say their family or friends are increasingly distracted with looking at their smartphones.

SELFIES AT THE TABLE



39%

Of **millennials** post pictures of their holiday meals to social media.

34%

Women say smartphones at the holiday table is appropriate to take and share photos only.

WHAT WE'VE LEARNED

It's pretty convenient to have quick and easy access to a camera, social media, email, and entertainment on your smartphone, but it can also add tension to holiday traditions and be distracting at the holiday table. However, consumers agree that there are some exceptions to the rule - it's acceptable to have your smartphone at the dinner table when it comes to sharing photos of the holiday meal on social media. Consumers want to share their holiday experience with their social network, and brands, especially those that play a strong role in holiday traditions, should take notice and develop a social media strategy to connect with their customers during the holidays. At the same time, they should know when to step aside and let families and friends enjoy each other's company at this time of year.

TECHNOLOGY MAKES LIFE EASIER, ESPECIALLY DURING THE HOLIDAYS

OUT WITH SOME OLD, IN WITH SOME NEW

One in three consumers said they would sleep instead of meeting friends for drinks, baking cookies and other holiday activities if mobile technology helped save three hours of their time.

JINGLE BUZZ, JINGLE BUZZ



57%

Of **consumers** say thanks to text messaging and social media, they're in more contact with their family; 63% of women agree.



52%

Of **consumers** say when they use social media to see family from out of town, they feel like they know what's going on in their lives.



25%

Of **consumers** say instead of a traditional phone call, they will video chat with their family members who don't live close by.

RETAIL: BLACK FRIDAY BACKLASH

65%

Of **consumers** say they would never stand in line for Black Friday deals.

36%

Of **consumers** say instead of making them shop on Black Friday, retailers should let loyal customers cash in on the same deals at their convenience.

35%

Of **millennials** say Cyber Monday is when you find the best deals, not Black Friday.

DINING: TURKEY + TECH



17%

Of **consumers** like to order take-out during the holidays to relieve stress and make their lives easier.

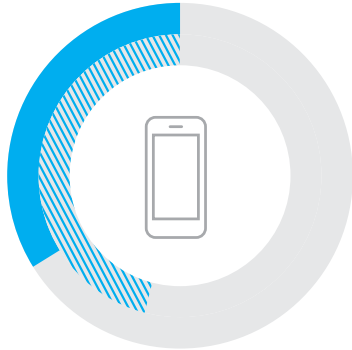
10%

Of **men** order meals ahead of time on their mobile app to pick up food and avoid long lines.

TECHNOLOGY MAKES LIFE EASIER, ESPECIALLY DURING THE HOLIDAYS

CONNECTED DEVICES, HAPPIER HOLIDAYS

JINGLE ALL THE WAY



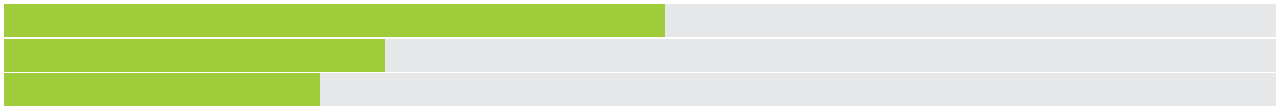
33%

Of **consumers** say they would be lost without their smartphone during holiday travel.

46%

Of **consumers** say they rely on apps like Waze, Google Maps, Apple Maps to guide them to their destination (e.g. to my grandmother's house); 53% of millennials agree.

HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS



53% Of **consumers** say they text friends and family when they take off and land.

30% Of **consumers** say they monitor their flight/train status with their favorite travel app.

25% Of **consumers** say they use a mobile app for their boarding pass when they fly.

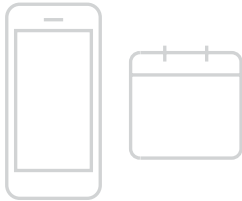
WHAT WE'VE LEARNED

Consumers are dreaming of extra sleep and a stress-free holiday experience. While the reality is that the holidays can be stressful, technology can help relieve some of this unneeded stress that comes from traveling to holiday shopping to connecting with family and friends. It's important for brands to understand what their customers want and when they want it. Traditionally, Black Friday was the best day for deals, but technology has shifted the way consumers shop. Brands need to recognize the change and create a technology-focused omnichannel customer experience that allows consumers to get their holiday tasks completed, allowing them to spend more time with friends and family...or catch up on some sleep.

EMBRACING THE DIGITAL HOLIDAY EXPERIENCE

EARLY ADOPTERS

EMBRACING THE DIGITAL HOLIDAY EXPERIENCE - SMALL PERCENTAGE OF EMERGING CONSUMERS ARE ADOPTING INTERACTIVE TECH



22%

Of **men** say they keep a family calendar to track holiday activities

15%

Of **millennials** use mobile apps to track nutrition and calorie intake to manage

CONVENIENCE IS KING



10%

Of **millennials** say they are more likely to use “convenience” mobile apps for dry cleaning, meal delivery, valet parking and other services/tasks during the holidays to free up time in my schedule for more important things.



19%

Of **consumers** ages 30-44 are prefer to use mobile payment options if available to save time for dining and restaurant during the holiday.



13%

Of **millennials** say to save time, they will use Uber or take a taxi to avoid looking for parking at my destination

WHAT WE'VE LEARNED

An emerging group of consumers are adopting interactive technology in many different ways to improve their holiday experience. This group of power users, many of whom are Digital Firsts, have grown up in a world where almost everything is connected and digital culture for them is second nature. They may not be your customers today, but very well may be in the future. The trends from this emerging consumer base show that there is a push for the use of interactive technology to address fundamental consumer needs: convenience, time and information management. Are these a reflection of an increasingly busy lifestyle? Perhaps, but at the core, they are a reflection of peoples' desire to spend more time on the important things in their lives – time with family, friends and personal pursuits. Brands should contemplate the needs of this emerging customer base as they think about how all of their customers communicate, transact and interact not only during the peak holiday season, but across the year.

CONCLUSION

During this hectic, stressful time of the year, brands must step back and take inventory of their consumers' expectations of the holiday season, aligning their strategy to what consumers want, not what the brand thinks they want. Today's consumers are interested in blending traditions with technology to create a seamless holiday experience, and brands that focus on customer experience will thrive.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

Brands that rely heavily on holiday sales should capture consumer feedback and look for trends during this busy time of year, and consider its implications across the entire year and customer lifecycle.

There are clear opportunities to design and develop new products and services for a consumer seeking a positive and productive interplay of the digital and personal elements of their lives.

Think about smart digital – tools that integrate technology into the everyday needs of consumers. These can also be tools that seamlessly integrate functions or transactions, for example travel and communications. Don't give consumers more tools to clutter their life, give them smart tools to make it more efficient.

Challenge the status quo, like retail traditions such as Black Friday, and listen to your customers about where they want brand interactions – and where they don't.

Watch for consumer trends and technology adoption from the emerging group of digital firsts as you develop new products or services and plan for your future customer base.

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In October 2015, Sequence surveyed over 1,000 U.S. consumers ages 18+. This research offers a snapshot of consumers' perception of technology's role during the holidays. This survey was completed online and responses were random, voluntary and completely anonymous.

