

Wunderkind

Marks the Spend

*A Treasure Map for Turning
BFCM Intent into Revenue*



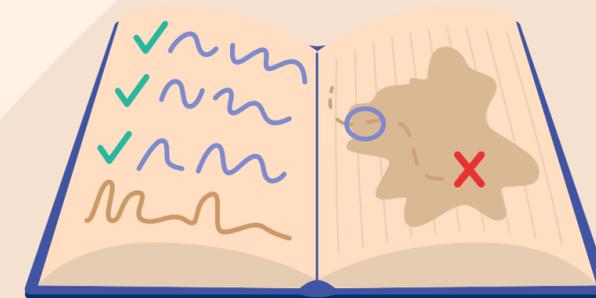
Stormy Seas & Steady Hands: Navigating BFCM's Economic Crosswinds

Black Friday isn't just a sales event anymore. It's a high-stakes expedition. And this year, the landscape is treacherous: inflation, shifting consumer trust, and tariffs turning everyday purchases into carefully charted decisions. Marketers? You're expected to navigate it and still strike gold.

The truth: BFCM isn't the end-of-year sprint, it's the main voyage. And it demands more than bold discounts. It requires strategic navigation powered by first-party data, identity resolution, and cross-channel decisioning, ideally via agentic AI.

So welcome to the guide that doesn't just tell you where to go. It shows you how to chart the course and claim what's yours. In this book, we'll decode real consumer behavior shaped by

economic pressure and rising prices. We'll map what worked — and what didn't — during BFCM 2024. Then, we'll walk through proven strategies that combine AI and identity to engineer success, not just chase it. If you're ready to future-proof your brand in uncertain waters, let's plot the smartest Q4 of your career.



Shoppers with Compasses: Welcome to the Era of Calculated Spending

Consumers are more cost-conscious than ever before, and it's not just a feeling—it's fact. [According to Wunderkind's 2025 Tariffs Consumer Impact Survey](#), 76% of Americans say they're willing to switch brands for better prices. That loyalty cliff is steep. Even consumers who typically stick with their go-to brands are jumping ship if it means saving 10–20%. Price now outweighs brand in the hierarchy of purchase decisions. Loyalty hasn't disappeared, but it's certainly on pause.

Behind this behavior is a confluence of economic stressors. Tariff-driven price increases are rippling across product categories — from groceries to apparel to tech — and 91% of shoppers say they're fully aware of it. That level of awareness has real implications: 66% of consumers say even a 20% discount is

enough to make them change brands. Gen Z and Millennials, in particular, are scanning for value like never before, using comparison tools, signing up for price alerts, and turning to resale markets. They're acting with the same budget-minded precision as their Gen X parents.

The result is a calculated, cautious shopper. Nearly half of all respondents plan to delay large or non-essential purchases until BFCM or similar sale events. These aren't impulse buyers—they're timing their spend like it's a chess match. And brands that fail to meet their expectations for transparency, value, and personalization risk being ignored entirely. Keep in mind, 49% of consumers believe tariffs will last at least until the end of 2025, with 36% believing they could extend into 2026. This could be a long chess match if that turns out to be true.

This shift changes how brands must show up. It's no longer about loud discounts or endless urgency. Consumers are looking for justification: Why this product? Why now? AI is the answer to that complexity. Wunderkind's agentic AI uses real-time behavioral signals — scroll patterns, timing delays, bounce rates — and fuses them with contextual economic data to find the right moment to trigger engagement. It turns wait-and-see shoppers into confident buyers by making sure every message, offer, and timing decision feels intentional.

In today's economic climate, showing up smarter isn't a bonus. It's survival.



Clues from the Past: What 2024 Whispered — And 2025 Is Shouting

Last year told us everything — if we were listening. Mobile shopping, which had plateaued post-pandemic, came surging back with force. Consumers weren't just browsing on their phones; they were buying. Often. And big. That shift made it abundantly clear: mobile-first isn't a nice-to-have — it's mission-critical. Your checkout experience, load speed, and mobile-friendly layouts are no longer competitive advantages. They're entry requirements.

Signups also soared. Some brands captured nearly 50% of their total yearly email and text opt-ins in November alone. Think about that: half your addressable audience raised their hand in a single month. And what's more, they did it willingly; during peak promotional pressure. That volume, combined with identity resolution and behavior-based retargeting, created a flywheel of performance that paid off far beyond the holiday window.

Keep in mind that 30% of consumers are currently browsing more websites looking for better deals because of tariffs. This means

you need an optimal acquisition strategy NOW. Opting in new site visitors today leads to more opportunity for BFCM revenue when you need it. Always be collecting data, but don't assume your ESP's basic pop-ups are working as well as they could. Identity partners like Wunderkind can more than double your acquisition rates using historical data on a given consumer to serve up that value exchange offer at the right moment and place on your website. That's data your brand doesn't have. Use it to your advantage.

Speaking of identity: this was the year it moved from background tech to front-stage MVP. Wunderkind's data showed that 33% of BFCM revenue was driven by known users: shoppers who were re-engaged through personalized, triggered messaging. These weren't blanket campaigns. They were highly individualized reminders, prompts, and nudges — timed to behavioral signals like browse depth, cart value, and session time.



Urgency still worked – but not on its own. Yes, we saw conversion spikes at 9 p.m. ET. “Ends at midnight” campaigns still pack a punch. But urgency without personalization is just noise. The brands that won combined time-sensitive triggers with real-time intelligence, knowing not just what to send, but who to send it to, when, and how.

That’s where AI changed the game. With a traditional tech stack, you can optimize. With Wunderkind’s Agentic AI, you orchestrate. You don’t just send faster – you send smarter. Our Autonomous Marketing Platform (AMP) reads shopper behavior in the moment, taps into trillions of data points across billions of devices, and uses that intelligence to deliver messaging in the most effective channel at exactly the right time. That means you have AI as a decisioning layer optimizing your messaging platforms to deliver the ultimate cross-channel experience for every single customer.

That’s not campaign marketing. That’s adaptive, autonomous, infinitely personalized performance marketing. And it’s not a trend. It’s the new standard. In 2025, the brands that dominate BFCM will be those that use AI not just to automate, but to reason, decide and deploy.



Ghost Ships and Gold: The Truth About BFCM Shoppers

The line between Black Friday and Cyber Monday has all but vanished. Consumers start shopping earlier and earlier — and they don't wait for the calendar to tell them when. That early intent can be misleading, though. High engagement often comes with high abandonment. More carts, more clicks, more... ghosting.

That's where identity becomes your secret weapon. When you can recognize who's on your site — even if they haven't logged in — you can lift the amount of opportunities to personalize messaging, both onsite during their visit or via email and text after they bounce. Identity turns fleeting visits into revenue. Especially critical are holiday-only shoppers: one-third of BFCM buyers don't return post-season unless you re-engage them thoughtfully.

The rich historical data an identity partner brings allows Agentic AI to help brands launch earlier, optimize in real time, and adapt with minimal manual input. Historical data means every consumer's messages are optimized for send times, messaging formats, and channel delivery to ensure you're always meeting the moment. And with identity resolution in place, you can suppress redundant prompts and deliver seamless, high-value experiences — even across multiple devices.



Rules of the Route: Mastering the New BFCM Playbook



Let's talk about execution. Because in Q4, your revenue lives and dies by how well you can activate, engage, and convert high-intent shoppers.

Email is still your revenue workhorse — but not just any email will do. It needs to be fast, responsive, and behaviorally intelligent. Think cart, product, and category abandonment sequences that update dynamically as shopper behavior shifts. Think welcome flows that adjust based on whether someone clicked an ad, browsed a product, or signed up for a loyalty program. With liquid variables, you can ensure that the offer in the subject line, body copy, and CTA all reflect your current onsite promo — without lifting a finger. And with AI driving cadence decisions, your brand knows exactly when to send — not based on a calendar, but based on real-time signals like scroll depth, session time, and category engagement.

Text

Text, meanwhile, is your urgency engine. It's how you reach high-intent shoppers in the moments that matter, before they bounce, before they convert elsewhere. MMS adds visual punch, but it only works when deployed thoughtfully. AI helps here too, determining:

- When to send text messages outside of peak hours to avoid inbox noise.
- Who gets a full MMS and who gets a crisp, concise SMS.
- What message will tip someone from interest into action based on previous engagement or cart size.



Onsite

Now let's talk onsite. This is where first impressions turn into first-party data – or disappear entirely. Passive overlays won't cut it.

Your opt-in experience should be:

- Timed precisely (based on exit intent, cart contents, or scroll behavior).
- Visually compelling (gamified formats like scratch-offs or spin-to-win still work).
- Adaptive (suppress for known users, tailor based on traffic source).

It's not about showing more popups—it's about showing the right experience to the right person at the right time.

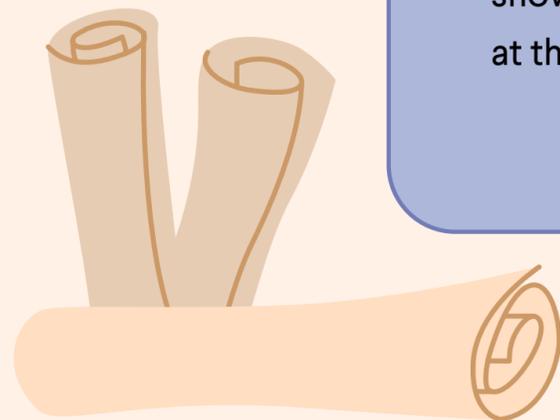
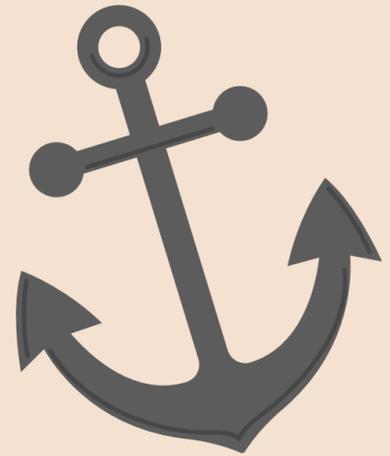
Timing

And timing? It's everything. BFCM engagement starts well before Black Friday and runs through the week after Cyber Monday.

AI helps you plan and adapt your timing strategy by:

- Identifying peak conversion windows for different segments.
- Adjusting send frequency across email and text.
- Layering urgency (“ending soon,” “low stock,” “24-hour only”) based on
- real-time supply and demand data.

Multiple sends per day aren't just okay – they're often necessary. But they must be coordinated. That's the difference between spam and strategy. When each touchpoint is timely, relevant, and rooted in identity and AI-driven insight, your brand doesn't just participate in BFCM – it dominates it.



Beyond the Bounty: Building a Brand That Outlasts the Rush

BFCM may be a seasonal voyage, but it's also your clearest shot at plotting a course for long-term growth. The brands that win Q4 aren't just chasing holiday hype — they're using that momentum to expand their reach and build a smarter, always-on performance engine for the year ahead.

Email and text lists, when captured with intention and enriched with behavioral context, become more than messaging tools, they become high-value coordinates on your revenue map. When powered by Wunderkind's identity resolution and Agentic AI, these channels deliver precise, personalized messaging across email, text, ads, and onsite; right place, right time, right message. Every signal informs the next move. Every send

becomes a step closer to greater yield. That's the promise of the Wunderkind Autonomous Marketing Platform. AMP doesn't just automate your journey — it captains it. It listens, learns, and navigates in real time, pulling from billions of device signals, trillions of behavioral data points, and your own first-party insights to chart the smartest route to conversion.

With cross-channel decisioning handled by agentic AI, you're not simply increasing volume, you're increasing efficiency and velocity. That means higher order values, fewer discounts, and more profitable outcomes. And thanks to AMP's API-first design, you can leverage multiple data-in/data-out scenarios to optimize

personalization, identity and abandonment flows. API access means whichever data you need will fit seamlessly into your stack, when and where you want, becoming the performance engine driving your entire ship, not just another system in the background.

In a landscape where attention is scarce and margins are tight, autonomy is your compass. The brands that thrive don't guess — they steer with precision. And that's how you transform BFCM from a seasonal spike into a year-round strategy for scalable growth.



Wunderkind

Wunderkind is the leading AI-driven performance marketing solution that collects consent based, first-party data and identifies anonymous traffic for brands in order to scale hyper personalized one-to-one messages. Brands lean on the Wunderkind Identity Network, a proprietary database recognizing 9 billion devices, 1 billion consumers and observes 2 trillion digital transactions per year, to trigger the most impactful offers to their target audience at the right moment and in the right channel. This proprietary data is accessed by Wunderkind's Autonomous Marketing Platform, an AI engine which integrates seamlessly into a brands' existing ESP to boost performance across email, text and advertising channels. Wunderkind is the only performance solution that guarantees a lift in revenue for its clients and delivers over \$5 billion in directly attributable revenue annually for brands across a number of industries, often ranking as a top 3 revenue channel in clients' own analytics platforms. Brands such as Harley-Davidson, Perry Ellis, True Botanicals and Kendra Scott partner with Wunderkind to drive top-line revenue.

TRUE BOTANICALS



PERRY ELLIS



KENDRA
SCOTT