

Happy
Thanksgiving

Please note our office will be closed
November 23rd & 24th and
December 22nd - January 1st

Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!
2 COR 9:15

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

- Heading to a Conference? Make It Worth Your Time
- Three Ways to Win Back Inactive Email Subscribers
- Four Reasons to Support Local Businesses

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In the Beginning

The Background Stories on Thanksgiving Traditions

People follow traditions because “that’s the way it’s always been done,” but every custom started somewhere. Why turkey? What’s up with the wishbone? And who started the parade? Impress your guests when you dish about these traditions.

Eating turkey. Turkey was not the star of the show at the first feast in 1621; that didn’t happen until the mid-1800s. Magazine editor Sarah Josepha Hale read about the 1621 feast and used it as a model for an annual holiday dinner. She published recipes for turkey, stuffing and pumpkin pie, launching traditions that had nothing to do with the colonists. Today, nearly 88% of Americans eat turkey on Thanksgiving.

The Macy’s Parade. In the early 1900s, people began associating Thanksgiving with the holiday shopping season. To capitalize on this, Macy’s announced it would treat New York to a special event in 1924—the first Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade. Soon after, Macy’s partnered with NBC to broadcast the parade so people around the country could tune in.

Breaking the wishbone. This tradition dates back to ancient Roman times, when Etruscans fought over chicken and hen bones, which they believed would bring good fortune. The English inherited this tradition and introduced it to the New World. When they discovered the land was rampant with wild turkeys, they applied the custom to that bird instead.

Watching football. Football on Thanksgiving precedes the NFL. In fact, the earliest Turkey Day games date back to the 1890s. In the 1920s, the Detroit Lions began playing on Thanksgiving as a way to boost attendance. Other teams soon followed suit, but Detroit and Dallas are the two NFL teams that consistently play on Thanksgiving Day.

The presidential turkey pardon. Every year, the President frees one lucky turkey—this fairly recent tradition began with President George H.W. Bush. He gave the first official pardon to a turkey in 1989. The survivor lived out its days at a Virginia petting zoo.

Five Ways to Make Thanksgiving Easy as (Pumpkin) Pie

- 1 Buy your turkey pre-cooked from a local restaurant (though you may need to order days ahead).
- 2 Outsource some of your cooking by making your meal potluck.
- 3 Buy all your pies/desserts and bread rolls at a local bakery.
- 4 Wash potatoes in your dishwasher. Keep your mashed potatoes warm in a slow cooker.
- 5 Use your cooler (with ice) as an extra fridge.

WORDS TO LIVE BY

*“I suppose I will die never
knowing what pumpkin pie tastes
like when you have room for it.”*

—ROBERT BRAULT

IT’S WHAT’S INSIDE >>>

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Heading to a Conference? Make It Worth Your Time

It can be tough to get away from work when your inbox is full and your desk is piled high, but attending a conference could be what you need to get re-energized, re-focused and fall more in love with your job.

If you're planning to attend one this year, here are five ways to get more than just some cool swag.

Make connections before the conference starts.

Most conferences will have a social media presence with Facebook pages, Instagram accounts and Twitter handles. Connect with other attendees to pick their brains about relevant topics before the conference even begins.

Take advantage of on-site networking opportunities.

Once you're at the event, there will be built-in opportunities to meet people and connect with colleagues. Receptions, lunches, after-hours parties or excursions—get out and about in lieu of watching TV in your hotel.

Visit the exhibit hall.

Everyone loves the free swag and candy, but the industry partners manning their booths can also give you valuable information. Don't worry about getting stuck in a salesy conversation; you can always say "no thank you" and walk away.

Use social networking tools.

Connect with new colleagues and friends on LinkedIn—it's like adding them to a digital Rolodex. Tweet nuggets of information from your sessions. Engage with other conference-goers on the event's Facebook page. Also take advantage of the conference mobile app, if they have one.

Leave work at work.

When you're at a conference, be there 100%, if possible. Let your auto responder handle your emails for a few days and your coworkers hold down the fort. You'll get more out of the conference if you set your mind on being fully present.

Three Ways to Win Back Inactive Email Subscribers

It happens to the best of companies. Whether they sent emails too frequently or the content wasn't relevant enough, every business has email subscribers who stop engaging. It doesn't have to be the end; you can re-engage inactive subscribers if you approach them with a relevant win-back campaign. When you reach out, keep these points in mind:



1 Write compelling subject lines. Keep them short, clear and urgent.

- **Don't beat around the bush.** The best subject lines are short and to the point. Those with 6 to 10 words have the highest open rates, according to Retention Science.
- **Support the "from" line.** This tells the recipient who sent the email, and the subject line sells the recipient on opening it. Research shows readers often look at the from line first when deciding whether to open an email, and then the subject line.

2 Adopt HTML design best practices. When you create emails, be sure to:

- **Minimize images.** Even though images will engage your readers, limit your use of images to no more than 30% of your email template. Images won't load in several email service providers.
- **Use alt and title text.** Because your images may not load, be sure to apply both alt and title text behind the images so that text displays when the images don't show up.

3 Make the email content relevant. If it's not interesting to your subscriber, it doesn't matter how good it looks; it'll get deleted in a second.

- **Keep copy short.** The more words you include in an email, the less likely your viewer will read it or take action.
- **Include contact information.** You don't want to distract readers from your call to action, but you want to make it easy for them to contact you. Including contact information builds trust. Display it prominently.

Four Reasons to Support Local Businesses

With the holidays approaching, you may find yourself shopping more than usual for groceries, gifts and everything in between. While big box retailers and chains may offer enticing deals or more choices, there are some valuable benefits to both you and the community when you shop local. Here are four of them.

1 IT'S GOOD FOR YOUR HEALTH.

When you buy from local farmers and growers, you have access to fruits and vegetables that you know are chemical free, as well as grass-fed meats, fresh eggs and dairy products. There are also benefits to eating local honey, which is believed to help battle allergies.

2 IT'S GOOD FOR THE LOCAL ECONOMY.

When you buy local, significantly more of your money stays in the community. In fact, one Chicago study found that for every \$100 spent at a local business, \$68 remained in the city compared to only \$43 of each \$100 spent at a chain retailer.

3 IT GIVES YOUR COMMUNITY UNIQUE CHARACTER.

Cities across the country may have similar chain restaurants, grocery and department stores, but your favorite Saturday morning breakfast spot may be one of a kind. By supporting that local business, you help to preserve your community's unique culture.

4 YOU'LL GET BETTER CUSTOMER SERVICE.

If you've ever dealt with customer service for a large retailer, you know that finding someone who cares can be difficult. When you shop local, the business owner is usually directly connected to every employee in the store. That leads to a personal approach, which often gets problems solved quicker.



It's best not to colorize small text. It's okay to use color on large text, like headlines, or on smaller sizes down to about 12 points. But black works best for text smaller than that.



SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

The American Independent Business Alliance claims money spent at local small businesses generates **3.7 times more** direct local economic benefit than spending at chains.