Zoho Campaigns

Festive campaigns done right with Zoho Campaigns

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Introduction

Holidays occur throughout the year, and different countries celebrate different holidays. For example, while the holiday season in the US is between November and December, in India it revolves around Diwali, and in the Middle East it aligns with Ramadan. When you also take regional holidays, local festivals, and community events into account, the number of occasions increases, which in turn means, you'll have to send marketing emails more frequently. If your contacts are spread across multiple countries with diverse celebrations, you need to be holiday-ready all year long.

As we've entered a new year, it's the perfect time to plan your email marketing strategies for 2026. In this ebook, let's explore how you can prepare your holiday campaigns using Zoho Campaigns.

P.S. You can use these strategies not just for holiday marketing, but for all kinds of email marketing, product promotions, feedback emails, monthly reminders, and more. Your emails serve to connect you with your contacts—so why wait for some holiday to pop up when you can do it year-round using Zoho Campaigns?

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Why holidays are a marketer's biggest opportunity

You know why any given holiday season is important to you more than we do, so let's not waste time. During the holidays, people don't just shop; they celebrate through spending. And that's why countless brands try their best to be heard—all at the same time. But here, the key isn't just to send more emails, but to:

- Plan your campaigns in advance.
- Find the right audience.
- Create emails that matter to them.
- Ensure that they receive their emails at the right.

Zoho Campaigns helps by offering built-in personalization features, smart scheduling, segmentation, and automation.

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Plan your campaigns in advance

In email marketing—just like in daily life—planning is key to effective execution and avoiding last-minute panic. It also means you can space your campaigns out so that it doesn't look like you're bombarding your contacts with emails. Let's see how Zoho Campaigns can help you in planning and scheduling your email campaigns:

Calendar

Zoho Campaigns' Calendar might look like a modest feature, but it has huge potential. At the beginning of a year or quarter, you can map out all major festivals, holidays, and other events relevant to your audience and plan your email campaigns accordingly—which can bring structure and value to your campaign-planning efforts. It helps you:

- Clearly visualize upcoming campaign dates and maintain reasonable gaps between campaigns, as well as plan ahead by preparing content, images, contact segments, and CTAs. Plan not just for email campaigns, but for other online and offline marketing endeavors.

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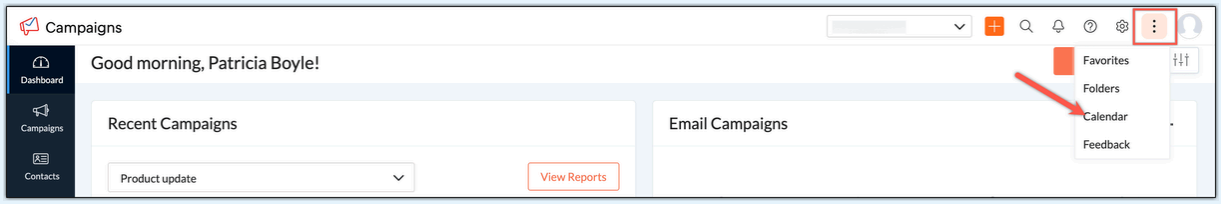
- Plan not just for email campaigns, but for other online and offline marketing endeavors.
- Track which campaigns went out on which dates so you can compare campaign results across holidays and understand which campaigns performed best and what mistakes you should avoid in the future.
- Derive insights into which campaigns received the most engagement, which email-sending frequencies worked, and which frequencies didn't work.



Plan better with the Calendar

Zoho Campaigns' Calendar helps marketers stay on top of their email campaign schedule by providing a structured and visual way to plan, organize, and coordinate email-marketing activities throughout the year. Some of its key features include the following:

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Monthly and yearly views of campaigns

The Calendar offers monthly and yearly views of events to yield clear, high-level overviews of all your email activities, including campaigns that have been scheduled, are in progress, and have already been sent. This makes it easier to plan the right frequency and avoid overloading recipients. For example, a retail brand preparing for the holiday-heavy period between October and December can visually plan Diwali sales, Black Friday deals, Cyber Monday offers, and Christmas promotions without sending too many emails too close together.

Built-in list of country-specific holidays

The Calendar also includes country-specific holiday lists, allowing you to plan culturally relevant campaigns based on your recipients' locations. For instance, a global ecommerce store selling to customers in India, the UAE, and the U.S. can add Diwali, Ramadan, and Thanksgiving to the same calendar and create email campaigns relevant for each region.

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Create your own private or custom holidays

Apart from the predefined list of holidays, you can also add your own custom occasions or private holidays. This is especially helpful when you need to create brand-specific occasions, such as store anniversaries or upcoming product launches. These occasions wouldn't appear on the public holiday list, but they can become powerful marketing opportunities unique to your brand.

Mark important dates and set reminders

You can also mark important dates and set reminders in advance (up to 15 days) to ensure that tasks like creating the email content, designing images, segmenting contacts, and setting up automations can happen well before the send date. For example, setting a reminder two weeks before Mother's Day can help marketers prioritize their work and execute their campaigns smoothly.

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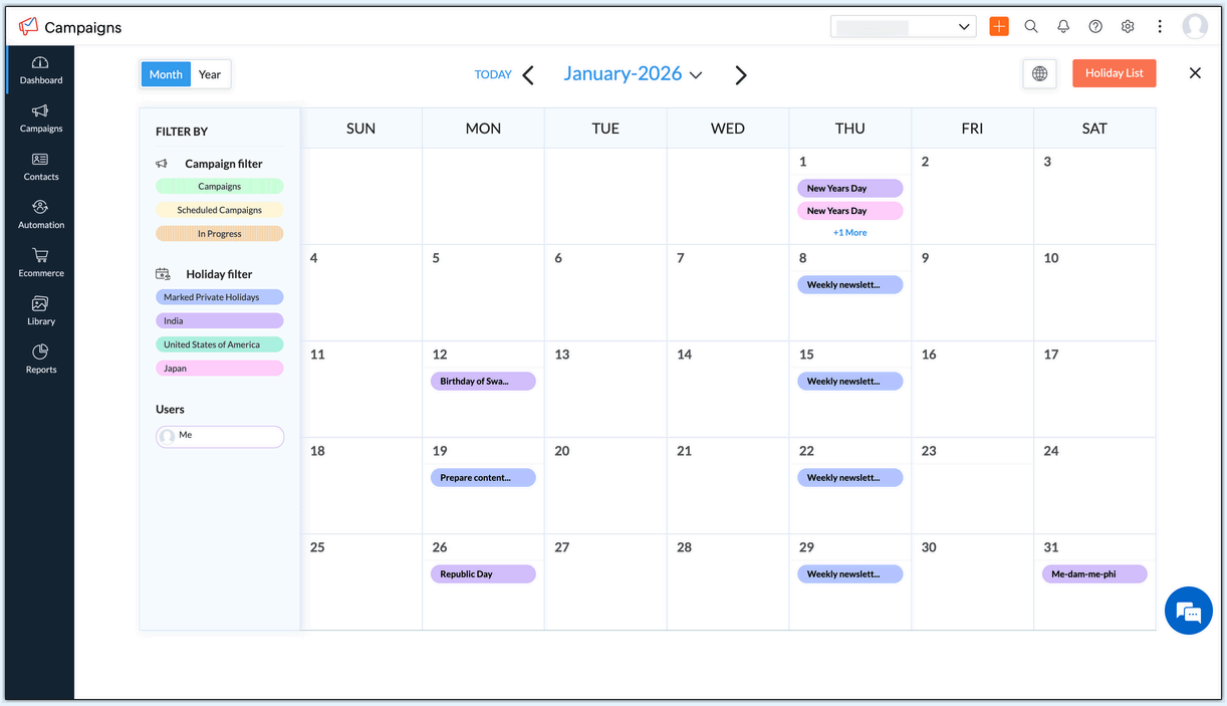
Share marked dates with teammates

The Calendar also helps make collaboration easier. Marked dates can be shared with teammates so that everyone on your team—including content writers, designers, reviewers, and product owners—can work with the same timeline without needing long email threads or separate spreadsheets.

Advanced filters for easy navigation

The Calendar's filters help streamline visibility when things becomes busy. You can view campaigns by status, country holidays, private holidays, and reminders set by specific team members. This makes it easy to focus on what matters, whether that's identifying gaps, avoiding overlaps, or tracking work in progress during peak seasons.



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Find the right audience

Even if you craft the most beautiful and well-designed holiday email, it won't work if you send it to the wrong recipients. Recipients will only engage with your email if they find it relevant. Finding the right audience ensures your message reaches people who are truly interested, instead of simply everyone on your list. Once this happens, you'll see higher open, click, and conversion rates, as well as a stronger sender reputation.

Importing contacts into Zoho Campaigns

As part of identifying your target audience, the first thing you need to do is bring contacts into your Zoho Campaigns account. You can do this in a few easy ways:

- **Import contacts:** If your contacts are already stored in a spreadsheet, you can import them into Zoho Campaigns via file upload. You can import files in CSV, XLS, and XLSX formats, with a maximum file size of 25 MB. For example, if you've collected contact information through signup forms, events, and offline stores, you can easily bring them into Zoho Campaigns using this method.

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- **Sync contacts:** If you’ve integrated your Zoho Campaigns account with other Zoho apps like Zoho CRM, Zoho Commerce, and Zoho Backstage, or with third-party apps such as Shopify, Zendesk, or Eventbrite, you can set up a synchronization that imports contacts from those apps into your Zoho Campaigns account. For instance, imagine you run an online store on Shopify. If you have an active sync, the contact details you collect there will be automatically added to your Zoho Campaigns account.

- **Using Application Programming Interface (APIs):** If you're using custom applications to run your business, you can use APIs to import your contacts into Zoho Campaigns. For instance, let's say your business uses a custom-built order management system where customers can register and place orders. Since this system isn't directly integrated with Zoho Campaigns, you can use APIs to push contacts to your Zoho Campaigns account.

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Lists, segments, and tags: What they are and how to use them

Once your contacts are added to Zoho Campaigns, the next step is to organize them in such a way that it maximizes conversions. During the festive season, customers are more active with their purchases; they search for multiple options, compare them, and wait for deals. A good number of them even shop a bit impulsively. With Zoho Campaigns, you can organize contacts using lists, segments, and tags in order to identify and respond to customer behaviors instead of sending the same email campaign to everyone.You can do this in a few easy ways:

Lists

Lists are your starting point for contact management. For example, you can create a list to incorporate all your newsletter subscribers, one for all past customers, or one for contacts who attended an event. You can use these lists to make broader announcements, like your main holiday sale, festive greetings, and so on. Lists are also the building blocks by which you can create segments and tags for deeper targeting.

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Segments

Segmentation enables you to personalize holiday emails based on who your customers are and how they behave. For example, instead of sending a general "Holiday sale is live" email, you can create segments of customers who purchased in the last three months, those who bought only during last year's holiday sale, and subscribers who have never made a purchase. Each segment can receive a different message. For example, loyal customers might get early access to festive deals, first-time buyers could see a welcome holiday discount, and customers who shop during deals can get exciting offers. This kind of personalization feels thoughtful and relevant, and often leads to higher open and conversion rates—especially during busy holiday seasons. There are different criteria based on which you can segment your contacts:

- **Behavior:** You can segment contacts based on their interactions with your past emails; for instance, contacts who opened your email but didn't click the call-to-action (CTA), those who clicked the CTA but didn't complete a purchase, or contacts who made multiple purchases during past sale. Such segments let you send targeted follow-ups like reminder emails, urgency-driven emails when a sale is about to end, product recommendations for customers

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who've already purchased, price-drop alerts for contacts who viewed a product but didn't buy, restock notifications for customers who showed interest in out-of-stock items, and so on. Approaching contacts based on how they engage with your email campaigns makes your emails more relevant to them.

- **Demography:** You can also group contacts based on their age, gender, language preferences, and other attributes. For example, a fashion brand running a festive sale might promote party wear and accessories to younger audiences, while highlighting comfort-focused ethnic wear or family outfits to older shoppers. Similarly, men may receive offers on grooming products, while women are shown wellness or lifestyle products matching their interests. Brands can also send Diwali promotions in regional languages to add an emotional connection, while continuing to send English campaigns to subscribers who prefer English. Emails to budget-conscious shoppers can have details about value bundles, discount-driven subject lines, or "under ₹999" gift ideas, whereas premium shoppers are targeted with exclusive collections, limited-edition festive products, or early-access invitations.

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- **Geography:** Segmenting contacts based on where they're located helps brands align holiday messaging with local behavior and logistics. For example, an ecommerce business can promote same-day delivery in metro cities while highlighting store pickup or standard shipping in smaller towns. Brands can send emails related to winter wear and accessories for colder locations, and lightweight festive collections for warmer climates. Businesses with physical stores can conduct location-specific holiday promotions, store events, or nearby pop-up announcements to make campaigns more timely, relevant, and actionable.

Tags

Using tags is another way to organize your contacts in Zoho Campaigns. Tags act like labels that group contacts based on unique behaviors or attributes. For example, you can create a tag called "Interested in new products" for contacts who participated in a product launch event, or "Buys kids' clothing" for customers who frequently purchase children's items, enabling you to send them relevant offers and promotions. They can also help you build a richer understanding of your audience without constantly recreating segments.

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During holiday campaigns, tags become especially useful for capturing the real-time interest of contacts. For instance, if a subscriber clicks on gift-related emails or browses festive bundles, you can tag them with "Gift Shopper" and follow up with curated gift guides or limited-time festive bundles. Similarly, contacts who repeatedly view premium products can be tagged as "High-Value Interest" and shown exclusive holiday collections or early-access deals, while discount-driven shoppers receive flash sale alerts and price-drop notifications.

Tags also work well for behavior-based follow-ups. Customers who abandon carts during a holiday sale can be added under a specific tag to send reminder emails with extra offers to as a little nudge. Subscribers who purchase during a festive campaign can be tagged with "Holiday Buyer" to make it easier to send post-holiday thank-you emails, product care tips, review requests, or loyalty rewards in the new year.

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Create compelling content

To make your holiday emails stand out, make sure your content is relevant, engaging, and visually appealing. Zoho Campaigns gives you multiple tools and options to craft emails that resonate with your audience and drive engagement.

Explore different campaign types

Zoho Campaigns supports various campaign formats based on your goals:

- Regular campaigns for one-time promotions, festive announcements, or newsletters
- A/B testing email campaigns to test subject lines, sender details, or content versions and help you determine which version performs best
- Automated campaigns triggered by recipient actions such as purchases, signups, link clicks, or inactivity

Choosing the right campaign type ensures that your holiday message sounds less like an announcement and more like a meaningful conversation.

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Use pre-designed templates to get started quickly

Zoho Campaigns offers both pre-designed and basic templates crafted to suit seasonal promotions, welcome emails, feedback collection, newsletter layouts, and more. All the templates are professionally designed and mobile-responsive, ensuring readers have a smooth experience regardless of the device they're using. With Zoho Campaigns, you can:

- Import templates from other platforms using the Upload HTML option, which is useful when you're migrating from another tool.
- Build your own email from scratch if you're comfortable with coding or prefer a custom layout.

Design instantly with the drag-and-drop editor

Zoho Campaigns' drag-and-drop editor helps you quickly create beautiful emails even without requiring any design skills. You can fully customize text, images, backgrounds, and buttons to reflect your holiday theme. To make your campaigns feel unique and memorable, you can add festive elements like:

- Holiday-inspired colors, like yellow and orange for Diwali, red and gold for Christmas, or purple and silver for New Year.
- Fonts, spacing, and sections to match your brand identity
- Visuals such as gift icons, product galleries, countdown timers, and offer highlights

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Craft subject lines that spark curiosity

Your subject line is the first impression you make on your recipients, and often the deciding factor that determines whether they'll open your email. Keep your subject line short, clear, and catchy. You can also add a festive touch wherever required to make it sound exciting. You can also personalize your subject lines using merge tags and emojis.subject lines using merge tags and emojis.

A few examples of holiday subject lines your recipients can't ignore:

- "Your holiday wishlist starts here—gifts up to 50% off!"
- "Still searching for the perfect gift? We've got you."
- "Diwali surprise inside✨ Limited-time offers await!"
- "Last-minute Christmas deals you can't miss! 🎅"
- "Mom deserves the best! Mother's Day specials inside💙"
- "Final hours! Sale ends at midnight🎁"

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Make content personal

In a crowded inbox, personalization helps customers feel seen and valued. You can use a variety of merge tags available in Zoho Campaigns to insert recipient-specific details, such as their names and locations.

Another way to personalize your email content is by using dynamic content, which lets you show different content to different audience segments. For example:

- Inactive subscribers see a warm holiday re-engagement message.
- Event attendees receive early access invitations to holiday launches.
- Recent buyers receive related product suggestions.
- Newsletter subscribers get a festive signup offer for upgrading their subscriptions.

Reuse designs that deliver results

If you feel there's an email template that performs exceptionally well, or if there are templates that you tend to reuse often, you can save or bookmark them. This makes it easy to:

- Maintain brand consistency across campaigns.
- Launch future holiday campaigns faster.
- Build a library of top-performing designs.

Over time, this can act as an internal reference catalogue of what works for your recipients.

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Automate emails using workflows

Holiday emailmarketing is definitely not a one-time task; to drive real results, you need follow-ups and reminder emails that keep the momentum going. Zoho Campaigns' workflows make this easy by automating email sequences so you can stay consistent without having to send every email manually. For example:

Set up follow-up and reminder emails

Workflows enable you to send reminder emails automatically to people who didn't open or click your first holiday message. Imagine you've launched your Diwali offer email and some recipients didn't open it within 48 hours. You can set up a workflow to send them a "Last chance! Offer ends tonight" reminder automatically. This ensures no potential customer is left behind, especially since shopping decisions happen quickly during the holidays.

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Send relevant follow-up emails based on actions

Automation also helps you send emails that are triggered by what recipients do and how they engage with your emails—not just when you want to send them. For instance, if a recipient clicks on your Christmas sale email and buys a product, you can automatically follow up with:

- Related product recommendations a few days later
- A thank-you email or a festive greeting
- A loyalty signup invite or a refer-a-friend offer

Or if someone browses but doesn't buy, a workflow could send an abandoned-cart reminder or a discount incentive to nudge them towards completing the purchase.

Schedule your emails

Timing is key. Scheduling your email campaigns during the holiday season ensures that your emails will reach recipients at the right times—for instance, when they're actively browsing for gifts or checking deals. If you successfully land these emails when your recipients are active, they'll generate more engagement and thereby scale up conversion. Zoho Campaigns gives you flexible scheduling options that you can use to deliver all your holiday campaigns exactly when they're most likely to be seen—boosting opens, clicks, and conversions.

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Fixed time and time zone

With this option, you can schedule your campaign for a specific date and time in a time zone you choose. For example, imagine you're running a Christmas Eve flash sale exclusively for customers in the UK; you can schedule the campaign to go out a day in advance, on December 23 at 10:00 AM GMT, to inform recipients about the sale early.

Recipients' time zones

This scheduling option is perfect for global audiences, as it lets you send emails at the same local time for every recipient, wherever they are in the world. For instance, let's say you're promoting an international New Year Countdown Sale. You schedule it for 10 AM on December 29, and Zoho Campaigns automatically sends it at:

- 10 AM PST for customers in California
- 10 AM CET for customers in Germany
- 10 AM SGT for customers in Singapore

This ensures that each of your recipients will receive the email at a convenient morning hour—not while they're asleep—and lead to higher open rates across all regions.

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Recipients' optimal open time

With this option, you can send emails based on each recipient's personal engagement patterns. Zoho Campaigns studies past campaign data to understand when recipients typically open and engage with your emails, and then delivers messages at times they're most likely to interact with them. Suppose you're running a Mother's Day gift campaign, and one subscriber regularly checks emails around 8 PM after work, while another prefers catching up around 1 PM during lunch. Zoho Campaigns will send your emails at those exact times to help your message stand out in an inbox overflowing with holiday discounts.

Domain authentication: Ensure your emails reach the inbox

Even after you've done everything right—organizing your contacts, crafting compelling emails, and sending them at the right times—it won't matter if your emails don't reach your recipients' inboxes. To prevent this, you must authenticate your sender domain.

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Domain authentication is a way of proving that your emails are genuinely coming from you and not from impostors. This is similar to showing an ID before entering your office. Without it, email service providers (ESPs) such as Gmail, Yahoo, and Zoho Mail can't easily verify your identity.

As a result, even well-written emails sent to an interested audience may be treated with suspicion and routed to the spam folder. This often happens silently, without any visible error, which makes it difficult to understand why your campaigns aren't performing as expected.

Check out our help documents to learn more about domain authentication.

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Wrapping it up

Holiday email marketing isn't just about sending festive messages and offers; it's about building meaningful, well-timed, and relevant connections with your recipients during moments that matter. With thoughtful planning, strategic segmentation, compelling content, and smart automation, every campaign becomes an opportunity to strengthen relationships and drive real results.

Remember that festivals and holidays happen year-round. Whether it's a global celebration, a regional festival, or an event unique to your brand, every occasion is a chance to show up thoughtfully and authentically. With Zoho Campaigns as your email marketing partner, you're equipped to plan confidently, execute effortlessly, and engage meaningfully—throughout the festive season and beyond.

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