



Regional
Only

attitudes
TOWARDS CHRISTMAS

REGIONAL | SOUTHERN CROSS AUSTERO RESEARCH

SCA research
& insights

Christmas tends to sneak up each year... but how do people actually feel about the holiday period?

With so much going on in their lives, Christmas can sneak up on people each year.

With mixed feelings of happiness for the time to spend with loved ones, and anxiety for everything that needs to be done and bought before the day, it's no wonder why the magic of Christmas has less of a twinkle than it used to...

So let's take a look at how people actually feel about the holiday period...



45%

of people took a well-deserved break this past Christmas

Xmas 2016 = 42%

Each year seems to get busier, so it's no surprise that more people living in regional Australia took a well-deserved break this past Christmas compared to the previous.

It's this time of year that consumers want a break from all the seriousness. The Christmas holidays can be a stressful time, so brands need to **keep things light** by using humour and keeping things fun and exciting.

So what are their feelings towards the Christmas period?



Christmas is becoming too commercialised

Christmas seems to hit the shops far earlier than most people have even started thinking about it. This has become an annual gripe for many people leading into the holiday period, with over 2 in 5 (43%) saying the true spirit of Christmas has been lost. Regional shoppers were 17% more likely last year to believe the holiday had become too commercialised compared to Christmas 2016.

Thought for Brands:

While consumers may be resistant at first, the most powerful way for brands to connect with them is through their emotions. **Nostalgia** is one of the most powerful emotions connected to this holiday, and this can be conveyed through stories and imagery which resonates with the audience.

61%

Believe Christmas is far
too commercialised
these days

Xmas 2016 = 52%



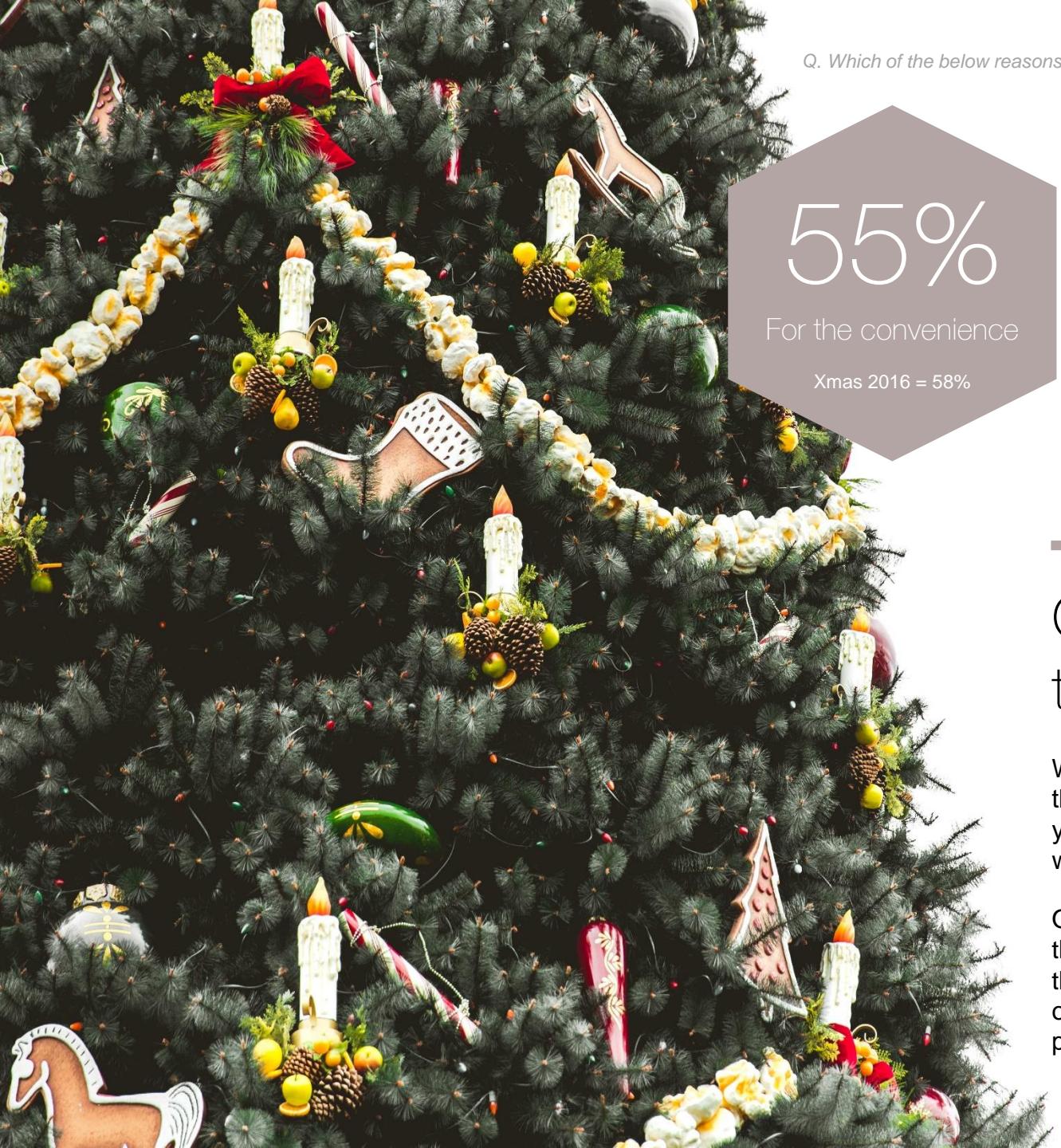
67%

Believe Christmas starts
in the shops far too early

Xmas 2016 = 70%



Source: 1. SCA Research, Post Xmas Study January 2018,
‘Agree – Christmas Statement – ‘The true spirit of Christmas
has been lost’, ‘Christmas is far too commercialised these
days’, ‘Christmas starts in the shops far too early’. Regional All
People 2018 n=2024, 2017 n=1946. | 2. Jayson DeMers 2016.
5 examples of brands doing holiday marketing right.



Q. Which of the below reasons describes why you did Christmas shopping online?

55%

For the convenience

Xmas 2016 = 58%

46%

To avoid crowds at the
shops

Xmas 2016 = 44%

42%

To save time

Xmas 2016 = 43%

Consumers are turning to online
to do their Christmas shopping

With online shopping alleviating many of the pressures consumers experience over the Christmas period, it's no wonder 44% did their Christmas shopping online last year. This trend doesn't seem to be going anywhere either, as this is similar to what was seen during Christmas 2016 where 45% did their Christmas shopping online.

Over half find shopping online more convenient than trudging through the shops with the masses, and 46% do it to avoid the crowds. With over 2 in 5 taking a break over the holiday period, people from regional areas are filling their shopping baskets online rather than in-store, giving them more time to do the things they love with the people they love.

Source: SCA Research Post Xmas Study. January 2018. 'Where did you end up doing your Christmas shopping?' Regional. All People 2018 n=2512, 2017 n=1880. 'Which of the below reasons describes why you did Christmas shopping online?' Regional. All People 2018 n=1094, 2017 n=843.

So what does this mean
for advertisers?



Start festive conversations

Christmas is a time many people look forward to so they can finally take that well deserved break and spend time with family and friends. Brands need to get into the Christmas spirit too by using Christmas and holiday specific creative which starts the festive conversations.

With so much noise during this time, brands need to get consumers excited about their products and put them onto their consideration sets for this Christmas. 57% of regional consumers get their *giftspiration* from what the recipient asked for. Brands need to focus less on selling ideas, and instead encourage people to put together their own wishlists by selecting products from their store. People can then share their wishlist with their loved ones.

Address consumers' needs

While it should be a time for relaxation, Christmas can also be stressful and a strain on the budget, and suddenly there's not enough time to get everything done. People crave peace, heartfelt moments, and relaxation around the holidays so brands need to give them that when nobody else will.

Brands need to show that they understand consumers' stresses by providing solutions to the challenges faced during the holiday season. The simple act of proving that a product can save consumers time, money and stress can set the brand up as the go-to option when consumers need help. If a brand can give them that relief when nobody else can, their messages will really stand out from the clutter.

Stress levels are high during this busy period so customer service is key - brands need to ensure that everyone who comes in contact with them has a positive experience.

Create unique & emotive content

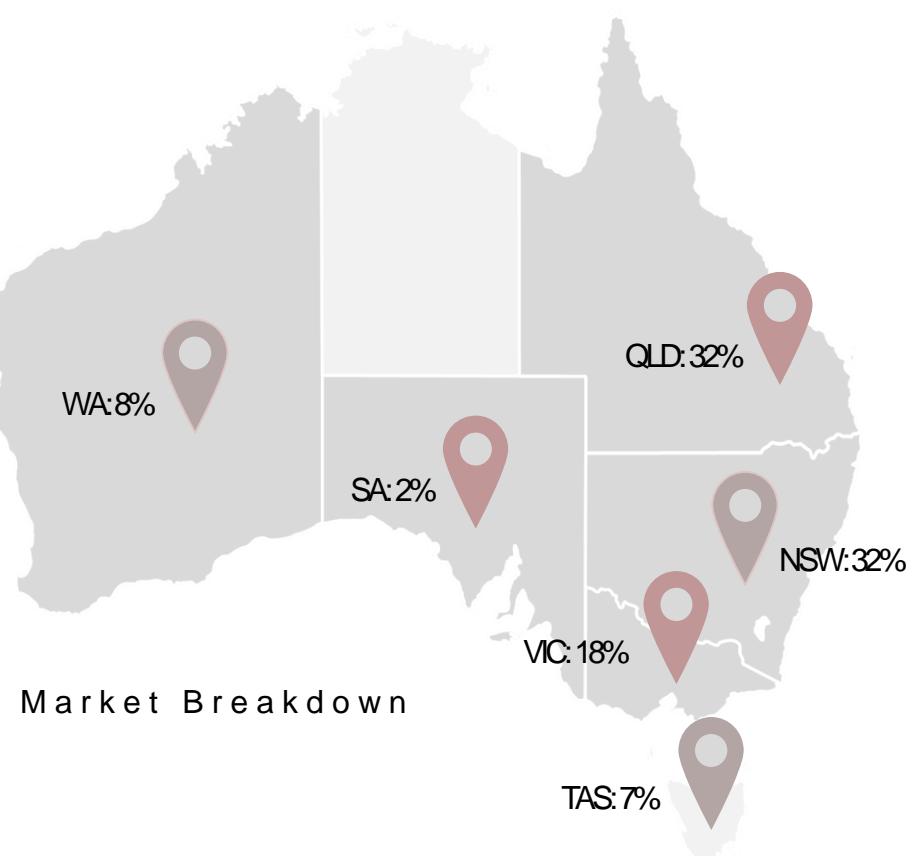
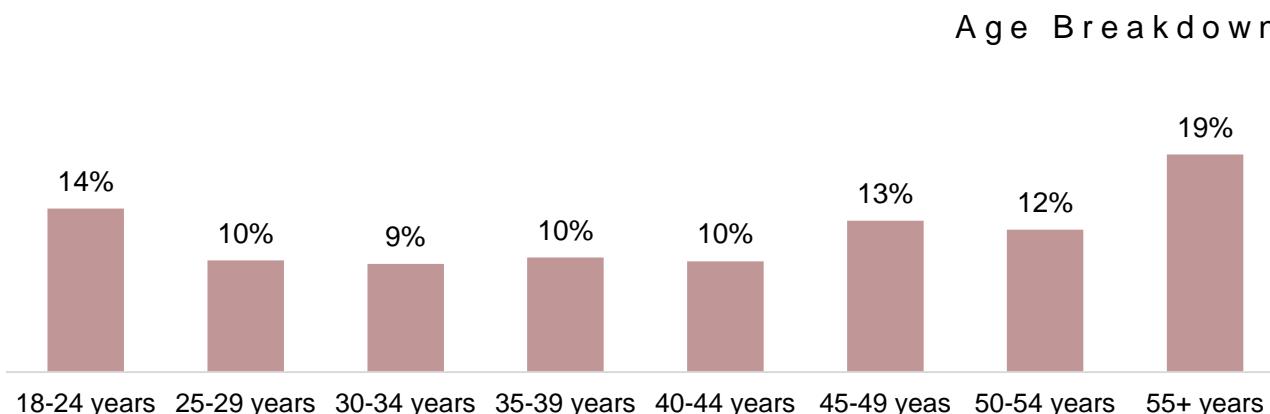
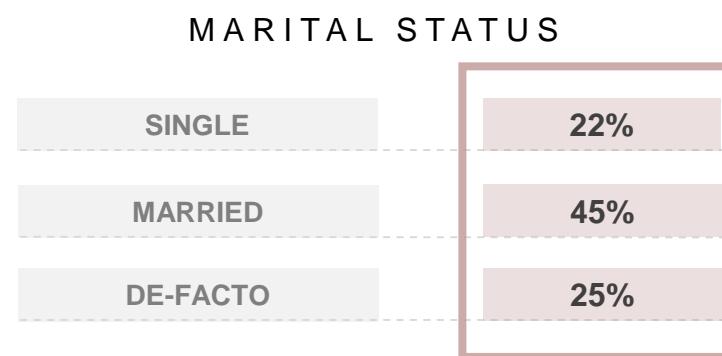
Christmas is a nostalgic time of year, with every family having their own stories and memories of the holiday. During this time, brands need to focus on crafting emotionally charged advertising that are more like stories that capture the magic of Christmas.

Advertising during the holiday period should reflect the true meaning of Christmas which can be hidden by all the distractions. Advertising should be grounded in reality and serve as a reminder that Christmas may not be perfect, but that it's ok if things aren't going to plan. Brands can stand out from the clutter by putting forth a message of truth and thankfulness that consumers can look back on should any holiday obstacle arise.



Source: 1. SCA Research Post Xmas Study, January 2018. 'So when deciding what gifts to buy for people, where did you get your inspiration from?' Regional All People n=2512 | 2. Dixon Jones. 2017. Provide the option to create a wishlist. | Marketing Interactive. 2017. 5 commandments for brands this festive season. | Nichole DaMere. 2017. Address your customers' pain points. | Luke Sword. 2017. US advertising: holiday season stress relief. | Andrew Holland. 2017. Try to capture the magic of Christmas. | Zahra Media Group. 2017. How to rock your Christmas marketing campaign.

RESPONDENT BREAKDOWN



METHODOLOGY

The results of this survey are "INDICATIVE" ONLY.

The survey was conducted by Southern Cross Austereo using its online panel nationally, an external panel to make sure it is market wide, and CATI in regional Australia.

The SCA panel is obtained from our radio networks database under the labels of 'VIP' on the Hit Network and 'The Club' on the MMM Network. All members of these databases would be considered listeners to these stations.

The database contains about 260,000 members. Of these, approximately 16,000 are a part of our online community. This is split between the Hit VIP database and the Triple M database.

Members of both databases were asked to take part in the study and over 4,200 people did so. Certain questions asked for an 'essay' or 'verbatim' type of response OR brands/words that first came to mind.

A keyword search was used to sort and rank the responses to these questions.

The results are an un-weighted sample, but are reflective of the Southern Cross Austereo Austereo audience. SCA brands reach approximately 40% of the 10+ population and approximately 46% of the 25-54 population in the five metropolitan markets in Australia, suggesting it would be reasonable to consider these results to be a fair if not fully balanced representation of the opinions in these marketplaces.

Furthermore, as it is an online survey, the respondents would also be skewed towards being 'early adopters' for technology, 'trend setters' in general and likely to be a good early indication of brand leaders, trend setters and early adopters in general.

These research surveys conducted by Austereo are done so to provide a general understanding of the opinions, interests and attitudes of the metropolitan marketplaces only.

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