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Ramadan Preview 2019

Insights on How to Make the Most
of Your Marketing this Ramadan



Ramadan Rundown

This year, Ramadan will start on May 5
— a full 10 days before it did last year (May 15th).

Ramadan 2019 will begin the evening of Sunday May 5 and end on Tuesday June 4, followed by Eid al-Fitr celebrations that last through the next evening, Wednesday June 5. The Ramadan period last year was May 15 - June 14, followed by Eid al-Fitr on June 15.

Online retail sales rise significantly during the month of Ramadan as consumers buy gifts and presents for family, relatives, and friends.

Travel sales are also impacted by Ramadan. Bookings rise and peak in the weeks approaching Eid al-Fitr.



Retail and Ramadan

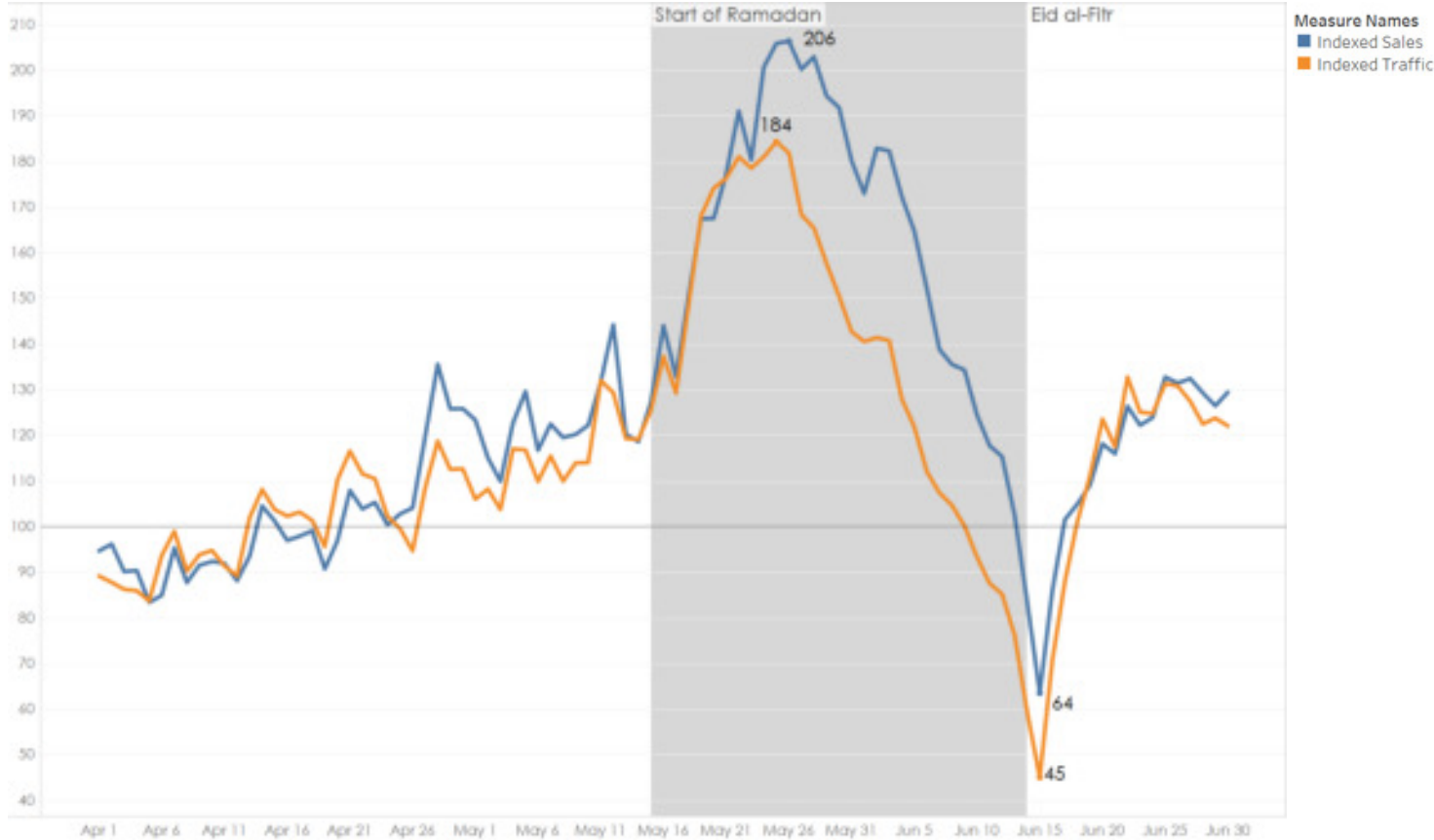
What's the effect of Ramadan on retail sales, and when are the peak sales periods?



Retail Sales and Traffic Rise During Ramadan



Indexed Daily Sales & Traffic



Last year, online retail sales started increasing early, reaching an increase of 106% by the second week of Ramadan. Sales dropped back to the baseline as Eid al-Fitr approached.

Consumer activity slowed near the end of the period, with sales and traffic dropping by up to 55% during Eid al-Fitr. While people may be more focused on celebrations with family and friends during this time, we see a quick recovery and reinvigorated shopper interest and activity in the 1-2 weeks following.

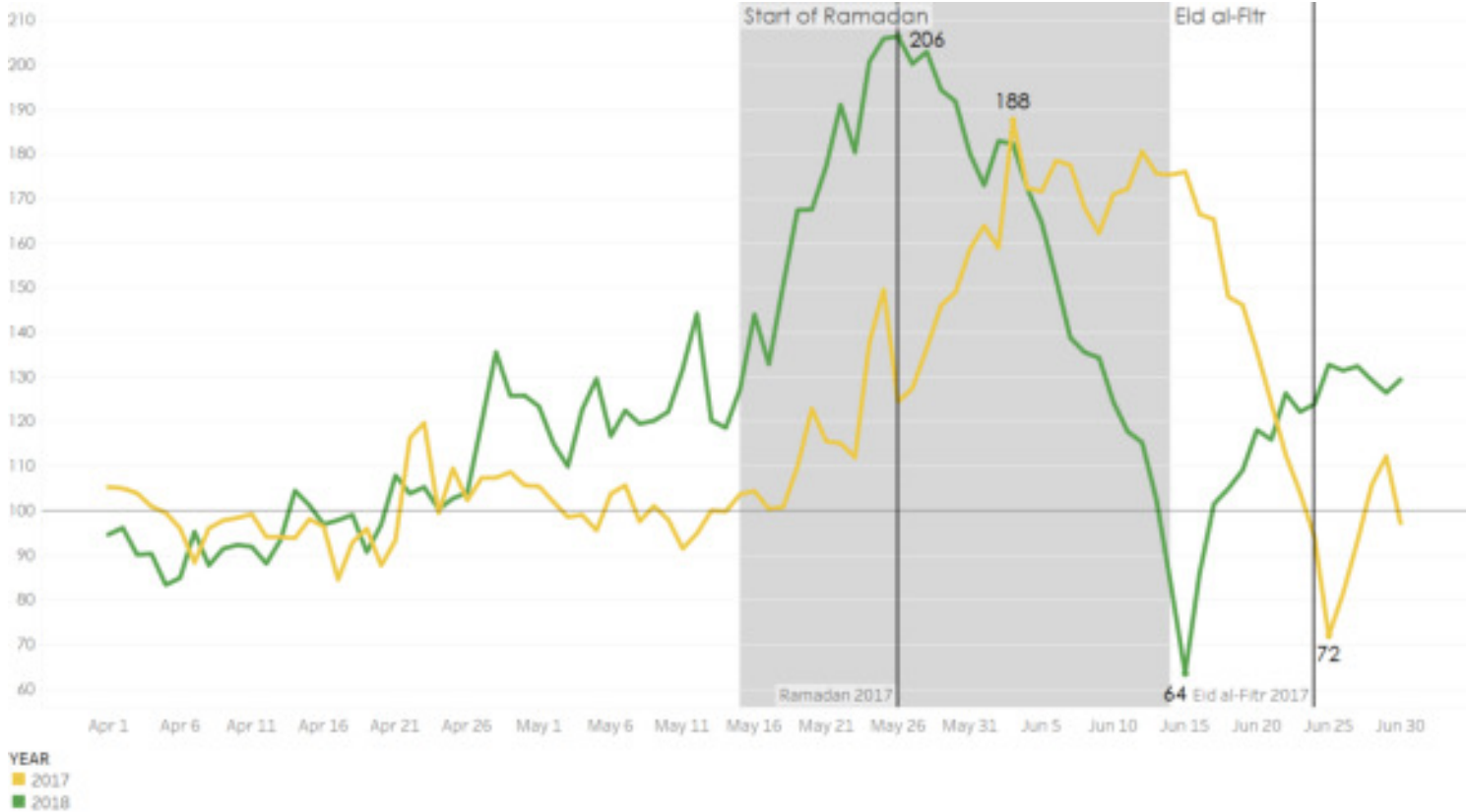
KEY MESSAGE

Shoppers start browsing and buying in the run-up to Ramadan, and the trend continues to escalate over the next few weeks, with the highest uplift in sales happening 1-2 weeks before Eid al-Fitr. If you're an advertiser, be sure to ramp up your campaigns early to gain visibility and stay top-of-mind.

Ramadan Sales Surged Earlier in 2018



YOY Indexed Daily Sales



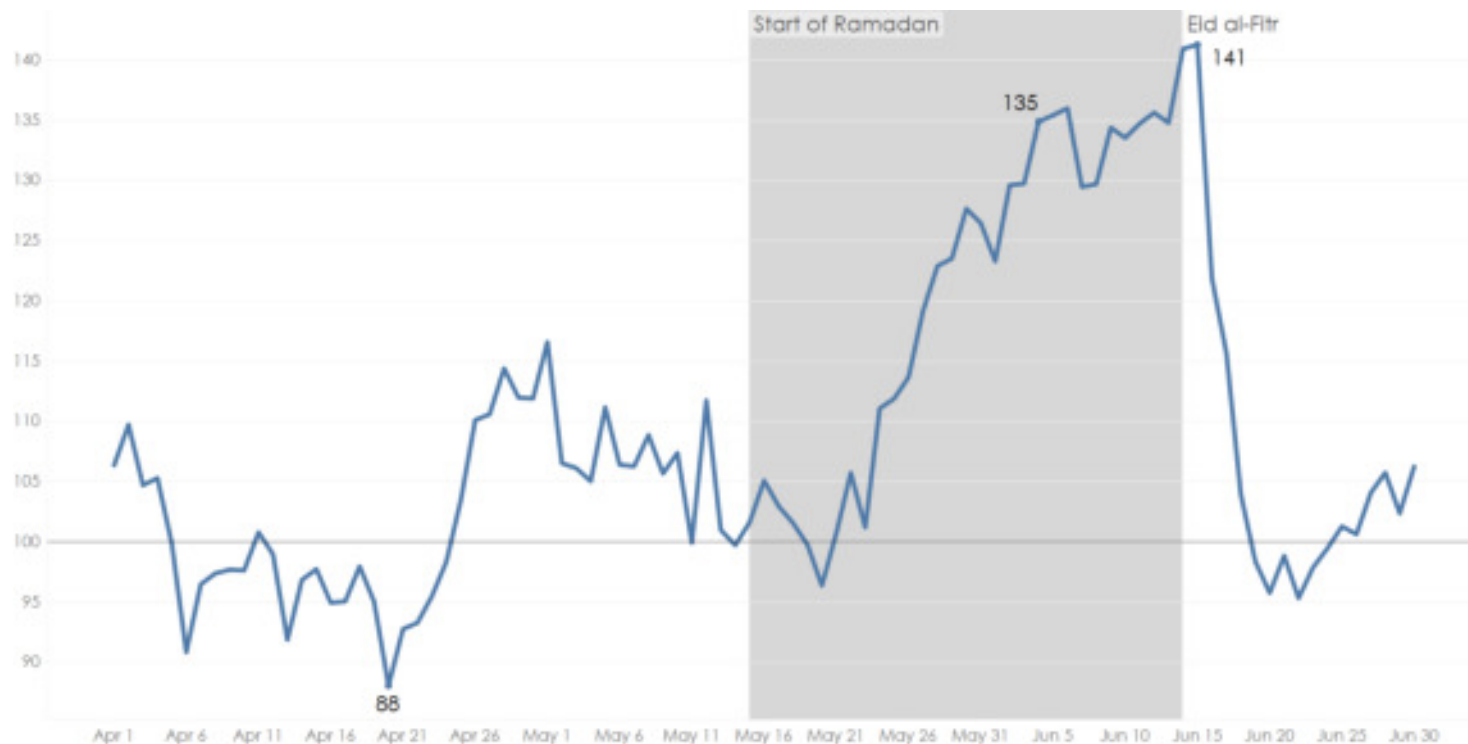
Higher sales, tighter peaks YoY.

In 2017, sales started to rise 8 days prior to the start of Ramadan. In 2018, sales started to surge even earlier, nearly 3 weeks (20 days) before Ramadan began.

Conversion Rates Surge Near Eid al-Fitr



Indexed Daily Conversion Rates



Initially, there is a 17% surge in conversions 2 weeks prior to the start of Ramadan. Year over year, we see major increases in conversions during Ramadan.

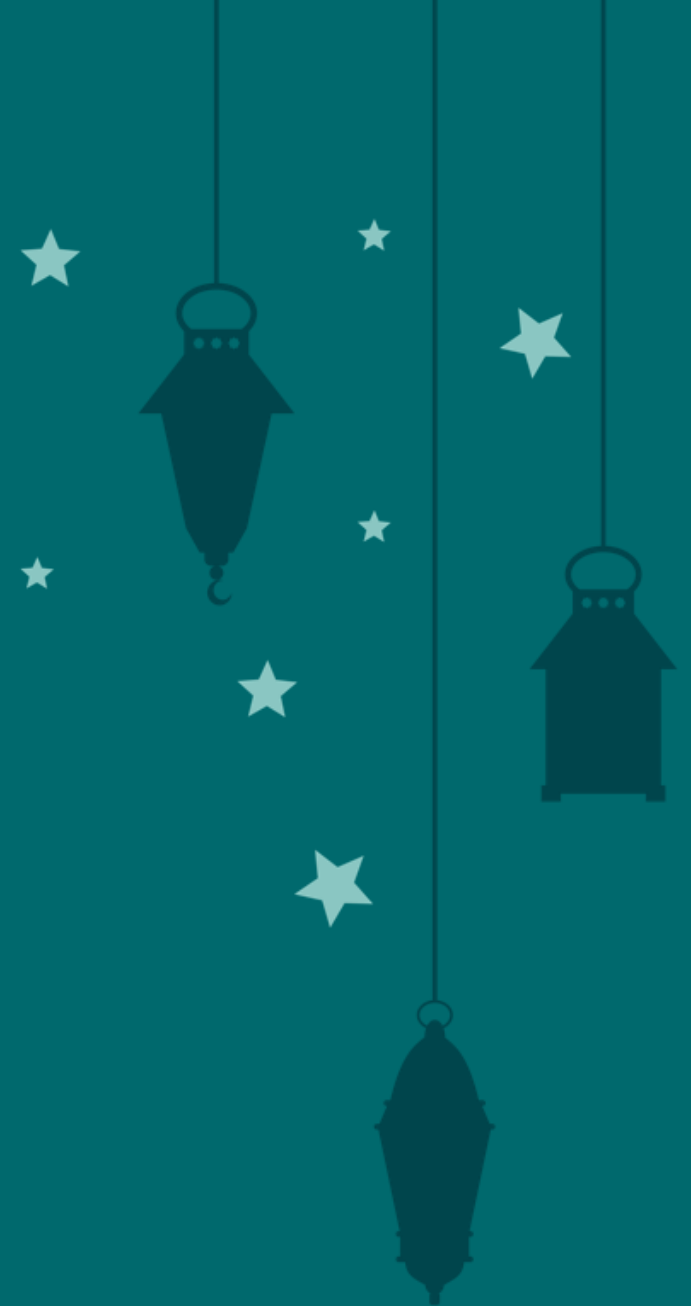
In 2018, the conversion rate surged by up to +35% a week before Eid al-Fitr. It remained high throughout the final week of Ramadan and even experienced another surge, to +41%, a day later. At the climax, average order values increase by up to 14%.

KEY MESSAGE

Conversion rates are at the highest in the second half of Ramadan. Make sure your advertising strategy is in market well in advance of the celebrations and stays strong throughout the weeks after.

Ramadan and Travel

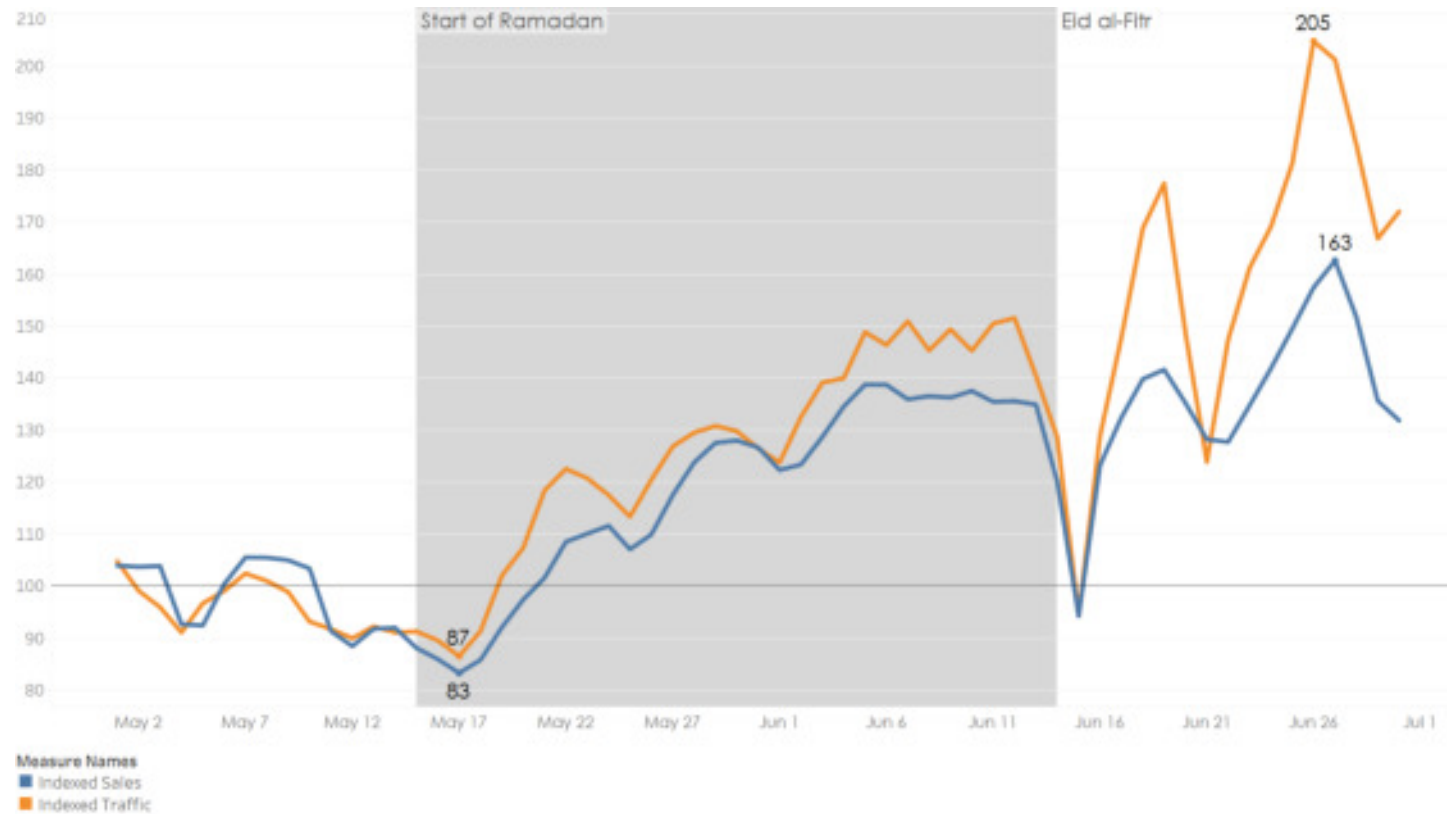
How should you plan your travel campaigns for Ramadan?



Many Travelers Book After Ramadan



Indexed Daily Bookings



During Ramadan, we see a continuous uplift in traffic to travel sites, increasing by up to 51% in the weeks approaching Eid al-Fitr.

Last year, in the final 10 days of Ramadan, travel bookings remained at or above +35%, peaking by up to 39%. Though consumer activity dropped during Eid al-Fitr itself, we saw a huge spike in traffic (up to +105%) and bookings (up to +63%) in the days after.

KEY MESSAGE

Travelers may start planning their travels during Ramadan, but many don't start booking until after. Travel players should plan to maintain strong advertising strategies throughout Ramadan, so they can capture the most traveler interest and bookings in the weeks following.

Mobile Shopping During Ramadan



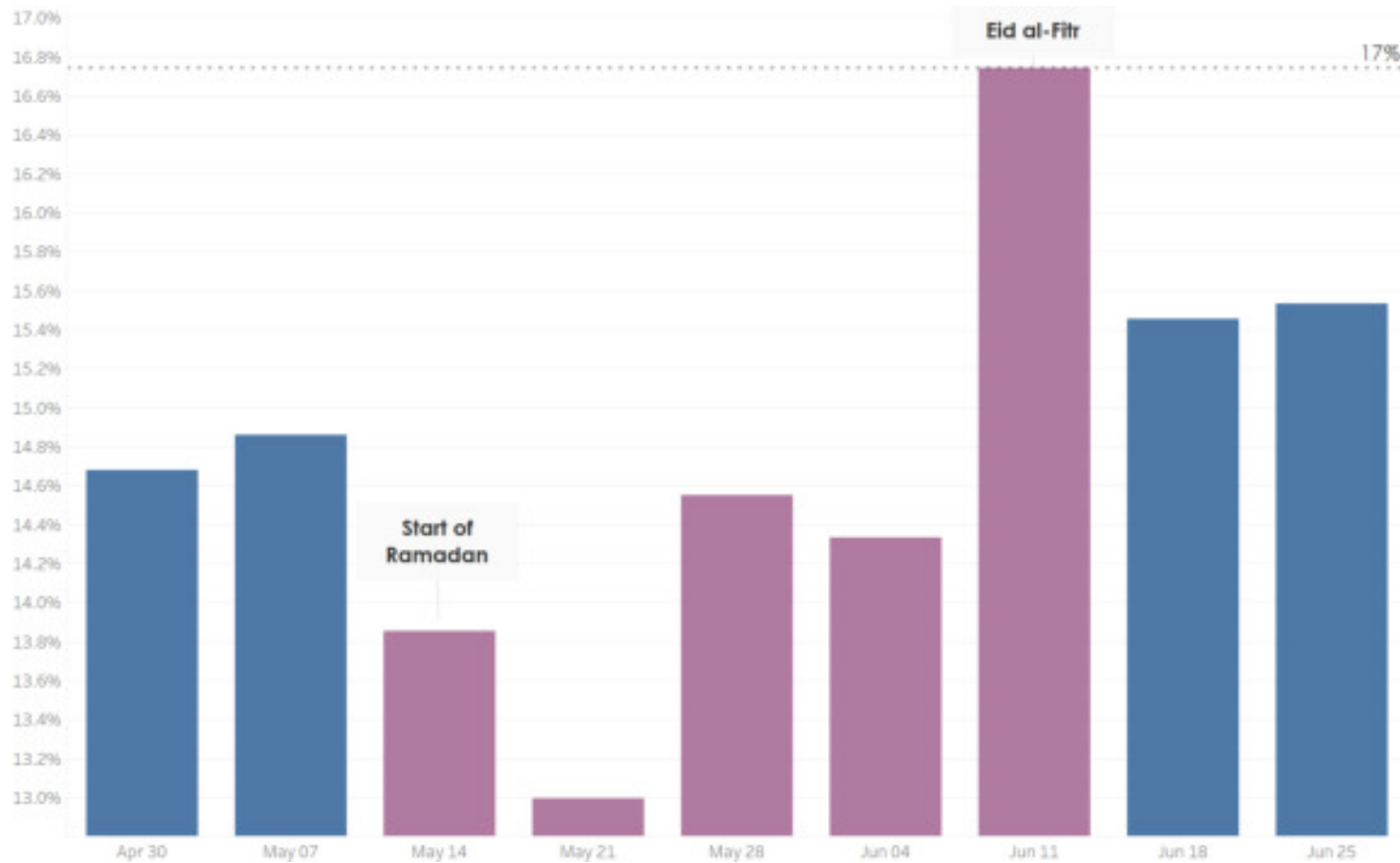
How much are people shopping on mobile during Ramadan?



Mobile Helps Ramadan Retail Sales Rise



Weekly Mobile Share of Bookings



Though desktop sales do account for more than 80% of all retail sales, shoppers may be more keen to buy from the palm of their hands during celebratory seasonal periods. Last year, as sales grew during Ramadan, the weekly mobile share in sales surged to 17% during Eid al-Fitr.

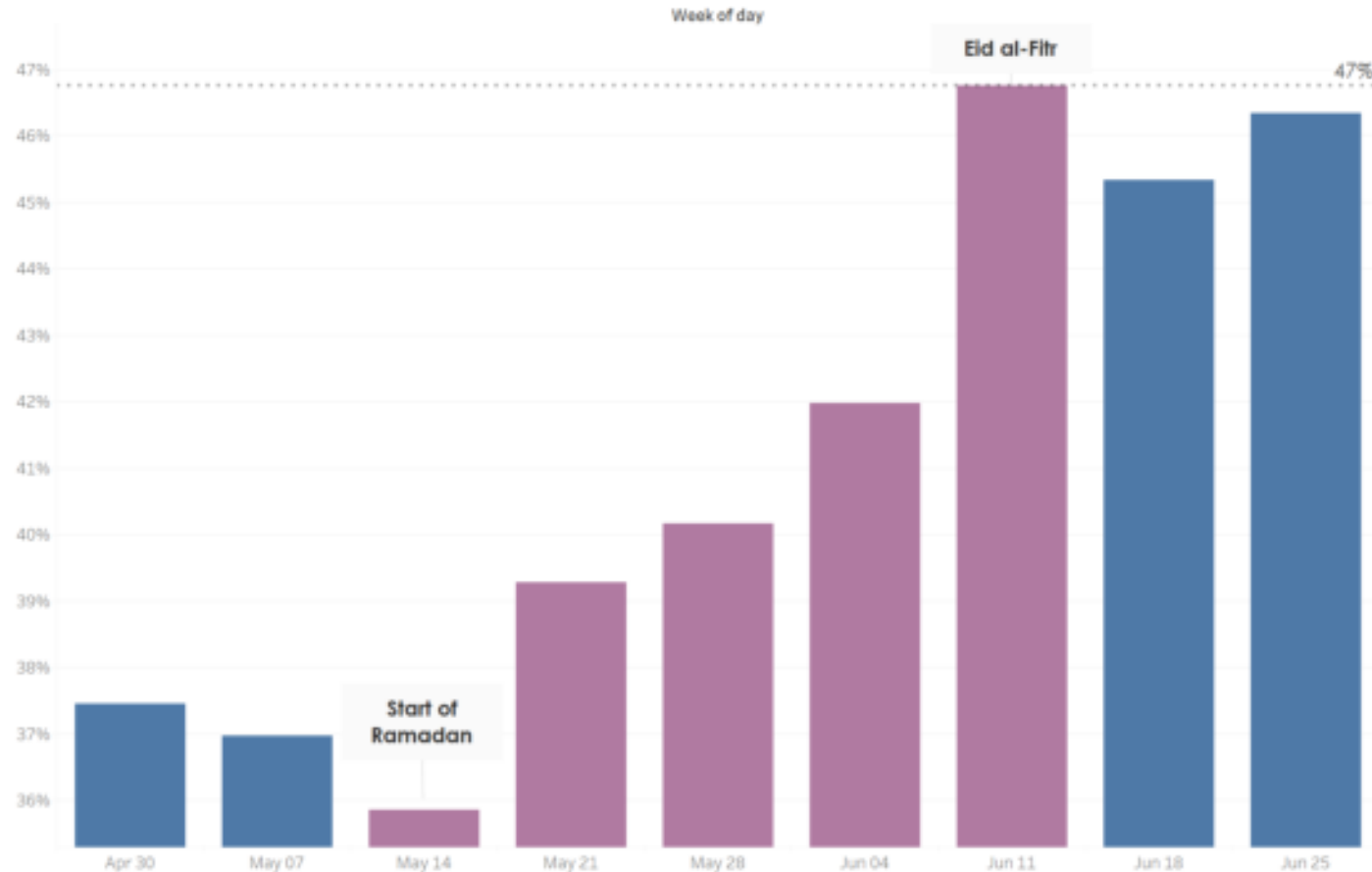
KEY MESSAGE

During Ramadan, we see higher surges and lower declines in mobile web sales. If you're a brand or retailer, don't forget to optimize your mobile presence — easy-to-navigate pages and a seamless checkout experience can make all the difference.

Mobile Bookings Increase During Ramadan



Weekly Mobile Share of Bookings

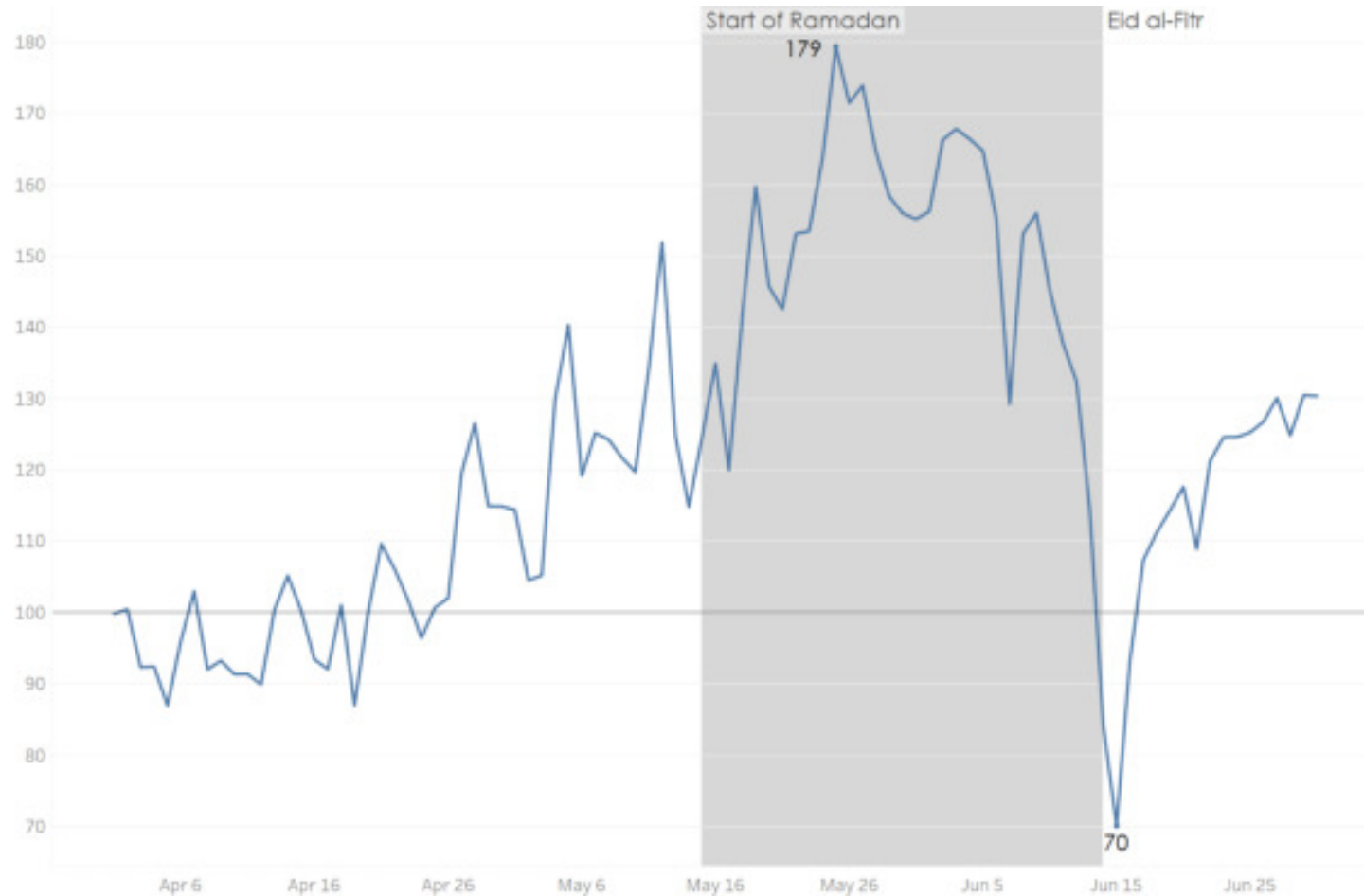


Mobile presence is integral for travel bookings during Ramadan for the Middle East. As bookings grew during Ramadan, the weekly mobile share in bookings steadily increased and surged to 47% during Eid al-Fitr. The mobile share of bookings stayed 45% and above for the two weeks after as well.

Apps Help Ramadan Retail Sales Rise



Weekly Mobile Share of Bookings



During Ramadan, when mobile usage increases, apps can help to drive sales.

In step with the retail sales surge during Ramadan, we see in-app sales increase. In 2018, in-app sales grew by up to 79%, indicating that consumers may be moved to buy within apps when they provide an easy, convenient shopping experience.

KEY MESSAGE

Shoppers are willing to use apps when available. Make sure yours delivers a frictionless user experience. Similar to mobile web, product pages that load quickly and easy checkout are two key elements that can help drive in-app sales.

Top Tips for the Run-Up to Ramadan



1

Start a couple of weeks before Ramadan begins.

Ramp up your advertising campaigns early during Ramadan and increase your efforts in the days leading up to Eid al-Fitr.

2

Optimize your mobile site and app.

Creating convenient app and mobile web experiences will help you maintain strong sales during the Ramadan weekends.

3

Continue beyond the end of Ramadan.

Keep your shopping campaigns strong throughout the weeks following Eid al-Fitr to capture maximum retail sales and travel bookings.



Methodology

Criteo identified these trends through the analysis of over 9.4 million retail shopping transactions, and over 22.3 million travel bookings across desktop, smartphones, and tablets from 197 major advertisers in the Middle East.

Mobile sales include sales via mobile websites and apps, both on smartphones and tablets.

