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Your Sale Didn’t Make You Money.
It Moved It.

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75%

Can’t estimate what share of their promotions made money

Binet & Boyd for the IPA, October 2026. Censuswide survey

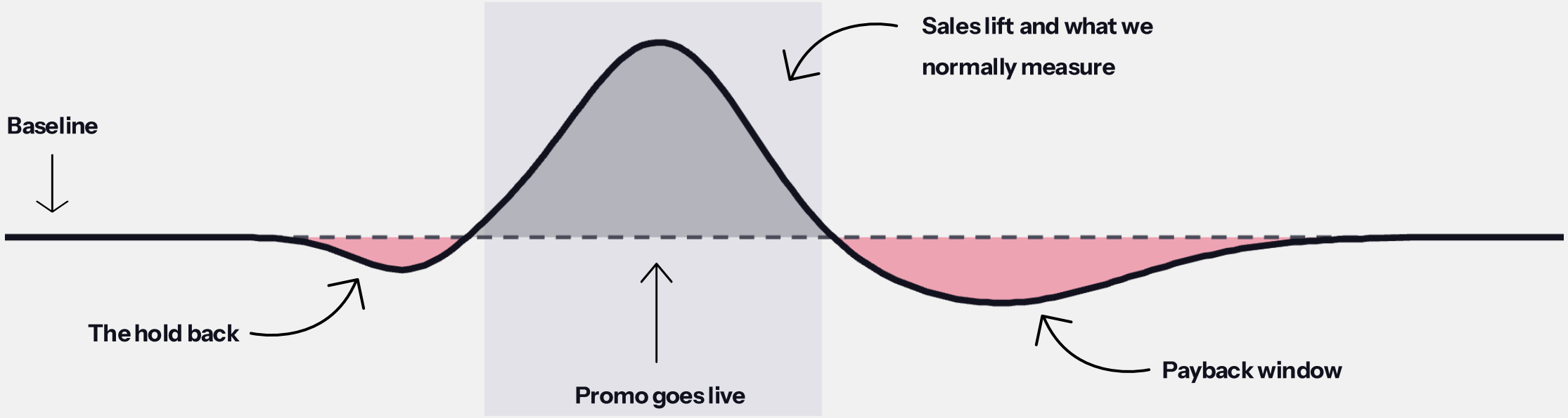
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Repeat promotions without having checked whether they were profitable

76%

Binet & Boyd for the IPA, October 2026. Censuswide survey

The view of promotions is the challenge, we often forget to measure the post-promo period and the impact it has



Promo worth example = gross uplift – held back – payback – margin given away

And it’s normally driven from the same conversations with the same questions…

“We should run a promo”

“We need to increase sales”

“This stock really needs to move”

“Orders are down, how can we solve it”

“Let’s run a promo on this new product”

So, we ran a promo analysis across three separate retailers with varying promos at different levels...

Furniture

Sales & Revenue

3 promos this year

From 8 week spring sales, summer sales and dedicated bank holiday push.

Baby care

Sales & Revenue

8 promos this year

Ranging from a 24-hour 15% codes all the way to 14 day “up to 40%” events.

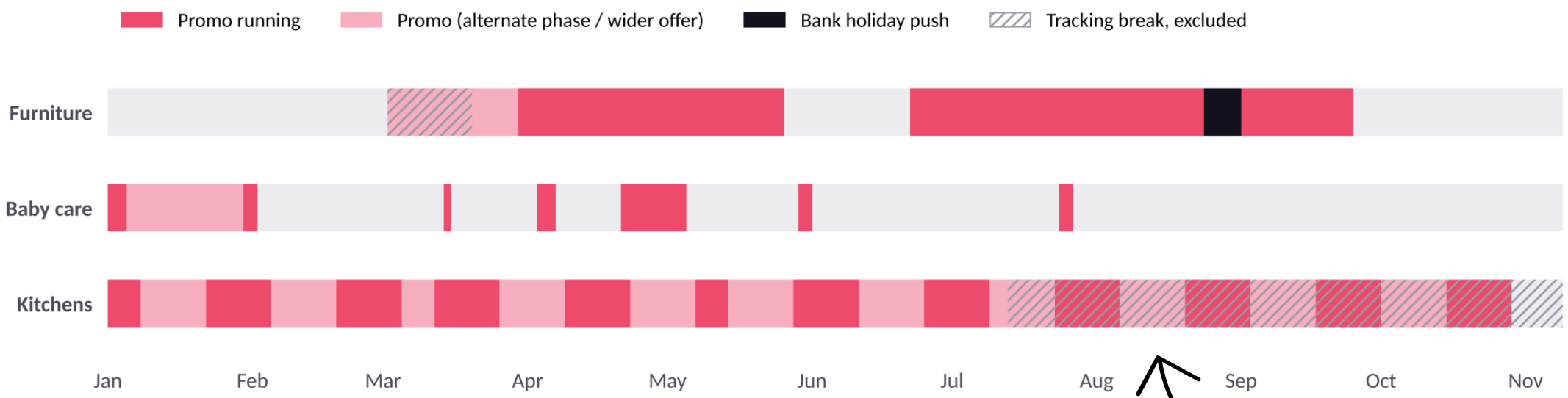
Homeware

Appointments

7 promos run this year

All back to back with a refresh every two weeks.

Which looked a little like this. We modelled promos, offers and when we have breaks in tracking



Shock, not all data is usable.

Using modelling to look at promotion performance

1

Baseline

Model sales with no promo, fitted on clean days only: no promo, and not within 14 days after one.

2

Window

Read from 7 days before the promo to 28 days after it ends.

3

Net and Split

Uplift minus held back and payback. Split revenue into orders × basket size.

4

Noise

Compare with a normal week's swing, adjusted for autocorrelation.

$$\log y_t = \beta + \beta_{dow} + \beta \cdot BH_t + \beta \cdot payday_t + s(t) + \beta_t$$

$$effect_t = y_t / \hat{y}_t - 1 \quad net = \beta\,(y_t - \hat{y}_t),\ t \in [-7, +28]$$

But before you start, ensure you know your data.

Does seasonality or bank holidays move sales?
Has tracking changed?
How much does a normal week swing?

On a normal day	Furniture	Baby care	Kitchens
Busiest vs quietest day	Sun/Wed	Mon/Sat	Mon/Fri
Bank holiday	+37%	+21%	-
Payday window	none	+20%	-
Tracking breaks	2 - 19 Mar	none	13 Jul
Normal weekly swing	±15%	±11%	±8%

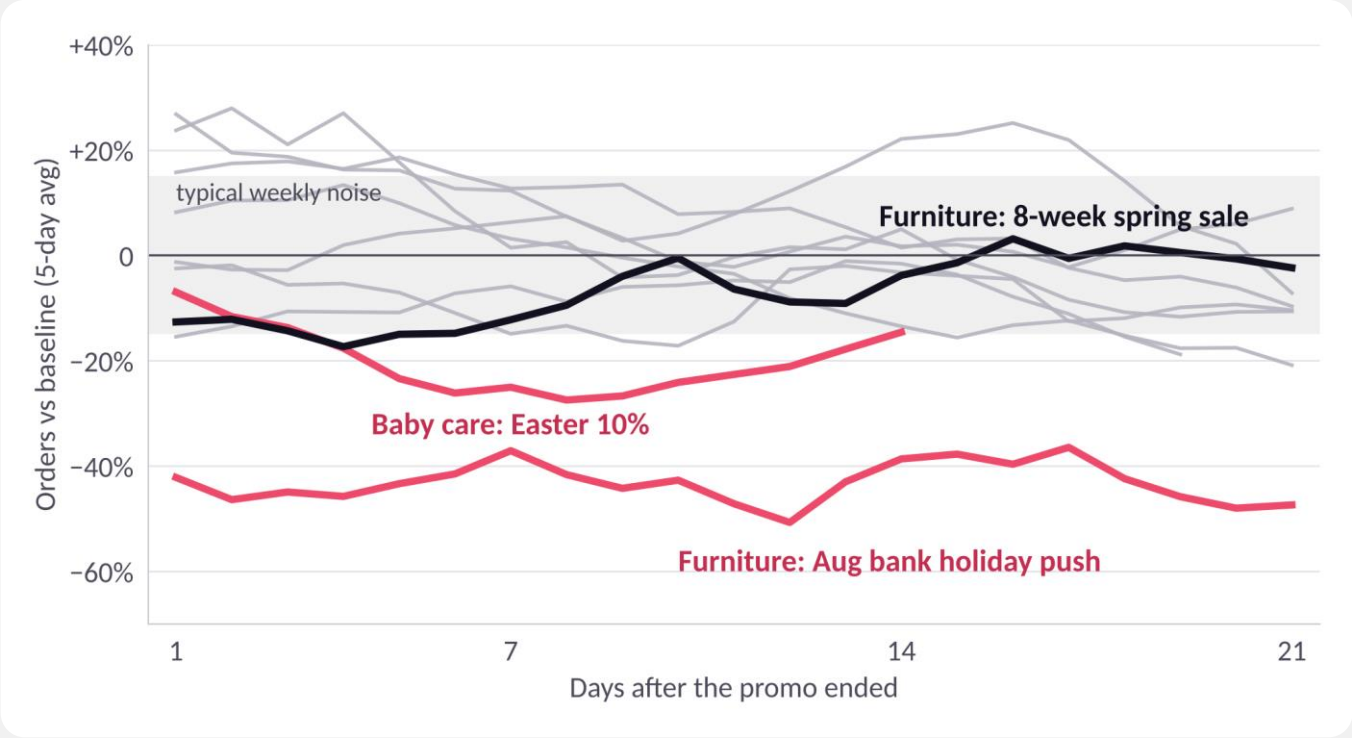


Understanding swings can help with noise alongside other channel swings. Check your channel data.

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Prep done. Now, do promotions really make you money?

Well sometimes, but not always. Context and length matters.



1-4 weeks

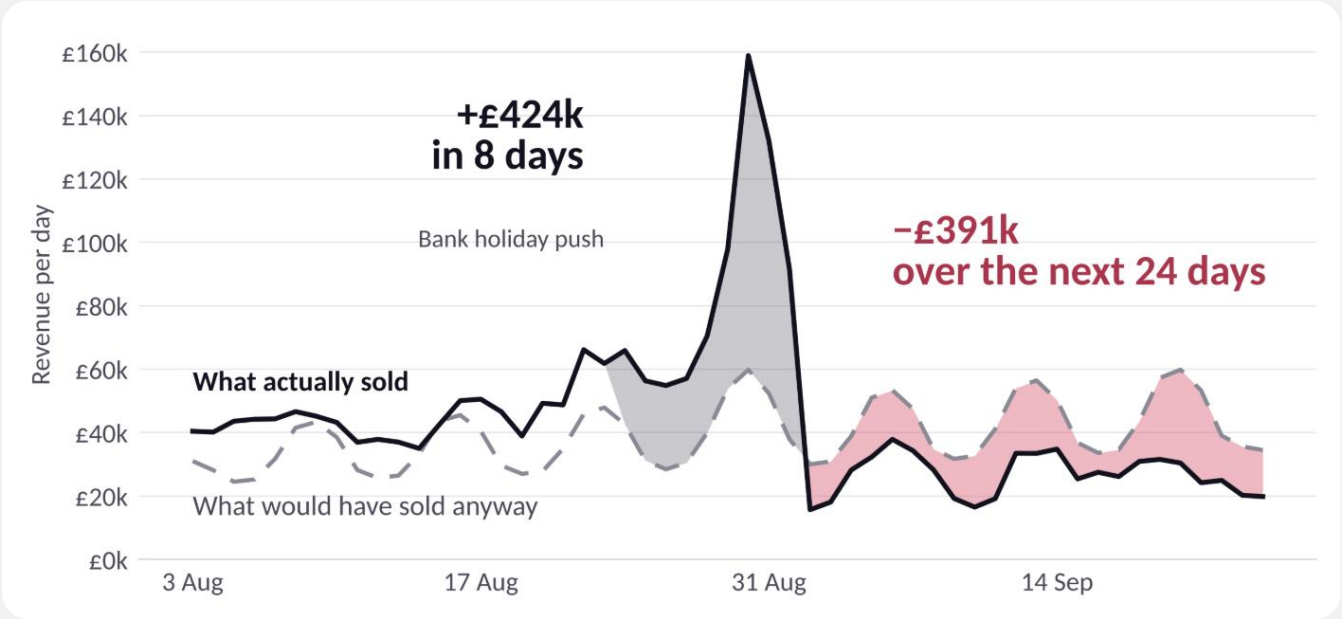
Depending on the promo, sales took one to four weeks to return to baseline

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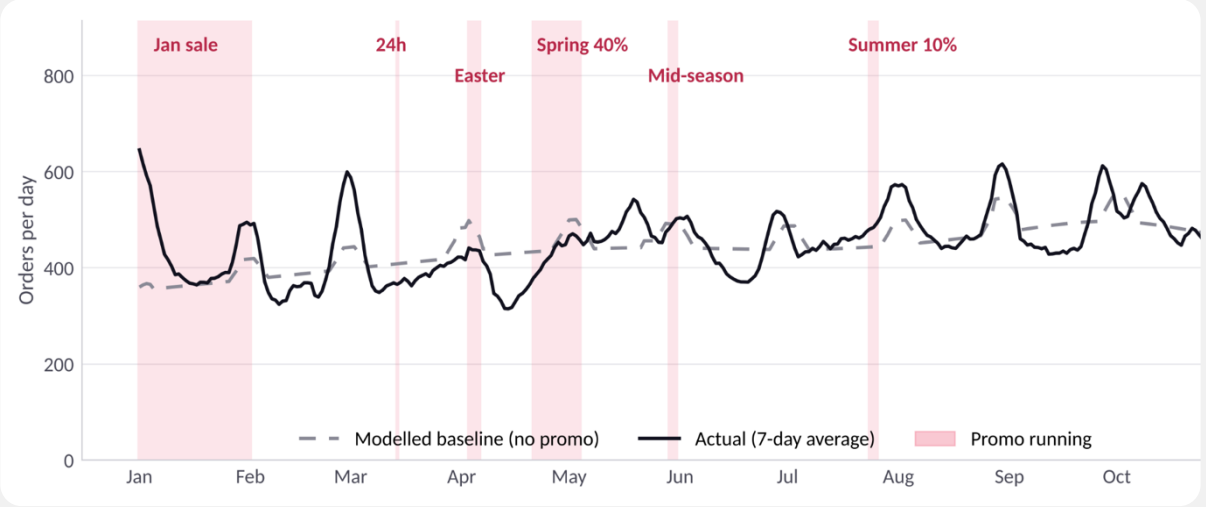
But this doesn't tell the full story, the context really matters

Long sales held their gains but the August push inside the summer took longer to return to baseline of daily sales leading to only marginal gains.



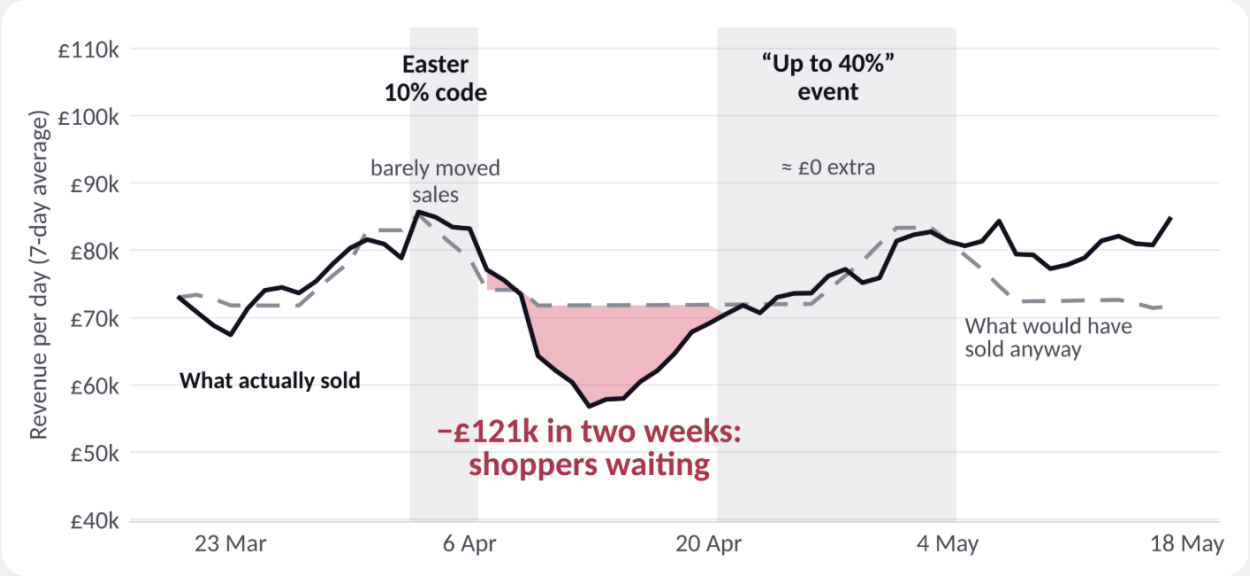


Measuring sales after the point of promotion is key

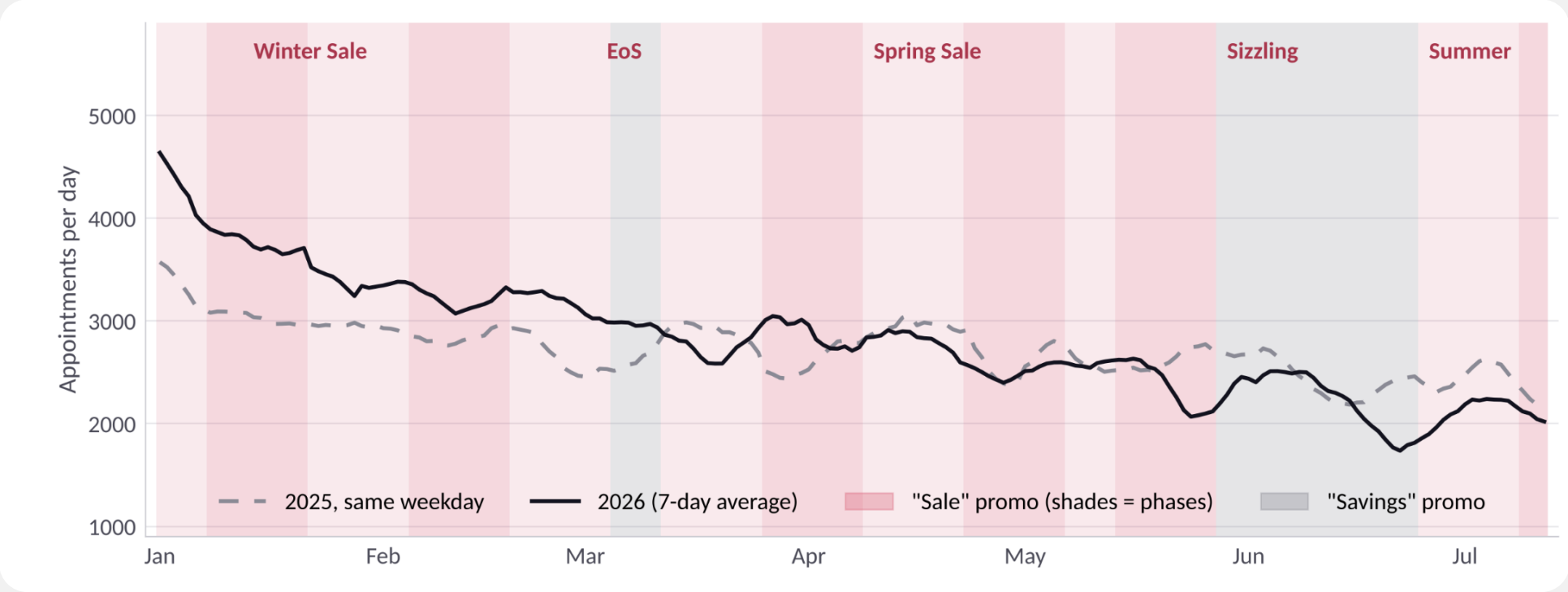


But for our baby care client, short burst promos performed well, unless they ran too close together

When promotion ran too close to each other through Easter & Spring, revenue was negatively affected



And for our homeware client, their near always on approach to promos left us with no way to isolate promotion performance



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But what does this actually tell us?

Well, not all promos are equal...

Long sales can perform well within the right season and context

Short sales over a few days can lift sales with little payback afterwards

Doubling up on sales can lead to a negative reward with loss in overall sales with baseline taking longer to recover

Always on sales turns you into a discount store and you can’t read the positive or negative effect through testing



Finally, let's wrap up

Measure four weeks after the sale, not just during. Compare against what would have happened anyway and don't stack promos back to back

Steps	What do I do?
Export	Daily orders and revenue, margin or one key event you want to monitor for two years (GA4 / CRM)
List promos	The dates, depth and type, discounts given and any media spend or pushes in platform
Clean the data	Check for tracking issues, unusual days and ensure to smooth the data before analysis
Fit the baseline	Plot out your baseline of daily sales or events outside of sale season and in it to provide a complete picture
Read the gap	Using your baseline read, plot it over your promotional periods and read the gap of actual sales/events pre, in flight and after

Watch for	Our findings from our data
Tracking breaks	Two data sets had points of tracking errors that needed to be corrected
The wrong metric	In one data set, orders also contained samples that needed stripping out
Unusual changes	Spikes off the calendar could have led to false positives if data sets were not cleaned
Media spend	Media spend often inflates the effect and needs to be accounted for
Noise and margin	A 1-day promo needs ±20% to show; revenue isn't profit

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Ready to get started?
Contact us today

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