

Your favourite romantic comedy probably revolves around timing—right place, right time, right person. A road trip from Chicago to New York City may not have been the best place to meet your soulmate, but perhaps a happenstance run-in years later could be.

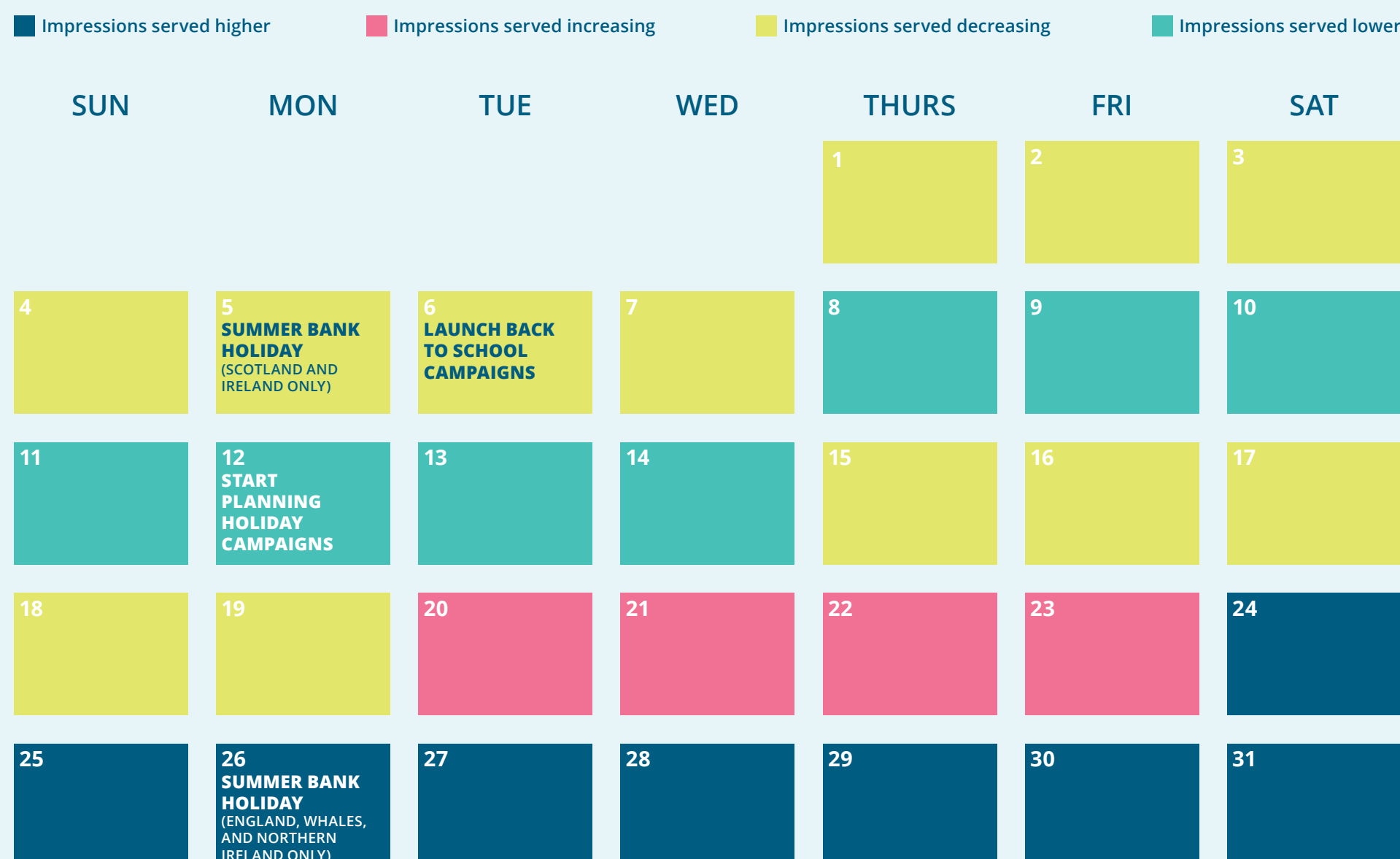


Okay, maybe your favourite rom-com isn't "When Harry Met Sally", so we'll jump to the point: timing is everything. This applies not only to snagging a date in advance of your office Christmas party, but also to planning and budgeting your holiday advertising campaigns.

If you're not aware of when shoppers are making purchase decisions and adjusting your marketing strategy accordingly, your business (and bottom line) may get left out in the cold this holiday season.

A longer runway will enable you to launch campaigns at optimal ad bidding cycles (where placement prices are lowest) and when your target audience is most likely to buy (e.g., the lead up to Black Friday). Although we can't help with your dating life, we can provide our top tips on how to get the most bang for your digital marketing buck. To make it easy for you, we've put together this seasonality calendar to keep you organised for the Q4 madness.

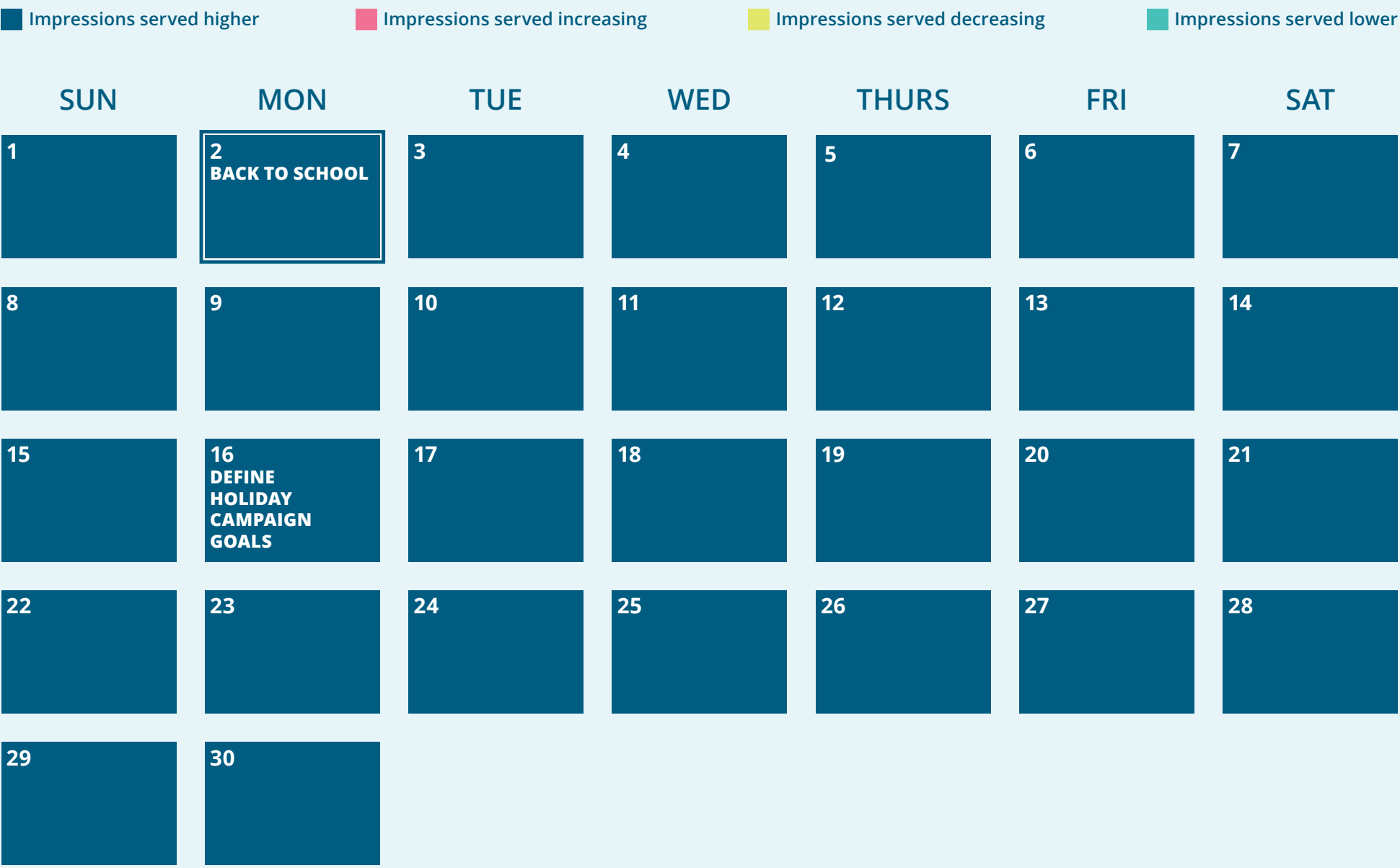
AUGUST



ACTION ITEM:
Finalise your budget and test campaigns, so you can properly allocate your advertising spend throughout your digital channels in the following months.

This is around the time when cost per thousand impressions (CPMs) begin to rise and continue to rise until the end of the holiday season—with the months leading up to October seeing the highest number of impressions. We recommend to start planning and testing your campaigns for the holiday season in early August to ensure you are launching effective ads in Q4. Additionally, plan ahead and get your Autumn ads ready now. September and the back-to-school period are very busy times.

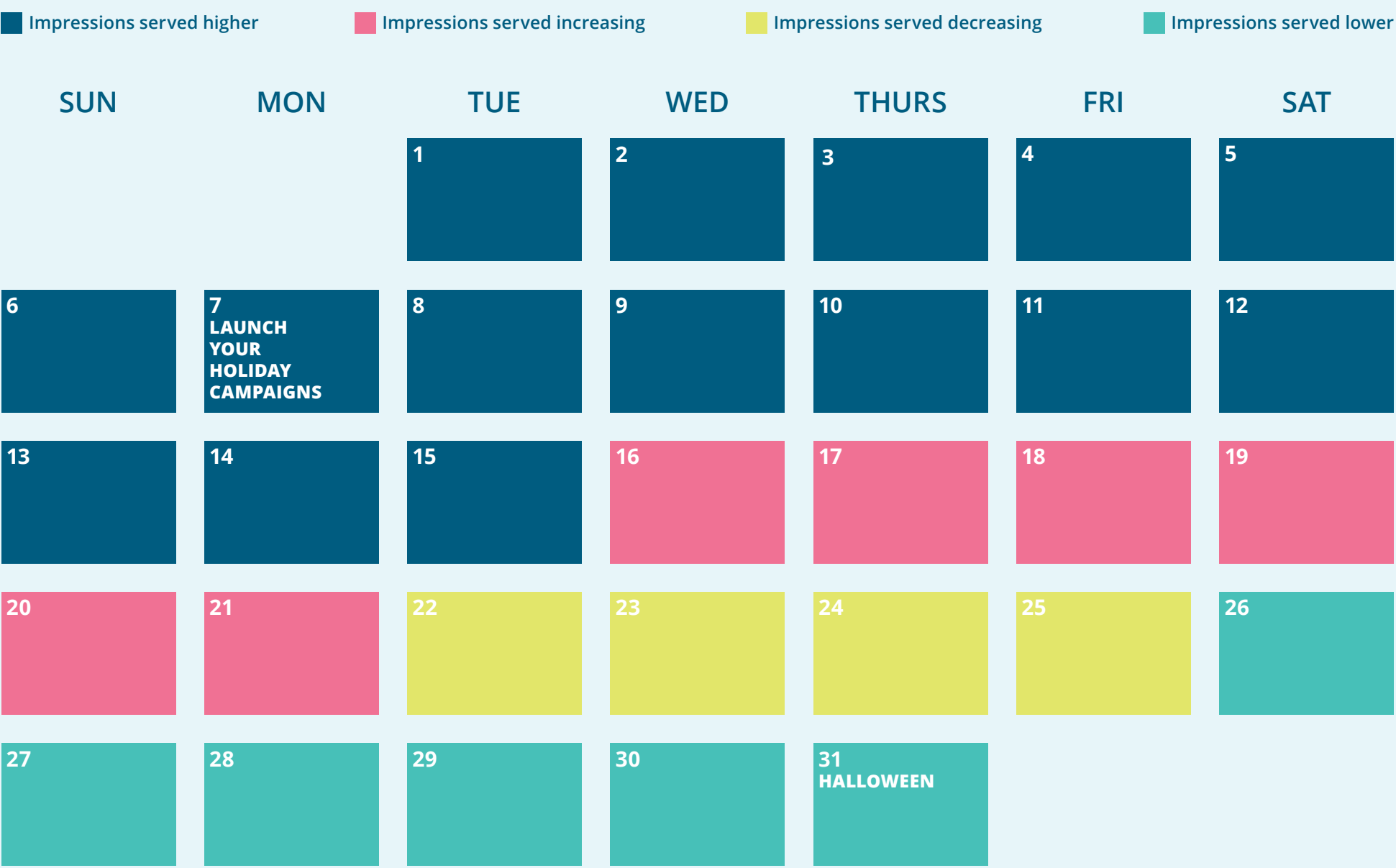
SEPTEMBER



ACTION ITEM:
Define your campaign goals, such as brand awareness, engagement, or response, and match the metrics that indicate success, like impressions video views, or purchases.

September is when the holiday shopping season kicks off for most brands and online shopping experiences a revival. Our internal data shows that most campaigns in September had click-through rates (CTRs) that rivaled those in late November and early December. Additionally, *early half of parents start their holiday shopping* by the middle of September—making this a pivotal month to ensure your success this holiday season.

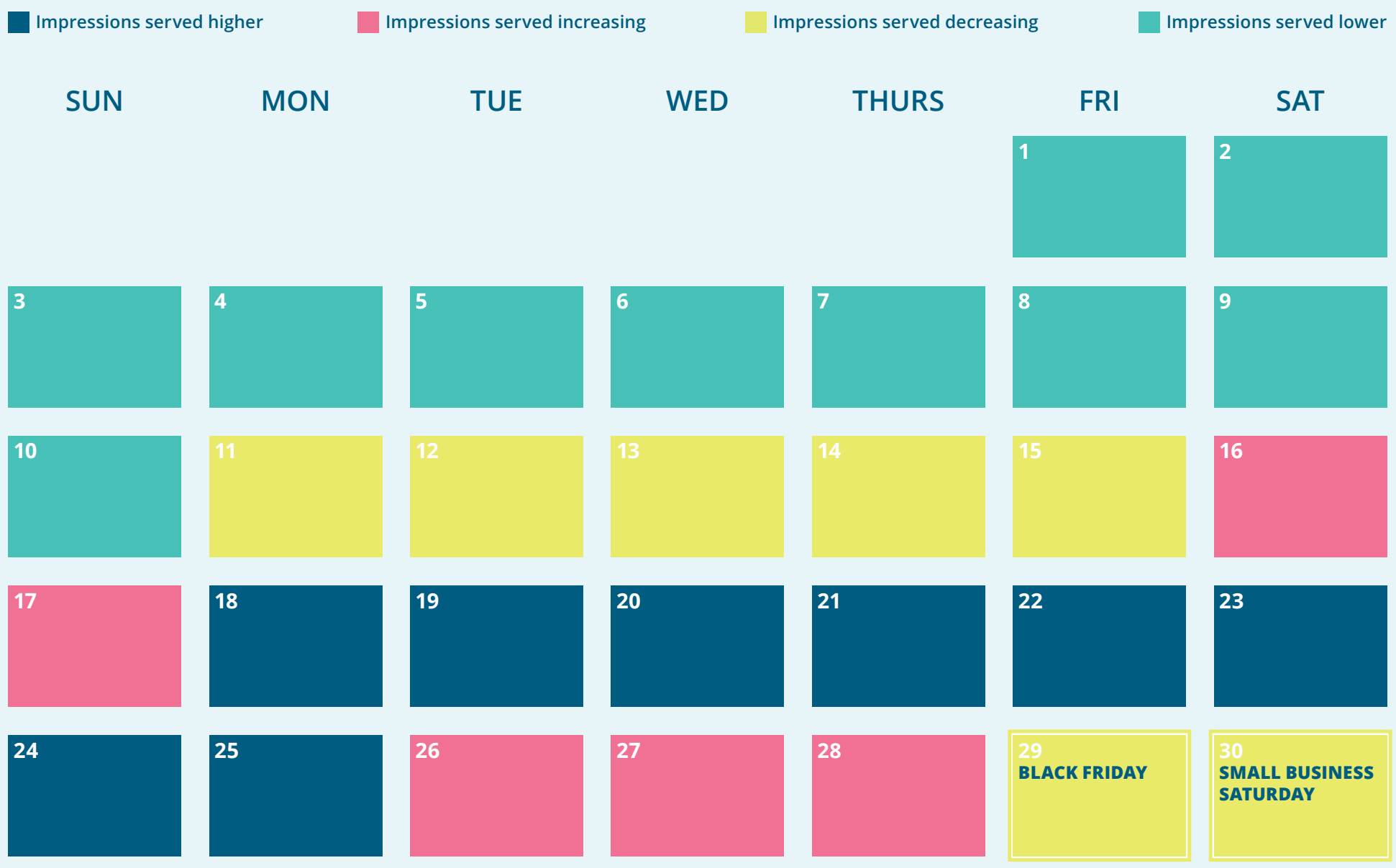
OCTOBER



ACTION ITEM:
Begin testing all aspects of your campaigns (e.g., channels, creative, cadence) to keep a pulse of what is and isn't working, so you can iterate accordingly.

This is when holiday campaigns shift into high gear. October is the final month before the digital landscape is littered with your competition's holiday-related ads—with cost per click (CPCs) rising and ad impressions falling in the final months of the year. If you didn't start your campaign planning earlier, we highly recommend launching your campaigns no later than Halloween to ensure that your brand won't get lost in the holiday shuffle.

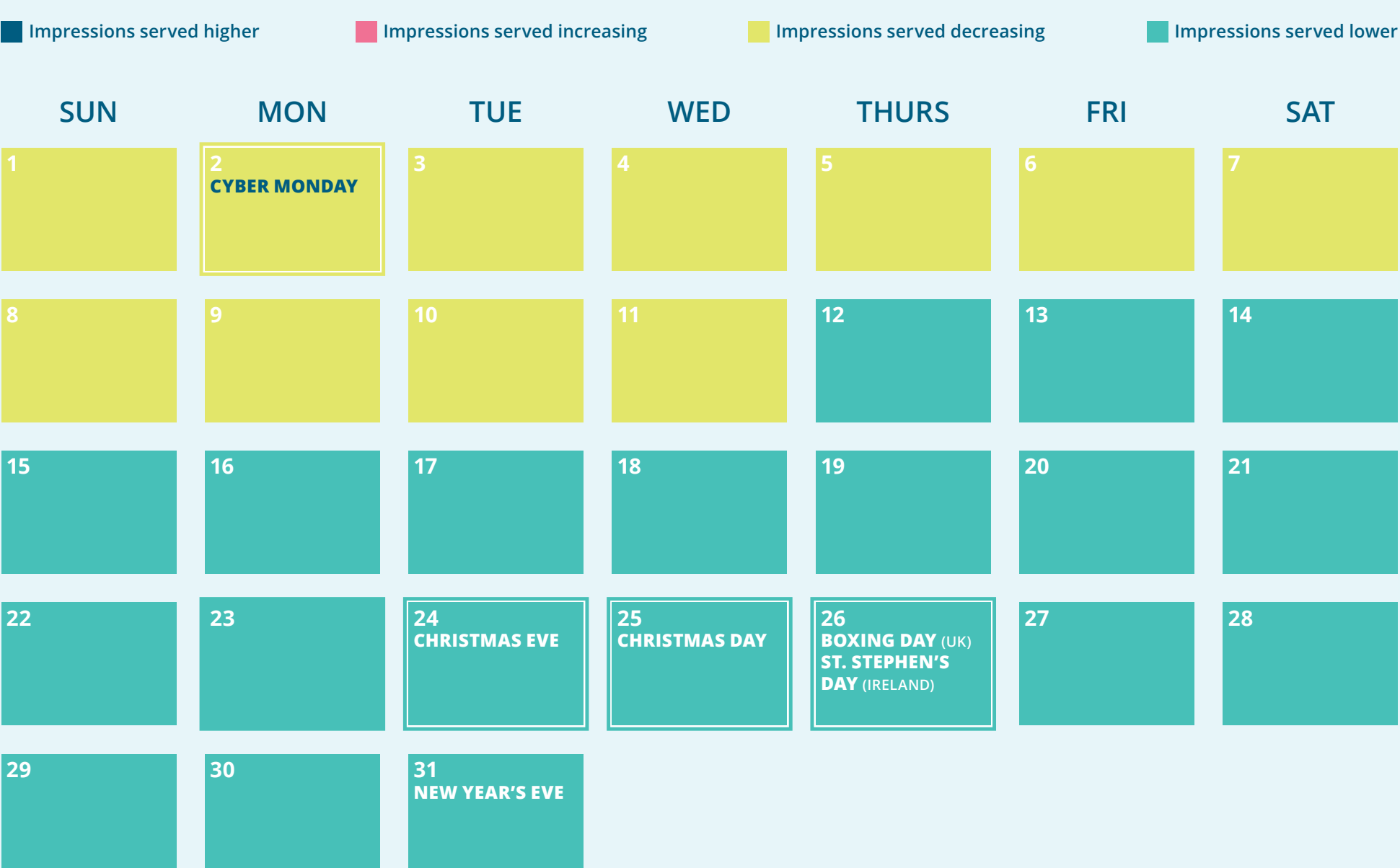
NOVEMBER



ACTION ITEM:
Start thinking beyond the holidays and plan for a short-term January media plan to carry you through the initial regroup period after the holidays.

This is the most critical time of the holiday season for e-commerce brands, with Black Friday, Small Business Saturday, and Cyber Monday, coming in quick succession. These shopping holidays, known as Cyber Week, drive a lion's share of the revenue produced during this season. Competition will be stiff, but that doesn't mean you won't be able to continue to seal the deal with potential shoppers. Ensure that you are staying top-of-mind by running multi-channel campaigns across web, social, mobile, and email. Testing your ads against each other is also key here—this will allow you to make on-the-fly optimisations.

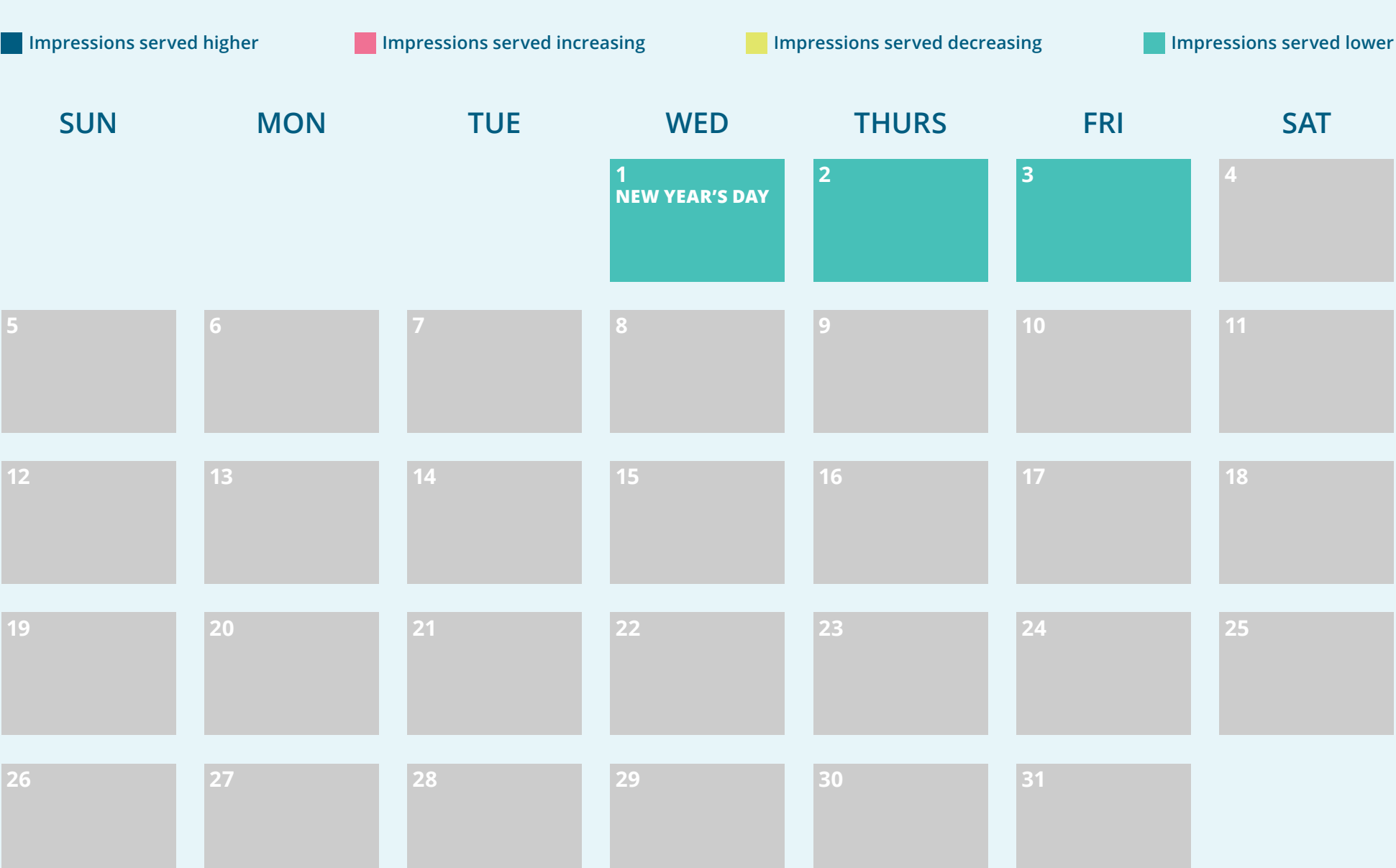
DECEMBER



ACTION ITEM:
Meet with key stakeholders to review the success of your holiday campaign (what went wrong, right, etc.) to derive insights for future campaigns.

We're in the final stretch and speeding up to the big day—Christmas! Despite many purchasing their gifts during Cyber Week, there are still lots of last-minute shoppers that will be scrambling to complete their holiday gift list. Make sure to run your campaigns until the end of the month and sprinkle in promotions to entice the last-minute shoppers, such as free 2-day shipping.

JANUARY



ACTION ITEM:
Think beyond the holidays and build out a seasonal calendar to capitalise on upcoming holidays and events, such as Valentine's Day.

Marketers that aren't looking past December miss out on shoppers with time and gift cards on their hands. January sees an influx of these eager buyers visiting sites in droves. Savvy brands have begun to take notice. We saw a nearly 20% increase in the number of impressions served in January 2018 compared to the previous month, with CPMs over 30% cheaper. Get ahead of your competition by reaching the post-holiday audiences they don't think about targeting.



'TIS THE SEASON FOR ROMANCE AND REVENUE.

With insights from this seasonality calendar, you'll be better prepared to capitalise on holiday marketing trends and end the year on a high note. Who knows, maybe next year you might find that special someone.

Make sure to update your AdRoll campaigns or speak with your account manager about your holiday plans.

Need an account? Sign up at: adroll.com/seasonality