

Q4 Peak Season Readiness Checklist

Peak season starts earlier than most sellers think, and gaps that seem small in September become costly in November.

Go section by section. What's not checked is what's standing between you and a strong Q4.

Cyber
MONDAY

prime day

Black
Friday



Strategy & Planning

Last year's data reviewed by SKU and channel

Sales targets set with pricing strategy per marketplace

Hero products & bundles identified for peak focus

Key commercial dates mapped for all markets & regions



Channel & Listing readiness

All sales channels live and correctly set up

Listings updated with titles, images, descriptions

Products categorised with all attributes complete

Listings optimised for marketplace search & promos



Inventory & Operations

Demand forecast created for 3 scenarios (base, high, low)

Safety stock confirmed for top-selling SKUs

3PL/LSP capacity locked in for peak period with SLAs

Contingency plan in place for stockouts or delays



Pricing & Promotions

Automated pricing rules set up per channel

Marketplace promo events identified and applied for

Promotional calendar aligned across all channels & regions

Fee changes during promo periods reviewed for margin impact



Marketing & Visibility

Ad campaigns planned and budgeted with front-loaded spend

Review collection campaign launched ahead of peak

Social commerce activated (TikTok Shop, Instagram)

Gift guides & seasonal content scheduled and ready



Post-peak readiness

Returns plan in place — expect up to 3x normal volume

Q1 reactivation plan and loyalty offers ready to launch

Real-time KPI dashboard and stock alerts configured

Post-season review scheduled before January ends



Common pitfalls that cost sellers every peak season

▶ Starting too late

By October, there's no room to experiment. Plan 3–6 months out.

▶ Discounting too aggressively

Deep cuts train customers to wait. Compete on value, not just price.

▶ Narrow product focus

Only pushing hero SKUs misses volume. Small-ticket items drive significant add-on sales.

▶ Doing it manually

Copy-pasting between systems is your first point of failure at peak volume.

▶ Ignoring mobile

Over 54% of BFCM* purchases happen on mobile. Listings and checkout must work flawlessly on small screens.

▶ No contingency plan

Stockouts and carrier delays happen every year. Without a written playbook, your team improvises.

▶ Going silent on customers

Proactive updates prevent WISMO tickets from overwhelming support at the worst moment.

▶ Forgetting post-peak

Returns spike 3x and Q1 ROAS crashes without a retention plan ready before December ends.

* Black Friday Cyber Monday

Every unchecked box is a risk you can still close before Q4.

A ChannelEngine marketplace expert can help you get there.

Book a free consultation

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