

BLACK FRIDAY CYBER MONDAY PREP

Q4 Checklist for Ecommerce Businesses

Q4 is the time to dig in and maximize on the natural rhythm of heightened consumerism and buying behaviour! Here's everything you need to know to prep for a successful ecommerce season:

- Review your past Q4 performance
- Set your Q4 goals or targets for this year

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□ Identify your target products that are going to help you hit your targets. Things to consider include:

- Demand - what was your best selling product last year?
- Profit Margins - the higher your profit margin on a product, the greater the discount you can offer and more you can spend on advertising while still leaving room to turn a marked profit.
- Stock - do you have excess stock you'd like to sell? Do you have enough stock to satisfy demand and run your sale for a meaningful period of time? Will your ad have enough time to get out of the learning phase before you run out of stock?
- Cross-selling - can you upsell or cross-sell someone on the product to increase average order value?

□ Identify your promotional strategy. What is the value add you're offering? Options may include but are not limited to:

- Gift with purchase strategies
- BOGO strategies
- Percentage off or money off strategies
- Product bundles or bundle-and-save
- VIP discounts or product selections
- Early access
- Customer loyalty rewards programs
- Offers exclusive to new customers

□ Plan your marketing strategy

- Since orders naturally peak during Q4 with festive shopping, you should not only aim to increase your number of sales, you want to focus on increasing your average order value!
- Focussing on repeat business is one of the most cost-effective ways to keep acquisition costs low.
- Strategies to increase average order value may include offering bundle promos, identifying popular single order items or lower value items and looking for companion products that customers tend to buy with them on larger cart values!
- Think about how you could segment audiences based on behaviour to trigger email flows like abandoned cart emails, repeat customer email flows etc.

□ Make sure your website is primed to handle the increased traffic.

- Don't forget to optimize for mobile! Studies show the vast majority of site traffic these days comes from mobile.
- Focus on improving UX and removing unnecessary friction points that stand between your site visitors and check-out.
- Optimize your landing pages with products by including a clear CTA, reviews etc.

□ Test your campaigns

- Find the right audience for your campaign! This could be a retargeting audience of previous customers, abandoned carts, etc.

□ Be ready for increased customer support requests and prepare your team for success!

- Ensure your team's morale is high and that teams have the support and staff required to execute their respective functions.
- Determine and communicate your scaling min/maxes. I.e. what is the minimum ROAS for profitability, max cost per purchase, and max number of orders you can fulfill in a week.
- Determine your last order day for shipping in time for Christmas.
- Plan ahead for a second shipping company! Last year we saw major disruptions to services by Canada Post as a result of the strike action.
- Start email data and audience building data collection now while it is still cheaper to acquire your target audience! If you wait until Q4 to try and find your customers, you'll be outbid by major players and your results and sales will suffer as a result.

Are You Ready To Scale?

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Q4 Checklist for Non-Ecommerce Businesses

Don't run an ecommerce business? Work Q4 in a way that works for you! If you have historically seen poor results, struggled to generate leads or close sales in Q4; it might be the ideal time to shift gears, goals and budget into another channel around the Black Friday time period when ad auctions hit all time highs and your sales team is off on holiday. The key to knowing what to do lies in last year's data, results, and costs, and in when your team can be the most responsive! Still unsure of what to do? We can help!

□ Review your Q4 performance for last year. Look at what worked and make that the focus of this year's strategy.

- Talk to your sales team and get their feedback on what they find works best and what customers are most interested in. Your sales team is your marketing team's secret weapon when it comes to messaging and timing! Don't forget to tune in and touch base with them to supercharge your Q4 strategy!

□ Set your Q4 goals or targets for this year.

- Don't forget to review your yearly goals and align your Q4 goals with those set for the year at the end of Q4 last year!

□ Plan and schedule your existing projects for Q4 and identify resources required for existing or new business.

□ Optimize your resource allocation to allow for the influx of Q4 business.

□ Develop your marketing strategy

- Identify your unique selling points and value propositions specific to this time of year.
- Invest in targeting your top funnel prior to Q4 to build quality retargeting audiences!
- If Q4 is still a good time of year for your business, you could also focus on leveraging your bottom funnel email audiences during prime Black Friday advertising periods to avoid the ad platform costs. You can test messaging and increase the volume of emails sent as needed if you notice open rates dropping; to cut through the noise of other Black Friday and Cyber Monday emails and offerings.

□ Touch base with your marketing team to finalize scaling projections

- Use those projections to make predictions and plan adequate staffing in the warehouse and customer service departments.
- Create preemptive plans for increasing staffing temporarily during peak periods if needed.

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