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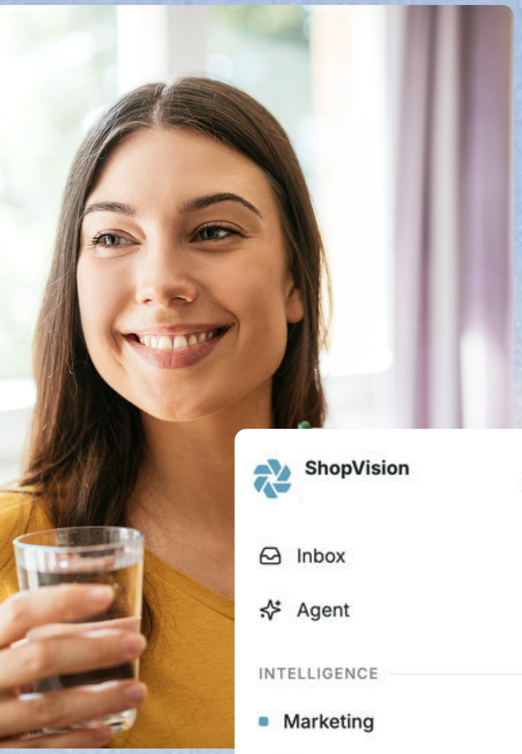
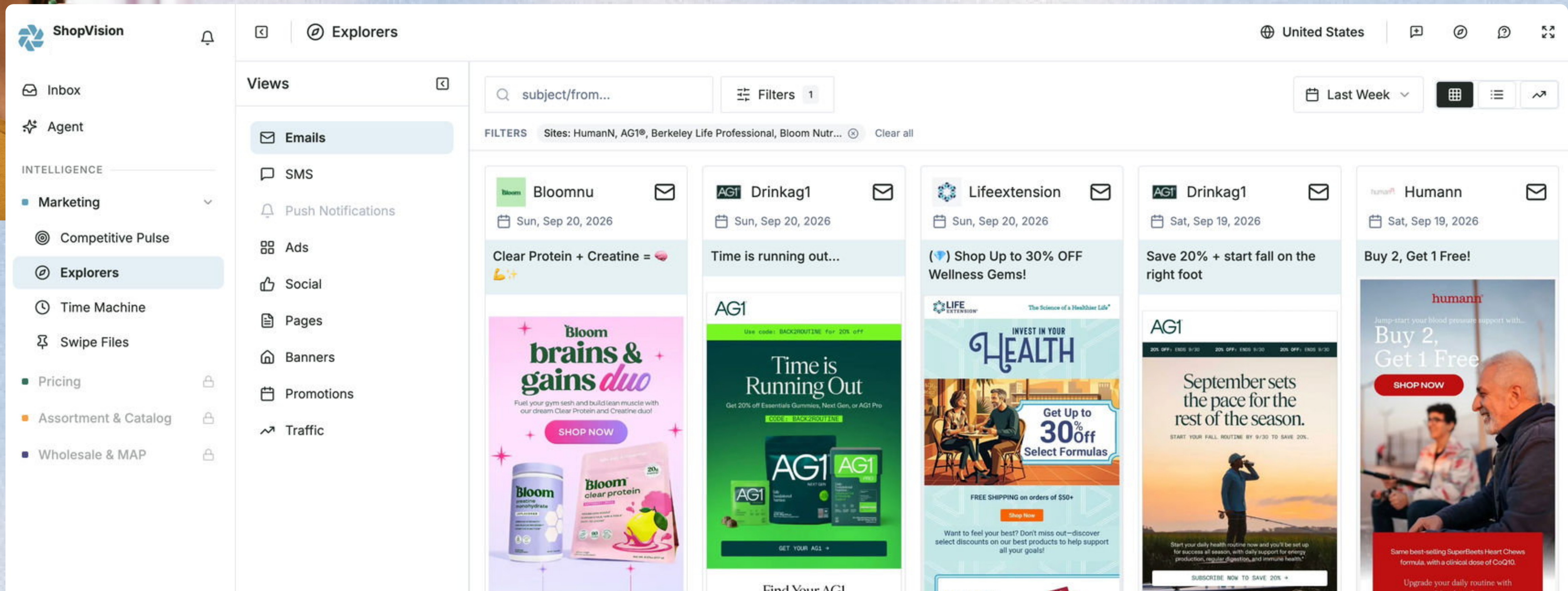
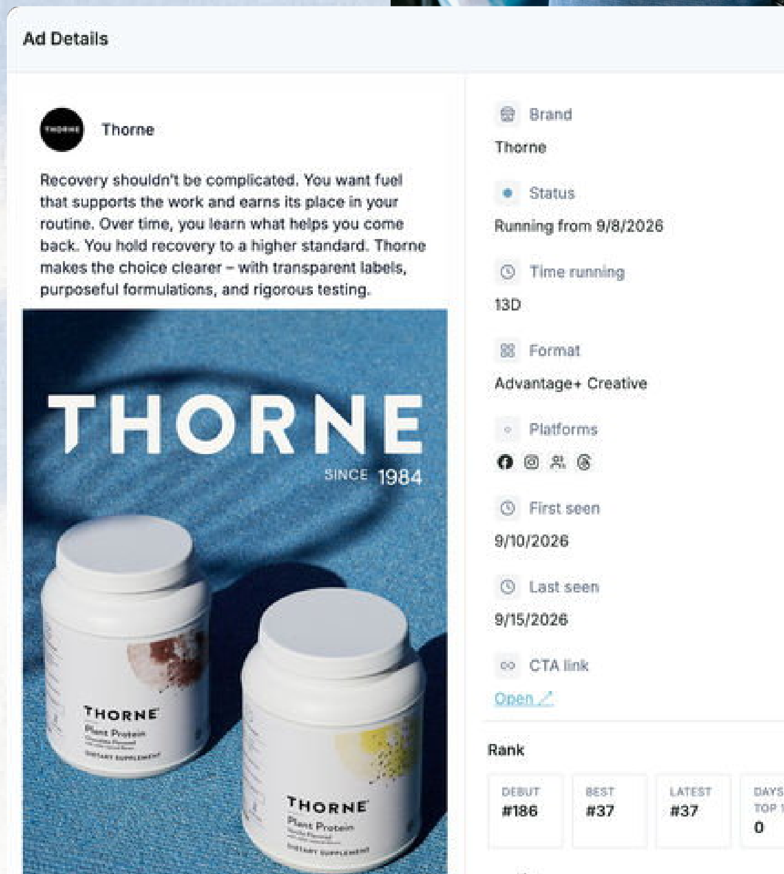
# How to win BFCM 2026

## The Supplement Playbook





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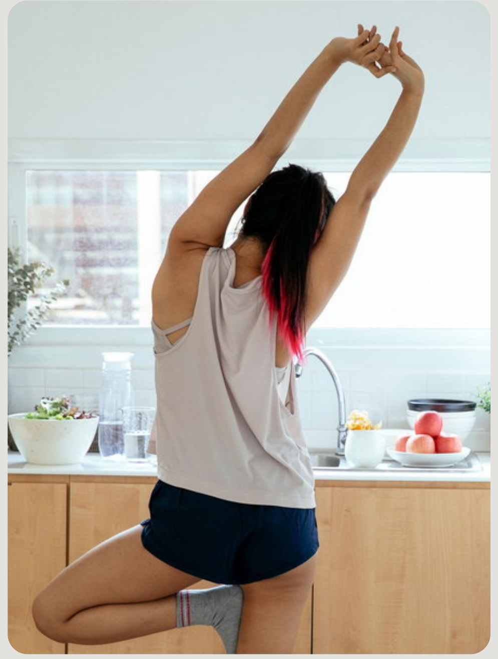
# What your category did, and *what you do next.*

Last year we tracked every promotional move 10 supplement brands made across 13 weeks of Q4:

3,400+ data points on timing, mechanics, gifts with purchase, category plays, and email. The benchmark told you what the market did.

This playbook is about what you do with it, updated with what we're seeing in the market right now as Holiday 2026 takes shape.



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# *Play 1:* Move before November 10, the window this market left open

**What 2025 told us**.

The peer set clustered tighter than almost any vertical we track: 8 of 10 brands launched between November 10 and 25, and only Life Extension moved earlier, opening Doorbusters on November 10 and running them for 11 days before its separate Black Friday event. Everyone else launched into the same crowded fortnight. Going earlier here isn't following the market; it's leading it.

**What we're seeing in 2026.**

The early ramp is being rehearsed on other holidays. Puritan's Pride opened its Memorial Day preview roughly 18 days before the main event, its longest early-access window yet, then ran a 10-day ramp into Labor Day. The lengthening preview format is exactly the machinery a pre-November 10 Black Friday launch needs, and it's being tested in public.

# Play 1: Your winning move

- Claim a launch date in the first week of November. One brand owned that air uncontested last year, and its Doorbuster structure (rotating individual product deals) kept the window fresh without burning the headline offer early.

- If a full early launch is too rich, run the preview-email pattern instead: a named early-access wave one to two weeks out that warms the list before the depth drops.

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# *Play 2:* Decide what your member gate is for, in this category it runs shallow

**What 2025 told us.**

Three brands opened with gated early access, and in all three cases the gate was shallower than the public offer that followed: Humann's 15% before its Buy 2 Get 2 Free, Berkeley Life's VIP subscription offer before its public 20%, Bloom's loyalty 15 to 20% before the public 30%. Nobody gave members a deeper rate. The gate bought timing and signal on what moves, not price.

**What we're seeing in 2026.**

The loyalty infrastructure is getting heavier. Puritan's Pride added a top tier that unlocks an extra 30% during major sale events, the first real member-deeper mechanic in the tracked set. Nuun built its whole program around earning rather than buying, with Strava-linked points redeemable for free product. The gates are being upgraded from timing devices into value tiers.

# Play 2: Your winning move

- If you keep the shallow gate, use it deliberately: a members-first week at a modest rate is a low-cost read on which SKUs will carry the public event.
- The unclaimed play is the deeper member rate. No brand in the 2025 set priced loyalty above the public offer, so a members-only extra cut would be a genuine differentiator, and one competitor is already building toward it.

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# *Play 3:* Take the market rate, or break from it on purpose

**What 2025 told us.**

Seven of 10 led with a sitewide percentage, clustered at 25 to 30%. The three that broke from it chose structure over simplicity: Humann's Buy 2 Get 2 Free tied depth to quantity, Life Extension's tiered dollar-off thresholds ($10 at $75, $25 at $175, $50 at $325) pulled baskets upward through five rotating codes, and Thorne compressed its entire season into one 15% Cyber Monday code.

**What we're seeing in 2026.**

The structures are in year-round rehearsal. Puritan's Pride has run tiered dollar-off codes at nearly every tentpole and stacks three layers at its biggest events: a multi-buy base, a deep select-item tier, and a sitewide code on top. Nuun tested a clean three-step spend ladder in June (20% at $40, 25% at $50, 30% at $60) and a one-day 35% sitewide flash. The mechanics that differentiated Black Friday last year are being calibrated now.

# Play 3: Your winning move

- A 25 to 30% sitewide keeps checkout simple and puts you at the market's center of gravity. Break from it only when the structure does a job: multi-buy for unit velocity, tiered thresholds for AOV, a single-day event for margin protection.

- Test the structure in October on a smaller event. Threshold levels are the whole game in a tiered offer, and the brands drilling them at summer tentpoles won't be guessing in November.

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# *Play 4:* Layer the gift on top of the discount, never instead of it

**What 2025 told us.**

Six of 10 brands ran a gift with purchase, and every one layered it on top of the headline offer rather than replacing it. Bloom ran 8 days of rotating daily gifts alongside its 30% sitewide, Humann added free product at $100 on top of its multi-buy, Nature Made attached a gift at just $50. The GWP was the AOV lever that let the headline rate stay put.

**What we're seeing in 2026.**

The gift lane is surprisingly quiet right now. Nuun ran one threshold gift all year (a free tube at $40 in April), and Puritan's Pride runs no physical GWP at all, substituting purchase credits and loyalty points. The mechanic that 6 of 10 brands leaned on last November is barely being exercised in the off-season, which means the muscle, and the differentiation, is available.

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# Play 4: Your winning move

- Set the gift threshold just above your real average order value so the gift does AOV work, and rotate it if inventory allows: Bloom's daily rotation turned one mechanic into eight email sends.

- If physical gift logistics are the blocker, run the Ettika-style alternative from adjacent categories: a store credit by tier, value the customer can only spend back with you in January.

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# *Play 5:* Run the condition calendar before Black Friday week, then dissolve it

**What 2025 told us.**

Supplement shoppers don't browse product types, they shop health goals: immunity, sleep, heart. Only 3 brands built offers around that: Humann's cholesterol and metabolic events, Nature Made's immune and zero-sugar codes, Life Extension's mood and sleep flashes. All three ran them before BFCM week and dissolved them into the sitewide once the main event opened. Seven brands ran nothing but sitewide.

**What we're seeing in 2026.**

The condition calendar has become a year-round operating system at the value end of the market. Puritan's Pride rotates a category spotlight roughly weekly, mapped to health observances: Heart Month in February, Healthy Vision in May, Brain Awareness in June, Healthy Aging in September, with immune pushes bookending cold season. Even Nuun pivoted its September content to immunity ahead of fall. The pre-BF condition play from 2025 is now a template anyone can read.

# Play 5: Your winning move

- Book two or three condition beats for October through early November, matched to what your catalog credibly owns (immune and sleep are the seasonal naturals), and let them dissolve into the sitewide when the headline opens.

- Use the condition events as targeting reads: which condition audience converts deepest in October tells you where the Black Friday hero placement belongs.

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# *Play 6:* Pick your inbox posture on purpose, loud, ramped, or silent

**What 2025 told us.**

The spread ran from Nature Made's 71 emails to AG1's 2, and the loudest inbox didn't belong to the deepest discounter. The postures were distinct: Nature Made ran always-on with no BFCM ramp, Humann ramped 3.3x into the window, and Thorne sent zero promotional emails in BF week, holding a content-first line its premium model could afford. Send volume peaked on Cyber Monday and Cyber Tuesday, not Black Friday, and Thanksgiving was a gratitude-note dip across the set.

**What we're seeing in 2026.**

The poles are further apart than ever. Puritan's Pride holds a flat 2-sends-a-day cadence and surges depth rather than volume when events open, the Nature Made pattern taken to its limit. Nuun runs the tight three-email event unit, launch, reminder, last chance, on every sale it fires. Both patterns are set months before November.

# Play 6: Your winning move

- Choose ramp or always-on and commit: a visible ramp tells the list Black Friday is a break from the norm; a flat cadence with deeper offers says the event speaks for itself. Either works, drifting between them doesn't.

- Plan for the real peaks. Cyber Monday and the day after out-sent Black Friday last year, and a soft gratitude send on Thanksgiving matched the market's tone while keeping your name in the inbox.

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# *Play 7:* Script December to match your pricing model

**What 2025 told us**.

Seven of 10 brands kept promoting after Cyber Monday, and the week after Christmas split the set four ways: sustained code rotation (Life Extension, Piping Rock), deep clearance (Bloom at up to 50%), New Year reset codes (Nature's Way, Berkeley Life, Nature Made), and silence (AG1, Thorne). The posture mapped cleanly to the pricing model: always-on promoters kept rolling, subscription-first and premium brands went dark, and the middle minted a clean-break code for Q1 attribution.

**What we're seeing in 2026.**

The January patterns confirmed the map. Nuun opened the year with a New Year BOGO on January 1; the always-on promoters rolled straight through. And the subscription-acquisition tail is the quiet winner: Humann closed last December escalating new-subscriber offers from 10 to 20%, converting resolution demand into recurring revenue rather than one-time clearance.

# Play 7: Your winning move

- Pick the December posture your model earns. If you're subscription-first, silence protects price integrity and the January offer does the work; if you carry inventory, the clearance week is your margin-recovery window.

- Mint a distinct New Year code regardless. It costs nothing, gives analytics a clean break between the CM buyer and the resolution buyer, and January's subscriber is worth more than December's discount chaser.

SUPPLEMENTS CATEGORY - HOW TO WIN BFCM 2026

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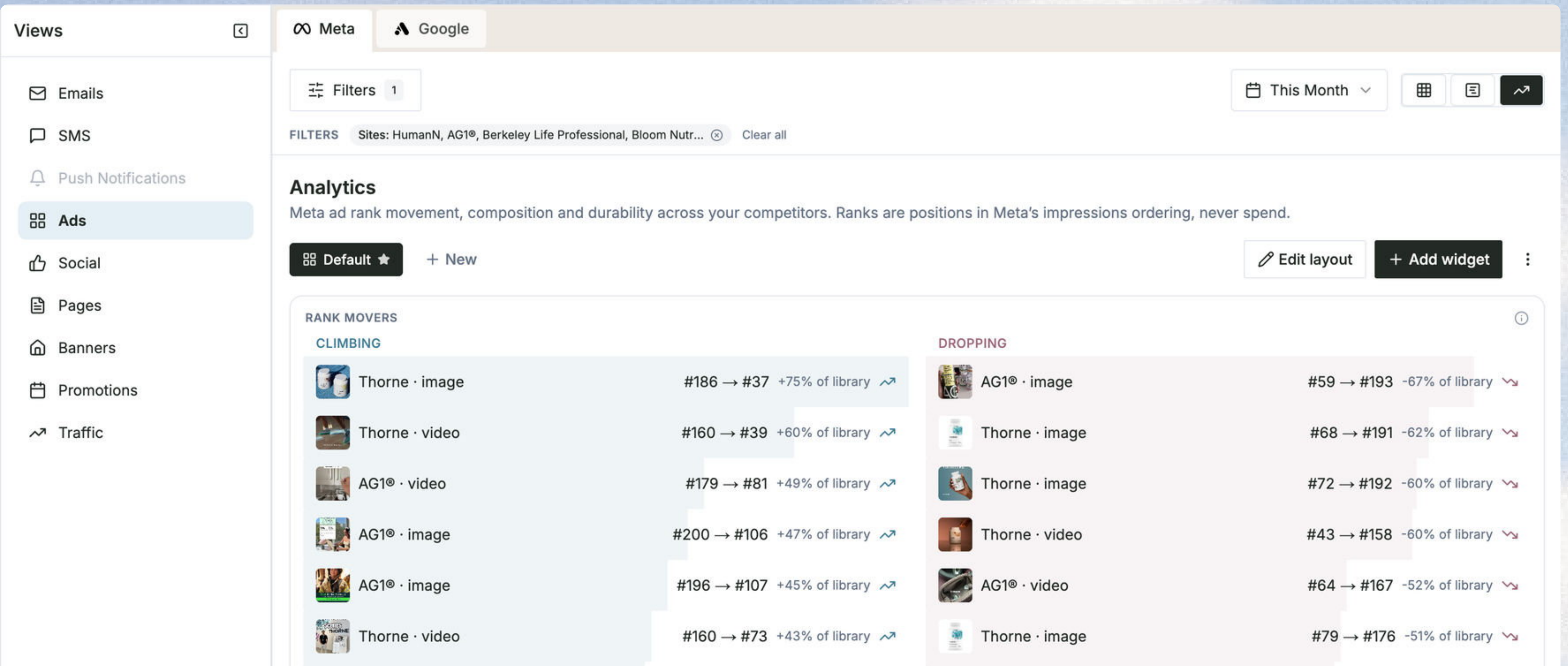
# The market is already moving. *Watch it live.*

**Everything in this playbook came from one source of truth:** seeing what every competitor actually did, verified at the source, from their own public copy.

That's what ShopVision does every day, across 300,000+ brands, retailers, and marketplaces, with 15 million products tracked daily.

This year, don't wait for the retrospective. Track your own peer set through the whole Q4 window: every launch date, every rate, every tease, every flash, as it happens.

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