Maisonette

THE 2027 PLANNER

# The *Merch* Planner for People Teams

Every employee moment worth celebrating in 2027, and when to order so the gifts actually arrive. Appreciation days, onboarding waves, intern season, and the holiday deadline nobody warns you about.

*a year of well-timed merch, planned in one sitting*

A FREE RESOURCE FROM MAISONETTE MEDIA

# How to use this planner

The difference between a gift that lands and a gift that is late is about six weeks. Your people will never see the PO dates, they will only remember how day one felt and whether the holiday gift showed up. For every moment in this planner, find your date, then work backwards using the lead times below.

## The only math that matters: lead time

| | |
|---|---|
| In-stock items, standard logo decoration | **2 to 3 weeks** |
| Retail brands, the good stuff people keep | **4 to 6 weeks** |
| Custom patches, special packaging, kitting | **6 to 8 weeks** |
| Fully custom, made-from-scratch pieces | **10 to 14 weeks** |
| Anything arriving in Q4 | **add 2+ weeks** |

### THREE HABITS THAT MAKE IT ALL EASIER

1. **Systematize the repeating moments.** Welcome kits, anniversaries, and farewells should run on autopilot with stock on a shelf (or in a company store), not a scramble per person.
2. **Mind the calendar's cultural range.** Lunar New Year, Ramadan, Juneteenth, Diwali, Hanukkah: inclusive timing is part of the gift.
3. **Quality over quantity, always.** One piece people actually wear says more about your culture than five they quietly donate.

# The moments that don't have a date

Before the calendar: the merch moments that happen all year. These deserve a system instead of a scramble, because they are the moments your people actually remember.

### New hire welcome kits

Ready before day one, every time. The first thing on the desk sets the tone for everything after it.

### Work anniversaries

Tiered gifts at 1, 5, and 10 years. A system means nobody's milestone slips through.

### Promotions & big wins

A small, well-made marker of the moment beats a reply-all congrats.

### Retirements & farewells

The last impression is a lasting one. Send people off with something worth keeping.

### Peer-to-peer recognition

Give managers and teammates something real to give. Recognition with an object attached sticks.

### Offsites & retreats

The hoodie from the retreat outlives the retreat. Plan it with the agenda, not after it.

> **Pro move:** a small standing inventory (or an always-on company store) turns every one of these from a project into a two-minute task.

# Q1 Set the tone

January decides how appreciated your team feels in March. The best Employee Appreciation Days are ordered before Groundhog Day.

## JANUARY

| | |
|---|---|
| ALL MONTH | **New year onboarding wave.** Welcome kits for the January class. |
| ALL MONTH | New year wellness: reset kits, water bottles, self-care drops. |
| LATE JAN | **Plan Employee Appreciation Day now.** It is March 5. Custom orders go in by late January. |

## FEBRUARY

| | |
|---|---|
| FEB 6 | **Lunar New Year.** Inclusive celebration moment, Year of the Sheep. |
| FEB 8 | **Ramadan begins** (through Mar 8). Be thoughtful with food gifts this month. |
| FEB 14 | **Valentine's Day.** Team treats and small appreciation moments. |
| FEB 17 | **Random Acts of Kindness Day.** |

## MARCH

| | |
|---|---|
| MAR 5 | **Employee Appreciation Day.** The Super Bowl of people-team merch. |
| MAR 8 | **International Women's Day.** ERG events and panels. |
| ALL MONTH | Q1 wrap: celebrate the wins before Q2 planning eats everyone. |

# Q2 Appreciation season

A quarter full of thank-yous. The trick is ordering each one a month before you need to say it.

## APRIL

| | |
|---|---|
| APR 21 | **Administrative Professionals Day.** The people who run everything. |
| APR 22 | **Earth Day.** Sustainable merch and volunteer day kits. |
| APR 22 | **Take Your Kid to Work Day.** Mini-merch is unreasonably delightful. |

## MAY

| | |
|---|---|
| ALL MONTH | **Mental Health Awareness Month.** Wellness kits that go beyond a stress ball. |
| ALL MONTH | **AAPI Heritage Month.** ERG celebrations. |
| NOW | **Order intern welcome kits this month.** The class arrives in June. |
| MAY 31 | **Memorial Day.** |

## JUNE

| | |
|---|---|
| ALL MONTH | **Pride Month.** Celebrate authentically. Source from LGBTQ+ owned suppliers. |
| JUN 19 | **Juneteenth.** |
| ALL MONTH | Intern class arrives. Day-one kits make day-one impressions. |
| ALL MONTH | Summer kickoff: picnic and field day season begins. |

# Q3 Summer people season

Interns leave, new classes arrive, and the smartest people teams quietly order the holidays before anyone says the word gift.

## JULY

| | |
|---|---|
| JUL 4 | **Independence Day.** |
| JUL 29 | **National Intern Day.** Celebrate them publicly, gift them memorably. |
| ALL MONTH | Company picnic and summer event season peaks. |

## AUGUST

| | |
|---|---|
| ALL MONTH | **Intern send-off.** Farewell gifts double as come-back-full-time recruiting. |
| ALL MONTH | Restock welcome kits for the fall onboarding wave. |
| NOW | **Start holiday gift planning.** August orders are calm orders. |

## SEPTEMBER

| | |
|---|---|
| SEP 6 | **Labor Day.** Literally the holiday about appreciating workers. |
| SEP 26 | **HR Professional Day.** Yes, you get a gift too. |
| ALL MONTH | Fall onboarding wave arrives. |
| ALL MONTH | Holiday gifts: lock budget and headcount this month. |

# 24 The season everything ships

Every company in America is ordering gifts at the same time. Beat them to the warehouse.

! **Mid-October is the last safe window** to order custom holiday gifts for December delivery. After that, options shrink and rush fees grow.

## OCTOBER

| | |
|---|---|
| OCT 4 TO 8 | **Customer Service Week.** Celebrate the front line. |
| OCT 10 | **World Mental Health Day.** |
| OCT 16 | **Boss's Day.** Falls on a Saturday, celebrate Friday Oct 15. |
| OCT 29 | **Diwali.** Inclusive gifting moment. |
| OCT 31 | **Halloween.** Costume contest and office treats. |

## NOVEMBER

| | |
|---|---|
| ALL MONTH | **Gratitude season.** Thanksgiving is Nov 25. |
| ALL MONTH | Work anniversary catch-up: close out the year with no one missed. |
| ALL MONTH | Holiday gifts ship this month for a stress-free December delivery. |

## DECEMBER

| | |
|---|---|
| DEC 24 | **Hanukkah** begins (through Jan 1). |
| DEC 25 | **Christmas.** Kwanzaa begins Dec 26. |
| ALL MONTH | Year-end recognition: awards, milestone gifts, thank-yous that mean it. |
| NOW | January welcome kits: ordered and kitted before the holiday break. |

# The lead time cheat sheet

Screenshot this page. Tape it to your monitor. Set a calendar reminder 8 weeks before every moment you starred in this planner, and you will never pay rush fees again.

| WHAT YOU'RE ORDERING | TIME TO BUILD IN |
|---|---|
| In-stock items, standard logo decoration | **2 to 3 weeks** |
| Retail brands (the good stuff people keep) | **4 to 6 weeks** |
| Custom patches, special packaging, kitting | **6 to 8 weeks** |
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> **Before you close this:** pick your five starred moments, subtract the lead time from each date, and put those five order-by reminders in your calendar right now. Ninety seconds of work, a full year of looking unreasonably organized.

## Want the gifts without *any* of the logistics?

Maisonette Media plans, sources, kits, and ships welcome kits, employee gifting, and company stores for people teams that care how it feels. Tell us the moment, we will handle the calendar.

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