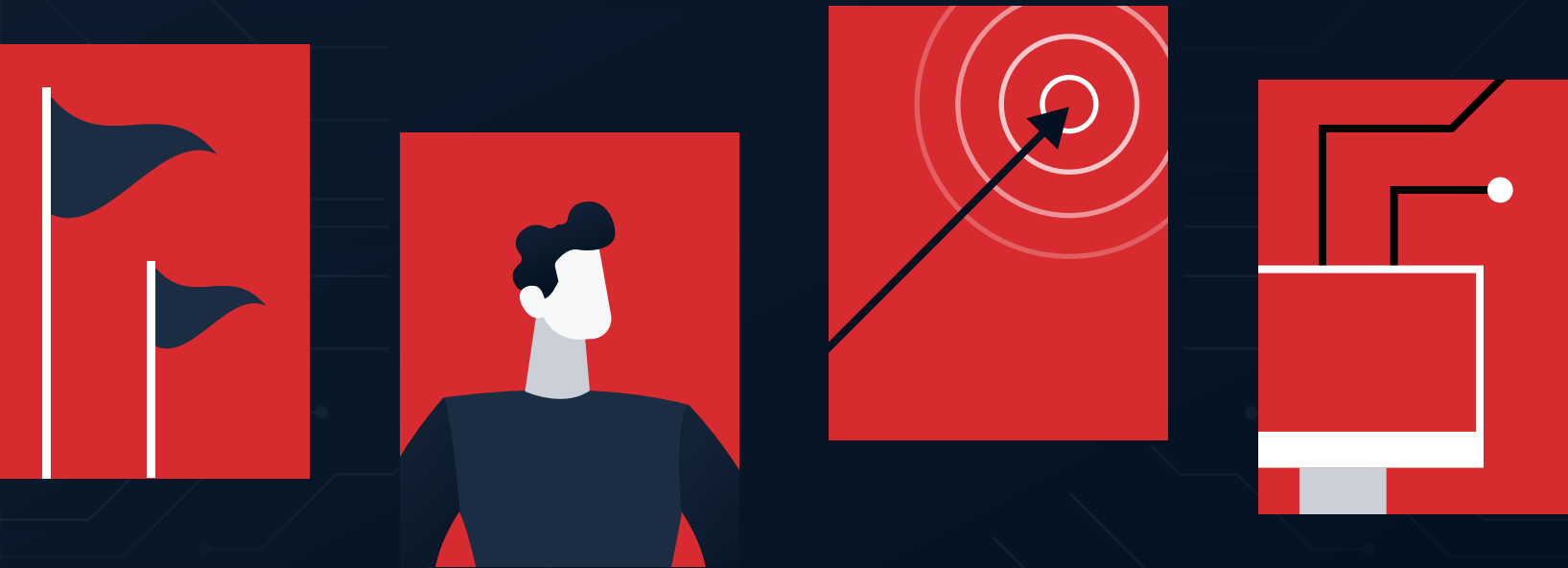


GRWM: How eCommerce Leaders Prep for Their Busy Seasons



Featuring advice from:

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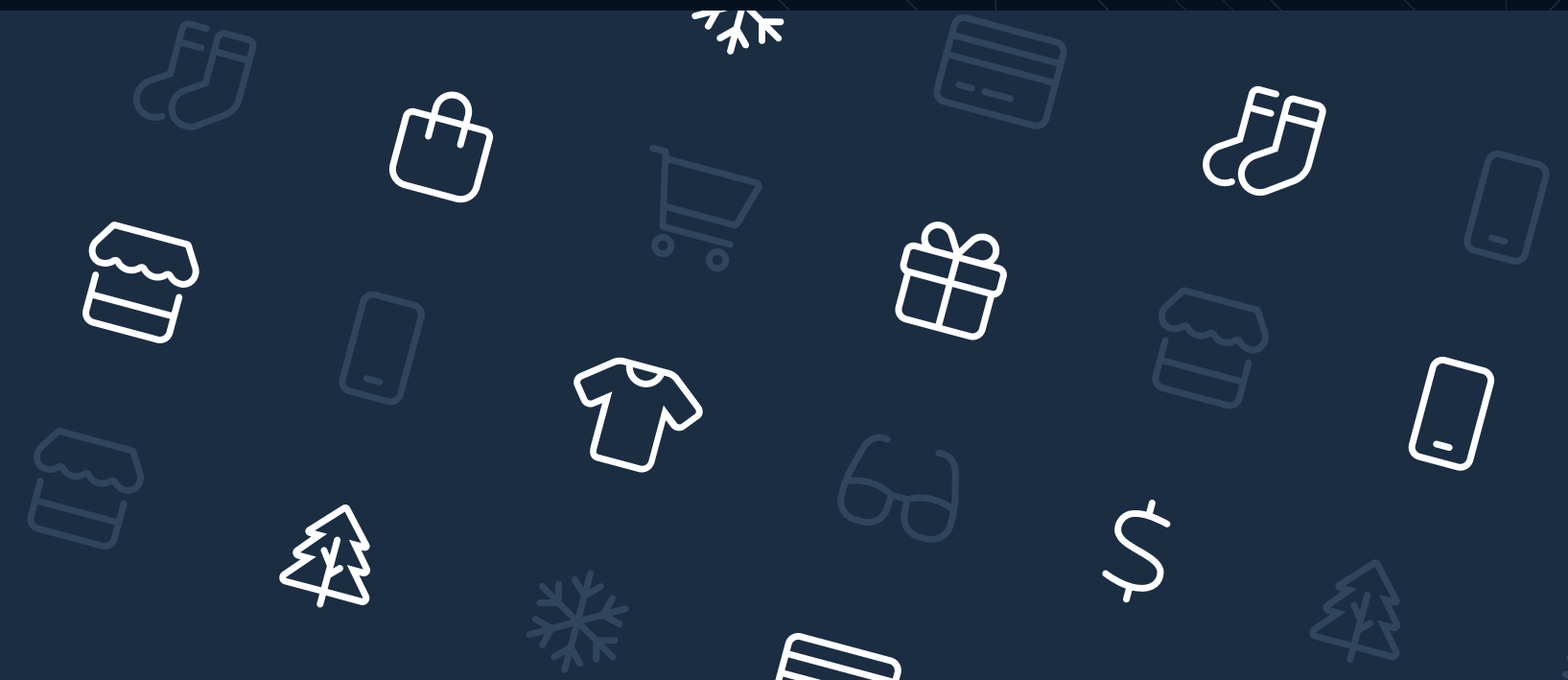
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ALWAYS ONE STEP AHEAD



In 2022, the traditional holiday season saw online **shoppers spend \$211.7 billion** — up 3.5% from the previous year. While holiday sales can amount to up to 30% of all retail sales, many eCommerce shops see seasonal spikes throughout the year based on their business model and the products they sell.

No matter when your busy season — or seasons — happen, this guide is for you. The common denominator among busy seasons across the board is that merchants need to do a lot of homework upfront in order to be adequately prepared to handle the influx of shoppers and sales. NoFraud sat down with eCommerce leaders to learn their top tips for preparing for their busy seasons. Here's what they had to say.



"Make sure necessary systems and technology are running smoothly 1-2 months before the start of your busy season."

Jeff Dodds, President of Dodds Shoe Co.

[Dodds Shoe Co.](#) originally launched in 1934 as Dodds Dry Goods and Ready to Wear. Four generations later, it is now Dodds Shoe Co., the largest footwear center in the Rocky Mountains. Dodds Shoe Co. offers the best and most popular styles in name-brand footwear and apparel at a great price.

Jeff likes to start planning early, which includes ensuring the technology supporting his campaigns is running smoothly. A month or two before their busy season, Jeff and his team run system updates across all the technology supporting their business. From website upgrades to marketing tool modifications and tweaks to their fraud prevention solution (NoFraud), Dodds Shoe Co. performs a 360-check to ensure the platforms are ready to effectively handle the influx of business.

Another pro tip Jeff shares is to review and refine search engine marketing campaigns — also a month or two in advance of peak season. This is to make sure you've budgeted correctly and that ads are indeed hitting the intended audience. Getting tooling set up well in advance gives everyone an opportunity to test and monitor for system stability and minimizes potential disruptions during busy seasons.



**"Automate as much
as you can."**

**Joe Adelantar, VP of Marketing & eCommerce
at ICER Brands – Brooklyn Cloth**

Joe Adelantar is the VP of Marketing & eCommerce at ICER Brands. ICER is a leading apparel marketer, manufacturer, and multi-tier distributor with a focus on young men's and women's trend-driven fashion. [Brooklyn Cloth](#), is their men's and children's division, which successfully features the freshest updates in quick-turn young contemporary fashion. Brooklyn Cloth has collaborations with Urban Outfitters, Tilly's, PacSun, and the Buckle, among others.

Joe's approach to busy season is that it's a magnifier of everything you do and don't do well. Almost like the grand finale or test of everything you've worked towards throughout the year; to be successful, you must "automate as much as you can," says Joe. Joe and his team spend the year leading up to busy season A/B testing strategies and learning from their customer service and marketing tactics. They start early to give themselves plenty of time to adjust and refine as necessary, finding ways to lean on technology when possible. Setting up automation where you can is critical to being ready for when the wave comes. It reduces the potential for human error and frees up the team to focus on other tasks.



"Build momentum before busy season hits."

Kyle Murphy, Founder of KM Tactical

[KM Tactical](#) is a one-stop shop for all your custom AR-15 and Glock component needs. Founded in 2013, they offer both retail sales accounts and wholesale accounts. KMT believes in helping small businesses grow, so they pass on their savings to their dealers. They pride themselves in being an American company with American-made parts, while also distributing for some of the leading brands in the firearm industry.

Kyle has never had to lay off employees during slower seasons because he uses the time strategically. Kyle says, "It's important to build momentum before busy season hits; use the downtime to strategize and optimize your plan." Between seasonal sales peaks, Kyle and his team test new strategies.

"We do a lot of our homework before each busy season," shares Kyle, "and it helps our team feel confident going into it." The team sets monthly and quarterly targets, and makes sure all are aligned and comfortable with the resources they have to get their jobs done. Being prepared, the team feels less overwhelmed and is able to focus on — and effectively manage — the increased volume.

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**"Make sure you have sufficient coverage,
and take extra care of employees."**

Amy Hockinson, Director of Customer Care at UMZU

UMZU is where both men and women can go to naturally reclaim their hormonal balance through clinical research-backed products. They favor a holistic approach to health over conventional reductionism. UMZU believes the human body is a self-healing organism that, when supported correctly, has the ability to not only heal itself but allow itself to thrive.

To prepare for busy season, Amy spends a lot of time planning. It's important to make expectations clear and offer overtime to motivate employees. "The fulfillment team, customer care team — they all need to be present during planning as we talk about hiring and scheduling," says Amy. Everyone needs to be aligned and understand their role in the bigger picture — how they'll all work together to conquer busy season.

It's about making sure you have the proper resources to make seasonal spikes run smoothly. Beyond checking that their systems and automations are prepared to handle increased demand, Amy also spends a significant amount of time making sure they have sufficient human coverage. This includes vacation time.

"People need vacation and time to decompress in order to be their best selves," shares Amy, and so she makes such considerations part of her planning. She says you have to go a step beyond to "take extra care of employees." UMZU has several seasonal spikes, some of which require mandatory workdays, so Amy builds in morale-boosting celebrations like virtual team events in addition to time off.



**"Be transparent with financial targets —
and keep talking about them."**

Dan Wells, CEO of Bases Loaded

Bases Loaded has been ranked as one of the fastest-growing businesses in the U.S. six times by INC 5000 and The Business Journal year-over-year. Over the last 26 years, Bases Loaded has grown dramatically into one of the largest retailers — and a top-10 supplier to major manufacturers — in the country that is solely focused on baseball and softball. Bases Loaded has been ranked as one of the fastest-growing businesses in the U.S. by INC Magazine and The Business Journal year-over-year.

Dan prepares his team for the busy season by setting clear targets and making sure everyone is aligned around them. "Be transparent with financial targets — and keep talking about them," says Dan. Having the team collectively focused and reminded of what they're working towards helps to motivate them. It also opens up the conversation, since everyone is working towards a shared goal. Dan regularly communicates progress towards goals in quarterly roundtables with the entire staff. This time is also used to raise challenges, threats, and opportunities for better collaboration.

Businesses need to be fluid and ready to adapt to change. "In today's environment, you have to constantly tweak your strategy and roadmap. You can't rest on what you've accomplished yesterday or even today," says Dan.

The Bases Loaded team prioritizes a growth mindset over fixed, and this approach trickles down into their hiring. "We're just constantly in a state of change, which is necessary for any business to effectively grow, so it's important to hire agents of change who are along for the ride with us," says Dan.

SHIMANO

"Don't underestimate the value of using quality assets in your campaigns."

Frank Martinez, Head of D2C at Shimano

Established in 1921, [Shimano](#) globally operates three key businesses involved in the development, production, and distribution of bicycle components, fishing tackle, and rowing equipment. Shimano prides itself on developing quality products that are heavily influenced by customer feedback. They make listening to customers a priority by offering fully staffed customer service centers that can answer questions and facilitate warranty resolution with just a phone call.

To prepare for their busy seasons, the Shimano team puts extra rigor around their creative assets. "Don't underestimate the value of using quality assets in your campaigns," says Frank. If you can get more use out of the content beyond the busy season, why wouldn't you? A quality, evergreen piece of content can yield returns far beyond the commerce waves that come at certain times of the year.

Frank does note that sometimes you need a quick asset for a shorter campaign but encourages eCommerce leaders to think it through — can you make some modifications to get more life out of this asset? "If your campaign has a short lifespan, say 12 hours, generic imagery is OK. If it's longer, or if it lives on your website, it needs to be higher quality. Use imagery that will have a longer life," says Frank.



"Set celebratory milestones to boost morale and keep employees motivated."

Michael Cole, Customer Success Manager at Super73

SUPER73® is an American lifestyle adventure brand based in Orange County, CA that develops products to help fuse motorcycle heritage with youth culture. Founded in 2016, SUPER73 has quickly grown into one of the most recognizable electric vehicle brands in the world, with a passionate customer base including A-list celebrities, professional athletes, and many more.

Michael rallies his team two months in advance of their busy seasons. It's important to "have strong internal conversations around strategy, with clear alignment on what we're forecasting and how we're planning to get there," says Michael. They look at trends from the previous year and use that data to arm their customer service team with improved narratives and updated standard operating procedures. This helps to make sure they are speaking the same language and there is consistency in the customer experience.

Beyond planning and executing, Michael emphasizes the value of team morale, "The team as a whole is critical to the success of our seasonality, so prioritizing morale is important to us. We like to set celebratory milestones to help boost morale and keep the team motivated." SUPER73 likes to throw a happy hour towards the end of their busy seasons. "It's a good time to reflect and enjoy each others' company," Michael shares. The team also sets a similar event at the start of the busy season as a sort of commencement to get the team focused, motivated, and ready to go!



About NoFraud

Founded in 2014, NoFraud is an eCommerce checkout and fraud prevention pioneer, ensuring every eCommerce merchant has access to the services and protection they need to scale with confidence. The company provides online merchants with cost-effective, easy-to-use solutions that remove friction and fraud from their eCommerce funnel to grow sales and improve the purchase experience for customers.

NoFraud provides the industry's most accurate eCommerce fraud protection solutions to increase merchants' conversion and approval rates while virtually eliminating fraud. Visit www.nofraud.com for more information.

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Set up a trial with a fraud analyst and see how NoFraud will benefit your business, by approving more orders, relieving your internal teams from manual review, and having a positive impact on your bottom line.

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