

# SHOPPING SEASON

EVERY ECOMMERCE BUSINESS'S GUIDE  
TO A GREAT HOLIDAY SHOPPING SEASON



OPLOG //



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# INTRODUCTION

Ladies and gentlemen, it's that time of the year! The time your customers have been longing to get their hands on their favorite perfume, buy their loved ones their Christmas presents, and perhaps change that tv which always makes that weird noise... All, for a steal!

So, as most eCommerce businesses are expected to witness a huge increase in demand, it is crucial that you're ready to meet the surge of orders. That is, of course, if you want to make the most of this peak season and increase your ROI without compromising your service quality, brand reputation, and overall customer experience.

For those who don't know where to start prepping, we have your back! This guide is filled with tips and tricks that will help you make sure that this shopping season is the perfect ending for 2022!

# **2022-2023 SHOPPING SEASON CALENDAR**

From the rush parents and students experience to get their school supplies to the time when lovers choose the perfect bouquet, there are many occasions that call for shopping.

We thought that you may want to keep a calendar in handy to mark those days and prep your business for them. So, without further ado, here are the most important shopping days for the upcoming 3 quarters—from the end of 2022 to mid-2023.



SEPTEMBER

**BACK TO SCHOOL**

OCT 31, 2022

**HALLOWEEN**

NOV 11, 2022

**SINGLES' DAY**

NOV 24, 2022

**THANKSGIVING**

NOV 25, 2022

**BLACK FRIDAY**

NOV 28, 2022

**CYBER MONDAY**

DEC 25, 2022

**CHRISTMAS**

DEC 31, 2022

**NEW YEAR'S EVE**

FEB 14, 2023

**VALENTINE'S DAY**

APRIL 09, 2023

**EASTER**

MAY 14, 2023

**MOTHER'S DAY**

JUNE 18, 2023

**FATHER'S DAY**

# **CONSUMER FORECASTS: A LOOK INTO WHAT'S TO COME THIS HOLIDAY SHOPPING SEASON**

Many consumers, and retailers, have been waiting for the shopping season to come. As your customers would help you increase your revenue, you need to be ready to face the increasing volume of orders.

That's why we gathered all the data you need to make sure you're prepared for the peak!



## Halloween — October 31

Although originally an American holiday, Halloween has gained a lot of hype across the world. And with COVID-19 casting a cloud over the spirit of good old trick and treating for the last few years, 2022 is the year people plan to put it all out!

So, there will be lots of consumers looking for masks, costumes, accessories, party favors, and everything else that will give a spooky feel! In fact, forecasts estimate **\$10.6 Billion** worth of Halloween Spending in the US alone—that's an all-time high!

## Singles' Day — November 11

First, here's a fun fact—did you know that Singles' Day is an idea that originated at China's Nanjing University as a sort of anti-Valentine's Day, all the way back in 1993? Then, in 2009, Chinese eCommerce giant Alibaba turned it into China's biggest both online and in-store shopping extravaganza.

Since then, as many events and holidays do, Singles' Day has outgrown its hometown, becoming a global shopping event all consumers look forward to in both the US and UK. And businesses that plan to create discounts for this special day are on the right path!

Why? Last year, Alibaba and its rival JD.com alone recorded **\$139 billion** of sales. And with its hype increasing throughout the UK and the states, your consumers are likely to be on a hunt for special offers too!

## Thanksgiving (US) — November 24

Mainly celebrated in the US, Thanksgiving marks the start of the shopping season as the Black Friday day is the Friday right after Thanksgiving. However, as it has for the past few years, Black Friday sales are expected to start early in October as businesses are planning week-long or even month-long deals.

What does that mean for Thanksgiving? On this nationwide holiday, most brick-and-mortar stores are again expected to close shop early to spend time with their loved ones, continuing their special Thanksgiving deals and discounts online. Last year, those numbers added up to **\$5.1 billion** in online sales within the US!

So, as an online retailer, you'll have lots of sales opportunities as your consumers will be surfing the web (as it was called ages ago) to land on sweet deals while digging into some sweet potato casserole!

## Black Friday — November 25

Many consumers wait for this event to go on with their shopping spree of the year. As online Black Friday deals have become more and more widespread with COVID-19, as we mentioned earlier, Black Friday is no longer limited to a single day but is now spread across weeks and sometimes the entire month of October.

So, we suggest that you too spread your offer and deals throughout the month (maybe category-based or with changing deal percentages) to get your slice of the cake, which in the US was **\$9.03 billion** of online sales last year (on November 26—actual Black Friday day).



## Cyber Monday — November 28

Surpassing Black Friday for the past 2 years, Cyber Monday deals have been the most profitable day of the season with US consumers generating **\$10.8 billion** in revenue in 2021.

Contrary to Black Friday, for which consumers expect both in-store and online sales, Cyber Monday is more of an online event (for both desktop and mobile —go omnichannel fulfillment!) which your consumers will be on a stake out for. So, make sure to make the most of it by utilizing all of your digital assets (from digital ads to social media)!

## Christmas — December 25

***Jingle bells, jingle bells, jingle all the way!***

***O what fun it is to land some sweet deals for Christmas Day!***

As a joyous holiday for many around the world, most friends and family have turned Christmas shopping into a tradition. What does this tradition hold?

To prevent delayed deliveries, make sure to have enough employees to speed up your increased picking, packing, and shipping demands. Don't have the resources?

As all of your orders should be delivered as fast as possible, keep in mind that holiday orders like Christmas and Halloween are more time sensitive.

To prevent delayed deliveries, make sure to have enough employees to manage the peak. Don't have the resources? Let OPLOG do the heavy lifting for you!

***Let OPLOG do the heavy lifting for you!***

## New Year's Eve — December 31

The final days of the shopping season hold significant importance for all businesses as it marks the final chance to improve their KPIs before the end of the fiscal year.

Consumers will be looking for a good way to end their year too! That's why they'll be on the look for food and beverages, party favors, clothes, toys, and everything else that just feels like a new start. What to keep an eye out for? Returns!

As the beginning of the holiday shopping season offers a peak in orders, as we reach the end of it, businesses start to experience the highest volume of returns. To ensure the same seamless customer experience until the very end, make sure to optimize your return process. Don't know how? Let's jump to our tips and tricks that will let that happen!



# **11 TIPS, TRICKS, AND FRIENDLY REMINDERS FOR A SUCCESSFUL SHOPPING SEASON**








Now that you have your facts ready, let's take a look at what you can do to make sure your plans and actual outcomes are all as you expected.



## 1. Plan ahead

A successful holiday shopping season requires well preparation. Not as exhausting as a “June wedding at the Plaza” kind of event but one that you’d have to plan ahead and have a checklist for.

Here are some of the questions we suggest you make room for in that checklist:

-  What will your promotions and deals look like, and how do you plan on informing your customers about them?
-  What does last year’s data tell you—how successful was your fulfillment process and what calls for improvement?
-  Do you have enough stock and a good WMS (warehouse management system) that provides real-time stock monitoring?
-  Do you need to hire seasonal warehouse employees to meet the increasing order volume?
-  What channels will be available to address your customer’s queries, which would increase in sync with your order volume?
-  Have you heard of mCommerce? Many brands today have mobile apps that provide them with an extra sales channel—not too late to have one yourself!
-  Do you have the needed amount of packaging supply to avoid a shortage right in the middle of the surge?



## 2. Think outside the warehouse

When you're in the eCommerce business, fulfillment operations are the center of everything; however, they are not the only aspect to keep in mind when prepping for the peak season.

We already mentioned deciding on the channels you'd utilize to communicate with your customers. After you've defined them, make sure they're up for the task!

So, in order to maximize your customer experience, it would be wise to,

- Make sure your website and other mediums are informative about offers, return policies, and shipping options.
- Talking about websites, make sure that it's technically available to handle the increased traffic.
- Deploy self-service options for order tracking and stock queries.
- Make sure your contact center is prepped and good to go, if you have one.

## 3. Align your in-store

With the many worries regarding the pandemic fading away, consumers have gained back their interest in in-store shopping. So, if you're a retailer that has both online and brick-and-mortar stores, you'd probably be expecting more traffic in both of them.

That also means you have to make sure they're totally aligned. Considering that the cost of running an online store is less than maintaining a physical one, your deals and promotions can vary between them.

However, it would be best to implement some best practices to make the most of omnichannel sales! For instance, if you don't have a product in stock online, you can refer your customers to the nearest store that does. If you want to cut on delivery costs, offer BOPIS (Buy Online, Pickup in Store)!

## 4. Leverage technology

Have you heard of [tech-enabled logistics](#)? If not, it's better late than never!

From receiving and processing to picking and packing, there are many steps within a fulfillment operation! Sadly, in a majority of warehouses, most of those processes are still handled manually. Some even still use Excel sheets and notebooks.

Leverage robust software to guarantee error-free stock management. Automate your picking process with a goods-to-person robot to significantly reduce your order fulfillment time.

During the busiest time of the year, such implementations and deployments are sure to improve your metrics (fewer order returns, faster order fulfillment) and cut you some slack, offering you hassle-free operations.

**Here's one reason the biggest and the best trust  
OPLOG—we empower them with the best of  
technologies!**

**From our strategically developed software OPLOG One  
to our very own fulfillment robot [TARQAN](#), we not only  
deploy but create the technology needed for seamless  
fulfillment operations.**

**Want to learn more?**

**TALK TO AN EXPERT!**



## 5. They DO judge a book by its cover

Picture this... A customer orders a few Christmas tree ornaments. The minute they open their package, a heavenly scent of cinnamon chocolate chip cookies spreads across their room...

This one little touch is sure to go a long way in building brand loyalty and creating repeat purchases and is a heck of a way to get you a 5-star review!

Although packaging can sometimes be overlooked, it reflects your branding and, as **studies** show, has a significant role in impacting consumer behavior. Plus, with more and more **consumers caring about sustainability**, it's more than necessary to offer your customers different packaging options.

So, what are the extra miles you can go?

- Sustainable packages (recycled, recyclable, biodegradable, etc.)
- Personalized packages (thank you cards, scented wrapping papers, etc.)
- Transparent packages (let customers see what they're receiving at a glance)
- Goodies (prompt a smile with complimentary candy, fun stickers, etc.)
- Branded assets (give room for branded pens, paper holders, notepads, etc.)

## 6. CAUTION! Handle with care!

If you think that your warehouse is hectic right now, think of the chaos carrier companies are experiencing. Bridging between the many businesses and consumers they serve, unfortunately, they can't handle every package with the desired delicacy.

So, you may have to take manners into your own hands. Have any fluids that are prone to spill? Secure the nozzle with some tape. Does your product have a delicate fabric that won't survive some pointy scissors? Opt for hard, durable packaging. Packing some fragile glass? Prefer including some padding.

Though it may seem time-consuming, such precautions will provide your customers with the best buyer experience.

**We care about your brand reputation and customer experience. Thus, we take pride in being one of the very few omnichannel fulfillment service providers that help you go the extra mile.**

**Our value-added services cover a large scale of personalization, from delicately wrapping your fragile or risky products to providing you with numerous special packaging options like holiday-themed wrappers and any other type of packaging we mention in part 5.**

**Want to discover how our value-added processes can help you stand out in the crowd? Take a look at what our client Woohobox has to say!**

**[READ CASE STUDY](#)**



## 7. Select your carrier, wisely

Frankly, the minute an order leaves your warehouse, you have very little control over its destiny. However, **52% of consumers** still blame the retailer for lost deliveries, damaged packages, and delayed orders.

So, it's important that you partner with a carrier that is up to your standards and which can align with your service requirements, especially during this time of year when you heavily rely on them.

In addition, you should evaluate the different delivery types that you want to provide your customers with and make sure your carrier offers them. Some delivery types you can consider are:

- ★ Same-day delivery
- ★ Drone delivery
- ★ Green delivery
- ★ Bike delivery
- ★ Curbside pickup

**Wouldn't it be great if you had real-time access to your deliveries' status and a team that could predict delays and contact the carrier to avoid them? We thought so too!**

**That's why we created DAS (Delivery Alarm System), a real-time delivery tracking system. This system not only informs our clients of every step of their orders but is also monitored by a special team to prompt the carrier when necessary to mitigate any risks of late deliveries.**

**Contact us to learn more about DAS and other unique benefits you can experience with OPLOG!**

**[CONTACT US](#)**

## 8. Keep an eye out for customer experience

9 out of 10 times, consumers are eager to get their hands on their deliveries. The tension only rises when it's for something they've been waiting to land a deal for. So, you would get how disappointed they'd be when they're delivered a wrong order, faulty product, or simply a bad shopping experience.

Thus, it's crucial to give extra care to your fulfillment process, making sure the collected items are intact and correct, packed for the correct order, and shipped to the right address.

In addition, during this hectic season, your customer queries would experience a tremendous peak, usually regarding:

- Deals and promotions,
- Product stocks,
- Order tracking,
- Returns,
- Shipping options,
- Payment options.

Make sure to be able to address all of them to ensure a seamless customer experience.

## 9. Returns shall return

As we mentioned way earlier in our eBook, the holiday shopping season does not only increase your order volumes. Among the many purchased items, there are bound to be returns, a lot of them.

Since the customer experience is an end-to-end process, you must ensure that you provide customers with a seamless return process. It's so important that **92% of consumers** state that they will buy again from a brand if they were presented with an easy return process.



As an omnichannel fulfillment service provider for 10+ years, we know how time-consuming and problematic, yet necessary return management is.

That's why we free our clients from the burden by investigating returns and processing them back into stock for them!

What else we can cover for you so that you can focus on growing your brand?

**DISCOVER**

## 10. 1, 2, 3, repeat!

The best way to improve something is to go over your steps and extract valuable data and insight. And the huge order volume you'll experience provides the perfect setting for that. What should you look out for? Here are some pointers from our monthly meetings with our clients:

- 🕒 What product sold the most?
- 🕒 Which products are usually brought together?
- 🕒 Deliveries to which location are the fastest and slowest?
- 🕒 Which product gets the most returns?

Keeping track of these and reorganizing your processes according to the outcomes will help you better your operations, every single time.

## 11. Out of options? Outsource!

Running a business is a long, costly, and complex process, and fulfillment operations are not an easy part of it, during the high season or not. Especially with the ongoing labor shortage and ever-changing consumer demands, it's normal that you feel like a little help is needed.

When that's the case, to not compromise your brand reputation, service quality, and customer experience, it's both cost-efficient and wise to outsource your operations to omnichannel fulfillment professionals.

# MEET

# OPLOG

At OPLOG, we provide clients with tech-enabled omnichannel fulfillment services that help them offer their customers the best buyer journey, all year round. We can hear you say, “What’s that?”

Let’s start with omnichannel fulfillment. Today, most retailers have various online and physical sales channels. They can have one local shop or chains across the map, and their online sales can be commissioned from their website, mobile app, and/or a wide range of different marketplaces.

The process of fulfilling different orders from all these channels is called omnichannel fulfillment, and it requires robust integrations, better stock management, flawless inventory checks, improved order fulfillment, and streamlined delivery processes.



That's where tech-enabled logistics comes to play! Since conventional warehousing operations fail to address omnichannel fulfillment's dynamic nature, we took matters into our own hands, bridging the gap between logistics and technology with our unique software and other industry-based technologies.

All these technological enhancements combined with our 10+ years of experience and know-how enable us to offer businesses of all scales a comprehensive and streamlined omnichannel fulfillment service.

And, with our warehouses located in:

- |            |           |
|------------|-----------|
| 📍 Turkey   | 📍 The UK  |
| 📍 Germany  | 📍 Italy   |
| 📍 Bulgaria | 📍 Hungary |
| 📍 Spain    | 📍 Greece  |

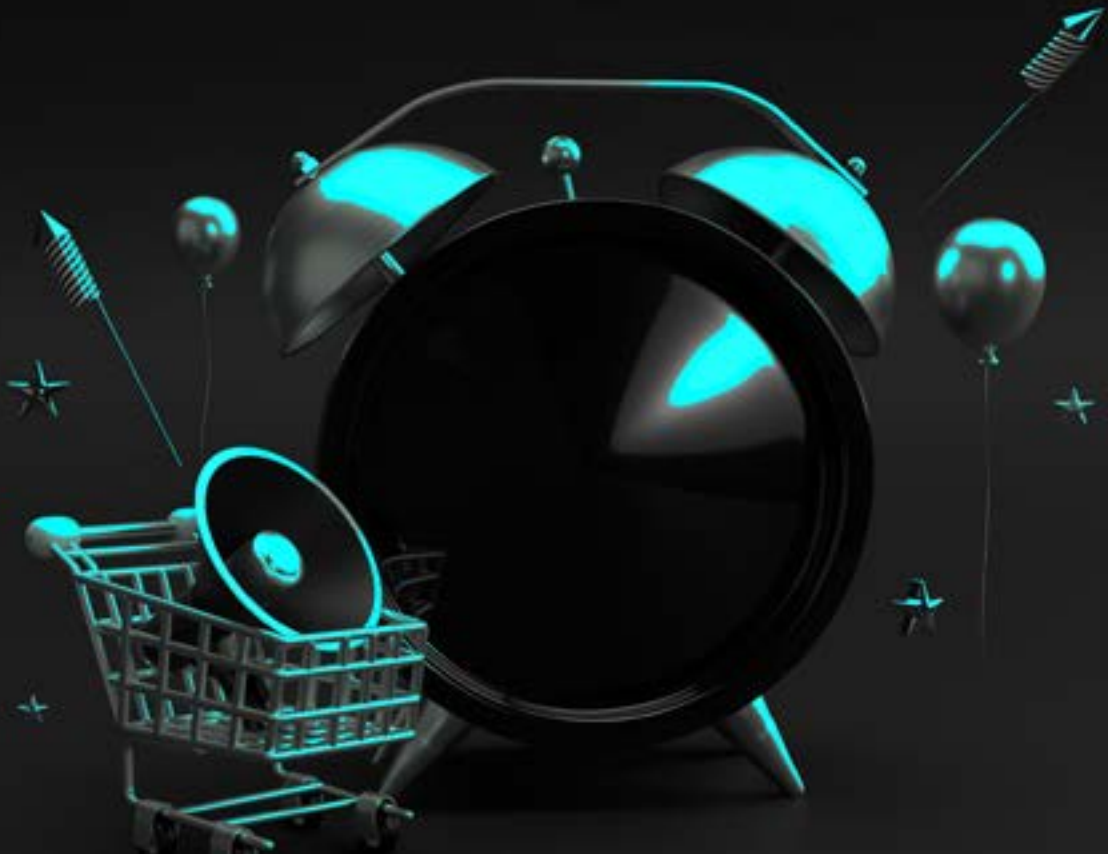
Our solutions translate into total efficiency for everyone around the globe.



## 1. COST EFFICIENCY

Owning/renting a warehouse, employing warehouse workers, investing in warehouse vehicles, and utility expenses are just some of the major cost items that come with running your own warehouse. But are they necessary?

In an industry where consumers look for competitive pricing, eliminating such costs becomes a huge leverage for all businesses. And by outsourcing their operations to OPLOG, our clients gain a warehouse provider that works like an extension of their own, just way more budget-friendly.





## 2. TIME EFFICIENCY

Return management, stock management, order fulfillment... Warehouse management is very time-consuming.

However, although they're a handful, each and every process must be executed with 100% attention as, when done correctly, they help your brand flourish—just like how one bad decision can affect your entire operation, customer experience, and overall brand reputation.

That's why at OPLOG, we have dedicated experts for each task that frees our clients to help them focus on what matters the most, growing their brand.



### 3. OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY

Finding good hires in an era of labor shortages is a burden. It's even harder to execute just the right processes to offer an excellent customer experience when the competition is this tough.

With OPLOG, our clients don't have to spend hours hiring warehouse employees or worry about making sure their deliveries are above customer expectations. We handle all that and many more for them, ensuring their operations run like clockwork.

You too can start benefiting from the various advantages of OPLOG—all you have to do is say “Hello!”

“

*OPLOG has saved us from the problems in returns management, inventory management, storage process, stock controls, picking, packing, value-added service, and shipping operations, that are, complete e-commerce logistics. Thus, OPLOG has been an important milestone for us to devote more time to product development and marketing.”*

**Azar Shirinov,**  
WOOHOOBOX, CO-FOUNDER

[GET A QUOTE](#)



# **THINKING BIG? GO B2B LOGISTICS!**

While each B2C sales operation inevitably contains B2B processes like return and stock management, B2B logistics is a whole different world that beholds an entirely different set of requirements, expectations, and challenges.

One of those challenges is, undoubtedly, attaining healthy supply chains. That's why today, most businesses prefer dedicating their energy to supply chain management by outsourcing their eCommerce logistics operations to professionals—just like how our industry-leading clients, such as Sony, Tupperware, and Rossmann, trusted OPLOG with their operations.

By doing so, our clients eliminate the many costs, efforts, and time that go into:

- ✓ Owning a warehouse (investing in warehouse space, vehicles, and deplolements),
- ✓ Running a warehouse (security, utility bills, etc.)
- ✓ Employment (HR processes, salary and compensations, etc.)
- ✓ Distribution networks and customer relations,
- ✓ Product transportation and processing
- ✓ Reverse logistics,
- ✓ Risk management

While we provide them with transparent, communicative, and end-to-end warehousing services.

Want to transfer your operations to a trusted solution partner to facilitate your global growth? Let's talk!



**OPLOG** 

<https://www.oplog.io/>