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Winning Q4 Before Cyber Week

The Enterprise Holiday Readiness Checklist

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A practical guide to aligning inventory, media and measurement before, during and after Cyber Week.

Cyber Week performance is shaped long before campaigns go live. As CPCs rise and competition intensifies, even a strong media plan can waste spend if stock is limited, promotions are incomplete, automation is untested or budgets cannot move quickly enough as trading conditions change.

This checklist helps enterprise ecommerce and retail media teams protect investment at every stage, from preparing inventory and audiences to managing live activity and measuring what Q4 spend genuinely delivered.

Your **Cyber Week countdown**

- 4-6 Weeks Out
  Build the foundations
- 2-3 Weeks Out
  Prepare audiences & automation
- 1-2 Weeks Out
  Lock the plan
- Cyber Week
  Stay in control
- After Cyber Week
  Measure and retain value

4–6 weeks out: Build the foundations

Before increasing media weight, identify which products can support additional demand and put the right controls in place. This helps prevent rising CPCs from turning stock constraints, lost Buy Box eligibility or weak margins into wasted spend.

- [ ] **Review previous Cyber Week performance** to identify the products and categories with the strongest demand, conversion and commercial potential.
- [ ] **Review current search-term performance** to identify products and queries gaining momentum, then activate emerging terms through Sponsored Products to strengthen campaign relevance before competition for top placements intensifies.
- [ ] **Confirm inventory and replenishment plans** can support the proposed media investment, identifying products at risk of running short.
- [ ] **Identify alternative products** that can receive budget if priority items become constrained, go out of stock or lose the Buy Box.
- [ ] **Set clear media guardrails** for reducing or pausing spend when availability, Buy Box eligibility or profitability falls below agreed thresholds.

By the end of this stage: You should know which products are ready for additional investment, where spend may need protecting and how media will respond when retail conditions change.

Prepare audiences and lock the plan

The commercial outcome of Cyber Week is increasingly determined before the event begins. Use the final lead-in weeks to build high-intent audiences, validate the controls governing spend and remove execution risk before auction pressure intensifies.

2-3 weeks out: Build high-intent audiences and test controls

Build high-intent audiences before auction pressure intensifies, and test the rules that will govern larger Cyber Week budgets.

- [ ] **Drive traffic to priority product detail pages** through efficient lead-in formats, building richer Amazon Marketing Cloud audiences that can be activated through Amazon DSP during Cyber Week.
- [ ] **Confirm eligible products and submit planned promotions** ahead of each retailer's deadline.
- [ ] **Test dayparting, bid and budget-pacing rules** on live traffic, checking that they activate, reset and interact as intended.
- [ ] **Establish Share of Voice and CPC baselines** for priority search terms, so teams can distinguish normal movement from meaningful competitive pressure.
- [ ] **Configure alerts for material changes** in CPC, conversion, budget depletion and product availability, with clear thresholds for manual intervention.

Ready to progress when: Audiences are populated, controls have been tested and intervention thresholds are agreed.

1-2 weeks out: Finalise activation and lock the plan

Shift from preparation to commitment by aligning promotions, audiences and budgets across priority retailers.

- [ ] **Verify promotional execution** by confirming submitted offers are approved and that pricing, promotional badges and retailer placements are accurate.
- [ ] **Validate creative and content readiness** by testing final variations and checking that imagery, claims, copy and product detail pages are accurate across priority retailers.
- [ ] **Complete audience activation** by validating segments, exclusions and retargeting windows, then pushing approved audiences into the relevant DSP and media platforms.
- [ ] **Lock budgets and pacing plans** by retailer, campaign, product and trading day, including sufficient flexibility to move spend when performance or availability changes.
- [ ] **Set clear rules for moving budget** by agreeing when spend should shift, who can approve it and which products or retailers should receive it.

Ready to progress when: Campaigns are approved, budgets are allocated and teams can respond without waiting for new decisions.

Stay in control when pressure peaks

Cyber Week turns planning assumptions into live investment decisions. Auction dynamics, availability and conversion can move faster than fixed budgets and fragmented reporting, making delayed or isolated decisions expensive.

The priority is to establish a control model that combines automation with clear commercial guardrails. Predictable changes can then be handled at speed, while teams intervene only where the potential impact on revenue, margin or media efficiency warrants it.

During Cyber Week: Manage by exception

- [ ] **Protect budget across the trading day** with hourly pacing and dayparting rules that prevent spend being exhausted before the highest-value conversion periods.
- [ ] **Keep media aligned with retail readiness** by reducing or pausing investment when products go out of stock, lose the Buy Box or fall below agreed profitability thresholds.
- [ ] **Move investment as performance shifts** across formats, products, campaigns and retailers, rather than relying on allocations agreed before Cyber Week.
- [ ] **Prioritise meaningful anomalies** with alerts for significant changes in CPC, conversion, competitor pricing, budget depletion and availability.
- [ ] **Maintain a shared trading view** through scheduled checkpoints that align media, ecommerce and supply-chain teams around the decisions requiring action.

By the end of this stage: Automation should be managing predictable changes, with teams focused on the interventions most likely to protect revenue, margin and media efficiency.

+1.3x Return on Ad Spend

In 2024, Sponsored Products delivered 1.3x higher ROAS than Sponsored Brands during Cyber 5. In 2025, that pattern reversed.

The strongest-performing format can change during the event, making live performance a more reliable guide to investment than allocations agreed beforehand.

Source: Pacvue and Helium 10, 2025 Cyber 5 Benchmark Report. Amazon US benchmark.

Turn Cyber Week into lasting value

Cyber Week performance should not be judged solely by attributed ROAS, and its value should not end when promotions finish. The post-event window is where teams determine what media genuinely added, retain the demand created and recover value that might otherwise be lost.

After Cyber Week: Measure, recover and retain

- [ ] **Retain the demand created** by re-engaging new customers, product viewers and non-converters with relevant post-event and Q1 activity.
- [ ] **Measure beyond attributed ROAS** by assessing efficiency, incremental sales, new-to-brand growth and commercial return across retailers, audiences and formats.
- [ ] **Recover lost value** by reviewing deductions, shortage claims and other retailer charges, where relevant, that could erode the margin generated during Cyber Week.
- [ ] **Build the next playbook** by identifying where inventory, content, automation and budget decisions supported growth or limited performance.

Questions for the post-event review

- Where did media create genuinely incremental demand?
- Which products, retailers or operational constraints limited conversion?
- What should be repeated, changed or stopped next time?

By the end of this stage: Automation should be managing predictable changes, with teams focused on the interventions most likely to protect revenue, margin and media efficiency.

Cyber Week demand does not end with the event

A supplements brand used Pacvue to retarget shoppers who visited its product pages but did not purchase during Black Friday and Cyber Monday, delivering:

42% Higher ROAS

24% Higher Subscribe & Save Performance

Source: Pacvue

PACVUE

Pacvue connects media, commerce and measurement throughout the holiday cycle, enabling enterprise teams to protect spend, adapt investment in real time and prove the incremental impact of Q4 activity.

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