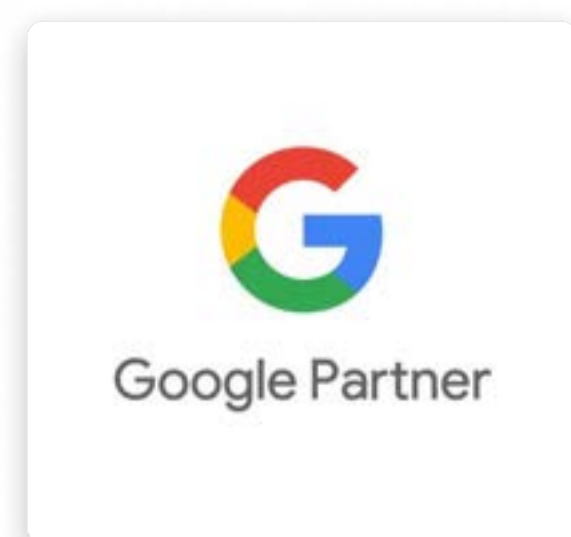




How to maximise your eCommerce sales during peak season

A Black Friday playbook



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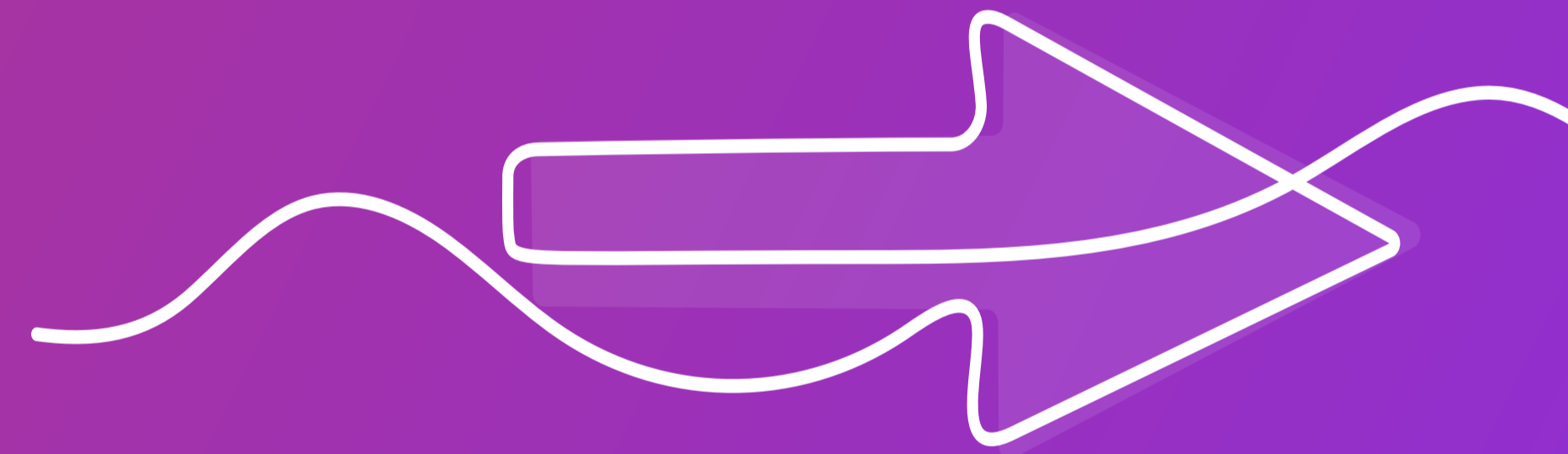
contents

Every eCommerce brand has its season.

For some, it's Black Friday or Cyber Monday. For others, it might be Christmas, Mother's Day, summer holidays, or even back-to-school season.

Regardless of when your peak sales period falls, the preparation required is the same. Brands that succeed don't simply slash prices and hope for the best, they plan, test, and execute with precision.

This guide walks through the essential steps every ecommerce business should take to maximise sales, profitability, and long-term customer value during their busiest seasons.



let's get stuck in

Setting clear objectives

The first and most overlooked step in preparing for peak sales is having real **clarity on your objectives.**

Are you trying to:



Maximise profit



Drive revenue growth?



Capture market share by acquiring new customers, even at a lower margin?

Each strategy can work, but your entire campaign will hinge on the choice you make.

During peak periods, demand is naturally higher.

Traffic volumes surge, conversion rates improve, and while ad costs (CPCs & CPMs) typically rise, the overall cost per acquisition (CPA) can drop. This can mean higher margins and more efficient revenue growth.

But the reverse is also true: if left unchecked, higher demand can tempt brands to scale too aggressively, sacrificing margins and profitability.

Your objective should guide decisions about budgets, offers, and channel strategies. Without this foundation, it's all too easy to spend big and earn little.



SEO: organic preparation for peak sales

Peak season is not the time to discover you have gaps in your SEO strategy.

Make sure technical fixes, schema and page speed optimisations are addressed well in advance, as crawling and indexing can slow up under peak traffic load.

Build and optimise dedicated landing pages for your seasonal blogs and offer pages well in advance so they have time to index and gain visibility before the rush.

The earlier you plan your strategy the better.

Longer lead times means you can get ahead of Black Friday or other peak sales periods with some crafted teaser and informational content which, even if full offer details are not yet ready, can help to build interest.

Too often brands leave these pages and pre-campaign content until the last minute, missing out on people who are searching for “2025 Black Friday deals” in early autumn while their content is still aligned to 2024.

This is also the time to review all of your internal linking and navigation to make sales or gift guide content easy to find. If you have made any global changes on your website or eCommerce platform between now and the last peak season, this might also affect how your users will experience your offers.

While looking at your technical SEO, it's also important not to neglect evergreen, intent-driven search queries such as “best gifts for” or “deals under £50.”

Preparing content around these queries can capture incremental traffic all year round.

AI Optimisation: improve visibility and efficiency

Google's AI Overviews and other LLM-driven results are pulling in reviews, Reddit threads and structured snippets on a daily basis all year round.



Ensuring product feeds, FAQs, reviews and on-page content are optimised for AI search engines well in advance of your peak sales period increases the chances of it being cited and favoured.

AI assistants and shopping tools like ChatGPT, Perplexity and Gemini are influencing purchase decisions, so ensuring you have clean, structured data and strong trust signals are key.

But it's not just showing up in AI search that can help you maximise sales. Branded images and product videos on SEO and PPC campaign landing pages are key for increased conversions.

But with creative turnaround often being too slow to capitalise on last minute stock availability, AI image and video generators can be a great way to make a strong first impression.

Brands that are delayed due to lengthy sign off processes risk being left behind by competitors, while new tools such as Google's Nano Banana for AI image generation and InVideo AI, produce quality visuals and video faster and cheaper than ever.

Internally, AI can also speed up peak preparation by generating content for gift guides, FAQs, email variations and CRO copy testing.

Post-peak, AI analysis of search trends, reviews and queries can guide brands where to double down either straight after the peak period or in time for next season.

Offer making: beyond blanket discounts

Too often, brands fall back on generic discounts: 20% off site-wide, 30% off selected items, or even 50% off clearance. While simple, this approach risks cutting into profit unnecessarily.



Instead, brands should ground their offers in data-driven unit economics:

- ✔ **Margins**
Which products can sustain discounts without eroding profitability?
- ✔ **Sell-through rates**
Which items would sell anyway without an offer?
- ✔ **Customer lifetime value (LTV)**
Do customers acquired during peak stick around or are they one-time bargain hunters?

Analyse past peak sales to see which products drove not only immediate revenue, but also repeat purchases.

If seasonal buyers have low loyalty and low LTV, overspending on acquiring them is a mistake. Instead, set realistic targets around efficiency (MER), new customer acquisition cost (nCAC), and overall ROI.

For brands with a limited SKU range, a simple “20% off everything” can work well. But if you have a large, diverse product set, vary your offers.

Use high-demand, lower-margin products as acquisition drivers to capture customers, then work on the cross-sell or upsell more profitable items - but ensure they work out commercially.



historical data is crucial

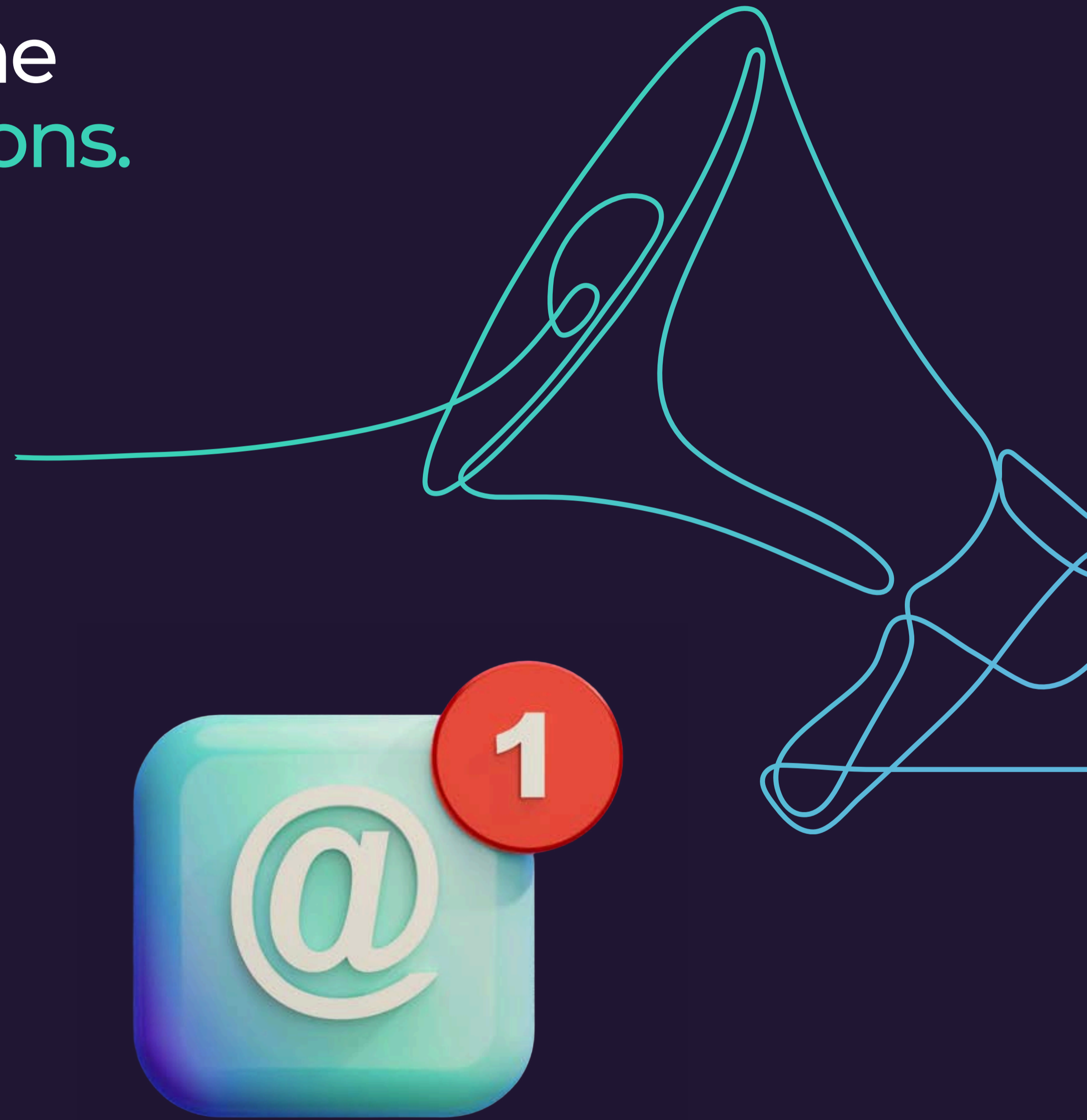
Activating early: building demand before peak

Once your objectives and offers are locked in, it's time to **plan campaign activations.**

Peak periods are expensive. Paid ads during these times are highly competitive, and relying solely on them can quickly blow your budget. Instead, smart brands build audiences ahead of time through lower-cost, and organic tactics.

For example:

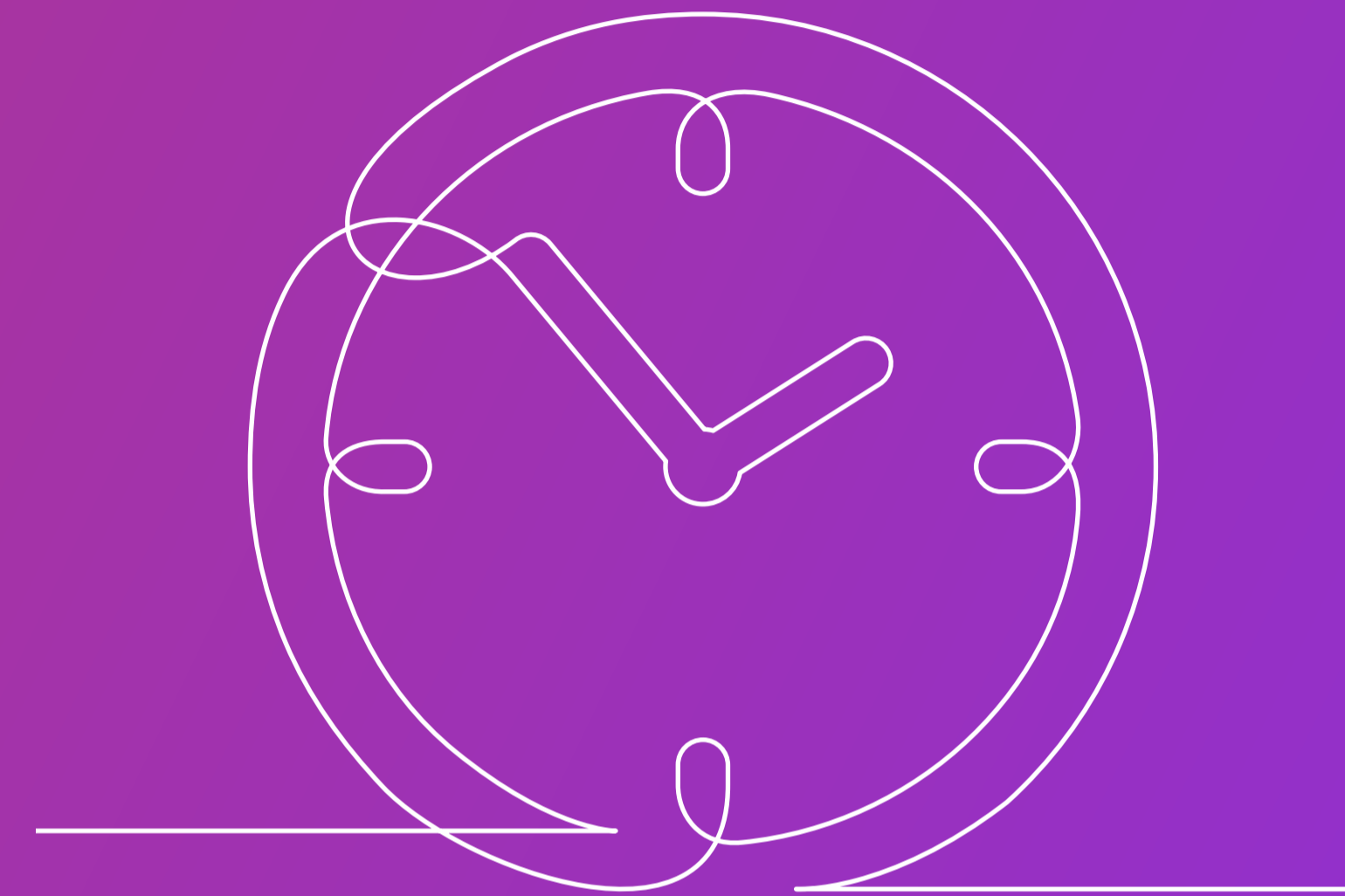
- ✓ **Competitions and giveaways**
- ✓ **Newsletter signups in exchange for early access to sales**
- ✓ **Exclusive “VIP first look” offers for email subscribers**



By capturing leads in advance, you reduce reliance on last-minute ad spend, while also giving yourself a warmer, cheaper audience to convert during peak.

Timing is also key. Many peak sales (such as Black Friday) have two surges: the early peak when shoppers are eager not to miss out, and the late peak during the main event. If stock or budgets are limited, decide which moment to prioritise and don't miss the first wave.

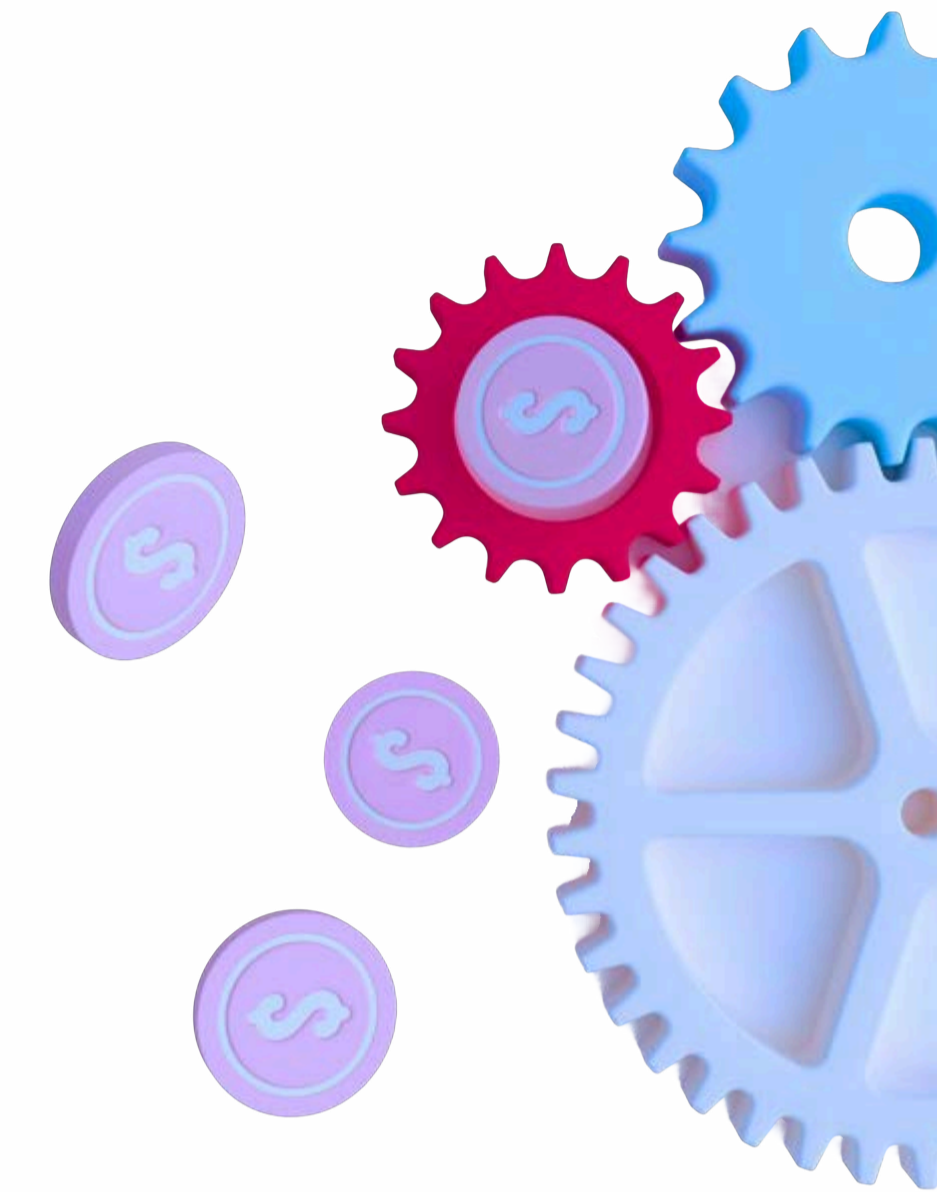
Above all, keep messaging simple and consistent. Fancy creative isn't necessary; clarity beats cleverness during high-intent shopping periods.



timing is key

Media buying: staying agile in volatile periods

Paid media during peak seasons is a different beast. Markets shift daily, sometimes hourly, and “set-and-forget” bidding strategies can mean overspend or underspend is likely.




Flexibility is essential.

Daily monitoring of spend, efficiency, and conversions ensures you don't burn through next quarter's budget.

Key tactics include:

- ✔ **Adjusting TROAS and CPA targets**
Be more aggressive when conversion rates spike - don't wait for the platform to work it out for you; scale back immediately when demand drops.
- ✔ **Investing in upper-funnel activity pre-peak**
Demand generation campaigns build brand awareness and intent ahead of time, often at lower cost.
- ✔ **Monitoring competitors**
If rivals are bidding harder or faster, relying only on bottom-funnel ads could leave you priced out.




Optimise your
landing pages; align
your user experience


Your website is where all the traffic you are buying and driving will land, and ultimately buy; don't let it be the weak link in your strategy. **During peak sales, customers expect seamless, relevant experiences.**


With all of our eCommerce clients we talk about alignment; of messaging, of offer, of experience. Nothing increases a bounce rate higher than a divergent user experience.


A frictionless user journey can be the difference between a bounce and a sale.

To optimise conversions:

 **Align landing pages with ads**
Ensure the journey from click to site is consistent in messaging and offer presentation.

 **Highlight offers on PDPs**
Use offer-specific imagery or banners to reinforce urgency.

 **Create dedicated sale hubs**
Custom category or collection pages that centralise offers and simplify navigation.

 **Simplify navigation**
Consider a temporary "Sale" button in your navigation bar for fast access.

Email journeys: the unsung hero of peak sales

Email remains one of the most powerful (and cost-effective) tools for eCommerce brands during peak seasons. Unsubscribes are inevitable, but during peak sales periods, they're insignificant compared to the revenue email can deliver.

Key strategies include:

- ✓ **Pre-planning campaigns**
Build user journeys well before peak, including nurture flows for new subscribers.
- ✓ **Focus on urgency and exclusivity**
Early access, limited-time deals, and low-stock alerts drive action.
- ✓ **Increase frequency**
Don't be afraid to send more emails. In a crowded inbox, more touchpoints equal more visibility.
- ✓ **Vary the content**
Avoid sending the same email repeatedly. Use themes like "Deal of the Day," "Last Chance," or "Only 50 Left."



Measuring and adapting in real time

Peak sales are dynamic. Platforms change, competitors react, and customer behaviour shifts. **Brands must track performance daily** to avoid missed opportunities or wasted spend.



If an offer underperforms or a channel lags, be ready to pivot. Flexibility and responsiveness often separate the winners from the also-rans.

Metrics to monitor include:

- ✓ **MER (Marketing Efficiency Ratio)**
- ✓ **nCAC (New Customer Acquisition Cost)**
- ✓ **(CM) Contribution margin**
- ✓ **Revenue goals vs actuals**

After the peak: turning buyers into loyal customers

The work doesn't end when your peak sales period does.

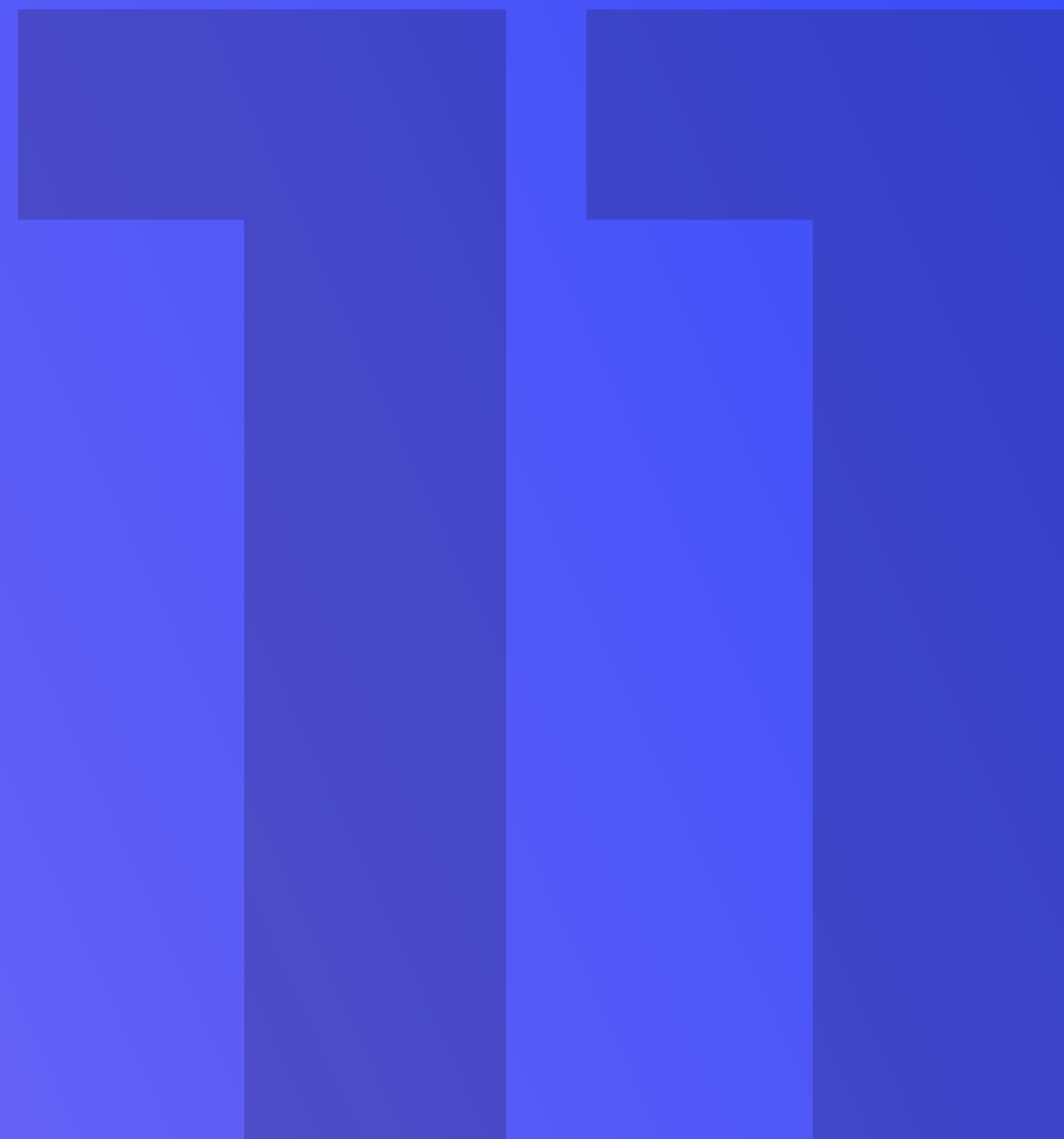
In fact, for many brands, the real return comes in the aftersales phase. If you've used peak to grow market share, you need a strategy in place ahead of time to nurture those customers into loyal repeat buyers:

- ✔ **Follow up with cross-sell and upsell campaigns.**
- ✔ **Deliver tailored content based on the products they purchased.**
- ✔ **Use remarketing to keep your brand top-of-mind during quieter periods.**



Think of peak season not just as a sales spike, but as a springboard for sustained growth.

Conclusion



Every eCommerce brand has **peak sales periods** that can make or break their financial year.

[Watch our webinar](#)



Whether your high season is Black Friday, Christmas, Easter or the Summer holidays, the rules for success remain the same.

Brands should prioritise getting seasonal content live and indexed early, aligning their creative messaging and offers with their landing pages across SEO and PPC, and leaning into AI both for visibility in emerging search experiences and for efficiency in campaign delivery.

- ✓ Review your technical and on-page SEO
- ✓ Optimise your current and campaign content for AI search
- ✓ Don't be afraid to trail offers in advance to capture early searches
- ✓ Build offers based on data, not guesswork
- ✓ Activate early and nurture your audience
- ✓ Stay agile with media buying
- ✓ Optimise landing pages for conversion
- ✓ Use email to cut through the noise
- ✓ Measure and adapt in real time
- ✓ Capitalise on momentum after the peak
- ✓ Set clear objectives.

your checklist

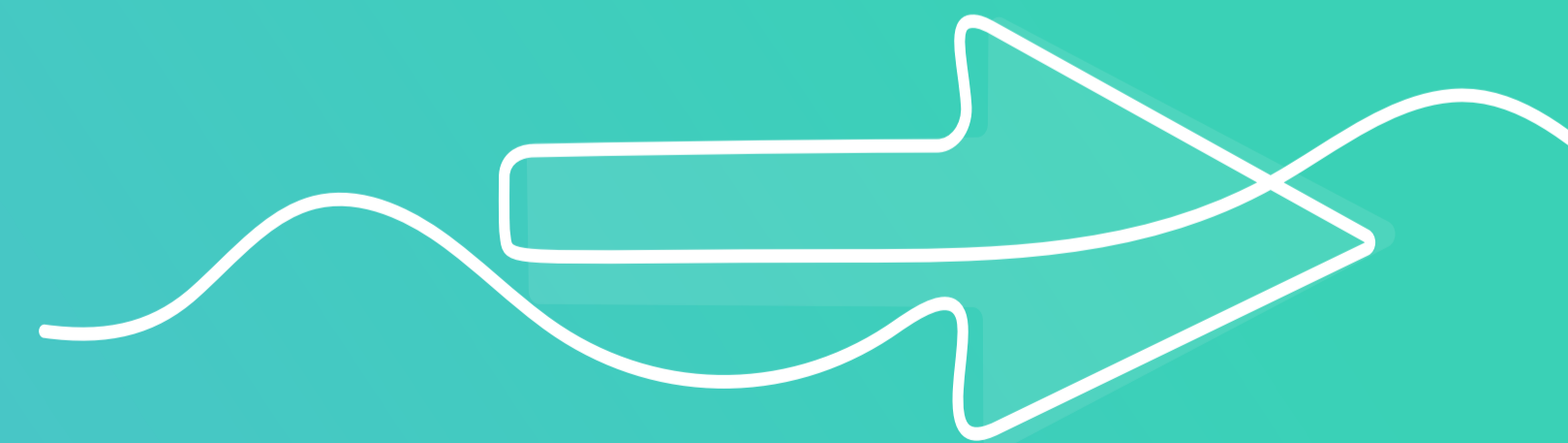
Brands that approach seasonal campaigns with structure and foresight don't just win in the moment, they create lasting, sustainable growth.

now is the time to act

Want to stay ahead of the curve?

[Book a meeting](#) →

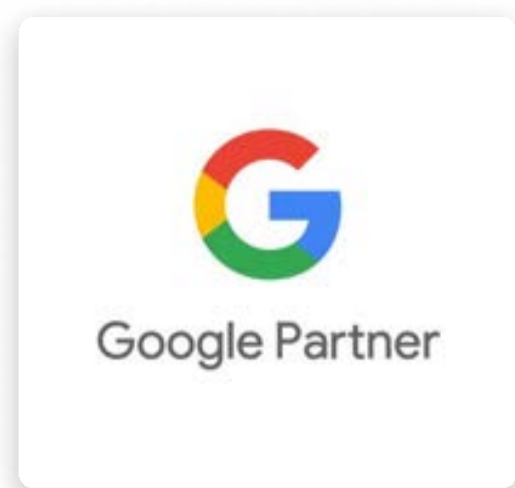
Schedule a meeting with our Marketing Director to discover how SOZO's sustainable approach can drive business growth.





Thank you for reading!

If you're ready to maximise your next peak sales season, SOZO's team of paid media and digital marketing experts can help.



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