

An Essential Holiday Checklist

From your friends at Boxcheck

This year has been anything but ordinary, kicking ecommerce into high gear for many of us in the alcohol beverage industry. The thought of preparing for “busy season” may seem a little crazy given the record volume over the last few months, but the season is upon us and we’re poised to set even more new records.

-- What can you do to prepare? --



Assess Your Analytics

If you haven’t already, review the metrics you’ve been tracking this past summer and use that information in combination with the results from last year’s Holiday Season to guide your forecasting for the fourth quarter of 2020.

- At a minimum, you should be tracking Average Order Value (AOV), Website Traffic, Conversion Rates, and Repeat Customers.
- You can use that information to plan for staffing, inventory, and ordering supplies.
- Keep in mind that this year could very well be your best year yet.



Product Listing & Inventory

This is the time to take a run through your website and make sure all of your products are showcased to your liking.

- Review the copy on your product descriptions with the customer in mind.
- Put together a selection of holiday gift sets and bring in a photographer for beauty shots.
- Make sure you have enough inventory on hand or in-stock with your fulfillment partner.
- Also, make sure you have plenty of gift wrap, holiday boxes, and gift cards at your disposal.
- Finally, don’t forget to make sure that your shipping and returns policies are clearly defined and easy for customers to find.



Promotions & Campaigns

Review your data for trends and use that information to build a fourth quarter marketing calendar.

- For example, did you find that a certain varietal or label was more popular for Thanksgiving or Christmas? You can use that information to plan email and social media campaigns.
- Also be sure to get all of your marketing assets in order, like imagery, copy, special offers, hashtags, and contact lists.
- What are the shipping deadlines your customers need to be mindful of for delivery by Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year’s? This is information that should be included on your website and in all outbound marketing.



Shipping Dates

Review your shipping schedule and make a date tracker or holiday calendar to share with your team. The ultimate goal is to ensure quick delivery for your customers and a tracker/calendar will provide insurance against unwanted delays.

- If you use a fulfillment partner, what is the lead time for getting inventory set up and ready to ship within their system?
- If you ship from multiple locations, how much extra time is required for inventory transfers and forward staging?
- What is the order upload cutoff time for same-day shipping?
- Be sure to include the delivery deadlines from above on your calendar along with any dates the carriers are closed.



Get Organized for Next Year

There are a number of things you can do now to make sure you are able to start 2021 without skipping a beat.

- First, get ready for your year-end inventory. You’ll want to determine the value of your inventory at year-end and reconcile your physical count with what’s logged in your inventory management system.
- Secondly, pull together any important tax information. Make sure your books are up to date and be prepared to submit 1099’s to any independent contractors.
- Finally, use your analytics from this year to set revenue goals and build a budget for next year.



How Can Boxcheck Help?

The most important thing you can do to guarantee a successful holiday season is to ensure your customers have the best possible experience. That’s where Boxcheck can help!

- ✓ We offer access to reduced shipping rates. This will lower your cost and allow you to pass the savings on to your customers. As an example, you can use the savings realized through your Boxcheck partnership to create a special promotion in the form of a 1¢ shipping offer for orders over a pre-determined quantity.
- ✓ Through our API’s, we provide up-front tax calculations so that your customers will know the exact total at checkout which will help avoid cart abandonment.
- ✓ Nothing is more frustrating to your customers than “avoidable” delays. We provide address checks and corrections to ensure packages are shipped to the correct address. Not only does this reduce unwanted delays, it also reduces unnecessary returns and helps you to meet or exceed customer expectations.



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