

BULQ[®]

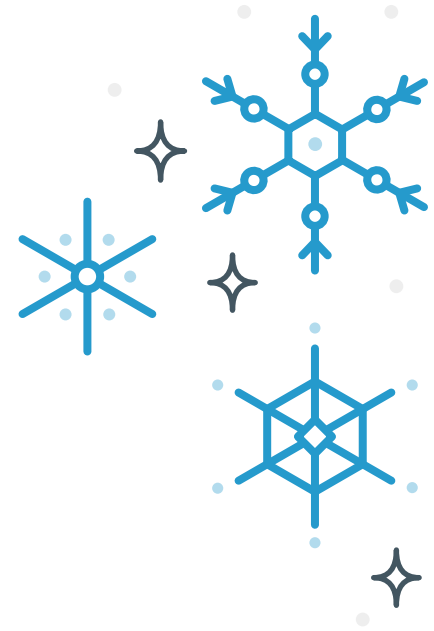
2019 Holiday Reselling Guide

*Online selling tools, tips and strategies for
the most wonderful time of the year*



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OVERVIEW

It's almost time for the biggest shopping season of the year.

Yet, as retailers of all sizes ramp up, guidance to help small businesses make their mark is rare.

From first-timers to seasoned pros, this guide is designed to help all resellers prepare for the holiday season ahead.





UNDERSTANDING THE SEASONAL SPIKE

So, just how big is the holiday shopping season?

BIG. In 2018, e-commerce sales during the five-day period from Thanksgiving Day through Cyber Monday totaled \$22.55 billion. In fact, traffic and sales started to increase even before Thanksgiving Day, with transactions on the Wednesday before increasing by 40% compared to 2017¹.

These sales aren't just for well-known retailers. On Amazon alone, customers purchased more than 1 billion items from third-party sellers, with more than 140 million items ordered during the "Cyber 5."² Even primarily seller-focused platforms like Etsy benefited from the spike, raking in \$200 million in sales during the 2018 holiday season.³

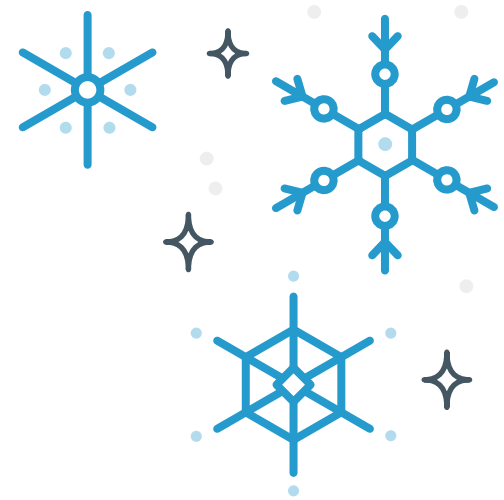
However, the holiday season is starting earlier and earlier—21% of Americans say they plan to start shopping before November.⁴ It's essential to start preparing now in order to meet these customers' needs and remain top of mind through the end of the year.

INVENTORY INSIGHTS

If you source it, they will come.

Stocking in-demand inventory is the first, and perhaps biggest, step to attracting customers and bringing in holiday profits.

Although several categories are tried and true favorites, there's actually a range of product options that are worth considering.



INVENTORY INSIGHTS

Apparel & Accessories



SEVENTIES STYLE IS BACK. Bell bottoms, vests, turtlenecks, corduroy, long jackets, and warm earthy colors are all staples of the decade, so keep an eye out for these classic pieces.



RUFFLES are making a modern entrance, gracing everything from shirts and skirts to dresses and scarves.



DRESS AND RAIN BOOTS are also a perennial winter favorite for all ages. Source styles for both men and women to satisfy a wide range of shopper's needs.

SOURCE APPAREL & ACCESSORIES

INVENTORY INSIGHTS

Consumer Electronics



SMARTPHONES AND TABLETS are always high on shoppers' wishlists. Although some brands (like Apple) restrict third-party resale of their items, companies like Google and Samsung also have great devices that tech-savvy consumers are eager to find.



AUDIO AND HEADPHONES like earbuds, noise-cancelling headphones, and Bluetooth speakers are also popular gifts this time of year, so search for name brand items to draw in audiophiles.



VIDEO GAME CONSOLES are a big draw for shoppers of all ages, particularly as portable devices, like the Nintendo Switch, continue to rise in popularity.

SOURCE CONSUMER ELECTRONICS

INVENTORY INSIGHTS

Toys & Baby



SLEDS AND SNOW GAMES are a great way to get families enjoying the winter wonderland. Look for plastic snow saucers, inflatable tubes and snow-related toys, such as snowball packers.



COLORING BOOKS AND BOARD GAMES are an easy way to appeal to children of all ages. Look for items featuring popular characters or a unique twist, such as colorable dolls, to grab customers' attention.



CONSTRUCTION AND BUILDING SETS, such as LEGOs, are another indoor activity loved by kids and parents alike.

SOURCE TOYS & BABY

LISTING AND MERCHANDISING

Having the right products is one thing; enticing people to buy them is another.

Competition from other sellers is at an all-time high during the holidays, so it's critical that your listings 1) appear high in a user's search results and 2) have a differentiating factor that makes them stand out.



LISTING AND MERCHANDISING

How To Get Your Listings Noticed



USE HIGH-QUALITY PHOTOS that are well-lit, high resolution, and have minimal to no background. These can build confidence among potential buyers as they examine your product, so the more angles and product details you show, the better.

Check out BULQ's video guide to taking great listing photos [here](#).

APPLY RELEVANT, HIGH-RANKING KEYWORDS to your product title, description, item specifics and catalog specifics. Keywords can be found using keyword-specific research tools, such as [Google Keyword Planner](#) or eBay's [Terapeak](#). You can also conduct your own research by analyzing products similar to yours and noting which keywords are used in top-ranking listings.

INCLUDE DETAILED PRODUCT INFORMATION to gain buyers' trust while also sparking interest. In addition to details like size, color, and dimensions, highlight key benefits of your item that customers will care about most. For example, if your product is a pair of wireless headphones, underscoring their compatibility with most bluetooth-enabled devices could be a big selling point.

BUNDLE SIMILAR ITEMS TOGETHER to create "baskets" or "gift packs" that do the gifting work for the customer. To sweeten the deal further, consider including special discounts on bundled items or products purchased at the same time to incentivize buyers while increasing your average order value.



SHIPPING AND RETURNS

Consumers are becoming accustomed to fast, easy, and free when it comes to shipping and returns.

This expectation is especially true during the holidays. Behind price discounts, 75% of holiday shoppers ranked free shipping as the most appealing promotional offer⁵ in 2018. Return policies are also a big consideration, with 54% of shoppers stating they're more likely to buy from retailers with free returns and exchanges.⁶

SHIPPING AND RETURNS



Free Shipping Strategies

WRAP SHIPPING EXPENSES INTO AN ITEM'S PRICE and offer "free shipping" that's still covered by the total purchase cost.

EVALUATE YOUR TOTAL BUSINESS BUDGET to see if there's any room to allocate funds toward shipping and handling costs.

INCLUDE FREE SHIPPING FOR ORDERS OF A CERTAIN VALUE to offset the total shipping cost while encouraging customers to buy multiple items.

Return Policy Planning

DISPLAY YOUR POLICY CLEARLY so customers can easily read it before making a purchase.

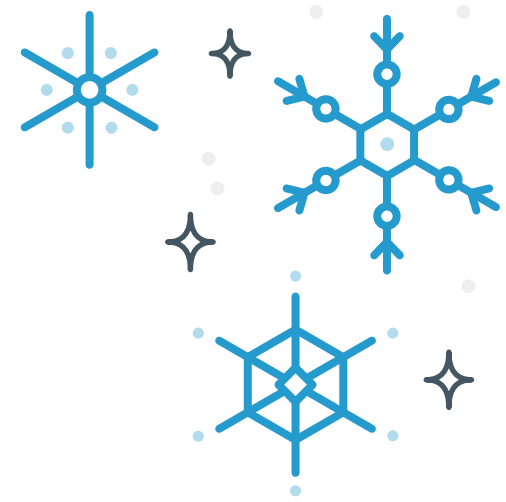
OFFER FREE RETURNS ON SMALLER, LIGHTER ITEMS to cut down on potential return shipping costs on larger, bulkier products.

EXPERIMENT WITH 30-DAY RETURNS to see how customers react before the holidays hit. Many times, the longer the return policy, the more likely the buyer is to grow accustomed to a purchase and decide not to return it. eBay is now even offering [advanced financial protections](#) for Top-Rated sellers who offer 30-day return policies, so it's worth giving it a shot.

ADVERTISING

Even the best listings can go unnoticed in a sea of holiday sales.

Both free and paid forms of advertising can be effective in giving your products that final push to get in front of buyers and keep them coming back.



ADVERTISING



Email

74.5% of high-growth brands rank general email offers as an effective way to turn new customers into repeat purchasers.⁷ If you don't do so already, consider sending email alerts to your existing customers to position your store as a holiday shopping destination. This can include:

- Monthly newsletters with general updates and trending products
- Product alerts for new or updated listings
- Special discounts or promo alerts



Social Media

Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and even YouTube are all great channels for reaching current and potential customers. If you haven't done so already, create a social profile for your store and update it regularly with new listings, promotions and reminders about your store's selection. Social media also makes it easy to show behind-the-scenes and answer your customer's questions, which can build trust among newer buyers.



In-Platform Advertising

If you want to guarantee your items will be seen, each selling platform offers a way for third-party sellers to advertise to target audiences for a fee. Amazon enables sellers to advertise both [Sponsored Products](#), which promote a particular item, and [Sponsored Brands](#), which promote your page as a whole.

eBay, on the other hand, only allows advertising of specific items through [Promoted Listings](#). Though effective, this form of digital advertising can add up quickly, so be sure to include room in your budget if you're planning to use this promotion strategy.

MONTHLY HOLIDAY PLANNING CHECKLISTS

Stay head of important holiday deadlines.

Follow these printable to-do lists to track your monthly progress.



October Checklist

- Stock up on shipping supplies
- Organize workspace for efficient processing and shipping
- Drop prices on slow-moving fall inventory to make room for holiday items
- Source and organize seasonal and holiday inventory
- Finalize holiday shipping and returns strategy
- Send inventory to FBA starting October 6
- Send air freight orders to FBA by October 25
- Plan out November promotions



November Checklist

- Optimize existing listings with details, keywords, and high-quality photos
- Send FBA shipments for Black Friday and Cyber Monday by November 5
- Start/increase spend on paid in-platform advertising
- Increase promotion of shipping and return policies
- Plan out December promotions



December Checklist

- Send FBA shipments for Christmas delivery by December 4
- Ship all "free shipping" Fulfilled By Merchant (FBM) orders for Christmas delivery by December 13
- Ship all "standard shipping" FBM orders for Christmas delivery by December 18
- Ship all "2-day shipping" FBM orders for Christmas delivery by December 21
- Being sourcing holiday returns for 2020 inventory

About BULQ

Launched in 2015, BULQ is a wholesale liquidation source that partners with top retailers to sell returned and excess inventory. With fully manifested lots, easy, full-service shipping, and a dedicated Customer Care Team, BULQ is dedicated to supporting resellers while reinventing the wholesale liquidation industry.

[SOURCE NOW](#)

Follow BULQ on Social



ENDNOTES

- 1 <https://www.digitalcommerce360.com/2019/01/14/holiday-season-ecommerce-analysis/>
- 2 <https://www.feedbackexpress.com/amazon-1029528-new-sellers-year-plus-stats/>
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