

The background is a solid teal color. On the right side, there is a large, intricate network of white lines connecting small white dots, resembling a data visualization or a complex web. A smaller, similar network is visible in the bottom left corner.

VOLO

Your Peak Trading Checklist

Introduction

With peak trading just around the corner, now is a great time to start prepping for the busy time ahead. We've prepared a checklist to help you understand if you are ready.

Follow these tips to have a successful peak trading period and don't forget Volo Professional Services are on standby to help with the heavy lifting and guidance.

Content



SEO Data Optimisation



Marketing



Shipping



Customer Service



Post-Peak Plan

SEO Data Optimisation

With such high traffic and conversion rates during Q4 peak, being found in search has never been so important. A good sales ranking on each product can set you up to sell over forecast the following year.

Title Optimisation

All channels have their own rules when it comes to titles. You should use as much of the allowed character limit as possible. Titles should have relevant keywords in them that customers are searching for and they should read well.

Marketplace Title Character Count Best Practice



SEO Optimisation

Marketing

Shipping

Customer Service

Post-Peak Plan


Description Optimisation

Descriptions should be at least 500 characters long, mobile optimised, contain any product specific FAQs, be informative and precise, needs to be written on brand in its content and should allow the customer to make an informed purchase.


A decent description can increase conversion rate and decrease return rates.


For eBay and Amazon, they must have no active content like contact information or URL links, or they will cause a listing error.

 SEO Optimisation

 Marketing

 Shipping

 Customer Service

 Post-Peak Plan

Marketplace Description Character Count Best Practice

 → 2000  → No Limit  → 5000  → 50K

Should avoid making them too long

Most important details in the first 160 – 500 characters

Image Optimisation

Images are arguably the most important part of a listing. More images on a listing will create more conversion and reduce return rates. Adding a second image on eBay, for example, can increase sales by over 10%, adding a third image can increase sales by a further 7%.

Main and second images should have a white background with lifestyle images to follow. You should be aiming to have 5 or more images on each product where possible. All images should be at least 1000 x 1000 px in size to allow zoom functions, with the product filling at least 85%.

Taking images and correcting them can be a timely and costly task, so concentrate on your top converting products first.

Marketplace Image Count Limit

→ 9 → 12 → 16mb per image → 10

SEO Optimisation

Marketing

Shipping

Customer Service

Post-Peak Plan

Attribute Optimisation

All channels will map the values of an attribute to the landing page for the product. This means it's very important to have as many filled in as possible to make sure you get shown in search. Also make sure the values in these attributes are correct and relevant, otherwise you'll see a negative impact on the conversion rate.

The importance of filling in as many attributes as possible and ensuring they're the valid values that the channel requires is because the refinement menu on the left of a search page is governed by these fields. If, for example, you have a red t-shirt and you have the value for colour as 'red' but the channel needs 'Red', when a customer clicks on the refinement attribute colour with a value of 'Red', your t-shirt will disappear from search.


Limit depends on the category. Click the logo for each marketplace's valid values.



 SEO Optimisation

 Marketing

 Shipping

 Customer Service

 Post-Peak Plan

SEO Data Optimisation - Checklist

Check the following or get Volo Professional Services to check for you.


- ✓ Are all product/listing titles in keeping with best practice?
- ✓ Are all descriptions over 500 characters, mobile friendly and well written?
- ✓ Do all products have 5 or more images, high 'res' and in keeping with best practice?
- ✓ Do all listings have the full range of product attributes, with the valid values provided by each channel?


If you can put a check against all these, you should expect to see increased impressions, higher conversion rates and lower return rates for all the products in question.

To discuss this with us please contact enquiries@volocommerce.com.

 SEO Optimisation

 Marketing

 Shipping

 Customer Service

 Post-Peak Plan

Peak Trading Checklist

Marketing

A well thought out and optimised marketing strategy can increase revenue by around 15% (depending on products enrolled) at very little cost. Each channel has their own versions of what is possible, but they follow the same principles.

SEO Optimisation

Marketing

Shipping

Customer Service

Post-Peak Plan

	Sponsored Products	In Page Advertising	Headline Brand Ads	Promotions / Sale Event

amazon

ebay

Google

OnBuy.com

Marketing – Sponsored Products



For Amazon, eBay Promoted Listings Advanced and Google this works on a PPC campaign format. eBay Promoted Listings Standard have no upfront charge, they will bill the FVF at an agreed % that you set.

All sales from sponsored ads count against the organic listing, essentially giving you more chance to grow the product sell rate further, and even the organic listing, if selling well will outrank the sponsored listing in search.


We recommend sponsoring all products in your inventory at the trending rate (margin permitting). Top selling products will generate the best return, and we highly recommend you sponsor new products for the first 2 – 3 weeks they go live.


OnBuy offer a “Boost” tool which is similar to eBays “Promoted listing” too. Please contact your OnBuy Account Manager for more information on this.

 SEO Optimisation

 Marketing

 Shipping

 Customer Service


 Post-Peak Plan

Peak Trading Checklist


Marketing – In Page Advertising


amazon ebay Google


This can be a great way to launch new products or brands. It can be quite expensive and will usually become as a loss leader unless the products take off instantly. This type of advertising is more for awareness and exposure rather than conversion.

 SEO Optimisation

 Marketing

 Shipping

 Customer Service

 Post-Christmas Plan

Peak Trading Checklist

Marketing – Headline Brand Adverts



Headline Brand Adverts are keyword-driven ads that allow you to sell products at the top of a page in a banner style ad that either links to a specific item or a landing page. This allow a brand to look like they own the search page and is a very prominent position to display.

These ads can be quite expensive but take up the prime position in search and can have a great conversion rate if the ad is compelling enough to click.

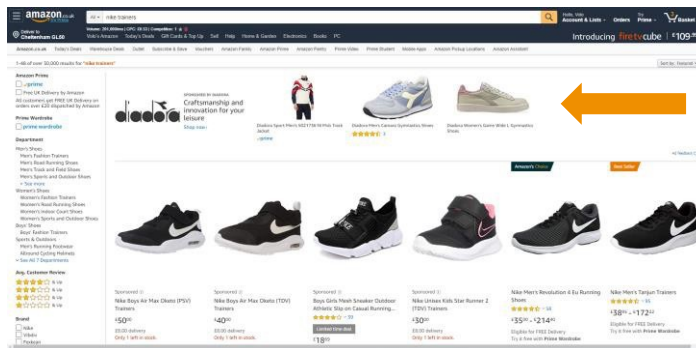
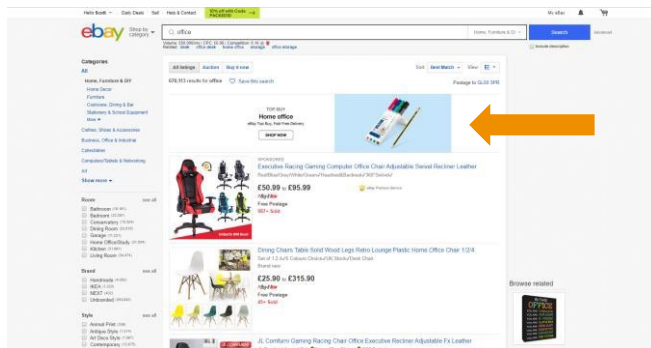
SEO Optimisation

Marketing

Shipping

Customer Service

Post-Christmas Plan



Peak Trading Checklist



Marketing – Promotions/Sales



Offering a sale on an item will gain you more traction and better Buy Box percentage. Timing is key for this; you want to make sure the strikethrough sale price is active during high traffic periods.


If you have the product exclusively and it is competitively priced already, then this item is not the target. Try to find products that give you a foot up against competitors if you lower the price.


If an item is a non-mover, it can be productive to hike the price first for 2 weeks, then drop it back to its original price to gain more traction. Products with price slashes get better search rankings.


Think about offering multi-buys either with kits, bundles or the eBay multi-buy function.

 SEO Optimisation

 Marketing

 Shipping

 Customer Service

 Post-Peak Plan

Marketing – Checklist

Check the following or get Volo Professional Services to check for you.


- ✓ Are all products/listings part of a sponsored campaign?
- ✓ Do you have any products that would benefit from in page advertising?
- ✓ Would a set of branded products benefit from a headline search ad and a landing page?
- ✓ Have you run a report to see if you can be more competitive than the competition while remaining profitable?


If you can put a check against all these, you should expect to see increased impressions and revenue. Make sure to include the ad spend when calculating your profit margins.

To discuss this with us please contact enquiries@volocommerce.com.

 SEO Optimisation

 Marketing

 Shipping

 Customer Service

 Post-Peak Plan

Shipping – Profiles

Shipping is an important part of online strategy as it can give you an advantage over your competitors. A perfect shipping strategy looks like this for all channels.

- ✓ 1-day (or less) dispatch time
- ✓ Free option for 2 to 3-day delivery time
- ✓ Paid-for next day delivery service
- ✓ Prime enabled for Amazon


Creating these shipping profiles will give you the best chance to offer the customer what they expect and gain an advantage over the competition.

Understandably, this will not be possible for all products but you should consider it.

 SEO Optimisation

 Marketing

 Shipping

 Customer Service

 Post-Peak Plan

Shipping – Strategy


We've run tests, listings the same product twice, one with paid shipping, one with free shipping and the cost of the shipping included in the final price. The listing/product page with free shipping will always sell out first. Why not try this on your store?

Free returns can be a deal clincher for some customers over the Christmas period, since many items are bought as gifts. Consider offering this for some of your products to see if conversion improves. If it does, roll out on other items.


Prime is very important when selling on Amazon. If you have no products enrolled in Prime, test the water by sending some items to FBA and see if the sales velocity increases. If so, think about getting involved in the Seller Fulfilled Prime programme.

Keep a laser focus on your metrics. If your sales jump up it can be easy to lose your store due to slow dispatch and/or mistakes.

 SEO Optimisation

 Marketing

 Shipping

 Customer Service

 Post-Peak Plan

Shipping – Checklist

Check the following or get Volo Professional Services to check for you.

- ✓ Have you optimised your shipping profiles for best practice?
- ✓ Have you tested and added the shipping cost to the product price?
- ✓ Have you tested and implemented a free returns policy for gifts in your product line?
- ✓ Have you set up anything to keep a close eye on the metrics to avoid bad feedback and a drop in store rate?
- ✓ Have you checked with all your couriers to see when the last post day is to receive the before Christmas?


If you can put a check against all these, you should expect to see increased revenue and conversions. Remember to check competitors, to match or better their offers.

If you need help with any of the above, please contact accountmanagement@volocommerce.com.

 SEO Optimisation

 Marketing

 Shipping

 Customer Service


 Post-Peak Plan

Customer Service – Customer information


Customer Service is an integral part of any online business, especially during such high traffic periods as Q4.

 SEO Optimisation

 Marketing

 Shipping

 **Customer Service**

 Post-Peak Plan

Make sure everything is up to date on your website and marketplace store information, including:

- ✓ About us pages
- ✓ Returns information
- ✓ Delivery information

Make sure everything customers can see about your business is still correct, especially if you're making some of changes we're suggesting.

Peak Trading Checklist



Customer Service – Customer information

Target customers who frequently shop with you and offer discounts if they are on your website, to drive up conversion.

Do you have support for your customers in countries outside of the UK? Services exist to help with this, but they can be expensive. Google Translate is not perfect but can deliver decent results.

Think about free gifts to offer anyone who has to contact Customer Service during peak trading.

Make sure all your Customer Service staff know last post days, returns policies and what to offer customers to go the extra mile and deliver a great service.

 SEO Optimisation

 Marketing

 Shipping

 **Customer Service**

 Post-Peak Plan

Customer Service – Checklist


Check the following or get Volo Professional Services to check for you:

- ✓ Are all your information pages about the company up to date?
- ✓ Do you have multi language support?
- ✓ Are your customer service agents up to date on all information passed and informed of any new plans?

If you can put a check against all these, you should expect to see increased revenue and conversions, with a much better-looking returns rate and some repeat customers throughout the following year.


To discuss this with us please contact enquiries@volocommerce.com.

 SEO Optimisation

 Marketing

 Shipping

 Customer Service

 Post-Peak Plan

Peak Trading Checklist




Post-Peak

It's important to have a plan going straight into January – if Christmas is your peak, for example – to get the most out of what can be a bad trading month.

 SEO Optimisation

 Marketing

 Shipping

 Customer Service

 **Post-Peak Plan**

- ✓ Schedule and implement Boxing Day and New Year's sales. Customers will be looking to pick up a bargain and this is another high traffic opportunity.
- ✓ Try to get customers back into your store with targeted email campaigns offering discounts for returning customers.
- ✓ Post-Peak returns are inevitable. Have a plan in place to deal with them swiftly and efficiently, so the customer has the best possible experience.

The background is a solid teal color. On the right side, there is a large, intricate network of white lines connecting small white dots, resembling a data visualization or a complex web. A smaller, similar network is visible in the bottom left corner.

VOLO

Your Peak Trading Checklist