

The Prep for Peak Checklist

Fail to prepare, prepare to fail! We're here to help you plan for peak with our comprehensive checklist.

What you can expect:

- Look ahead and get forecasting!
- Ensure those Service Level Agreements (SLAs) are locked in.
- Reduce 'out of stock' disappointment with inventory management.
- Where the magic happens... warehouse and fulfilment operations.
- Sort your ship out...
- Testing, testing 1, 2, 3...!
- Customer Service? Consider it done!
- How did we do? Regular reporting and metrics are key.
- Final prep and tests - let's get ready to rock and roll.

Take a 'peek' at what's inside

Our recommended key questions to ask your fulfilment provider prior to peak... or ask us, we're always up for a chat!

- Can you scale to meet our forecasted peak volumes?
- What are your contingency plans for managing any disruptions?
- Are you prepared to handle expedited shipping and promotional surges?
- Do you foresee any potential challenges with carriers or warehouse staffing?
- Can you guarantee sufficient inventory visibility and real-time reporting?
- How will you manage post-peak returns and reverse logistics?
- What adjustments to SLAs should we make for peak season performance?



Ready to read more? Fail to prepare, prepare to fail!

We're here to help you plan for peak with our comprehensive checklist.

Look ahead and start forecasting!

Begin forecasting now to keep your fulfilment seamless, stocked, and ready for peak demand!

Provide peak volume forecasts

It is crucial to share anticipated order volumes with your fulfilment provider based on historical data, marketing plans, and expected promotions.

Ask if your fulfilment provider can handle the forecasted demand

Confirm whether your fulfilment provider can scale their operations (staff, space, carriers) to manage your projected peak demand.

Review your inventory projections

Align inventory availability with forecasted sales to ensure sufficient stock. Work with your fulfilment provider to manage inbound shipments and storage space. Also check if your provider offers forecasting capabilities within their technology?



Read our latest preparing for peak blog:

Strategies for managing high volume fulfilment

[Read the full blog](#)

Ensure your **SLAs** are locked in

Setting clear SLAs with your provider is the key to smooth sailing through peak season.

Review SLAs for peak season

Ensure that SLAs (on-time shipping, order accuracy, etc.) are realistic and clearly defined for peak season between you and your provider.

Confirm cut-off times for same-day or expedited shipping

It is crucial to share anticipated order volumes with your fulfilment provider based on historical data, marketing plans, and any expected promotions you might be running.

Clarify return and refund processing SLAs

With potential post-peak returns, ensure your fulfilment provider is equipped to handle reverse logistics in a timely manner.



Read our latest preparing for peak blog:

Missed SLAs? 5 reasons why it's time to switch your fulfilment provider.

[Read the full blog](#)

Prevent 'out of stock' frustration with **inventory management!**

Stay stocked and ready. Real-time inventory management is a peak season game changer.

Ensure inventory accuracy and visibility

Confirm that your fulfilment partner provides real-time inventory tracking and reporting. Accurate stock levels are critical for avoiding overselling during peak season.

Coordinate inventory inbound plan

Plan with your fulfilment provider for the receipt of inventory ahead of the peak season to avoid delays caused by capacity constraints.

Create contingency plans for stockouts

Establish backup plans for fast-moving items or stockouts, or temporary promotions for slower-moving, older inventory.

Where the magic happens... warehouse fulfilment operations

Streamlined picking, packing, and shipping are key to handling peak volumes with ease.

Check warehouse staffing and capacity

Ask your fulfilment provider how they plan to increase staff and allocate more space in the warehouse during peak periods.

Review picking, packing, and shipping processes

Ensure efficient picking and packing procedures are in place to maintain speed and accuracy. Does your current provider have robust technology in place to achieve accurate and seamless picking?

Agree on any packaging requirements

Ensure that packaging materials (e.g. branded boxes, inserts etc) are in stock and ready to meet the higher order volumes.



Wondering where our warehouses are located?

We're transforming logistics with a global network of fulfilment centres

[View all locations](#)

Sort your shipping out...

Stay on top of peak season shipping cut-offs to keep your customers happy and your parcels on time.

Confirm carrier capacity and performance

Work with your fulfilment provider to ensure they have agreements with carriers for peak season capacity.

Plan for multi-carrier shipping options

If possible, diversify carrier options to mitigate risks of delays or issues with a single carrier. Ensure your fulfilment provider can integrate with multiple carriers.

Track shipping cut-offs for holiday deliveries

Understand the final shipping dates for guaranteed delivery by specific holidays to communicate clearly with your own customers.



Read our latest preparing for peak blog:

Why lost parcels during peak can cost you more than money

[Read the full blog](#)

Testing, testing

1, 2, 3!....

Stable integrations and smooth order flow are key to a successful peak season.

Ensure system integrations are stable

Confirm that your e-commerce platform, order management system (OMS), and warehouse management system (WMS) are fully integrated with your fulfilment provider systems. Test the integrations to ensure smooth order flow.

Test order flow and fulfilment processes

Run tests of your entire order fulfilment process to identify and resolve potential bottlenecks or system glitches.

Got an issue? No problem, lets' talk!

Align your customer service teams now to handle peak season queries with ease.

Establish clear lines of communication

Set up regular touchpoints with your fulfilment provider's team to monitor progress during the peak season.

Define escalation protocols

Clarify how issues will be escalated if there are delays, stockouts, or system failures. Ensure you have a clear chain of command for troubleshooting urgent problems.



Read our latest preparing for peak blog:

What online shoppers really want from the returns process

[Read the full blog](#)

Customers change their mind? Get your returns covered

Ensure your returns process is ready to manage the peak season demand.

- Review returns process for peak season**

Discuss the capacity required to handle increased return volumes post-peak season and ensure they can meet return processing SLAs.

- Ensure adequate stock levels for replenishment**

Plan for restocking or refurbishing returned items so they can be resold quickly.

Customer Service? Consider it done!

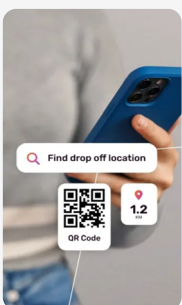
Ensure your customer service is ready to handle the rush during peak season.

Align customer service teams

Synchronise your customer service team with to support to handle order queries, tracking issues, and delivery delays during peak season.

Prepare for increased customer enquiries

Anticipate a surge in customer service enquiries and ensure your fulfilment providers team is ready to handle requests related to shipping, delivery, and returns.



Find out more about delivery assured

Did you know our customer service product, Delivery Assured, can reduce time spent on delivery queries by up to 60%? Interested in learning more?

[Discover Delivery Assured](#)

How did we do?

Regular reporting and metrics are key

Define key metrics to monitor order accuracy, speed, and customer satisfaction during peak.

Set up key performance metrics

Define the KPIs that will be used to monitor performance during the peak season, such as order accuracy, fulfilment speed, inventory accuracy, and customer satisfaction.

Schedule regular performance reviews

Set up weekly or daily performance reviews with your fulfilment provider to monitor progress and address issues in real time.



Read our latest preparing for peak blog:

Leveraging analytics for strategic insights in 3PL management

[Read the full blog](#)

Final prep and tests - let's get ready to rock and roll

Final preparations are crucial - make sure your fulfilment provider is on the same page for peak season.

- Conduct a pre-peak test**

Run a mock pre-peak test to challenge the capacity of the fulfilment system and identify any last-minute bottlenecks.

- Finalise promotional and shipping strategies**

Ensure all marketing, sales, and fulfilment teams are aligned on promotional offers, expected order volumes, and shipping cut-off dates.



Found our checklist helpful?

Imagine what is it like to work with us, for you AND your customers.

If you're looking for a global fulfilment partner to support you through peak and beyond, switching to fulfilmentcrowd will ensure your operations are in the best possible shape for the busiest time of the year.

With 250+ customers worldwide backed by award-winning tech we can guarantee you and your customers are in safe hands.

Get in touch