

FREE GUIDE • FOR D2C & SHOPIFY FOUNDERS

The 90-Day BFCM Checklist

Get your Shopify store ready for Black Friday & Cyber Monday 2026 — phase by phase, starting this week. Site speed, email flows, inventory, offers, and ads, in the right order.

VIREXO MEDIA

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WHO THIS IS FOR

Virexo Media is an ecommerce growth agency for D2C and Shopify brands — we build stores, fix conversion leaks, and run Meta ads that scale. This guide is for founders who want their biggest Q4 ever and know that November results are built in the summer. Everything here is doable in-house; if you'd rather have it done for you, we're at the end.

WHY START 90+ DAYS OUT

BFCM lands on **27 November 2026**. Industry post-mortems of 2025 found the winning brands didn't out-discount anyone in the final week — they spent the summer fixing what can't be fixed under load: site performance, inventory depth, and the automated flows that quietly do most of the selling (source: Digital Applied Q4 2026 playbook). Best-seller inventory needs ordering roughly 8+ weeks ahead, and email sender reputation warms over weeks, not days. Pre-BF search and discovery traffic climbs roughly 40% above late-October levels (source: Home of Direct Commerce, 2025 season data) — demand arrives early, and so should you.

The rule: every phase below front-loads the slow, unglamorous work so the final two weeks are pure execution — not firefighting.

THE 4 PHASES

Phase 1 — Foundation (late July - August, T-90 to T-61)

- ✓ **Set the target.** Pick a revenue goal and work backward: sessions × conversion rate × AOV. Know which lever is weakest today.
- ✓ **Order best-seller inventory now.** 8+ week lead times mean August POs decide November stock. Rank SKUs by last-Q4 velocity + this year's trend.
- ✓ **Run a speed + mobile audit.** Test your top 5 pages on a real phone. Compress images, cut unused apps/scripts. Slow stores bleed the most under BFCM load.
- ✓ **Start the list-growth engine.** Add a genuinely good email/SMS opt-in offer now — subscribers captured in August are your cheapest BFCM buyers.
- ✓ **Audit last year.** What sold, what stocked out, which creative won, where checkout leaked. Write it down; it's your playbook skeleton.

Phase 2 — Infrastructure (September, T-60 to T-31)

- ✓ **Build the core email flows** (welcome, abandoned cart, browse abandonment, post-purchase) and let them run through September — that warms your sender reputation and compounds revenue before Q4.
- ✓ **Audit checkout end-to-end.** Test every payment method, shipping rate, and discount stack on mobile. Fix friction now, not in November.
- ✓ **Lock the offer architecture.** Sitewide % vs tiered vs bundles vs GWP — decide once, price it for margin, and test the discount mechanics on a September mini-sale.
- ✓ **Brief creative.** Shoot/design BFCM ad and email creative this month; you'll want 3-5 concepts to test in October.
- ✓ **Clean the catalog + feed.** Titles, images, variants, and product feed hygiene — ad platforms and Pinterest both rank cleaner feeds better.

Phase 3 — Campaigns (October, T-30 to T-15)

- ✓ **Test ad creative with real budget.** Run the 3–5 concepts; kill losers weekly. You want proven winners before CPMs spike in November.
- ✓ **Build the BFCM landing page** (one page, one offer, fast, mobile-first) and an early-access signup for VIP subscribers.
- ✓ **Grow retargeting pools.** Top-of-funnel traffic in October is cheap fuel for November retargeting.
- ✓ **Draft the full send calendar.** Every email/SMS from teaser to last-chance, written and scheduled — not improvised on the day.
- ✓ **Confirm shipping cutoffs + returns policy** and publish them visibly; they're conversion factors, not fine print.

Phase 4 — Dress rehearsal & launch (November, T-14 to T-1)

- ✓ **Run a full dress rehearsal:** place test orders with every discount live, on mobile, including edge cases (gift cards, stacked codes, sold-out variants).
- ✓ **Load-test and fix what it surfaces.** A test you don't act on is theater.
- ✓ **Prep support:** macros for the top 10 questions, extended hours, a clear escalation path.
- ✓ **Schedule everything** (ads, emails, SMS, price changes, banners) and freeze the site — no new apps or theme edits inside T-7.
- ✓ **Plan the post-BFCM flow:** the welcome/win-back sequence that turns one-time deal hunters into repeat customers is where Q4 profit actually compounds.

5 MISTAKES THAT QUIETLY RUIN BFCM

- **Discounting without margin math.** A 30% site-wide cut on thin margins is a revenue party and a profit funeral. Price the offer backward from contribution margin.
- **Launching flows in November.** Cold sending domains hit spam exactly when it matters most. Warm up in September.
- **Testing creative during the sale.** November CPMs are the most expensive classroom of the year. Test in October.
- **Treating mobile as a preview.** Most BFCM traffic is on phones; if checkout is clumsy on a phone, that's your real store.
- **No post-purchase plan.** Brands that only harvest demand start January at zero. The repeat-purchase flow is the whole point.

WHAT GOOD LOOKS LIKE (ILLUSTRATIVE)

Example — hypothetical, for illustration: a store doing \$40k/mo starts this checklist in late July. August: speed fixes + opt-in offer add 2,500 subscribers by October. September: four core flows go live and start producing ~15–25% of email revenue on autopilot (typical range for well-built flows; Klaviyo benchmarks). October: creative testing finds 2 winning ads before CPMs rise. BFCM week: proven creative + warm list + rehearsed checkout — the store runs its biggest week without a single 2 a.m. emergency. The difference wasn't the discount; it was the 90 days.

Want Q4 done for you?

Virexo builds and optimizes Shopify stores and runs the Meta ad campaigns behind them — **5.2x average ROAS across ecommerce campaigns, \$2.4M+ in client revenue generated, 50+ Shopify stores built.**

If you want your store BFCM-ready without doing the checklist yourself, we'll audit it and hand you the plan on a free call.

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