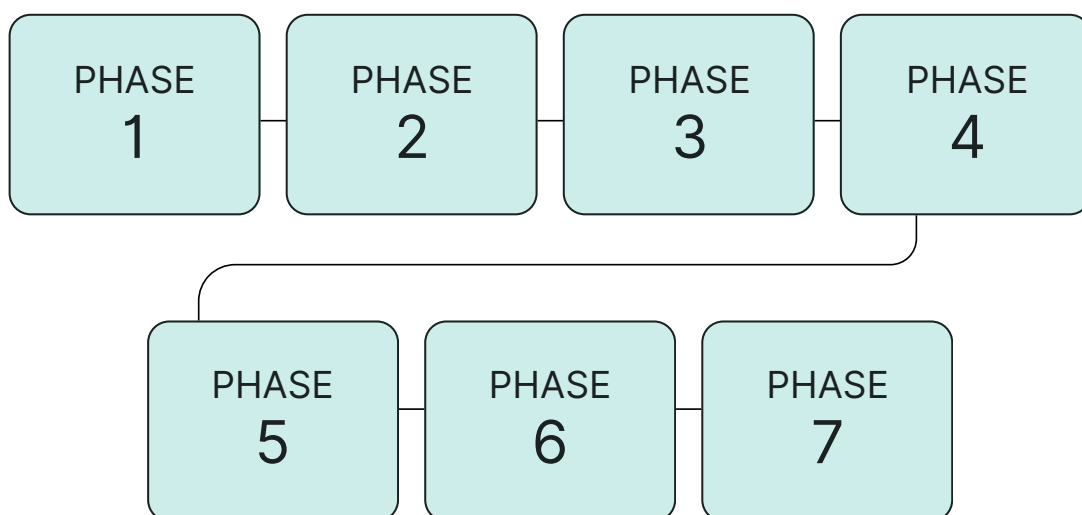




BLACK FRIDAY CYBER MONDAY

Email Marketing & Retention Checklist



A 7-Phase Step-by-Step Plan
for DTC Ecommerce Brands to
Maximize Revenue and Retention

How to Use This Checklist

This checklist will guide you through the exact steps to prepare your email, SMS, and retention systems for a record-breaking Black Friday Cyber Monday (BFCM) season.

Start at Phase 1 and work your way down to Post-BFCM, ticking off each action as you go. Each task is written so you can implement it immediately without guesswork.

Why this checklist works:

- *Every step is clear and practical so you can act right away.*
- *Retention-first approach ensures profits last beyond the holiday season.*
- *Tested on real client accounts and proven to work year after year.*

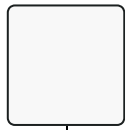
BFCM Prep

Timeline Overview

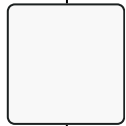
PHASE	OVERVIEW	DESCRIPTION
1	Build Foundation	Set up your list growth, segmentation, and deliverability to ensure every campaign reaches the inbox.
2	Flow Optimization	Update and optimize automated flows like welcome, pre-purchase, and post-purchase to maximize conversions.
3	Campaign Planning	Create your BFCM campaign calendar, write key campaigns, and prepare SMS for a seamless launch.
4	Website & CRO Prep	Build landing pages, confirm inventory, and optimize site speed and messaging to handle high traffic.
5	Pre-Launch Warm Up	Tease your sale, activate early access offers for VIP segments, and drive sign-ups to build anticipation.
6	BFCM Week: Execute	Launch, remind, and close with urgency-driven campaigns and SMS for maximum engagement and sales.
7	Post-BFCM Week: Retain Buyers	Thank customers, segment BFCM buyers, and continue nurturing relationships to drive repeat purchases.

Phase 1: Build Foundation

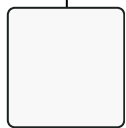
Set up your list growth, segmentation, and deliverability to ensure every campaign reaches the inbox.



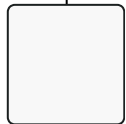
Optimize Pop-Up Forms: Set your pop-up to appear after 4–6 seconds and limit each step to one field. Make sure it covers at least 75% of the screen and keep copy under 10 words for clarity. Always compress images before uploading to ensure the form loads quickly.



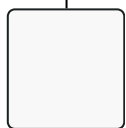
Clean Your List: Run a list cleaning process to remove invalid, bounced, or unengaged email addresses. This keeps your sender reputation strong and prevents spam traps from damaging deliverability.



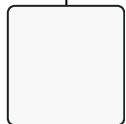
Verify Domain Authentication: Check that your SPF, DKIM, and DMARC records are set up correctly in your DNS. These records signal to inbox providers that your emails are legitimate, improving sender reputation and inbox placement.



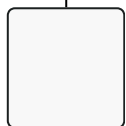
Fix Deliverability Issues: Turn off Smart Sending in all flows so every triggered message is delivered. Add an HTML footer that includes key details. If needed, add additional text to your footer to increase inbox placement (especially if your emails are largely image-based).



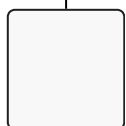
Ensure Legal Compliance: Review your email setup to make sure it complies with CAN-SPAM, CASL, GDPR, and other local regulations. Confirm that every email includes a visible unsubscribe link, physical mailing address, business identification info, and that you have appropriate consent for all subscribers.



Create Engaged Segments: Review your email setup to make sure it complies with CAN-SPAM, CASL, GDPR, and other local regulations. Confirm that every email includes a visible unsubscribe link, physical mailing address, business identification info, and that you have appropriate consent for all subscribers.



Build VIP Segment: Create a dedicated segment for your most loyal or highest-spending customers. This ensures you can send them exclusive early access offers and personalized messaging during BFCM.

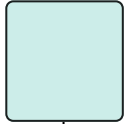


Warm List with Value Campaigns: Send content-driven campaigns such as product education, customer testimonials, or brand storytelling. These emails build trust without discounting and help boost engagement rates before the sale season. Keeping engagement high now will protect your inbox placement in November.

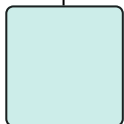
Pro Tip: Test multiple pop-up versions early to find the one with the highest conversion rate before your busiest season.

Phase 2: Flow Optimization

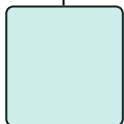
Update and optimize automated flows like welcome, pre-purchase, and post-purchase to maximize conversions.



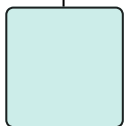
Update Welcome Flow: The first email should deliver the incentive immediately while showing bestsellers. The second email can share your brand story with a founder photo or mission. End the sequence with an urgency reminder so new subscribers know to act quickly.



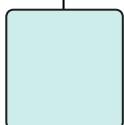
Optimize Abandoned Browse Flow: Trigger an email 30–60 minutes after someone views a product but leaves without adding to cart or purchasing. Display the exact product with reviews and a clear shop button. Keep the email short and highly visual so it feels personal.



Optimize Abandoned Cart and Checkout Flows: Set 3–5 emails to send over 3–7 days to remind shoppers about their cart. Start with product benefits and objections, then only introduce a discount in the final few emails. This maximizes recovered revenue while protecting your margins. Add BFCM-specific language so these flows feel seasonally relevant.



Update Post Purchase and Winback Flows: Thank customers immediately after purchase and recommend complementary items. For winback, reach out after 60–90 days with a “We miss you” message and highlight new arrivals.

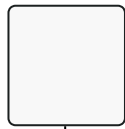


Add Cross-Sell to Post Purchase Flow: Include a follow-up email in your post-purchase flow that recommends related or gift-worthy items. This increases average order value and helps position your products as easy holiday gifts.

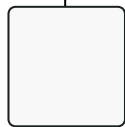
Pro Tip: Insert holiday language like “gift guide” or “trending gifts” into core flows so messaging feels timely and relevant.

Phase 3: Campaign Planning

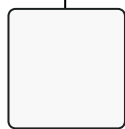
Create your BFCM campaign calendar, write key campaigns, and prepare SMS for a seamless launch.



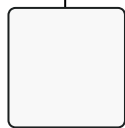
Finalize BFCM Campaign Calendar: Plan for 3–4 campaigns per week leading into Black Friday. Schedule a mix of teasers, launch emails, reminders, and last-chance messages. Having this mapped in advance will keep you consistent when the season gets busy.



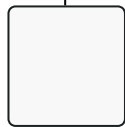
Create Sale Framework Emails: Prepare essential sends: teaser, launch, reminder, closer, and last chance. Teasers can be plain text while launch and reminder emails should be graphic-rich. The last chance should feel personal, ideally written as a founder message.



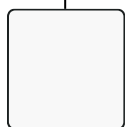
Design Campaign Templates in Advance: Prepare graphic and text-based email templates for your teaser, launch, reminder, and last chance emails. Having branded assets ready will save valuable time and ensure consistency when sending multiple campaigns during BFCM week.



Test Mobile-First Email Design: Preview all planned BFCM campaigns on mobile to confirm subject lines, CTAs, and images display correctly. Since 70%+ of BFCM opens happen on mobile, optimizing for this device ensures a smooth experience and prevents missed clicks.



Prepare SMS Sequences: Write short SMS messages under 160 characters with a direct shopping link. Schedule launch alerts and urgency reminders during peak sale hours. SMS cuts through inbox noise and should complement your email sends.

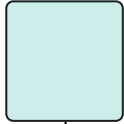


Build VIP Early Access Page: Design a landing page with an opt-in form promising early access to your BFCM sale. Drive traffic here from teasers, ads, and social media posts. This segment can then receive exclusive early-bird offers before the general list.

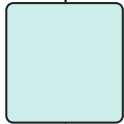
Pro Tip: Test subject lines and preview text on warm-up campaigns now so you already know which combinations work best during BFCM. Consider new angles for your BFCM campaigns to avoid email fatigue.

Phase 4: Website & CRO Prep

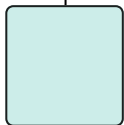
Build landing pages, confirm inventory, and optimize site speed and messaging to handle high traffic.



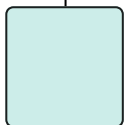
Build BFCM Landing Page: Create a dedicated page that features your headline offer, a live urgency timer, and your top 3–5 product bundles or additional deals. This page should be the main link in all campaigns during BFCM. Keep design simple for fast load times.



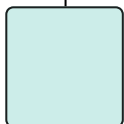
Add Social Proof to Key Pages: Display reviews, user-generated photos, or trust badges on product and landing pages. This builds credibility and helps hesitant shoppers feel more confident purchasing during BFCM.



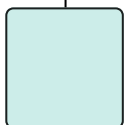
Add Shipping Deadline Messaging: Place your holiday shipping cut-off dates on product, cart, and checkout pages. This reduces hesitation from last-minute shoppers who worry about delivery times. Update banners as deadlines get closer.



Confirm Inventory: Check stock levels for your top sellers and featured bundles. Place additional orders now if you anticipate demand spikes. Running out of inventory mid-sale can cost you thousands in lost revenue.



Test Checkout and Payment Gateways: Run test orders through your checkout process using multiple payment methods like credit cards, PayPal, and Shop Pay. Fix any errors or slow-loading pages now to avoid failed purchases when traffic spikes.

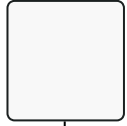


Test Site Speed: Run your site through tools like Google PageSpeed or GTMetrix. Compress large images and remove unused code so pages load in under 3 seconds. Mobile optimization is critical since most BFCM traffic comes from phones.

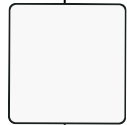
Pro Tip: Add real-time inventory counters such as “Only 5 left” to your bestsellers to increase urgency and boost conversions.

Phase 5: Pre-Launch Warm Up

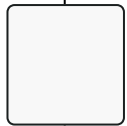
Tease your sale, activate early access offers for VIP segments, and drive sign-ups to build anticipation.



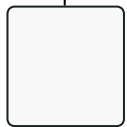
Send Teaser Campaign to VIPs: Let your VIP segment know they will have early access. Keep the copy short, personal, and exciting so they feel rewarded for being on the list. This drives urgency and builds anticipation.



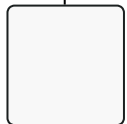
Resend Teasers to Non-Openers: Duplicate your teaser campaign and resend it only to subscribers who did not open the first email. Change the subject line slightly to capture their attention without over-emailing your VIP segment.



Activate Early Access Pop-Up: Update your site pop-up so it promotes early access to your sale. Make the incentive clear and test the form to confirm it captures and syncs all subscribers properly.



Drive Social Sign-Ups: Promote BFCM sign-ups across Instagram, TikTok, or other platforms. Use countdowns and behind-the-scenes posts to encourage followers to join your email and SMS list.

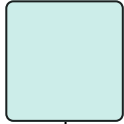


Send VIP Early Access to Offers: Give your VIP list exclusive early access to shop before the public sale. Send an email and SMS with a private link or password-protected landing page so they feel valued and prioritized.

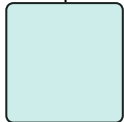
Pro Tip: Use curiosity-driven subject lines in teaser emails to spark opens without giving away the full offer.

Phase 6: BFCM Week - Execute

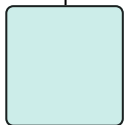
Launch, remind, and close with urgency-driven campaigns and SMS for maximum engagement and sales.



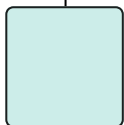
Launch Morning Send: Send an email and SMS early in the day announcing your sale. Include the direct shop link and make the offer clear at the top.



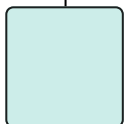
Mid-Day Reminder: Resend a campaign around midday with a focus on urgency and low stock. Highlight bestsellers that are running out quickly.



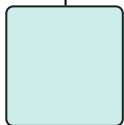
Evening Closer: Send another email in the evening with a countdown timer and urgent copy. This helps capture shoppers who wait until the last moment.



Last Chance Send: Write a plain-text email from the founder reminding customers the sale ends soon. Keep it short and personal for maximum impact.



Exclude Recent Purchasers When Appropriate: Filter out customers who just bought during the sale from receiving every campaign, especially repeated reminders. This prevents list fatigue and avoids annoying your best buyers with irrelevant emails.

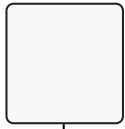


Restock Alerts: If popular products come back in stock during the sale, send an immediate email and SMS. This creates a surge of additional orders.

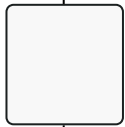
Pro Tip: Keep subject lines under six words for these urgent campaigns to maximize mobile open rates.

Phase 7: Post-BFCM Week - Retain Buyers

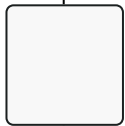
Thank customers, segment BFCM buyers, and continue nurturing relationships to drive repeat purchases.



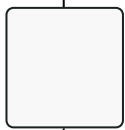
Send Thank You Campaign: Send a thank you email within 48 hours of the purchase. Express appreciation and include a small next-purchase incentive to encourage repeat orders.



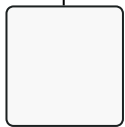
Segment BFCM Buyers: Tag all BFCM customers in your email platform for December upsells. Use this group as a VIP segment for future launches.



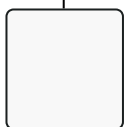
Maintain Campaign Frequency: Keep sending 2–3 engaging campaigns per week in December. This prevents a drop in momentum and keeps new buyers warm.



Send a Holiday Gifting Guide Campaign: Curate a holiday gift guide featuring your products and send it to BFCM buyers and your broader list. Position it as a helpful shopping shortcut, encouraging repeat purchases without relying on discounts.



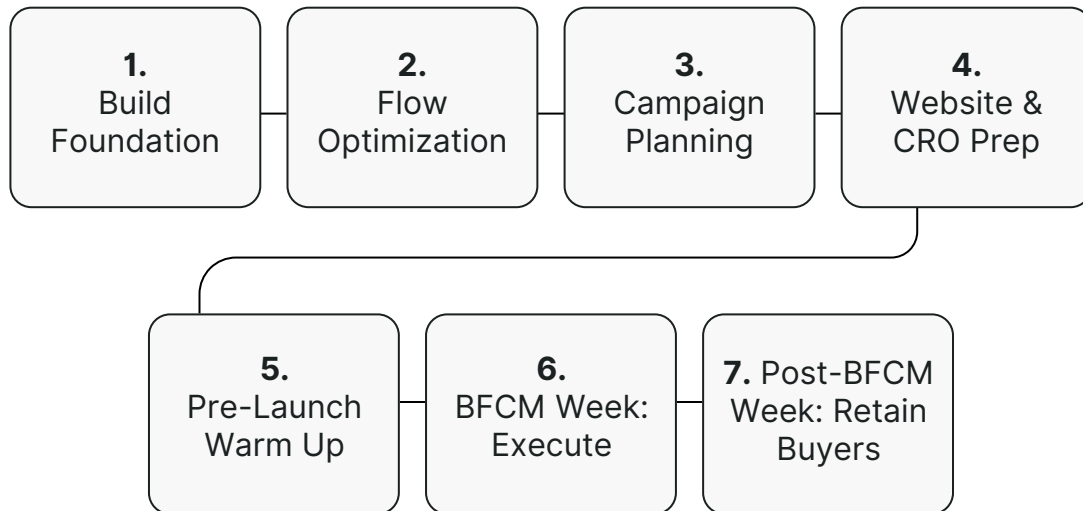
Promote Gift Cards: Market gift cards as the perfect last-minute holiday gift. This helps capture additional sales from shoppers who missed shipping deadlines.



Send Replenishment or Upsell Campaigns: Follow up with BFCM buyers by suggesting complementary products or refills based on what they purchased. This keeps your brand top-of-mind and turns one-time holiday buyers into repeat customers.

Pro Tip: Ask for reviews and user-generated content in December to create social proof for Q1 marketing.

Overview Summary



Pro Tip Highlights

- Test pop-ups in September to secure the highest conversion rate before November.
- Use urgency and early access instead of deep discounts to protect margins.
- Tag BFCM customers so you can reward them as VIPs in future campaigns.
- Send SMS reminders on the final sale day to lift conversions significantly.
- Use post-purchase upsells immediately after BFCM to increase average order value.

Need a Hand With Your BFCM Marketing? We Can Help.

Lustre Lagoon helps DTC ecommerce brands grow sustainably with retention-focused email and SMS marketing. Our clients regularly see 30–40% of store revenue come from email using proven strategies like the ones in this checklist.

BOOK MY FREE CONSULTATION





Featured Client Testimonial

"As a small business owner, I wear many hats. I was doing the emails myself, and I didn't have a consistent brand, and it was far and few between when I had time to create emails. Since partnering with Lustre Lagoon, there is a weight lifted from having to deal with email marketing. Their team took everything off my shoulders, and the weekly 30-minute sessions with Paul are super productive."



My customers love the emails, & I have seen a huge increase in online orders!"



Rachel Lewman
Co-Owner of

SOTAR
CUSTOM INFLATABLES