Tech tips you can apply to your eCommerce store before Black Friday

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1. HOSTING & INTEGRATIONS

Validate that your hosting can handle the traffic spike
☐ Ask your host how they handle surges of traffic and what the resource limit is.

☐ A high quality hosting environment is better. If you're on a shared server, try upgrading to a dedicated server.

☐ It's too late in the season to switch hosts. The best you can do for now is to upgrade your plan and move to a better host after the shopping season.

Implement a CDN
☐ A Content Delivery Network (CDN) will reduce loading times and allow for quicker response.

☐ On top of that, a CDN can also work as an extra layer of security to your eCommerce store.

Optimize your images
☐ In addition to having your images cropped to the correct size, there are ways to reduce the image file size keeping the same quality.

Make sure your SSL certificate won't expire
☐ There's nothing worse than seeing an open lock icon. People run away from sites like this, and it also hurts your SEO ranking.

Beware of caching and updates
☐ If you don't have caching implemented, now is NOT the time to do so. Configuring caching on an eCommerce store for the first time can be tricky.

☐ Do not touch any code or update extensions unless there is something urgent affecting the shopping experience.

☐ Updating things now can potentially break something on your eCommerce store, and you don't want this. It can wait!

Review analytics and tracking
☐ Check your settings for Facebook Pixel, Google AdWords, Google Analytics, etc.

☐ There's nothing worse than getting an influx of traffic, only to find out later that the data it generated is useless.

3. STABILIZE, FREEZE, AND GET READY

Freeze! Now it's not the time for big changes
☐ Freeze the store

Stability is the word
☐ Code freezes usually begin in early November and go until early January. If you plan ahead you won't have any problems implementing a freeze.

☐ You can still change content, like landing page text, product descriptions and images.

Have a backup and recovery plan in place
Ideally, at least in high traffic periods, backups should be taken hourly. And make sure your whole database is being backed up.

☐ Check with your host so you understand their backup recovery process.

☐ Check that your hosting will be available during your high traffic times in case you need to contact them.

☐ Subscribe to an automatic downtime monitoring service. This way you'll be notified if your site goes down.

☐ Designate a team member to create a backup and recovery plan, and action it if necessary.

2. TEST, TEST, TEST

What to test
☐ Test all pages and user flows, just like your customer

☐ Purchase journey from product to checkout

☐ Account creation & password recovery

☐ Coupon codes or other discounts

☐ New pages (landing pages) and new products

☐ Special functionalities your store offers

☐ Multi-currency and multi-language

What to do when you've found a bug

If you don't have a bug tracking tool, create a doc. For each bug you find, log the following:

☐ The URL where the bug was found

☐ Printscreen of the bug happening

☐ Instructions on reproducing the bug

☐ Explain what you were expecting to happen

☐ The operating system and browser you were using

Sometimes shooting a quick video instead makes it easier!

Need a hand with this?
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