

THE PAID SOCIAL EXPERTS' BFCM CHECKLIST

Win it in October, not in November...

Why prep matters on social...

The Social algorithms need time and data to learn, creative needs time to be approved and tested, and audiences need time to be built. If you're still setting up when peak arrives, it's too late. In 2025, advertisers who went into peak still validating catalogues, setting measurement baselines or configuring value-based bidding missed the conversion surge entirely, with no time to course-correct.

Key Dates 2026:

- The BFCM period runs from Thursday 26th to Monday 30th November.
 - Black Friday is 27th November, and Cyber Monday is 30th November.
 - Working backwards, anything that needs a 3-week learning or validation window must be live by early November at the latest.
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The Reward?:

- Social is now the largest channel for product and brand discovery, at 47% in 2024, up from 34% in 2018. It's ahead of Search (31%) and TV (30%).
- The median conversion rate on Meta on Black Friday 2025 was 73% higher than the October baseline.

The biggest rule to remember: everything that needs learning, testing or approval should be done before November. Peak week is for protecting performance, not building it.



Email: info@circusppc.com

Website: circusppc.com

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AUDIENCE BUILDING

- ☐ Consider Reminder ads for the sale launch or early access drop.
- ☐ Warm audiences grown through October with video views, engagement and site traffic campaigns, so you have a bigger retargeting pool at peak.
- ☐ Early access or VIP sign-ups captured via lead generation campaigns.
- ☐ Custom audiences refreshed: customer lists, past BFCM purchasers, cart abandoners, engagers.
- ☐ Recent-purchaser exclusions set up where relevant, or switched to cross-sell creative.

BUDGETS

- ☐ Budget plan agreed for each phase: build-up, peak, Cyber Monday, Christmas, January.
- ☐ Budget scheduling set up in advance if possible.
- ☐ Budgets increased gradually through November rather than jumped.

PROMOS & LANDING PAGES

- ☐ Offers consistent across platforms and channels.
- ☐ Landing pages live, fast on mobile and matching the ad creative.
- ☐ Promo codes tested and working.
- ☐ Stock levels confirmed for advertised products.
- ☐ Shipping cut-off and returns policy messaging ready.



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CREATIVE

- ☐ Creative mix audited: at least three asset types (including Reels/9:16 with sound).
- ☐ Creator relationships set up now. Partnership ad permissions take time, so lock in seasonal content early.
- ☐ Advantage+ creative settings reviewed and tested before peak.
- ☐ BFCM creative built and uploaded early. Q4 review queues are slower, so allow for rejections.
- ☐ Creative built in phases: teaser, early access, main sale, Cyber Monday, “last chance“, and shipping cut-off/gifting.
- ☐ Offer visible in the first 3 seconds of video and readable with the sound off.
- ☐ Native, lo-fi and UGC formats ready alongside polished brand assets, especially for TikTok.
- ☐ Countdown-style messaging and urgency overlays prepared.
- ☐ Creative scheduled with start and end dates to avoid manual edits on the day.

ACCOUNT HYGIENE

- ☐ BFCM campaigns launched in time to exit learning before peak.
- ☐ Account spending limits checked and raised.
- ☐ Backup payment method added.
- ☐ Business verification, admin access and 2FA confirmed, with more than one admin on every account.
- ☐ Page and account quality checked for restrictions or policy flags.



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TRACKING & MEASUREMENT

- ☐ Pixel and Conversions API validated, with deduplication working correctly.
- ☐ Event Match Quality (EMQ) at 6.0 or above on key events. Pass hashed email, phone and external ID where possible.
- ☐ Value signal QA complete: purchase values are accurate, with no zero or duplicate values.
- ☐ Expected conversion events are live and firing with correct values and currency.
- ☐ Attribution settings agreed and locked for the whole period.
- ☐ UTMs consistent so third-party measurement and the backend can be reconciled.

CATALOGUE & SHOPS

- ☐ Catalogue match rate of 90% or higher.
- ☐ All feed errors and warnings resolved.
- ☐ Feed set up to update hourly so prices, sale prices and stock stay accurate.
- ☐ Holiday product sets built: e.g. best-sellers, gift ideas, price bands, high-margin lines.
- ☐ Sale price and promo fields populated so strike-through pricing shows.
- ☐ Product videos and/or alternative imagery added to the catalogue where possible.
- ☐ Advantage+ catalogue ads and Reels placements active.