



Holiday Shops Playbook 2026

How to launch, sell, and grow with holiday shops – the season-long selling system, September through January.



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MOQ1.COM

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BY THE END OF SECTION 2

You'll know exactly who to pitch this week – and what the calendar says to do every week after.

Section 01

The Case

Why holiday shops win, and why the season just got longer.

The biggest weeks of the year are the ones you **can't sell.**

The holiday season is the single biggest window for branded merchandise. Corporate gifts, employee appreciation, spirit wear, year-end fundraisers – for many of your clients, these are the biggest merch-buying weeks of the year. **You already know that.** You plan your whole fall around it.

Here's what the traditional model never let you say out loud: for most of the industry, the season ends before the spending does. Traditional lead times mean holiday orders close in early November – and everything after the cutoff is a no. The client who decides in late November, the budget that frees up in December, the panic order on the 10th – **that demand is real, it's enormous, and it has always belonged to whoever could still say yes.**

This year, that's you. This playbook is the season-long selling system: who to pitch in September, how to win corporate gifting, what to do when the late requests land, and how to turn every holiday shop into next year's business.



HOW THE PLAYBOOK IS ORGANIZED

- **The case** – why holiday shops win, and why the season just got longer.
- **The plays** – the season-long selling system, September through January.
- **The mechanics** – build it, promote it, and turn the recap into next year.

By the end of Section 2, you'll know exactly who to pitch this week.

Everyone wants to give. Nobody wants **the logistics.**

Holiday demand isn't the hard part – it's everywhere. Companies treat gifting as a strategic investment in loyalty and retention. Schools and teams ride the biggest spirit-wear window of the year. And year-end is one of the most important fundraising windows for nonprofits and community organizations. **Every one of those clients wants branded merchandise in these weeks.**

What they don't want is the traditional way of getting it: guessing sizes, committing to bulk quantities, storing boxes, and hand-distributing gifts. And the people receiving those gifts have opinions too – **77% of consumers say it's important that a holiday gift reflects their individual tastes**, and 69% of employees would rather choose their own gift than be handed one.

A holiday shop dissolves all of it. The client shares a link. Every person picks what they actually want, in their size, and it ships to their door. The client gets the goodwill without a single logistics headache – and you get the order.



**The client shares a link. Everyone picks their own gift. It ships to their door.
That's the whole pitch.**

The old season ended in November. Yours doesn't.



This was never about hustle. Traditional promo production needs weeks – sometimes months – of runway to guarantee delivery by the holidays. So the industry built its season around the cutoff: pitch in September, close orders by early November, and spend December watching demand you can't touch. **The reactive posture wasn't a choice; it was the lead time talking.**

But look at what that ceiling costs. December is when budgets get spent before they expire, when the client who "wasn't doing gifts this year" changes their mind, when the event moves up and the order gets desperate. The weeks when clients are most ready to buy are exactly the weeks the traditional model forces you to say no.

What changes

MOQ1 removes the runway. Shops launch in seconds, every order produces on demand in 1–2 days, and there's no inventory to buy first – so the season runs as long as the shipping calendar allows, not as long as a production schedule demands. **Clients can launch and shop in-season, right up to the holidays.**

And because shops are free and unlimited, with your profit built into every product, there's no risk math to run. A shop that sells 400 pieces is a win. A shop that sells 12 is also a win – it cost nothing, and it kept those 12 orders with you.

WHAT THE SEASON LOOKS LIKE NOW

- No inventory risk.
- No minimums.
- Production in 1–2 days.
- The season is yours until the last shipping day.

A branded shop, dressed for the season.

A holiday shop is a branded online store built to capture seasonal demand – the client's logo and colors, live in seconds, pre-stocked with apparel and gifts their people will actually want. Add festive designs and featured collections, announce an ordering window that creates urgency, and share a single link.

The best holiday shops are **turnkey** – nothing for the client to set up, manage, or ship. **Built for choice** – every recipient finds something in their taste and size. And **urgent by design** – an announced closing date drives excitement and action, and you simply take the shop down when the window ends and bring it back whenever demand returns.

Apparel – still the most popular holiday gift category, favored by 53% of consumers – is powered by DIGISOFT® decoration: vibrant, full-color, retail-quality prints, produced in MOQ1's own automated factory. Everything else in the 200+ product-type catalog ships from the same 1–2 day engine.



I was skeptical. I thought it was too good to be true. Everybody in my office, we were all kind of like, what's the catch? There's no catch.

LESLEY RINELLA · ARTINA PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS

Every kind of client. Every corner of **the industry.**

Employee appreciation



HR teams surprise staff with an exclusive shop – everyone chooses their own gift, and distribution is a link in an email.

School spirit wear



Seasonal collections for winter sports, holiday breaks, homecoming, and alumni drives – spirit and fundraising in the same shop.

Events and clubs



Year-end banquets, holiday festivals, gyms running December challenges – short-window shops that make participation easy.

FOR DISTRIBUTORS

Holiday is the everyday-client season at maximum volume. Corporate gifting and employee appreciation are your accounts' biggest asks of the year; the plays ahead tell you who to pitch and when.

FOR DECORATORS

Q4 is when your equipment is most slammed with bulk seasonal runs. That makes holiday the single best time to route small and late orders to on-demand production, so your presses stay on the work that pays.

FOR TEAM DEALERS

Winter sports season overlaps the gifting window, and spirit wear is holiday inventory for school families. A team store dressed for the season sells to parents shopping for gifts, not just players needing gear.

Corporate gifting



Companies thank employees and clients with branded apparel, drinkware, and gift bundles – distributed through a link instead of a loading dock. The gift-code play in Section 2 makes this the strongest corporate pitch of the season.

Nonprofit and community fundraising



Year-end is one of the biggest giving windows of the year – a holiday shop turns that generosity into a zero-risk merch fundraiser, with profits going back to the cause while MOQ1 handles everything behind the scenes.

END OF SECTION 01

That's the case. Section 2 is **the system.**

Five plays across the season, each with the exact move and the exact words – starting with what to do this week.



Section 02

The Plays

The season-long selling system, September through January.



First, the calendar. The season rewards the early and **forgives the late.**

September

Pitch season

Audit your accounts, build shops proactively, and put holiday on every client conversation **(Play 1)**. Shops built now have the whole season to sell.

October

Launch season

Corporate gifting shops go live; gift codes get loaded **(Play 2)**. Schools and teams open their seasonal collections.

November

Peak season

Shops are selling; your job is promotion support and the late pitches everyone else has stopped making **(Play 3)**.

December 1–15

The budget window

Use-it-or-lose-it money is in play; every corporate client gets the budget-flush email **(Play 4)**. Late shops still launch – on-demand production keeps the window open deep into December.

Late Dec – January

Conversion season

Recaps go out, and the best holiday shops stay open year-round **(Play 5)**.

THE LATE-SEASON ADVANTAGE

Traditional holiday selling ends when lead times run out – early November at best. With 1–2 day production, your window stays open weeks longer – deep into December, while everyone else has gone quiet.

Build it before they ask.

The strongest holiday pitch isn't a pitch – **it's a finished shop**. Audit your client activity over the past 12–24 months: who bought holiday gifts, seasonal apparel, or ran a fundraiser? Those are your holiday accounts. Build each one a shop before you ever mention it – their logo, their colors, festive designs already loaded – and open the conversation with the link.

Shops are free and unlimited, so the proactive build costs you seconds per client. And a client looking at their own logo on holiday merchandise in September is already imagining December.

WHAT TO SAY

*The holidays sneak up every year, so I got ahead of it for you. I built **[company]** a holiday shop – your logo, seasonal designs, already stocked: **[link]**. Employees or customers pick what they want and it ships straight to them – no minimums, no inventory, nothing for you to manage. If you like it, we can have it live for your people in minutes.*



WHAT TO DO

- Pull 12–24 months of client activity; flag every account with seasonal history.
- Build each flagged client a holiday shop using artwork on file.
- Send the announcement below with the link and their launch assets.
- Put holiday on the agenda of every client conversation between now and November.

WHY THIS WORKS

You're early, you're already built, and it costs them nothing. Instead of asking whether they want a holiday shop, you're showing them theirs – and every gifting conversation that follows starts from your shop, not a blank page.

Fixed budget, free choice.

This is the corporate-gifting closer. The old way forces clients to guess – sizes, styles, how many mediums – and eat the waste when they guess wrong. **The gift-code play removes the guessing:** the client funds a set gift value, gift codes are created for their recipients, and everyone shops the branded store and picks what they actually want – with every order shipping direct to their door.

The client gets a fixed, predictable budget with zero waste and zero distribution work. The employees get choice – the thing 69% of them say they prefer. And you get the entire order, one code at a time.

WHAT TO SAY

*Here's the easiest version of employee gifting you'll ever run. You set a gift value, and gift codes are created for your people. They shop your branded store, pick exactly what they want in their size, and it ships to their homes. Fixed budget, no leftover boxes, no size-guessing, and nothing for your team to distribute. **You send one email; we handle the rest.***



WHAT TO DO

- Lead every corporate gifting conversation with codes, not products.
- Help the client set the gift value and choose the ordering window they'll announce.
- Request the gift codes from the Marketing Tab in your MOQ1 account, then hand the client a ready-to-send announcement for their team.
- Suggest a featured holiday collection so the shop feels curated, not generic.

WHY THIS WORKS

Every objection to corporate gifting – budget creep, waste, logistics, "half of it sat in a closet" – is answered in one mechanic. It turns a gift into an experience, and it's a pitch the catalog-and-PO model simply cannot make.

The yes **nobody else** can say.

Every December, the same scene: a client who meant to handle gifts in October surfaces in a panic, and everyone they call has stopped taking holiday orders. **The industry's lead times ended the season weeks ago.**

Yours didn't. On-demand production in 1–2 days means a shop launched in December still delivers – and the rescue you pull off in a client's worst week is the story they tell about you for years. This play is simple: stay open, say so loudly, and catch what everyone else turns away.

WHAT TO SAY

Good news – you're not too late. I can have your branded holiday shop live today, and orders produce in 1–2 days – so there's still time to get gifts moving before the holiday. Here's your shop: [\[link\]](#). Send it to your people this afternoon and you're done.



WHAT TO DO

- Set expectations honestly: production takes 1–2 days, and the earlier the send, the safer the delivery.
- In early December, email your list: "still time" – with a link.
- When a late request lands, build the shop on the spot and reply with the link the same day.
- Route rescue clients into Play 5 in January – a saved December is the easiest year-round conversion there is.

WHY THIS WORKS

A no on a desperate December request is the most memorable no a client ever hears – and this play converts it into the most impressive yes. It's also the concrete form of the season's whole argument: the late-season advantage, deployed at the exact moment it matters most.

Spend it or lose it.

Corporate budgets expire December 31, and every year **real money dies unspent because spending it was too much work**. A holiday shop with gift codes is the easiest possible way for a client to convert remaining budget into something their people value – before the calendar takes it back.

This play is one proactive email, sent to every corporate client in the first week of December. Some will have nothing left. The ones who do will thank you for the reminder – with an order.

WHAT TO SAY

*Quick end-of-year thought: if there's budget that expires December 31, here's the easiest way to put it to work. It becomes gift codes for your team on your branded shop – your people pick their own gifts, everything ships to their homes, and the budget is spent before year-end. **Codes can be live this week.** Want me to set it up?*



WHAT TO DO

- First week of December, email every corporate account the script below.
- Lead with the timing: codes live this week, orders shipping in days, budget spent before it expires.
- Pair with Play 3's still-time message so the whole window is credible.
- Track responses – budget-flush clients are prime candidates for a bigger program next year.

WHY THIS WORKS

You're not asking for new spend – you're rescuing spend that already exists and has nowhere to go. And it lands at exactly the right moment: remaining budget, a closing calendar, and every other vendor gone quiet.

The shop that shouldn't close.

A holiday shop that closes on December 24 did half its job.

The other half is January: send the client their recap – total orders, favorite products, dollars raised – and turn the results into one conversation: keep the shop open. Swap the seasonal designs for evergreen ones, and the ordering habit their people just built has somewhere to live all year.

This is where the seasonal spotlight becomes standing business. The holiday shop proved the model with real numbers from the client's own people – the year-round shop just keeps the door open. And when next December comes, the shop is already there, ready to dress for the season again.

WHAT TO SAY

Your holiday shop's final numbers: [X] orders, and [product] was the runaway favorite. One thought while it's fresh – let's keep the shop open. I'll swap the holiday designs for your everyday branding, and your people can order whenever they need something. They clearly like ordering this way – no reason to make them wait until next December.

WHAT TO DO

- In January, send every holiday-shop client a recap: orders, top products, totals.
- Where the shop performed, propose keeping it open year-round with evergreen designs.
- For fundraisers, frame the recap as dollars raised – and suggest reopening for the spring campaign.

WHY THIS WORKS

The recap is proof no pitch can match – the client's own people, voting with orders. A shop that stays open turns one strong December into twelve months of always-on opportunity – and next season, it's already there, ready to dress up again.



And when they want it in bulk, the season **still moves fast.**

Some holiday orders should be bulk – client gift boxes, party apparel, the conference in January. MOQ1's exclusive **Mix & Max Wholesale™** pricing handles them without the traditional commitments: mix any products, styles, colors, and sizes in one order to hit quantity break pricing starting at just 4 units, scaling to 144. Gift boxes with a hoodie, a mug, and a beanie per recipient? **The combination is the quantity.**

And the same production engine applies – wholesale delivery in days, not weeks, which in December is the difference between an order and an apology.



Any combination. From 4 units to 144. Delivered in days – not weeks.

Section 03

The Mechanics

Build it, promote it, and turn the recap into next year.



Build: live in seconds, dressed for the season **in minutes.**

A shop build is three moves: **upload the client's logo, pick their colors, launch.** It goes live pre-stocked, with your profit built into every product. That's the required part – live in seconds.

The seasonal dressing is the optional part worth doing: add festive and holiday-themed designs, feature a curated gift collection so the shop opens with a point of view, and decide the ordering window you'll announce. For gifting programs, request gift codes from the Marketing Tab in your MOQ1 account and set their value. A few minutes per shop, and the client's store looks like it was built for December – because it was.

THE BUILD, PER SHOP

- Upload logo, pick colors, launch.
- Add seasonal designs and a featured gift collection.
- Decide the ordering window – and announce the closing date everywhere the shop is shared.
- For gifting programs, request gift codes from the Marketing Tab.

The window is announced – you hold the switch

An ordering deadline drives action – "open through December 15" moves people in a way "always open" never will. **The window isn't a setting in MOQ1; it's a date you announce,** and when it passes, you take the shop down yourself.

Closed isn't gone: bring the same shop back for the spring fundraiser, the summer event, or next year's season with the artwork and history intact. Play 5 runs on exactly this.



Promote: you supply the assets, they make **the send**.

A holiday shop sells when the client's people see it – and **the client controls that audience, not you**. So promotion is a hand-off: give every client a set of launch assets built from the shop's marketing tools – flyers, QR codes, ready-to-send email copy and social posts – and coach the send.

The coaching is four lines. Share the link in your email blast. Post it on your channels. Put the QR code on flyers and event signage. And repeat the closing date – **the open window is what turns browsing into ordering**.



THE ROLLOUT

- Send the launch assets with every shop announcement.
- Coach the client: email blast, social post, QR on signage, deadline repeated.
- Time a mid-window reminder – "one week left" gives clients one more reason to act before the shop closes.
- For gifting programs, provide the employee announcement so HR sends it the day codes go live.

Recap: the season's numbers are next season's pitch.

Every shop tracks its own sales, orders, and payouts in real time. **MOQ1 collects payment, handles production and customer service, and pays you out monthly – automatically.** There's nothing to invoice and nothing to chase during the busiest weeks of your year.

When the season wraps, the reporting becomes the recap: total orders, favorite products, dollars raised. That recap is Play 5's fuel – proof of value in the client's own numbers, and the natural opening to propose keeping the shop open year-round.

SHARE THE RESULTS WITH THE CLIENT

Send every client their recap in January. A shop's numbers prove your value better than any pitch – and they make the case for staying open.

Shops that performed go into Play 5's year-round conversation. Fundraisers get the recap framed as dollars raised – and an invitation to reopen in spring.



Reading this without an account? **Start here.**

Everything in this playbook runs on a free MOQ1 account. **Free means free:** no setup fees, no platform fees, no order minimums, and nothing held back – every feature in this playbook comes with the free account. You only pay when orders are placed, and your profit is built into every product.

Getting in takes minutes: go to MOQ1.com, click Create FREE Account, and fill out the sign-up form. Every account is manually reviewed – MOQ1 is exclusively for promotional products professionals, which protects your position by keeping end buyers out. Most accounts are approved within one business day.

Day one after approval, run Play 1's audit – and build your own shop first. Order from it, judge the product and the experience yourself, and then put it in front of clients.

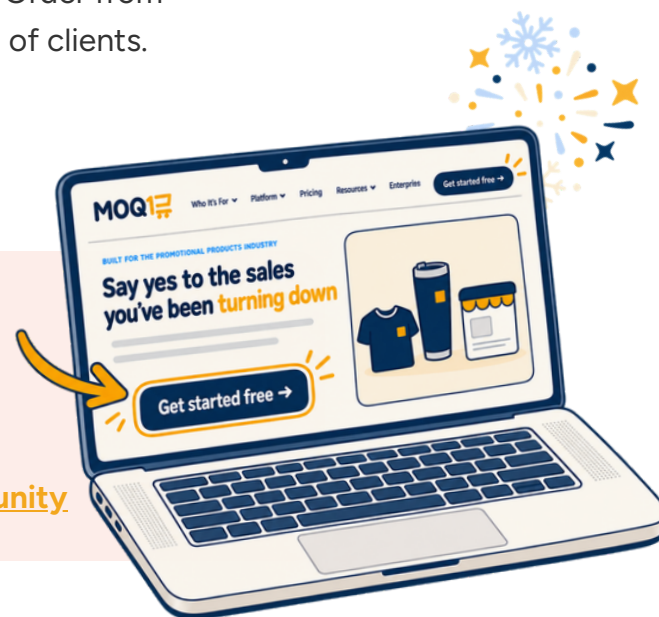
The season is long enough for that step, and your name is worth it.

RESOURCES

Create your free account: MOQ1.com

Help Center: <https://1300help.com/>

User community: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/moq1community>



The season, mapped.



SEPTEMBER

Pitch

- Audit accounts
- Build shops proactively
- Send the Play 1 announcements

First: build and test your own shop.

OCTOBER

Launch

- Launch corporate gifting with codes
- Open the school and team collections

Goal: launch assets out with every shop.

NOVEMBER

Peak

- Support the sends
- Run the mid-window reminders
- Keep pitching

Goal: you're the only one still open for new holiday business.

DECEMBER

Rescue

- Rescue the late clients
- Put remaining budgets to work

Goal: stay open when it matters most.

JANUARY

Convert

- Recaps out
- Best shops stay open year-round with evergreen designs

Goal: seasonal project becomes standing business.

Run the whole arc and a holiday shop stops being a seasonal project – **it's the on-ramp: proof in December, standing business by spring, and a client who never again wonders whether you can say yes.**

THE PLAYBOOK, IN ONE LINE

Say yes to December orders. And January's, and next year's.

- 01 Create your free account at [MOQ1.com](https://moq1.com)
- 02 Build your own shop and order from it
- 03 Run Play 1's audit – then work the calendar

moq1.com

CREATE. SHARE. EARN.

