



'TIS THE SEASON FOR DELIVERY:
**The definitive guide to
delighting customers
during holiday peak**

Learn how crowdsourced delivery and other tactics can help your operation stay a step ahead of holiday demand.



Custom content for Roadie by studioID



Peak season can be overwhelming for small and midsize businesses.

You have to manage high order volumes and even higher customer expectations, with more shoppers wanting ultrafast delivery and greater transparency into their orders' journey from click to delivery.

Certain outside factors make pre-planning especially important: Supply chain congestion continues to threaten product availability and delivery timing. Consumer demand is slowing just as retailers must contend with high costs for labor and fuel. And those gas prices could keep some shoppers from fully returning to stores.

In response, retailers of all sizes are looking for help managing the tasks that let them keep products on shelves, orders on time and customers happy. That includes the same-day, next-day and scheduled delivery shoppers want. Consider this: almost half of omnichannel customers will change retailers if delivery times are too long.¹



Almost **half of omnichannel customers** will change retailers if delivery times are too long.¹



With Roadie's help, we can deliver anywhere within 50 miles of our New York City locations – fast. **It's a seamless experience** that leaves more time for things that matter most... making the best pies in NYC."

PETEE'S PIE COMPANY
New York, NY

Offering customers the fast delivery they want can help your business stay a step ahead of today's shifting economy. That lets you avoid leaving business on the table while keeping costs in check and customer relationships strong — during peak season and all year long.

Petee's Pie Company, in New York, regularly turns to crowdsourced delivery to meet customers' needs for fresh products delivered to them daily. The holiday season is no exception. "With Roadie's help, we can deliver anywhere within 50 miles of our New York City locations — fast," says Robert Paredez, co-owner. "It's a seamless experience that leaves us more time for the things that matter most: helping our customers, and baking the best pies in NYC."

Some small and midsize businesses may wonder how they can efficiently and affordably offer delivery on demand during peak season. In this playbook, we'll walk through the steps your business can take to thrive this peak season, including how crowdsourcing can help you make ultrafast delivery an always-on option for your customers.



30+ DAYS BEFORE BLACK FRIDAY

Start peak season early.

Peak season starts earlier each year. Three in five consumers began shopping for the 2021 year-end holidays by early November, according to the National Retail Federation.² That number has been steadily increasing over the last decade. E-commerce giants are driving that trend by beginning their peak season promotions well before Black Friday. That doesn't mean you can't compete. Follow the steps below to get ahead early:

GET THE WORD OUT.

Make sure shoppers know about your business when they start deciding how to spend their holiday gift budget. To do that:

- ▶ Start talking to consumers about peak season products, deals and important ordering deadlines ahead of Black Friday.
- ▶ Use an e-commerce platform like Shopify to create a seamless customer experience with secure transactions and shipping visibility.³
- ▶ Determine whether you will give customers the option of same-day, next-day and/or scheduled delivery. If you decide to make those options available, make sure customers know about them well before they get to checkout.





70% of consumers say they are “highly satisfied” with all aspects of same-day delivery from current delivery providers, including gig-based ones.

Offering same-day delivery to local customers helps level the retail playing field for smaller operations. According to a recent survey by Roadie’s parent company, UPS, 70% of consumers would use same-day delivery again for products in recently-purchased categories. These consumers say they’re “highly satisfied” with all aspects of same-day delivery from current delivery providers, including gig-based ones.

However, same-day and other forms of ultrafast delivery can be a double-edged sword for retailers. Consumers may be more likely to buy if the option is provided, but a retailer’s inability to deliver on time risks losing repeat business. By working with a crowdsourced solution like Roadie to offer ultrafast delivery, you can meet customer demand year-round and be ready to scale fast during peak season.



DID YOU KNOW?

Even retailers who are offering store-to-door delivery for the first time can launch on-demand, local delivery in days, not weeks.



OPTIMIZE YOUR INVENTORY AND FOOTPRINT.

Knowing which products you have and where they are located is the first step to on-time delivery. Be sure to:

Stay in communication with your suppliers to make sure you're aware of their lead times and potential delays.



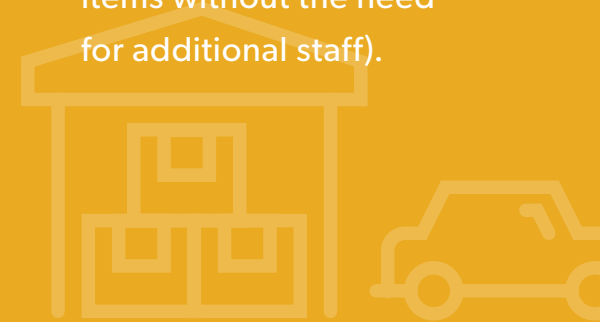
Examine current supply chain and shopping trends (including what you learned from talking with suppliers) to spot external factors that could influence how shoppers behave during this year's peak.



Stock up on the right inventory, get rid of slow-movers and deadstock and make sure your inventory storage is well-organized.



If possible, **get inventory closer to customers while still tracking where everything is**. Consider adding supplementary storage and distribution space (e.g., "dark stores" where you can stage items without the need for additional staff).





KNOW HOW YOU'RE GOING TO DELIVER ORDERS.

Don't wait until the orders start pouring in to plan how you'll deliver them. Parcel shipping is a popular way to get e-commerce orders to customers, but there are other options at your disposal. Local couriers and traditional carriers are standbys, but they can have rigid schedules and may not have the capacity you need when you need it.

With crowdsourced local delivery, you can deliver any order on-demand. And you don't have to hire drivers, lease vehicles or implement visibility software — it's all done for you. Instead, you can do what you do best: Serve your customers and grow your business.

If you haven't offered store-to-door delivery in the past — or if your options have been limited — it's not too late to get into the game.

ASK YOURSELF THESE QUESTIONS WHEN CHOOSING DELIVERY PARTNERS THAT CAN SUPPORT YOUR PEAK SEASON NEEDS:

- ▶ Can you offer on-demand availability to cover your anticipated volume, whether that's same-day, next-day and/or scheduled delivery?
 Yes No Not Sure
- ▶ Can you handle any delivery volume?
 Yes No Not Sure
- ▶ Can you efficiently and cost-effectively send big, bulky and oversized items?
 Yes No Not Sure
- ▶ Can you provide transparency and live tracking so you and your customers know where orders are at all times?
 Yes No Not Sure
- ▶ Do you have a wide delivery reach? Can you pick up returns and reusable packaging from customers' doorsteps?
 Yes No Not Sure
- ▶ Do you have systems in place to handle bulk uploads and high order volume?
 Yes No Not Sure
- ▶ Can you batch and route deliveries to save money without sacrificing time?
 Yes No Not Sure



DID YOU KNOW?

With Roadie, you can send just one item or hundreds of items on the same day. Roadie drivers operate in all 50 U.S. states, reaching more than 20,000 zip codes.



DECIDE HOW YOU'LL PRICE DELIVERY.

Pricing doesn't have to be a deal-breaker for store-to-door delivery. That includes same-day, next-day and scheduled options. Customers are willing to pay for fast deliveries⁴ — and the cost of delivery could even be worth the time savings for those shoppers. With Roadie, you can send an item across town for as little as \$9. Your on-demand delivery partner should offer ideas about whether and how to set pricing for these options. Consider whether delivery, particularly your ultrafast options, should be:



Free for all orders



Based on order value



Limited to customers in a loyalty or VIP program



Based on whether the order is same-day, next-day, scheduled or on another timeframe



15+ DAYS BEFORE BLACK FRIDAY

Let shoppers know you're ready for their business.

Shoppers are hitting the stores. Are you on their list? Make sure they can find your business by:

- ▶ Updating your in-store/point of sale (POS) signage, website, social channels and emails with your holiday hours, offerings and promotions.
- ▶ Extending your holiday hours to handle additional order volume and accommodate your customers' schedules.
- ▶ Coming up with promotions that incentivize sales but keep your overhead costs manageable.
- ▶ Educating shoppers about their order pickup and delivery options. If you've added ultrafast delivery, emphasize it.
- ▶ Ensuring your delivery partners can accommodate these changes, knowing that crowdsourcing can provide great flexibility. For example, a rush of orders doesn't mean allocating more staff and vehicles; connect with Roadie and let us take care of it — batch and route multiple orders to save time and money while delivering fast.

TIP: Stress-test your online shopping and delivery processes to ensure success. Prepare for supplier shortages or delays.





WEEK OF BLACK FRIDAY

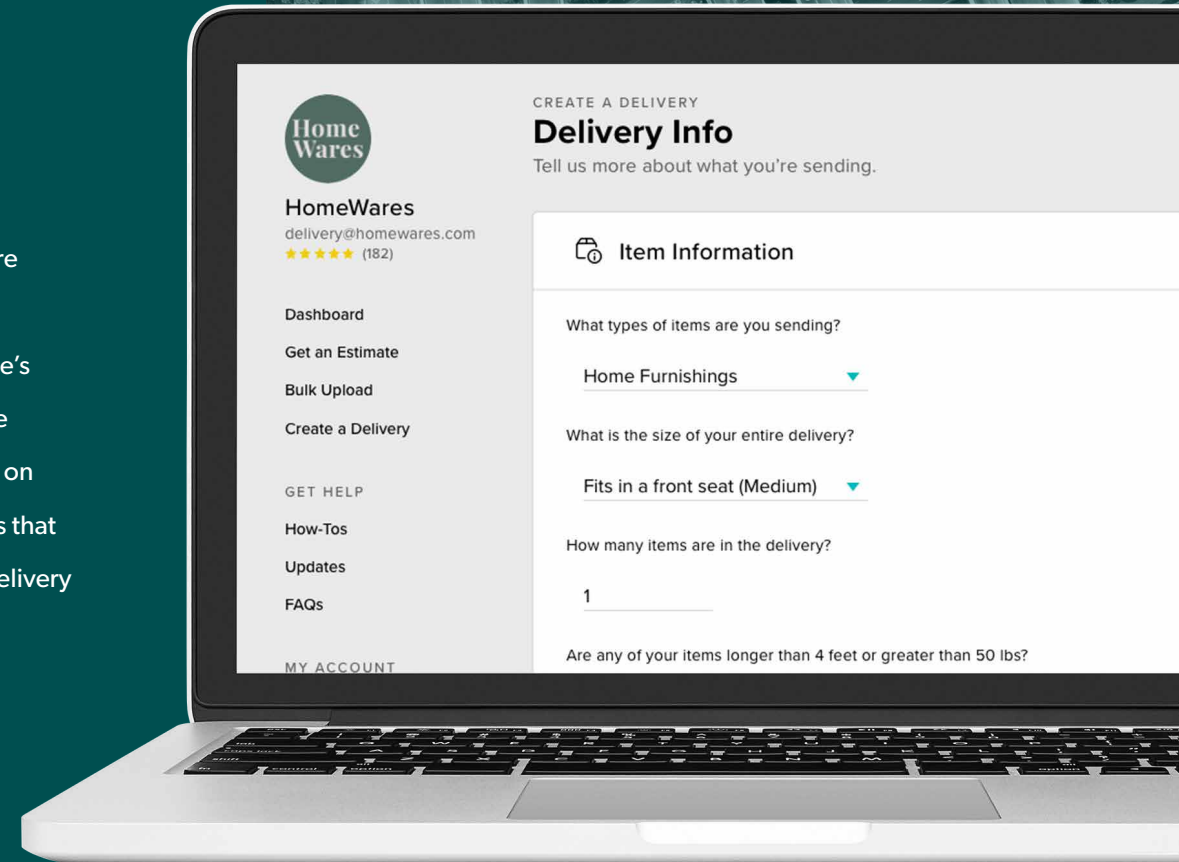
Get ready for the surge.

It's time to get your in-store or warehouse pickup process primed and ready for the rush of orders. Here are some critical steps to take during the all-important week before Black Friday.

PREP YOUR FACILITY.

Figure out where orders will be staged for pickup, which doors crowdsourced drivers will be using, and other ways you can streamline your picking, packing, staging and pickup processes. Make sure drivers can easily identify their orders (including batch deliveries) and clearly mark your facility so new drivers can find their orders and get back out the door quickly.

Use Roadie's **delivery notes** feature to ensure drivers have the information they need for a seamless pickup right in the app. With Roadie's templates,⁵ you never have to enter the same address or category twice and can cut down on time spent creating a delivery. Autofill details that always stay the same, like pickup location, delivery instructions, item size and more.



CREATE A DELIVERY

Delivery Info

Tell us more about what you're sending.

HomeWares
delivery@homewares.com
★★★★★ (182)

- Dashboard
- Get an Estimate
- Bulk Upload
- Create a Delivery

GET HELP

- How-Tos
- Updates
- FAQs

MY ACCOUNT

Item Information

What types of items are you sending?

Home Furnishings ▼

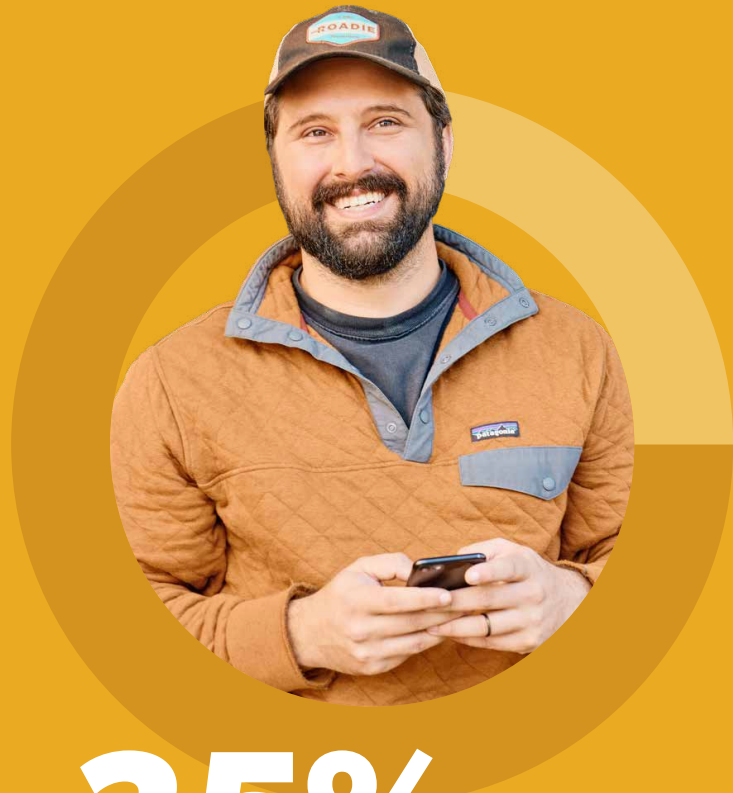
What is the size of your entire delivery?

Fits in a front seat (Medium) ▼

How many items are in the delivery?

1

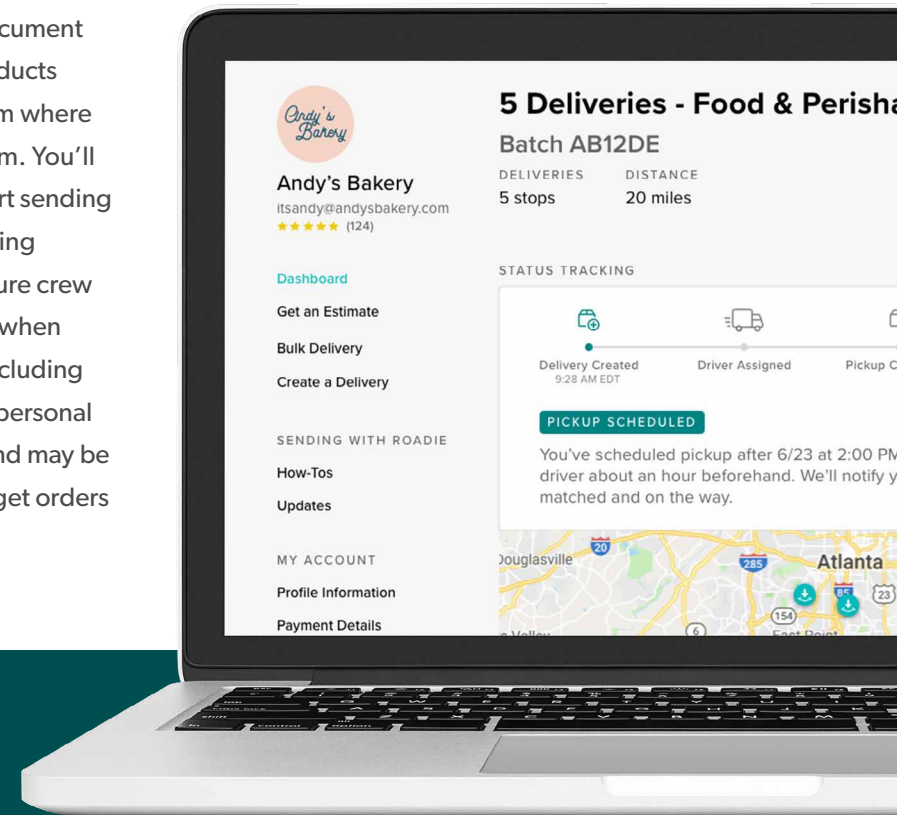
Are any of your items longer than 4 feet or greater than 50 lbs?



25%
saved on average
by using Roadie's
batch delivery

With Roadie's **bulk upload** feature, businesses can schedule up to 200 deliveries at once by uploading a single CSV, while our **batch delivery** allows you to combine multiple deliveries into a single streamlined group on an optimized route that saves you money, 25% on average. Plus, it means you only have to deal with a couple of pickups a day, saving you time and reducing driver foot traffic in your space. That way, you can spend less time coordinating pickups and more time growing your business.

And don't forget your team. Document delivery instructions for the products you'll be sending and store them where your entire team can access them. You'll want this on hand when you start sending high order volumes. If you're using crowdsourced delivery, make sure crew members know what to expect when working with those drivers — including that they are vetted but drive a personal vehicle, don't wear a uniform and may be new to your facility. Help them get orders to customers fast.





BLACK FRIDAY THROUGH CHRISTMAS WEEK

Hit the ground running.

It's the most wonderful time of the year — though it may feel more hectic and stressful. Don't forget to:

- ▶ Communicate with customers through your website, email and social channels so they're up to date on your hours, offerings, promotions and on-demand delivery options.
- ▶ Remind customers about ordering deadlines to ensure they can get the products they want and have them delivered on time.
- ▶ Make sure they know about your return options, such as whether they can get store credit, a refund or an exchange. Research shows awareness of those options can impact consumers' purchase decisions.⁶





CONGRATS, YOU'RE READY TO SURVIVE AND THRIVE DURING HOLIDAY PEAK!

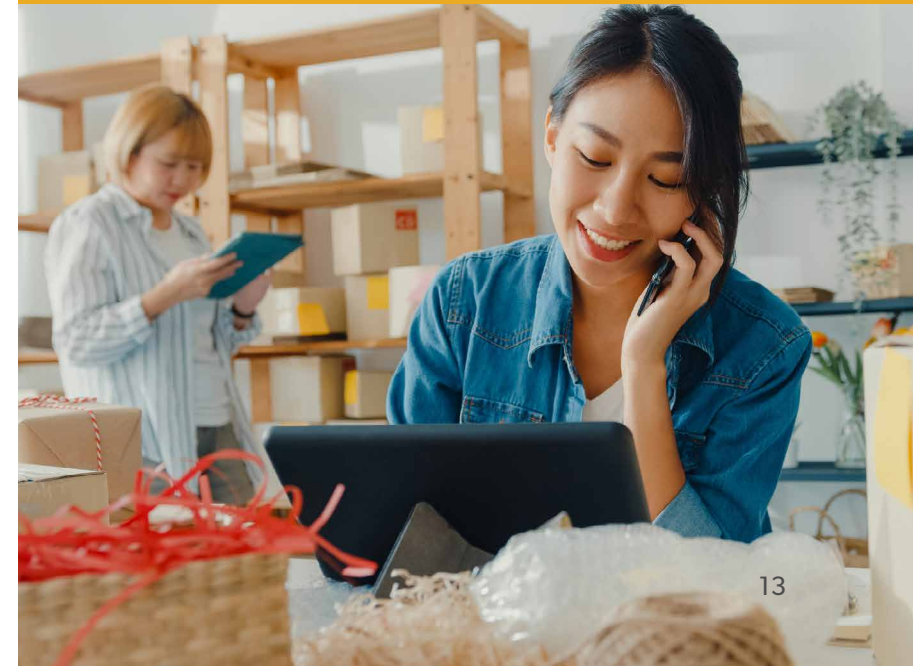
Now, let's get ready for returns.

Make sure you're ready for the inevitable uptick in returns this year. Having an easy and convenient return option will minimize the impact on your business and delight customers. When planning for returns:

- ▶ Update shoppers on their return options and share instructions for how to process a return.
- ▶ Get feedback on why they are returning the item. This may help you avoid future returns (such as being able to notify a manufacturer of a defective item).
- ▶ Create space in your store or facility for the returned goods, and track them to ensure they end up back in your system.
- ▶ If you're using crowdsourced delivery, talk with that platform about whether and how they can help you handle returns.

Tapping into the network of crowdsourced drivers using Roadie lets you get the merchandise back into your pipeline sooner while offering customers the same level of convenience they got from their delivery with home pickups of their returns.

About **18%** of holiday retail sales were forecast to be returned last year, according to the National Retail Federation.⁷



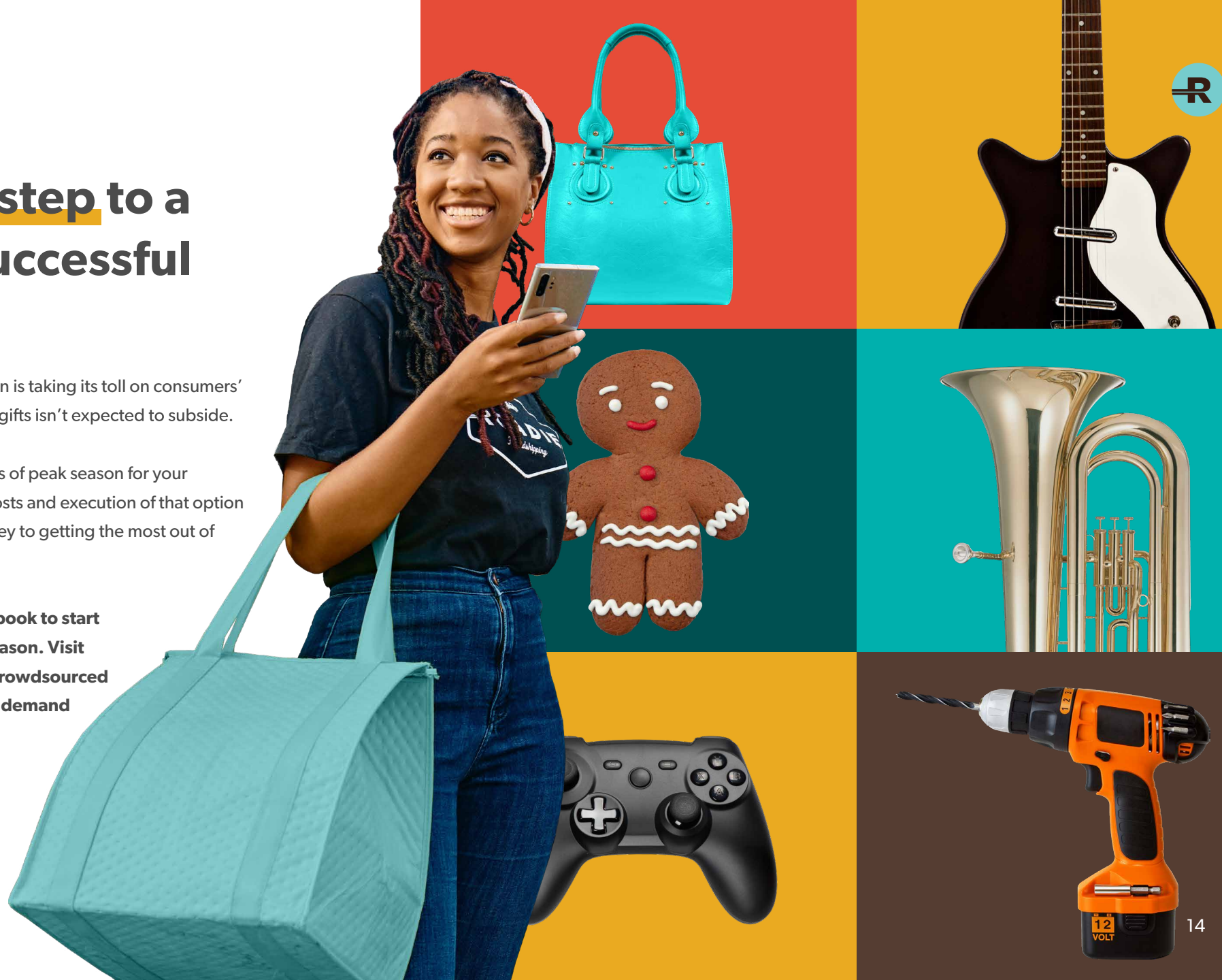
Take the next step to a smooth and successful peak season

The economy is cooling down and inflation is taking its toll on consumers' wallets, but the urge to spend on holiday gifts isn't expected to subside.

On-demand delivery can reduce the stress of peak season for your business. And with crowdsourcing, the costs and execution of that option are manageable. But proper planning is key to getting the most out of crowdsourced ultrafast delivery.

Use the strategies outlined in this playbook to start preparing now for a successful peak season. Visit [Roadie.com](https://roadie.com) to learn more about how crowdsourced delivery can help your team deliver on demand during peak season – and all year.

VISIT [ROADIE.COM](https://roadie.com) >





Sources

1. "Retail's need for speed: Unlocking value in omnichannel delivery," McKinsey & Company, September 8, 2021, <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/retail/our-insights/retails-need-for-speed-unlocking-value-in-omnichannel-delivery>
2. "3 key factors that led to a record-setting holiday season," National Retail Federation, February 3, 2022, <https://nrf.com/blog/3-key-factors-led-record-setting-holiday-season>
3. "Offer customers delivery from your Shopify store," Roadie, <https://www.roadie.com/small-business/shopify-delivery>
4. Same-day delivery: Ready for takeoff," McKinsey & Company, January 31, 2020, <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/retail/our-insights/same-day-delivery-ready-for-takeoff>
5. "Save time with Templates," Roadie, <https://www.roadie.com/templates>
6. "Consumer attitudes towards return policy of retailers and its influence on their purchasing decision worldwide 2020," Statista, June 2020, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1143014/consumer-opinions-on-retail-return-policies-worldwide/>
7. "Retail Returns Increased to \$761 Billion in 2021 as a Result of Overall Sales Growth," National Retail Federation, <https://nrf.com/media-center/press-releases/retail-returns-increased-761-billion-2021-result-overall-sales-growth>



Roadie, a UPS Company, is a crowdsourced delivery platform. Founded in 2014, Roadie works with consumers, small businesses and enterprises to enable scheduled, same-day and urgent delivery in passenger vehicles across the U.S. With more than 200,000 drivers nationwide, Roadie reaches more than 20,000 zip codes – the largest local same-day delivery network in the nation. By choosing to partner with Roadie, businesses can make more sales, create efficiencies within their own networks, and increase customer satisfaction by consistently delivering items on customers' preferred timelines. For more information, visit roadie.com.

LEARN MORE >



studio / ID

BY INDUSTRY DIVE

studioID is Industry Dive's global content studio offering brands an ROI rich tool kit: Deep industry expertise, first-party audience insights, an editorial approach to brand storytelling, and targeted distribution capabilities. Our trusted in-house content marketers help brands power insights-fueled content programs that nurture prospects and customers from discovery through to purchase, connecting brand to demand.

[LEARN MORE](#)