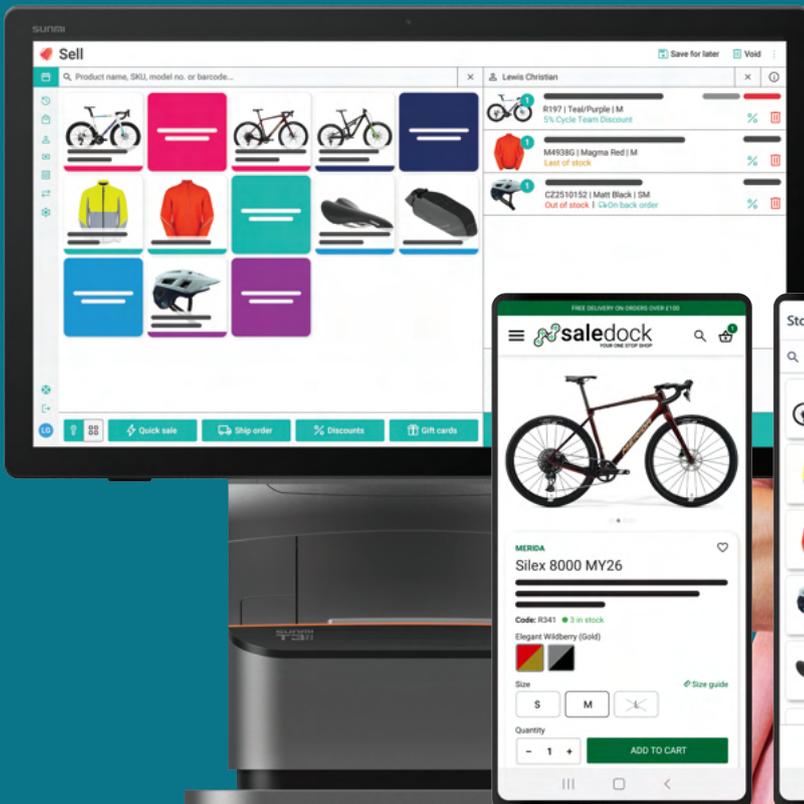


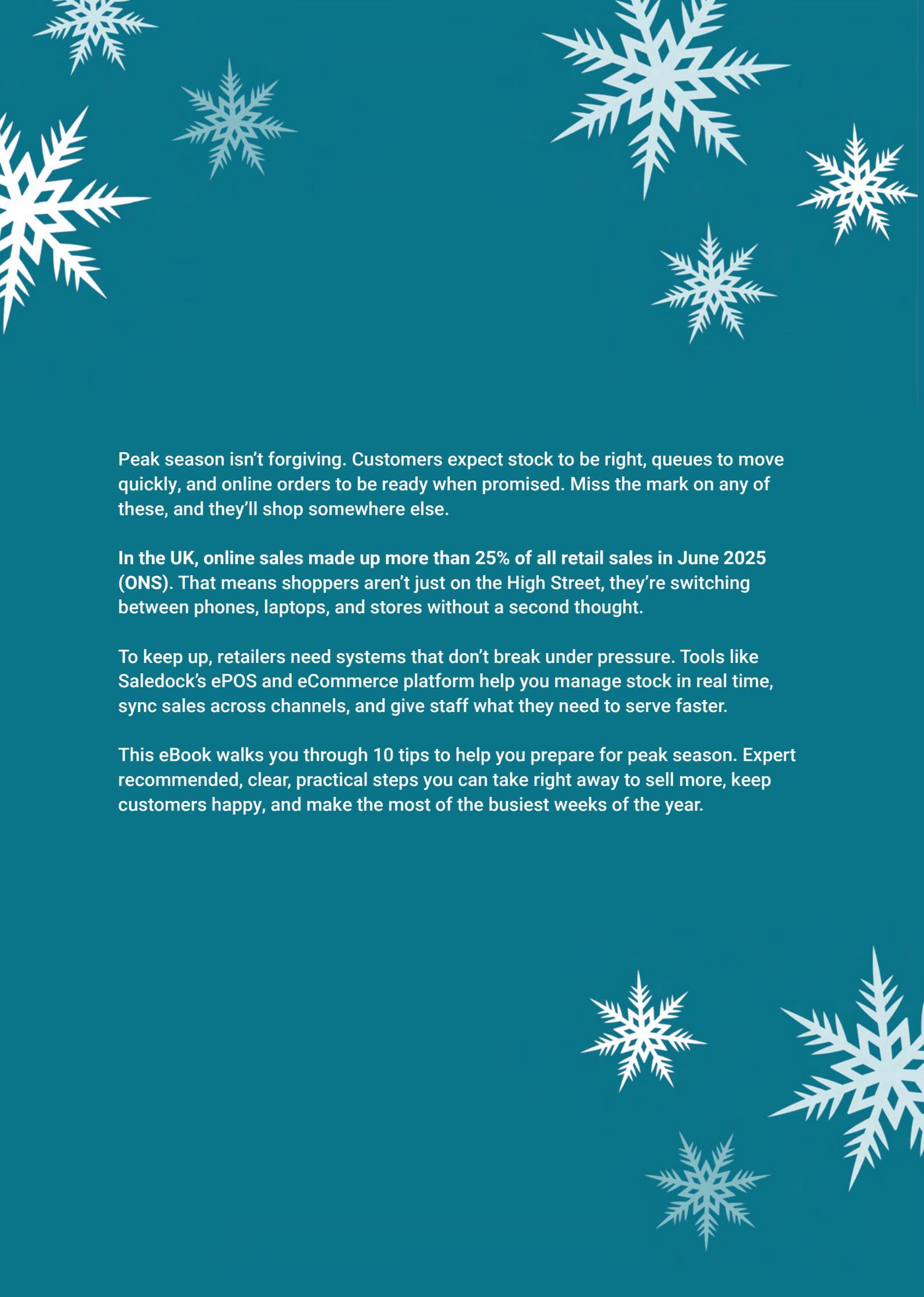


 **saledock**

# Top 10

## Peak Season Selling tips for retailers





Peak season isn't forgiving. Customers expect stock to be right, queues to move quickly, and online orders to be ready when promised. Miss the mark on any of these, and they'll shop somewhere else.

**In the UK, online sales made up more than 25% of all retail sales in June 2025 (ONS).** That means shoppers aren't just on the High Street, they're switching between phones, laptops, and stores without a second thought.

To keep up, retailers need systems that don't break under pressure. Tools like Saledock's ePOS and eCommerce platform help you manage stock in real time, sync sales across channels, and give staff what they need to serve faster.

This eBook walks you through 10 tips to help you prepare for peak season. Expert recommended, clear, practical steps you can take right away to sell more, keep customers happy, and make the most of the busiest weeks of the year.



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A festive background featuring several gingerbread men in shades of orange and brown, some with blue and red icing details. Light blue snowflakes are scattered throughout the white background.

# 1.

## Use sales data to plan ahead

Every peak season brings surprises. One year, a product you hardly promoted becomes a bestseller. Another year, something you thought would fly off the shelves ends up sitting in stockrooms until January sales. The best way to avoid guesswork is to learn from your own numbers.

Looking back at last year's busiest weeks will show you which products sold fastest, which categories underperformed, and when demand actually peaked. Reviewing both in-store and online data gives the clearest picture.

**This is where reporting makes a real difference.**

With Saledock, you don't need to dig through spreadsheets or piece together separate systems. Reports update in real time, across all stores and your eCommerce site, so you can see exactly what's working. You'll know your best-selling sizes, which suppliers are performing well, and even when queues are likely to build up.

If you plan ahead using these insights, you can order stock with confidence, adjust rotas for busy hours, and prepare promotions for the right time, instead of reacting when it's too late.

**Bonus:** Don't just focus on what sold, look at when it sold. If knitwear spiked earlier than expected last year, order sooner this time to spread sales across the whole season.



# 2.

## Keep stock levels accurate

Few things frustrate customers more than being told an item is “in stock” only to find it’s not there when they try to buy it. During peak season, those mistakes multiply quickly, leaving queues longer, shoppers unhappy, and sales slipping away.

Regular stock counts and real-time syncing are the simplest ways to avoid these problems. With [Saledock’s inventory management tools](#), every sale, whether it’s made online, in-store, or through Click + Collect, automatically updates your stock levels. That means what customers see on your website, in your system, and on the shop floor is always aligned.

This kind of visibility is especially important at Christmas and Boxing Day, when seasonal products can sell through in hours. Low stock alerts, forecasting reports, and re-order reminders help you react quickly, so you don’t miss sales or end up with excess stock piled in January.

**Bonus:** Run a weekly report during December to spot slow-moving items early. Adding them to a small promotion mid-season clears space for your bestsellers and keeps shelves looking fresh.



# 3.

## Create promotions that work for you

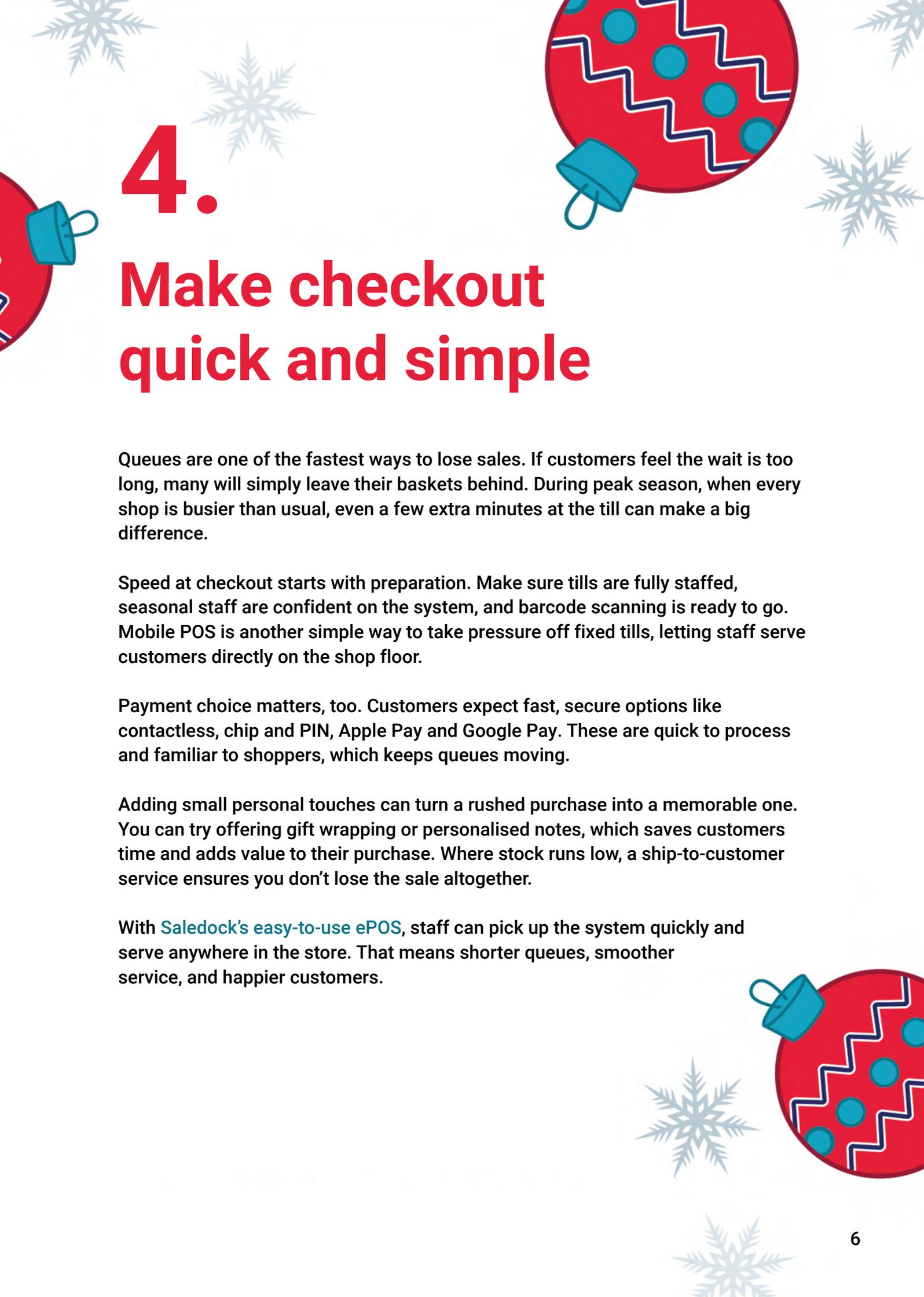
Discounts will always have their place in peak season, especially around Black Friday, Cyber Monday, and Boxing Day. But endless price cuts can hurt margins, so it's worth focusing on promotions that encourage loyalty as well as sales.

Simple loyalty rewards are one of the easiest ways to do this. Shoppers are far more likely to return and even buy full-price items if they feel valued. With [Saledock's built-in loyalty programme](#), you can reward repeat customers both in-store and online. They earn points or rewards with every visit, which can be tracked through their account or scanned quickly at the till.

You can also build excitement before peak weeks by running time-limited campaigns. A countdown on social media, a sneak peek at new stock, or a small giveaway in exchange for a share or review helps create buzz without heavy discounting. Local events are another great way to promote; many UK councils organise late-night shopping or High Street light events. Taking part keeps your business visible and strengthens community ties.

This approach keeps customers engaged well beyond the holidays. Instead of offering one-off discounts, you're giving shoppers a reason to come back in January, February, and beyond.

**Bonus:** Don't just roll out one blanket discount, mix it up. Use early-season loyalty rewards (like double points in November) to pull sales forward, bundle slow-moving products with bestsellers to clear shelves, and save margin by rewarding repeat customers with perks instead of deeper discounts. Shoppers will feel looked after, and you'll spread demand across the whole season instead of dealing with a single December crush.



# 4.

## Make checkout quick and simple

Queues are one of the fastest ways to lose sales. If customers feel the wait is too long, many will simply leave their baskets behind. During peak season, when every shop is busier than usual, even a few extra minutes at the till can make a big difference.

Speed at checkout starts with preparation. Make sure tills are fully staffed, seasonal staff are confident on the system, and barcode scanning is ready to go. Mobile POS is another simple way to take pressure off fixed tills, letting staff serve customers directly on the shop floor.

Payment choice matters, too. Customers expect fast, secure options like contactless, chip and PIN, Apple Pay and Google Pay. These are quick to process and familiar to shoppers, which keeps queues moving.

Adding small personal touches can turn a rushed purchase into a memorable one. You can try offering gift wrapping or personalised notes, which saves customers time and adds value to their purchase. Where stock runs low, a ship-to-customer service ensures you don't lose the sale altogether.

With [Saledock's easy-to-use ePOS](#), staff can pick up the system quickly and serve anywhere in the store. That means shorter queues, smoother service, and happier customers.

The page is decorated with a light blue background featuring several white snowflake icons scattered throughout. On the left and right sides, there are stylized gingerbread men in a warm orange-brown color. The gingerbread man on the left is partially visible, while the one on the right is more prominent, showing its smiling face and simple features. The number '5.' is written in a large, bold, red font at the top left of the main text area.

# 5.

## Offer Click + Collect to drive footfall

When done well, Click + Collect pulls foot traffic, speeds up fulfilment, and gives you extra chances to sell in-store. In fact, research suggests [Click + Collect will make up almost 11% of UK online sales by the end of 2025](#).

Another study found that [over two-thirds \(69%\) of UK shoppers now include Click + Collect in their usual shopping journey](#). Here's how to make it work for your shop:

**Choose smart pickup points** - Let customers pick which store they want to collect from. Make it clear online which stores are eligible, and keep the process simple. With Saledock's eCommerce setup, you can process Click + Collect orders straight from the ePOS, ensuring stock syncs in real time.

**Set up clear pickup zones** - A corner of the shop, a dedicated shelf, or a counter near the entrance, make sure staff and customers know exactly where to collect. This avoids confusion and ensures a smooth experience on busy days.

**Use upsell moments** - When customers come in to collect, they're already in your shop's environment. Place complementary products nearby, things like add-on accessories, small gift items, so they might make an extra purchase.

**Communicate collection windows and confirmation** - Be clear about when orders will be ready. Send SMS or email confirmations when orders are available. That way, customers don't wait too long or show up before you're ready.

**Monitor and adjust** - Track how many Click + Collect orders come in, how many get picked up, and what additional purchases happen in-store around those visits. Adjust your collection process or incentives if pick-up rates are low.



# 6.

## Support your staff during busy weeks

Behind every smooth peak season is a strong team. As an omni-channel retailer, you need staff ready to handle both in-store shoppers and the surge of online orders. The challenge isn't just having enough people, but making sure they have the tools and support to do their jobs well.

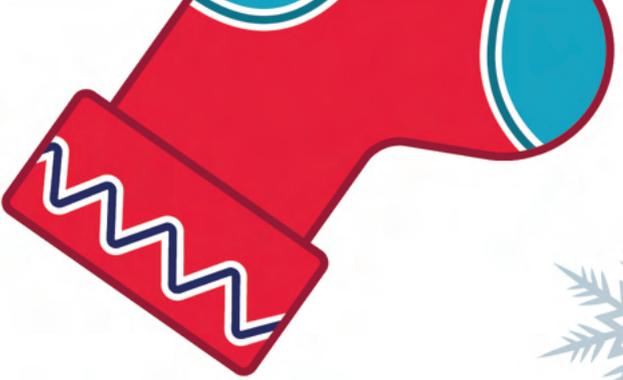
So, you want to start with careful rota planning. Build shifts that spread experience across the day, and allow proper rest breaks so staff don't burn out. December is long, and a tired team won't deliver the service your customers expect.

Equipping staff properly makes just as much difference as scheduling. With [mobile ePOS](#) and product lookup tools, employees can serve customers on the shop floor, check stock instantly, and process orders without sending people to a till or stockroom. That saves time for staff and keeps queues moving.

Finally, recognise the effort your team puts in. A simple 'thank you,' a staff meal after the season, or even a small bonus goes a long way in building loyalty and morale. Your team is the face of your shop, if they feel valued, customers will notice.

**Bonus:** Use your [ePOS reporting](#) to identify peak trading hours from last year, then schedule more staff for those periods. Share these insights with the team so they know what to expect, and give them confidence that the plan is based on real data, not guesswork.





# 7.

## Focus on the in-store experience

What do customers remember most after a shopping trip? It's not just the products, it's how the visit made them feel.

Creating the right atmosphere goes a long way. Thoughtful decor, warm lighting, and seasonal music can set the tone the moment someone steps inside. Adding services like gift wrapping or personalised notes saves customers time and leaves them with a reason to smile.

The layout of your shop plays a part, too. Clear signage, well-organised displays, and approachable staff make the experience smoother, even when the shop is busy. At the checkout, placing small add-on items like stocking fillers, accessories, or gift cards gives you a natural way to increase basket size without coming across as pushy.

Consistency is what ties it all together. If your shop feels festive and welcoming, carry that same tone through to your website, Click + Collect counter, and customer emails. A joined-up experience reassures shoppers that your brand will look after them, wherever they choose to buy.



The page is decorated with gingerbread men and snowflakes. One gingerbread man is on the left, another is at the top right, and a third is at the bottom right. Snowflakes are scattered throughout the background.

# 8.

## Make smarter buying decisions

One of the hardest calls in retail is deciding how much stock to bring in for the holidays. Buy too much, and you're left with excess stock in January. Buy too little, and you miss out on sales when demand is highest.

**That's where Open-to-Buy (OTB) planning comes in.**

OTB is a method that helps retailers set clear budgets for new stock, based on sales targets and current inventory levels. In simple terms, it shows how much money you should 'leave open' for reorders and new products, so you don't over-commit early on.

The benefit is control. Instead of relying on guesswork, you use data to decide when and how much to buy. For example, if knitwear sold out quickly last December, OTB planning can flag the need to allocate more budget to that category this year. On the other hand, if accessories move slowly, you can reduce your spending and free up budget for faster-moving lines.

For omni-channel retailers, OTB planning is even more powerful. By looking at combined eCommerce and in-store sales data, you can spot trends earlier and order stock where it's needed most. That way, you're less likely to tie up cash in products that don't move, and more likely to maximise sales during the busiest weeks.

The page is decorated with several red gift boxes with blue bows and white snowflakes. One gift box is in the top right corner, another is partially visible on the left edge, and a third is in the bottom right corner. Snowflakes are scattered throughout the background.

# 9.

## Handle returns smoothly

Returns are part of retail. How you deal with them can make the difference between keeping a customer for life or losing them altogether.

It's important that you start with a clear, straightforward returns policy. Customers shouldn't need to hunt through small print to know how long they have to bring something back or what condition it needs to be in. Make the policy visible on receipts, your website, and at the till, so there are no surprises.

Convenience is just as important. Offering both in-store and postal returns gives shoppers flexibility and shows you're willing to meet them halfway. For omni-channel retailers, letting customers return online purchases in store also saves time and builds trust.

Staff play a huge role too. A return doesn't have to mean a lost sale, with the right training, your team can suggest an exchange, offer store credit, or invite the customer to join your loyalty scheme. A positive experience at this stage often leaves shoppers more likely to come back.



# 10.

## Set clear goals and track success

It's easy to get swept up in the rush of December, but without clear goals and KPIs, it's hard to know whether your season was truly successful. Deciding what matters most at the start helps you stay focused when things get busy.

Your goals could be straightforward -increasing overall sales, protecting profit margins, or shifting more of a particular range. They might also be service-based, such as keeping average queue times under three minutes or ensuring every Click + Collect order is ready within 24 hours.

Once you've set your goals, use real-time analytics to track how you're doing. Daily reports can show sales by category, store, or channel, giving you the insight to react quickly if something isn't going to plan. If a certain line is falling short, you can push a promotion; if a store is underperforming, you can adjust staff or stock.

The benefit of measuring as you go is that you don't have to wait until January to learn what worked. You can make smarter decisions throughout the season and give yourself the best chance of meeting your targets.





At Saledock, our goal is to help UK retailers sell smarter and save time. What started with a chat in a menswear shop has grown into a Yorkshire-based business supporting retailers across the country with an award-winning ePOS and eCommerce solution.

By working closely with independent shops, boutiques, and growing chains, we've built a system that's intuitive, flexible, and designed around how retailers actually work. From managing stock across multiple stores to rewarding loyalty online and in-store, Saledock brings everything together in one place.

But more than software, we're a team that cares. Our UK-based support is on hand with training, live chat, and guidance whenever you need it. And because we're always improving, your feedback helps shape the features we release next. Get started with Saledock today to see how we can support your business this season and beyond! [www.saledock.com](http://www.saledock.com)

**BOOK A DEMO TODAY**

*Thanks for reading  
and happy holidays!  
The Saledock team :)*