Christmas Peak Readiness Planner

A working sheet for distributors. Use the twelve-week frame as a planning aid, not a universal rule; move the dates to match your own supplier lead times, warehouse constraints and customer commitments.

Area	Decision to lock	Evidence / trigger	Owner
Demand	Base and upside scenario	Current order intake; known account/range changes	
Supply	Committed lines and supplier slots	Lead time; shelf life; substitute policy	
Warehouse	Pick/load capacity plan	Goods-in; pick; marshalling; staffing	
Routes	Peak route pattern	Drops; windows; vehicle/driver capacity	
Customers	Cut-offs and changed delivery days	Published calendar + exception path	
Finance	Credit and cash exposure	Peak order values; account status; disputes	
Debrief	Measures for post-peak review	Plan vs actual; exceptions; returns; credits	

12 weeks out - scenarios

What are the base and upside cases? What observable signal would move the plan from one to the other?

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8 weeks out - supply and range

Which lines need early supplier commitment? Which substitutes are acceptable? Which range decisions must be explicit?

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6 weeks out - warehouse

Map goods-in, replenishment, pick, marshalling and load capacity. Note the first point where the upside scenario breaks the current plan.

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4 weeks out - customer rules

Write the changed delivery days, order cut-offs, closure dates and exception path in customer-facing language.

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2 weeks out - people and routes

Confirm peak route pattern, temporary users, role-limited access where appropriate, holiday cover and who can approve exceptions.

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Peak week - exception log

Date	Exception	Decision / reason	Owner	Follow-up

January debrief

What assumption was wrong? What control held? What should change before the next seasonal cycle?

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Calendar note: verify current UK bank holidays and Irish public holidays when you build the live operating calendar.