

PEAK/26

The 2026 Peak Season Shipping Guide

PLAN EARLIER. SHIP SMARTER. STAY AHEAD.

Insights.
Dates.
Strategies.
A stronger
peak season.



PLAN



PREPARE



SHIP



TRACK



OPTIMIZE



Welcome to Freightcom's 2026 Peak Season Shipping Guide

As the holiday shipping window approaches, businesses across North America face a dynamic landscape of massive sales potential alongside complex supply chain demands. Surging consumer orders, tighter carrier delivery windows, evolving regulatory requirements, such as updated cross-border eFiling standards, and seasonal volume surges create significant pressure across shipping networks. Left unmanaged, these factors lead to transit delays, operational bottlenecks, and unplanned surcharges.

For small to medium-sized businesses (SMBs) and eCommerce brands, navigating these challenges proactively is essential to protecting profit margins and delivering an exceptional customer experience. Freightcom's 2026 Peak Season Shipping Guide equips your business with actionable insights, technology-driven strategies, and industry best practices to streamline operations and maximize success during the busiest time of the year.

What Is Peak Season?

Peak season spans from early August through mid-December. During this timeframe, retailers, distributors, and manufacturers rapidly scale up inventory and outbound shipping to meet demand for back-to-school shopping, Black Friday, Cyber Monday, and the end-of-year holiday rush.

This surge in shipping activity places immense strain on freight networks, leading to tighter carrier capacity, longer transit times, and holiday peak surcharges. Without a clear strategy, businesses risk delayed fulfillment and unexpected costs. However, by leveraging automation, smart inventory placement, and flexible carrier options, your business can turn peak season logistics into a distinct competitive advantage.



Actionable Insights

Data-backed intelligence to help you plan earlier and make smarter decisions.



Technology-Driven Strategies

Modern tools to simplify shipping, reduce risk, and increase efficiency during peak demand.



Industry Best Practices

Proven strategies from shipping experts to help you stay ahead and deliver a better customer experience.



AUG

Back to School
Early signals.
Build momentum.



SEP

Growing Demand
Demand accelerates.
Capacity tightens.



OCT

Peak Builds
Higher volumes.
Be ready.



NOV

Major Sales Events
Black Friday &
Cyber Monday.



DEC

Holiday Fulfillment
Final push.
Deliver the season.



CHAPTER 02

General Shipping Tips.

Practical strategies to stay ahead of peak season demand.



01

Plan Ahead and Forecast Accurately

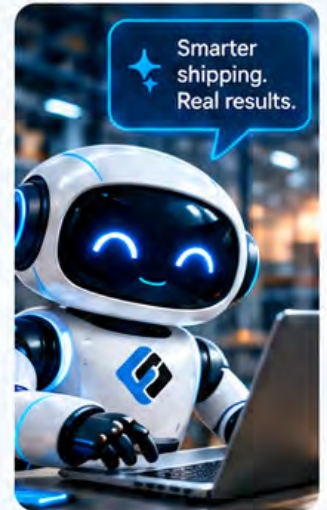
Analyze historical sales trends, market conditions, and early demand indicators to build realistic volume forecasts. Early planning allows you to secure carrier capacity, order adequate packaging supplies, and avoid high-cost, last-minute rush bookings.



02

Leverage Next-Gen Logistics Technology

Automate fulfillment processes through centralized shipping platforms. Utilizing platform-native tools and AI assistants (such as Freightcom's Milo AI) enables rapid rate comparisons, automated label generation, instant spot quotes, and real-time shipment tracking, drastically reducing manual processing time.



03

Diversify Your Carrier Mix

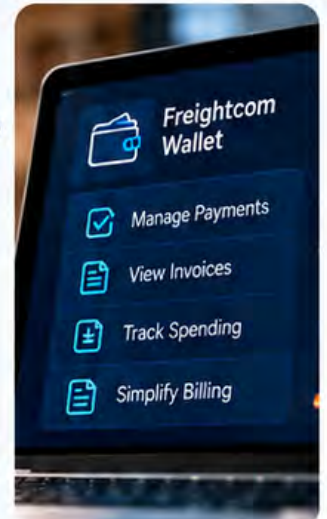
Relying on a single carrier during peak season exposes your operations to localized delays and capacity caps. Partnering with a multi-carrier platform gives you the agility to route shipments based on speed, cost, and carrier availability across specific lanes.



04

Budget for Seasonal Surcharges & Manage Cash Flow

Peak season brings temporary holiday handling fees, fuel adjustments, and peak surcharges. Factor these extra costs into your pricing model in advance, and utilize streamlined digital billing tools, like Freightcom Wallet, to simplify payment management and keep operations moving without friction.



INDUSTRY FACT

Canada's transportation and warehousing sector continues to show strong momentum into 2026, building on a [multi-billion dollar year-over-year expansion](#) as businesses increasingly rely on third-party logistics automation to manage surging freight volumes.

SCAN TO EXPLORE
**SHIP SMARTER
WITH
FREIGHTCOM**



Better rates. Easier shipping.
Visit [Freightcom.com](https://freightcom.com).

CHAPTER 04

Cross-Border Shipping Tips.

MORE REACH. FEWER BARRIERS.
A STRONGER PEAK SEASON.

Cross-border shipping unlocks bigger opportunities, but success requires preparation. Follow these key tips to reduce delays, control costs, and deliver a better experience for your customers.

CANADIAN TRADE ACTIVITY REMAINS AT HISTORIC LEVELS.

With annual cross-border goods and services trade volume topping **\$1 trillion CAD**, emphasizing the need for streamlined, error-free cross-border shipping processes.



01

Prioritize Complete, Compliant Documentation

Ensure commercial invoices, packing lists, digital product classifications, and certificates of origin are accurate and complete. Stay up to date on customs regulations, including U.S. CPSC eFiling requirements, to avoid delays and ensure smooth clearance at the border.

COMMERCIAL INVOICE



02

Measure and Declare Exact Package Dimensions

Dimensional weight is closely audited in cross-border shipping. Measure external dimensions accurately, round up to the next whole unit, and declare precise weights to avoid unexpected charges, reclassification fees, and delivery delays.



03

Set Clear Shipping & Customs Expectations

Build buffer time into your fulfillment plan and communicate estimated delivery windows clearly. Set realistic expectations for international shoppers, as customs processing times can vary and may be longer during the peak season.



04

Pre-Test Cross-Border Carrier Lanes

Select carriers with strong cross-border infrastructure, reliable tracking tools, and dedicated customs support. Run test shipments to key destinations before volume surges to validate transit times, costs, and service reliability.



SCAN TO EXPLORE

CROSS-BORDER TOOLS.

Everything you need for seamless cross-border shipping — in one place.



SCAN NOW
TO EXPLORE
OUR CROSS-
BORDER TOOLS.


 Customs guides
& documentation

 Duties & taxes
estimator

 Carrier options
by lane

 Real-time rates
& transit times

BORDERS CONNECT OPPORTUNITY.



SHIP SMARTER



REDUCE COSTS



REACH FURTHER

LTL Shipping Tips (Less-Than-Truckload)

SMARTER PALLET SHIPPING. BIGGER RESULTS.

01



Consolidate Freight into Full Pallet Loads

Combine regional shipments into consolidated pallet loads whenever possible. Grouping orders going to the same geographic region lowers per-unit shipping costs, minimizes touches, and speeds up hub processing times.

02



Verify Freight Classes and Specialized Equipment Needs

LTL pricing depends heavily on accurate freight classification, density, and equipment requirements. Double-check commodity codes and specify upfront whether your pickup or delivery location requires liftgate services, limited-access delivery, or specialized trailers (e.g., dry van vs. temperature-controlled reefer units) to avoid unexpected accessororial fees.

03



Secure Capacity Early

Freight capacity tightens significantly heading into Q4. Book pallet shipments well in advance and maintain strong relationships with top-tier regional and long-haul carriers to lock in space during peak volume periods.

04



Audit Bills of Lading (BOL) and Labels

Ensure every pallet is properly wrapped, clearly labeled with scannable barcodes, and accompanied by a detailed Bill of Lading. Inaccurate paperwork during peak capacity periods often leads to misrouted freight or costly terminal delays.



STRETCH WRAP

Secure and stabilize to prevent damage during transit.



BARCODE LABELS

Clearly labeled with scannable barcodes.



48"
MAX
HEIGHT

48"
LENGTH

40"
WIDTH



PALLET STANDARDS

Use standard, well-maintained pallets to ensure compatibility across terminals.



PROPER UNITIZATION

Keep freight aligned, balanced, and within LTL weight and dimension limits.

INDUSTRY FACT

eCommerce expansion and high demand for long-haul freight continue to drive the Canadian freight market, with LTL and truckload **revenues maintaining steady multi-billion dollar** expansion through 2026.



Parcel Shipping Tips.

Smarter strategies for a smoother peak season.

Parcel volumes surge during peak season, putting extra pressure on carriers, fulfillment teams, and delivery networks. With the right preparation, you can control costs, avoid delays, and deliver a better experience for your customers.


01


Track Carrier Holiday Cutoff Dates

Keep strict track of standard, express, and priority holiday cutoff dates from all major carriers. Share these deadlines with your customers so they know the last day to order for guaranteed holiday arrival.


02


Optimize Packaging Efficiency

Right-size your packaging and minimize empty space to reduce dimensional weight charges. Proper packaging also helps lower the risk of transit damage and avoids costly returns during the busy season.


03


Utilize Carrier Drop-Off Centers

Take advantage of local carrier hubs or depots to drop off time-sensitive parcels during busy periods. This can help avoid residential pickup delays and keep your shipments moving.


04


Adopt an Interprovincial Distribution Model

Ship from the node closest to your end customer across Canada. An interprovincial distribution model can lower zone charges, improve transit times, and reduce bottlenecks during peak season.



INDUSTRY FACT

Over 75%

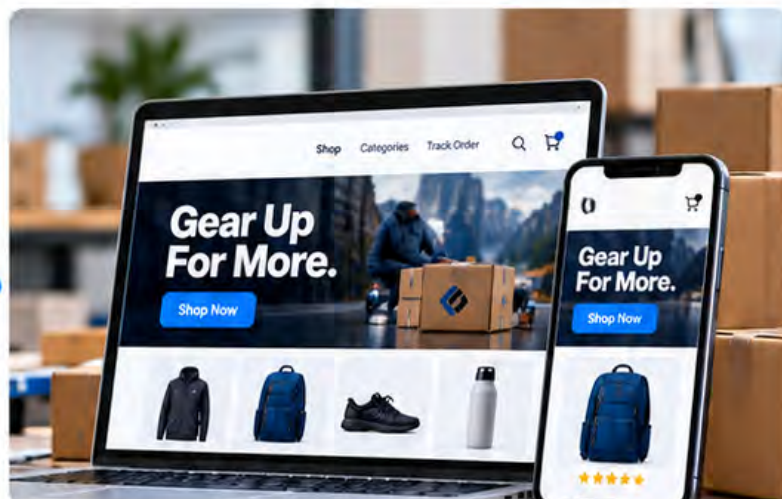
of logistics and supply chain leaders report ongoing operational strain during peak season due to tight labor markets and high delivery volumes, reinforcing the value of automated fulfillment and multi-carrier access.



CHAPTER 07

eCommerce Shipping Tips.

Build a faster, more transparent customer experience.



01



Maintain Real-Time Inventory Visibility

Sync your online storefronts to your inventory and warehouse systems to prevent overselling, reduce backorders, and ensure fast fulfillment during flash sales and high-demand periods.

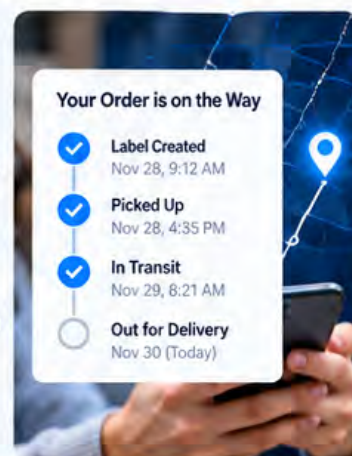


02



Provide End-to-End Tracking Communication

Send automated delivery notifications and provide direct tracking links from pickup to final delivery. Proactive communication reduces customer support inquiries and builds trust throughout the shipping journey.

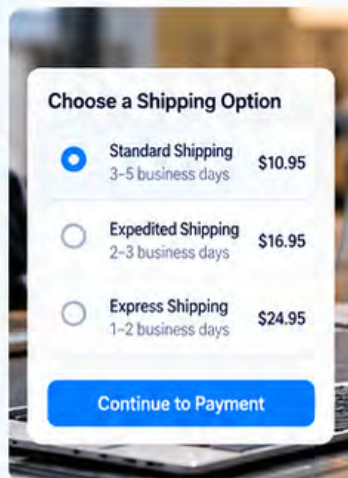


03



Offer Dynamic Checkout Rates and Speeds

Integrate real-time shipping rate calculators at checkout so buyers can choose between economical standard shipping and fast express delivery based on their needs and delivery timelines.

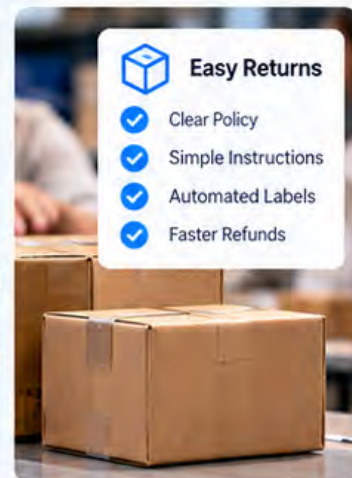


04



Establish a Streamlined Returns Process

Create clear returns policies, provide straightforward instructions, and offer automated return labels. A simple, hassle-free returns experience increases customer satisfaction and encourages repeat purchases during and after peak season.



INDUSTRY FACT

The Canadian eCommerce market continues its steady year-over-year growth, on track to generate an additional \$52 billion CAD in sales expansion by 2029.





THE 2026 PEAK SEASON SHIPPING GUIDE

Why Our Customers Choose Freightcom.

More capacity. Greater control. A stronger peak season.

Freightcom gives businesses the tools, support, and competitive rates they need to simplify shipping and stay ahead during the busiest time of the year.



Exclusive Discounted Shipping Rates

Access to heavily discounted volume rates across domestic and cross-border LTL, domestic and international parcel, and specialized freight services.



Dedicated Logistics Support

Our logistics experts are here to help from quote to delivery, including lane selection, troubleshooting, and claims management.



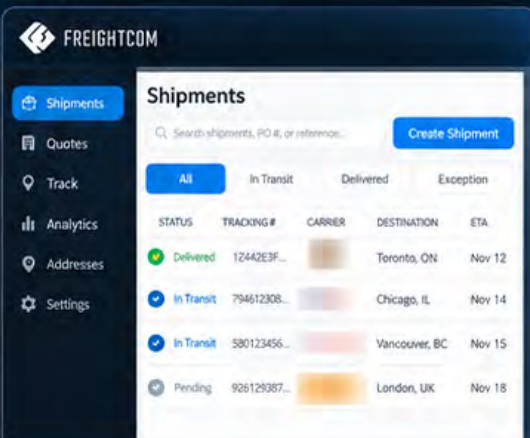
Zero Upfront, Monthly, or Platform Fees

No subscription fees, hidden charges, or minimum volume commitments. You only pay for what you ship.

PLATFORM HIGHLIGHTS:

01 All-in-One Shipping Dashboard

Quote, compare, book, track, and manage all your shipments in one place.



02 AI-Powered Shipping Assistance

Get instant recommendations, compare options, and shipping guidance with Milo, our AI shipping assistant.



Hi, I'm Milo!

I can help you find the best shipping options, compare rates, and more.

Milo's Recommendation

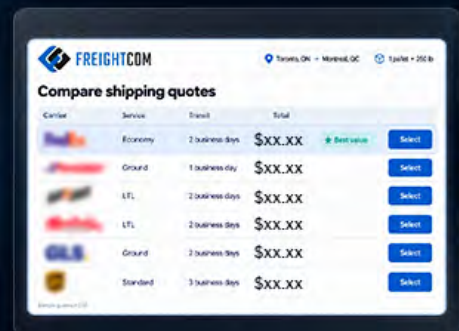
Toronto, ON → Dallas, TX
LTL • 1,450 lbs • Est. 3-5 days

- ✓ Lower cost option
- ✓ Reliable transit times
- ✓ Good for peak season

[View Quote Options →](#)

03 In-Platform Spot Quoting

Obtain automated, easy-to-book quotes on PTL, FTL, and time-critical services directly in-platform.



LOWER COSTS
More value in every shipment.



GREATER CONTROL
Full visibility at every stage.



EXPERT SUPPORT
Real people, real solutions.



STRONGER RESULTS
Built for your biggest season.

Platform Highlights.

Powerful tools. Smarter shipping. Built for your peak season.

The Freightcom platform gives you the tools, visibility, and flexibility to ship smarter during your busiest time of year. From instant quotes to tracking, payments, and integrations, everything you need to streamline operations, control costs, and deliver exceptional customer experiences is in one place.



01 Guaranteed Cross-Border Quotes

Calculate estimated duties, taxes, and cross-border fees total landed-cost transparency.


Get a Quote

Get a Quote

Ship

Track

Wallet

Integrations

Origin

Canada

United States

Destination

Canada

United States

Package Details

1

Box

10

lb

Base Shipping

\$18.45

Duties (Estimated)

\$6.20

Taxes (Estimated)

\$4.12

Cross-Border Fees

\$2.50

Estimated Landed Cost

\$31.27



02 End-to-End Tracking & Visibility

Monitor courier and LTL shipments with unified tracking updates, status notifications, and proactive alerts.


Shipment Tracking

Get a Quote

Ship

Track

Wallet

Integrations

FC1234567890

In Transit

Estimated Delivery Nov 22, 2026

Shipment Picked Up

Nov 18, 2026 8:14 AM Vancouver, BC

In Transit

Nov 19, 2026 4:42 PM Calgary, AB

Arrived at Facility

Nov 20, 2026 9:17 AM Winnipeg, MB

In Transit

Nov 21, 2026 7:03 PM Mississauga, ON

Out for Delivery

Nov 22, 2026 Toronto, ON





03 Simplified Digital Payments

Use Freightcom Wallet for consolidated invoicing, invoice review, spend tracking, and multi-user account management.


Freightcom Wallet

Get a Quote

Ship

Track

Wallet

Integrations

Available Balance

\$12,480.00

Add Funds

Invoices

View and download your invoices

Transaction History

Track your spending

Account Users

Manage team access

Payment Methods

Manage your payment options



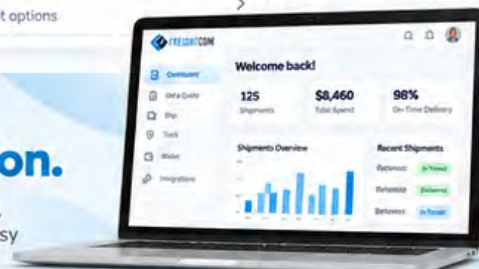
04 Seamless eCommerce Integrations

Connect Freightcom to your online storefront directly via the Freightcommerce API and offer accurate rates and services directly at checkout.



Built for a Stronger Peak Season.

Freightcom helps you ship smarter, save time, and grow with confidence — no matter how busy things get.



Start Shipping Smarter This Peak Season!

Contact our team of shipping experts today to optimize your peak season strategy and unlock the best shipping rates in North America.



1-877-335-8740



sales@freightcom.com



www.freightcom.com

REAL PEOPLE.
POWERFUL TECHNOLOGY.
A STRONGER SUPPLY CHAIN.

Get Rates

Compare real-time rates from top carriers in seconds.



GET RATES NOW

Track Shipment

Get real-time visibility and stay informed every step of the way.



TRACK YOUR SHIPMENT

Carrier Deadlines

Stay ahead with key cutoff dates from all major carriers.



VIEW CARRIER DEADLINES

Ask Milo

Get instant answers to your shipping questions with Milo, our AI assistant.



ASK MILO NOW

Contact Freightcom

Speak with a shipping expert and create your custom peak season strategy.



CONTACT OUR TEAM

PLAN EARLIER. SHIP SMARTER. STAY AHEAD.



LOWER COSTS.
HIGHER EFFICIENCY.



GREATER VISIBILITY.
FEWER SURPRISES.



A STRONGER
PEAK SEASON.