COLA Office of Business Opportunities + fig

Before Q4 Gets Busy, Get Ready.

A Q4 checklist for Columbia's small businesses, brought to you by the City of Columbia Office of Business Opportunities + Fig Columbia.

The holidays can be one of the biggest opportunities of the year for small businesses—but the businesses that make the most of the season usually start preparing long before the holiday rush begins.

Save it. Print it. Share it with your team. And start checking things off.



BRAND + PACKAGING

- Order branded shopping bags
- Stock tissue paper in brand or holiday colors
- Order logo stickers or holiday seals
- Create holiday gift tags
- Order ribbon, twine or branded tape
- Create a holiday thank-you/in-package card
- Decide on gift-wrapping options
- Prepare shipping boxes, mailers and packing materials
- Make sure packaging quantities will carry you through December
- Create a January bounce-back card: **"Come back in January and receive..."**

Need a Hand?

ByFarr Design House can help design, source and print custom holiday packaging in house—from shopping bags, tissue and stickers to gift tags, cards, ribbon and more.

Get help with Holiday Packaging

LEARN MORE



PRODUCTS + INVENTORY

- Review last year's holiday best sellers
- Identify this year's "hero" products
- Order holiday inventory early
- Build gift bundles
- Create hostess, teacher and coworker gift options
- Establish Black Friday + Small Business Saturday offers
- Determine Cyber Monday promotions
- Set final shipping/order deadlines
- Stock gift cards and/or e-gift cards
- Plan your post-Christmas inventory strategy



SOCIAL MEDIA

- Build November + December content calendars
- Schedule Thanksgiving messaging
- Schedule Black Friday posts
- Schedule Small Business Saturday posts
- Schedule Cyber Monday posts
- Promote gift cards
- Promote extended holiday hours
- Share gift guides throughout the season
- Feature employees' favorite gifts
- Share customer testimonials and reviews
- Create urgency around shipping + Christmas deadlines
- Schedule Christmas + New Year's messaging

Don't just Sell. Tell your Story.

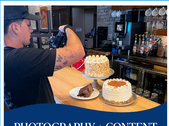
Q4 is also an opportunity to remind customers who they're supporting when they shop small. Introduce your team. Share your story. Show the hands wrapping the packages. Thank your customers. Give people a reason to feel connected to the business behind the gift.



IN-STORE EXPERIENCE

- Plan holiday window displays
- Create holiday signage and price cards
- Determine your gift-wrapping setup
- Create **Gifts Under $25 / $50 / $100** areas
- Create stocking-stuffer displays
- Merchandise grab-and-go gifts near checkout
- Plan holiday music, scent and overall atmosphere
- Update store-hours signage
- Prepare Small Business Saturday materials

QUICK TIP: Make shopping easy. Customers are often looking for a solution, not just a product. Offer curbside pickup and complimentary wrapping.



PHOTOGRAPHY + CONTENT

- Schedule a holiday photoshoot
- Photograph products individually and styled
- Capture gift-wrapping and packaging content
- Photograph your decorated storefront
- Capture owner/team holiday content
- Film short gift-guide videos + Reels
- Create "Gifts for Her / Him / Teacher / Hostess" content
- Create "Under $25 / $50 / $100" content
- Batch enough content to carry you through December

Need Content?

Don't wait until December to realize you need holiday photography. Fig can help small businesses plan and produce seasonal photography, video and social content so you have a library ready before the busiest weeks arrive.

Plan your Holiday Content



EMAIL CAMPAIGNS + GOOGLE

- Clean and update your email list
- Add newsletter sign-up prominently online + in-store
- Send a holiday preview email
- Send a gift-guide email
- Send Black Friday/Small Business Saturday email
- Send shipping/order deadline reminder
- Send a "Last-Minute Gifts" email
- Send a holiday thank-you
- Update your homepage with holiday messaging
- Add holiday hours
- Update Google Business Profile hours
- Make sure products + pricing are current
- Test checkout on mobile
- Test contact forms + newsletter signup
- Update shipping/pickup information
- Ask happy holiday shoppers for Google reviews

The goal isn't simply to have a great December. It's to let a great Q4 help build a stronger Q1.

Don't Forget January.

One of the biggest Q4 opportunities actually happens **after Christmas.**

Use the holiday season to grow your email list. Promote gift cards. Include a January bounce-back offer in every bag or shipment. Give holiday customers a reason to return after the decorations come down.

We're here to help Columbia's small businesses.



The City of Columbia Office of Business Opportunities provides resources and support designed to help local businesses grow and thrive.

EXPLORE OBO SMALL BUSINESS RESOURCES

And when you need help bringing your brand to life, Fig Columbia + ByFarr Design House are here to help tell your story—from photography and social media to branded packaging, print and holiday campaigns.

BYfarr + fig

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Here's to a strong Q4— and an even stronger start to 2027.