



WEBSCALE

# THE 2022 ECOMMERCE HOLIDAY READINESS GUIDE

Getting battle-ready for the  
all-important fourth quarter!



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**2022 Holidays  
Predictions**

**What Should Ecommerce  
Merchants Care About?**

**How Can  
Webscale Help?**

**Useful Resources**



# 2022 HOLIDAYS PREDICTIONS

# 01 | 2022 Holidays Predictions

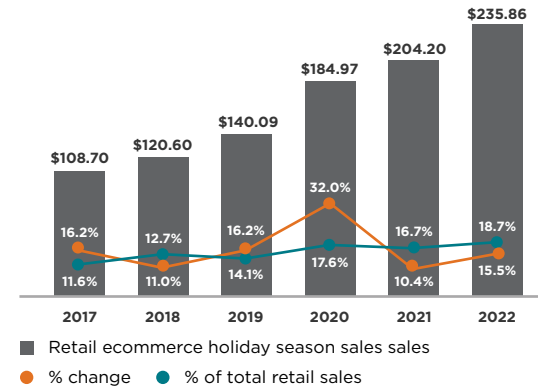
Many consumers have shopped early November over the last two years due to inventory and supply chain issues. But this year, the main motivating factor driving early purchases will be inflation which, at 8.5%, is currently the highest it has been in the US for more than 40 years.

According to [Salesforce research](#), 42% more shoppers worldwide and 37% more in the U.S. plan to start buying gifts earlier - the #1 behavioral change this holiday season as shoppers hope to pick their holiday gifts before prices go up even further.

Last year, **~180 million Americans** shopped during Cyber Week, according to the National Retail Federation (NRF). The figure compares with 186.4 million shoppers in 2020 and is in line with the average of the last four years. As retailers continue to extend deals and other offers into October and early November, half (49%) of shoppers said they took advantage of early holiday sales or promotions before Thanksgiving.

Black Friday remained the most popular day for in-store shopping, with 66.5 million shoppers, followed by 51 million shoppers on Small Business Saturday. Similar to recent years, Black Friday with 88 million online shoppers surpassed Cyber Monday (77 million).

**US retail ecommerce holiday season sales, 2017-2022**  
Billions, % change, and % of total holiday season retail sales



Note: includes products or services ordered using the internet, regardless of the method of payment or fulfillment; excludes travel and event tickets, payments such as bill pay, taxes, or money transfers, food services and drinking place sales, gambling, and other vice goods sales; sales are for Nov and Dec of each year  
Source: eMarketer, Feb 2022

## 2021 state of retail

 **104.9M**  
shoppers

 **127.8M**  
shoppers

## 2020 state of retail

 **92.3M**  
shoppers

 **145.4M**  
shoppers



Top gift purchases included clothing and accessories (bought by 51% of those surveyed), toys (32%), gift cards/certificates (28%), books/music/movies/video games (27%) and electronics (24%). With a longer holiday shopping season, consumers welcomed the flexibility it offered. The vast majority (84%) of holiday shoppers reported they had started shopping earlier and had completed more than half (52%) of their purchases before the holidays.

Cyber Week demand has been spilling out into early November and late December mostly due to the rise in buy-online-pickup-in-store (BOPIS) that has extended the holiday shipping window. U.S. retailers that offered BOPIS grew nearly 2x faster than their non-BOPIS peers over the last two weeks of the 2021 season.

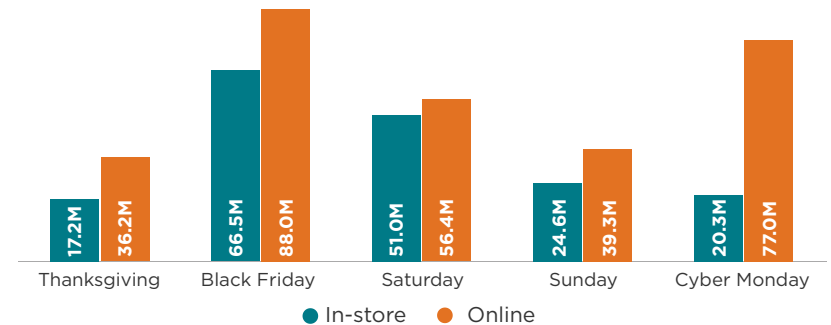
Last year, stores had a significant impact on digital sales, with store associates expanding their roles to become fulfillment experts, service agents, social influencers, and digital stylists. This year, with stores fully operational once again, we'll see consumers gravitate to physical locations in even greater numbers. Salesforce predicts that retailers with physical stores will grow online sales 1.5x faster than those without.

Over the long term, the ecommerce market has plenty of room to grow and could increase from \$3.3 trillion in 2022 to \$5.4 trillion in 2026 contributing 27% of retail sales, according to **Morgan Stanley**.

This year will mark a major U.S. retail milestone, as ecommerce will cross the \$1 trillion mark for the first time, according to the latest retail forecast from **eMarketer**. Total U.S. retail spending in 2022 is expected to grow by 6.4% YoY to reach \$6.988 trillion.

**Thanksgiving weekend in-store and online shoppers by day\***

\*May include consumers who shopped both in store and online



Source: NRF's Annual Thanksgiving Weekend Consumer Survey, conducted by Prosper Insights & Analytics

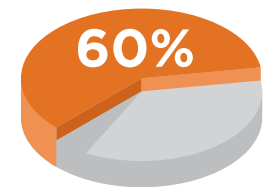


**Holiday shopping average spend**

**\$301.27**  
2021

**\$311.75**  
2020

**Digital orders influenced by the store**



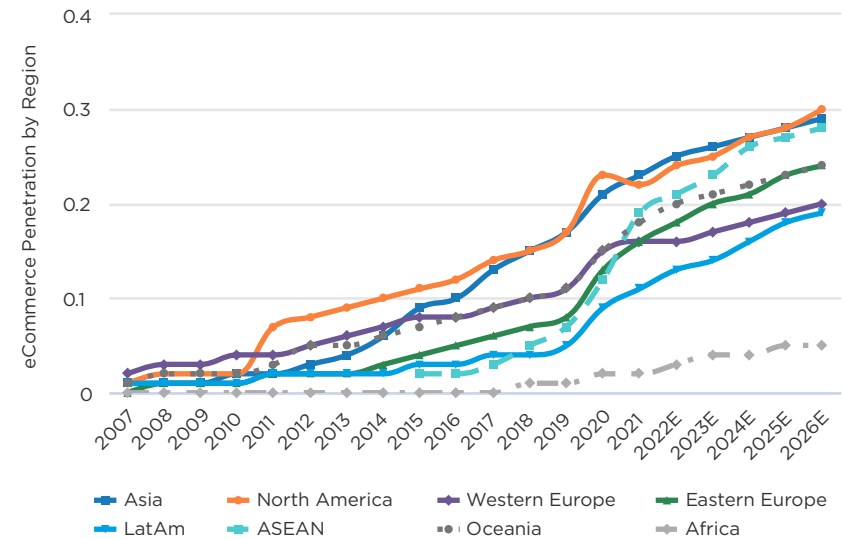
50% of respondents surveyed by [Adobe Commerce](#) in June 2022 said they are now more likely to make retail purchases on their phones, a big jump from the 26% who prefer in-store shopping and 24% who prefer shopping via their computer or desktop. For mobile commerce, eMarketer forecasts 2022 holiday sales to hit \$116.98 billion, or 49.6% of overall ecommerce sales. That also means we are likely one year away from mobile commerce accounting for the majority of holiday ecommerce sales.

Engaging and delighting customers across all touchpoints and delivering personalized experiences is increasingly becoming table stakes. Have no doubt - digital is not going anywhere!

While ecommerce will continue to normalize from its meteoric rise in 2020 and early 2021, brands and merchants have to embrace a new retail model - one where the moat separating the physical store and digital site is disappearing to offer shoppers a seamless frictionless experience.

This **eBook** will help you navigate the upcoming holiday season with confidence. Based on our insights gathered from managing hundreds of merchants, thousands of storefronts, millions of shoppers and billions of dollars in revenue every year, here's our checklist of action items to prepare your storefront for a spectacular holiday shopping season.

Ecommerce as a percentage of retail sales continues to grow across regions.



We are likely one year away from mobile commerce accounting for the majority of holiday ecommerce sales.



# WHAT SHOULD ECOMMERCE MERCHANTS CARE ABOUT?

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If brands want to capitalize on the digital surge during the holidays this year, they need to start preparing now by focusing on six key areas. Committed holiday readiness planning ensures flawless customer experiences, and can deliver unprecedented revenue growth.

# 90+ Core Web Vitals Score on Mobile and Desktop



## What you need: Web performance optimization with a CDN built for commerce

A Core Web Vitals score for your website that falls below 90, on desktop and mobile, may seriously impact your site's search ranking because Google is using the site's user experience, as measured by speed optimization and page performance, to index and rank the website.

A faster site delivers a better user experience, and there is a direct correlation between user experience, engagement, average cart size and revenue. According to Kissmetrics, "47% of consumers expect websites to load in two seconds or less and 40% will abandon a page that takes three or more seconds".

Improve your storefront's Core Web Vitals scores and Google Search will rank the site higher. Organic traffic is substantially more for websites with greater visibility on Google SERPs and during the holidays, you don't want to miss out on those bargain hungry eyes.

Customers are increasingly using mobile devices to shop for holiday gifts. Not only did mobile devices account for 60% of order share in Q4 2021, it comprised 72.9% of total ecommerce spend. So, optimize your mobile commerce experiences.





# Application Testing for Functionality and Peak Demand



## What you need: Cloud Application Testing and a code freeze!

Contrary to popular belief, most downtime incidents are not traffic related. Hasty code deployments too close to a planned sale, and poor or absent CI/CD processes, frequently result in unplanned downtime.

Testing to ensure that your latest code deployment isn't going to break the site, or your site will not crumble under a large surge of traffic, should be a regular activity for any ecommerce business, but it's even more critical during the all-important fourth quarter.

Performing Cloud Application Testing early on using real traffic logs and taking action based on quickly identifying issues around code issues, broken links, site and page availability and scalability can ensure your storefront is prepared to handle any traffic this holiday season.

After the code has been approved - freeze! The middle of a big sale event is no time to make code changes, updates or modifications, purging caches, yet remarkably many do. Aim to freeze your codebase at least 2 weeks before the holiday traffic kicks in as this helps prevent new glitches, bugs or lags, which could disrupt consumers from converting and making a purchase.

# #3 100% Storefront Uptime, Always



## **What you need: A storefront that scales automatically to any level of demand (Auto-scaling cloud infrastructure)**

Even a few minutes of downtime can seriously impact an ecommerce's business' revenue and customer loyalty. Hence, the core focus of your cloud infrastructure strategy should be to ensure that the storefront is "always-on."

Scaling for the upcoming holiday sales with dedicated servers is risky, and could see your site going down during an unexpected surge. If spare capacity is available, great, but it could also mean you're over-provisioned while not being used. Predictive auto-scaling keeps a site ahead of demand, and scales in/out in line with the site's traffic, so that the infrastructure is always right-sized, right-priced, and blazing fast - without hiccups!

# #4 Rapid Knowledgeable Support, at your Service



## What you need: Round-the-cloud DevSecOps support with guarantees

Across numerous Reddit threads one can see ecommerce merchants, and the digital agencies supporting them, venting about poor support from hosting providers, be they traditional ones or public cloud service providers or fully hosted commerce clouds.

If your hosting provider does not have any application-specific expertise, support tickets will take time to resolve and customer experience will be impacted. Ecommerce businesses need a 24x7x365 DevSecOps support team with cloud and ecommerce expertise acting as your extended IT team. And, for any unexpected glitches on the big days, ensure fast critical SLAs are in place.

# #5 Enterprise-grade Security



## What you need: Proactive, AI/ML-led end-to-end security

Last year during the Cyber Week alone, Webscale prevented over 76 million malicious bot requests. 76% of 1800+ businesses we surveyed stated lack of automation in threat management was their biggest challenge during the 2021 season.

Security cannot be reactive or driven purely by "people power." It has to be proactive and AI/ML-led to monitor, detect and defend against attacks in real-time, supported by a knowledgeable SecOps team to help with remediation and forensics as needed. If you are relying on a bundled WAF or CDN from your ecommerce platform provider, be wary of grossly inadequate capabilities that can seriously impact the effectiveness of your website's security, exposing you to significant levels of risk. Secure your storefront end-to-end – traffic, browser, and backend – and monitor everything.

# Deep Observability – Knowledge is Power!



## What you need: A single pane of glass view

Often referred to as a “black box”, traditional hosting providers intentionally provide very little access to your delivery infrastructure, making the gathering of data on traffic, sources, and conversions very challenging.

There are many tools out there to gather this data, but curating this data and performing the analysis necessary to gather meaningful insights can become a cumbersome triangulation process. What is needed is a “single pane of glass” view into the health of your digital enterprise so merchants can take timely action to address business critical issues.



# HOW CAN WEBSCALE HELP?

## 04 | How Can Webscale Help?

Webscale's SaaS technology stack has been purpose-built for ecommerce. Leveraging the cloud, automation, and machine learning, Webscale powers merchants to scale and grow their ecommerce revenue. By providing 100% uptime, enterprise-grade security, blazing fast performance and 24x7 support, Webscale enables ecommerce merchants to offer holiday shoppers a flawless customer experience.

**100%** Uptime during  
peak sales events

**100M+** Malicious bot requests  
blocked (2021)

**20B+** Traffic requests  
served (2021)

**8** Years of flawless  
holidays and peak  
sales seasons

**75%** Average reduction  
in TCO

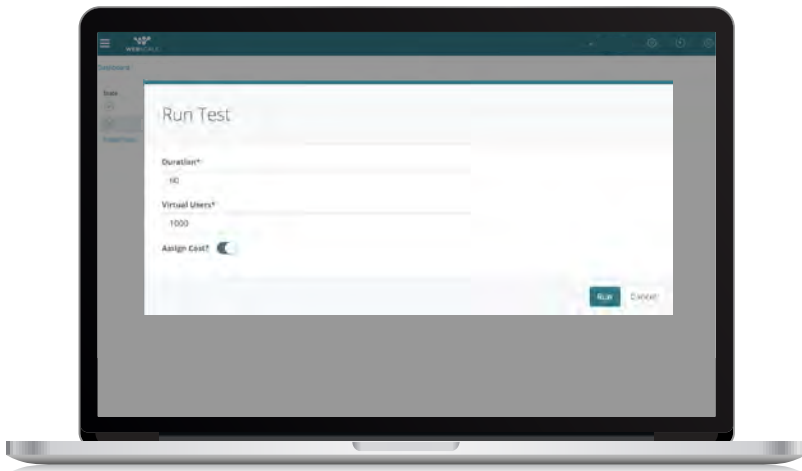
**50+** Cloud provider  
certifications

# #1 Application Testing

*Why: Ensure your customers have the best possible experience on your site, regardless of the traffic*

It's critical that merchants run synthetic tests to simulate end user patterns and shopping behavior on the ecommerce application, especially after new code deployments. They enable developers to scale up traffic and requests and find errors, while measuring the site's behavior, responsiveness, and overall performance.

**Webscale CloudEDGE Application Testing** replays your best sales event, as many times as you need, across any staging or cloned production site, hosted in any cloud provider or on-premise data center, using "real traffic logs."



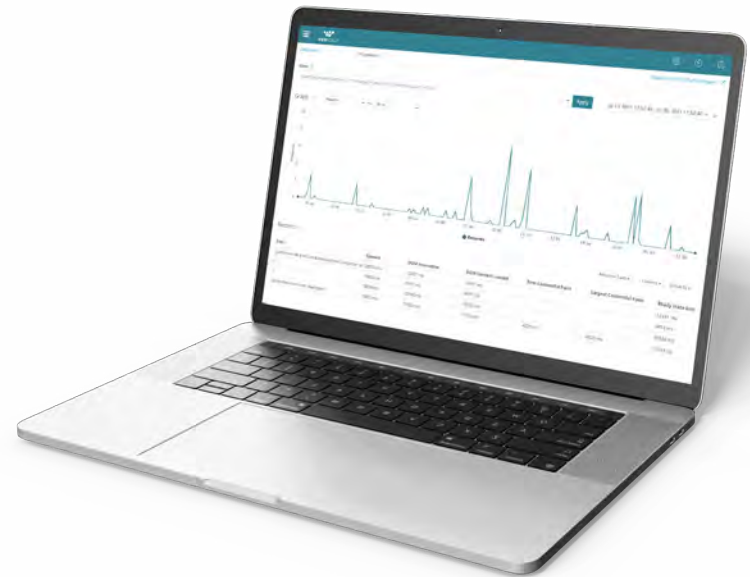


# #2 Core Web Vitals and Performance

*Why: Get ahead of Core Web Vitals and protect your search rankings for organic traffic.*

Core Web Vitals represent a specific aspect of users' real-world experience when visiting your site. They include the page loading experience (Largest Contentful Paint), interactivity (First Input Delay), and visual stability of page content (Cumulative Layout Shift). RUM (Real User Monitoring) can give you unprecedented observability into your site's performance and the Webscale CloudEDGE CDN, built for commerce, can catapult your rankings to the top.

**Webscale CloudEDGE CDN** is the world's first cloud-agnostic, compute-at-the-edge CDN designed for lightning-fast performance and the programmability needs of modern commerce. CloudEDGE CDN has been designed to enable modern commerce websites, with hundreds of product images and global customers, to deliver industry-beating Core Web Vitals, as well as additional services around observability, security, and delivery of headless frontends and PWA environments.

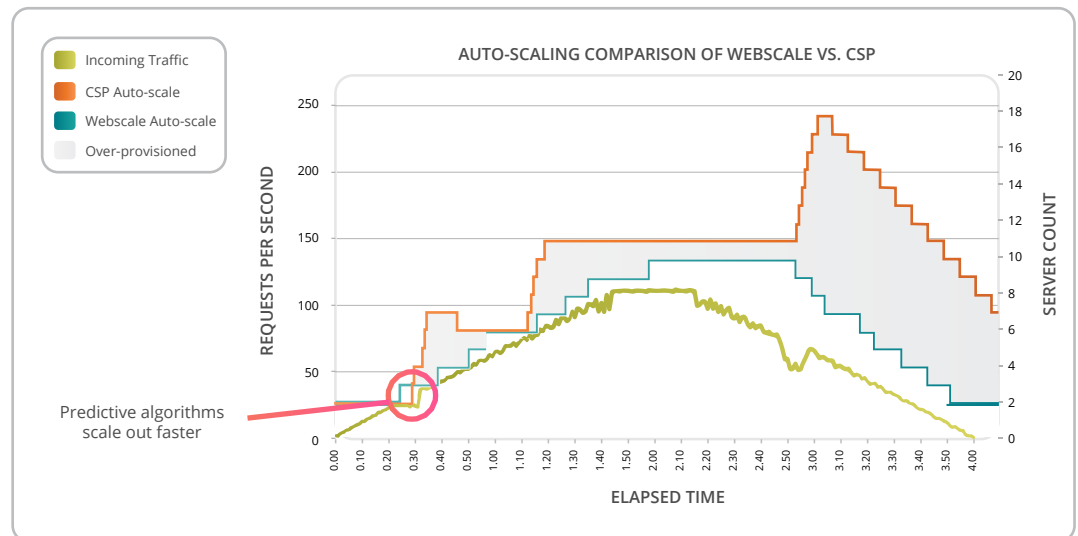


# #3 Cloud Delivery with Predictive Auto-scaling

*Why: Zero downtime whatever the traffic surge, and without over-provisioning.*

Webscale’s **predictive auto-scaling** leverages big data and analytics to forecast changes in user demand (site traffic), as well as subtle changes in application response times. It then proactively scales out the application infrastructure, in real-time, for 100% uptime and consistently high performance.

Webscale’s SaaS platform is built with complete redundancy and no single point of failure. The end-end high availability (HA) architecture, and built-in, automated “self healing” of faulty applications combined with the inherent resiliency of the public cloud, ensure virtually zero downtime due to any infrastructure related issues.



# #4 24x7x365 DevSecOps Support

*Why: Cloud and ecommerce experts who act as your extended IT team.*

Regardless of choice of ecommerce platform, cloud provider or toolchain, ecommerce businesses demand quick round-the-clock **DevSecOps support**.

Webscale's automation, **managed CI/CD**, highly defined DevOps protocols and an award-winning support team of cloud and ecommerce experts offer absolute peace of mind even during critical issues. With strict SLAs, Webscale support is the power on your side during big sales events.



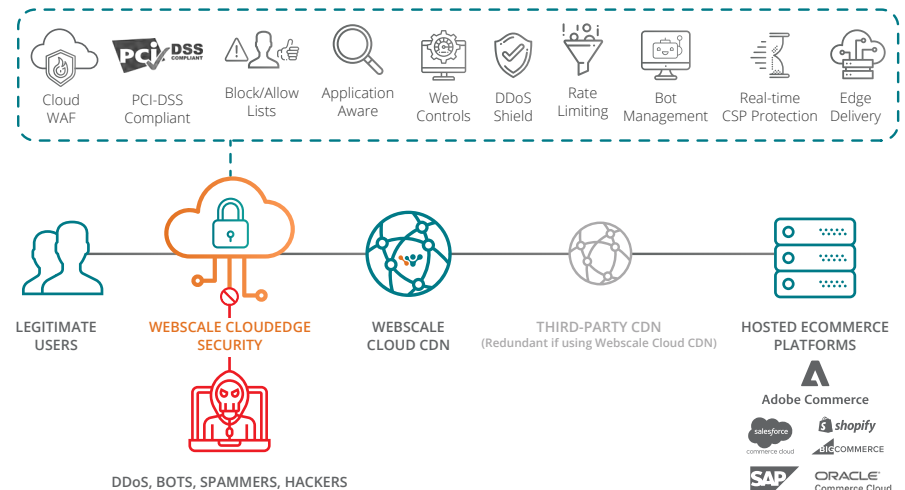
# 360-degree Security from Origin to the Edge

*Why: Comprehensive ecommerce security to address the gaps of bundled WAFs and CDNs.*

End-to-end automation-led security for ecommerce storefronts that can proactively identify and protect web applications from a myriad of evolving threats like bad bots, DDoS attacks, Magecart attacks, credit card skimming, and fraud.

**Webscale CloudEDGE Security** deploys our award-winning security platform at the traffic edge, alongside the Webscale CloudEDGE CDN or third party CDNs and WAFs, and on top of any fully hosted commerce clouds, headless or PWA deployments, and on-premise applications. A highly customizable and scalable solution,

CloudEDGE Security uses software, automation and analytics to proactively identify and protect your web applications from the front end through web traffic, malicious code inserted into the back end, bots or from browsers executing scripts to steal sensitive information.

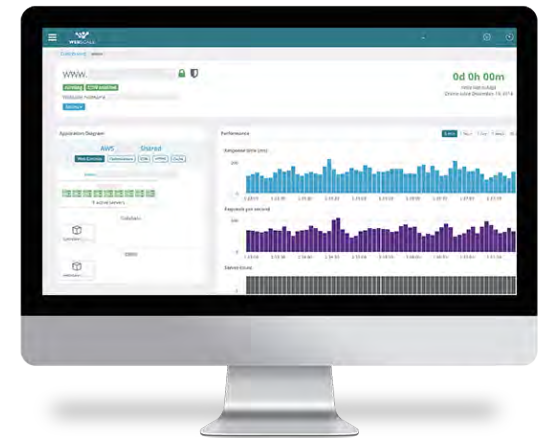
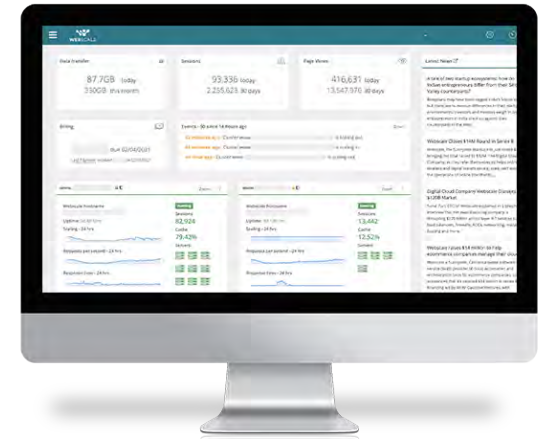


# Deep Observability and Real-time Control

*Why: Monitor Everything, Automate Everywhere for proactive readiness, always.*

Without monitoring and measuring the vital parameters of your online business, you cannot prevent adverse incidents or address critical issues in a timely manner. Complete visibility into traffic and infrastructure of your ecommerce business is necessary to manage and solve for availability, performance and security.

Few visibility solutions can claim to offer a comprehensive view into a website's infrastructure and user experience, which includes everything from event logs to uptime, performance, and security like the **Webscale Portal**. With advanced features like Traffic Viewer, Security Dashboard, Web Controls, CDN Logs, CSP Reports and Pageview Logs, the Webscale Portal is the most comprehensive monitoring tool in the ecommerce industry.





# USEFUL RESOURCES

## 05 | Useful Resources

Here are three Webscale Blogs that delve into the topic of holiday readiness.



# Now is the Time!

Freeze your code early and address issues around availability, performance and security for optimizing the overall customer experience.  
*Happy Holidays!*

## Need help?

Reach our ecommerce experts at [info@webscalenetworks.com](mailto:info@webscalenetworks.com)

## About Webscale

Webscale is powering modern commerce by layering software for performance, security, availability and compliance, over a distributed global network that leverages the cloud, automation, machine learning, and DevOps protocols to address the needs of growing brands. With use cases across a variety of ecommerce platforms and architectures, Webscale simplifies the deployment and day-to-day management of storefronts, including headless and progressive web application infrastructure, and across any self-hosted or fully hosted commerce cloud. Deployed in multi-cloud environments, including Amazon Web Services, Google Cloud Platform, and Microsoft Azure, Webscale powers Fortune 1000 brands including Dollar General, Unilever, Swarovski, Olympus, Regal Cinemas, and thousands of other B2C, B2B, and B2E ecommerce storefronts across 12 countries. Webscale has offices in Santa Clara, CA, Boulder, CO, San Antonio, TX, Bangalore, India, and London, UK.

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