

Executive summary

Q4 2024 was something of a rollercoaster ride for ecommerce, marked by inventory growth, shifting consumer behaviors and an increasing need for brands to dial in their retail media advertising strategies.

Amazon's on-hand inventory surged by 21.4% YoY, yet categories such as Furniture and Electronics struggled to gain momentum. Not surprisingly, seasonal milestones like Prime Day and Turkey 5 brought hefty spikes in traffic—but the last-minute shopping frenzy in December resulted in revenue losses due to out-of-stock items.

Even with stronger sales, Amazon faced growing margin pressures as prices bounced back following Q3 inventory clearances, and discounts cooled off. Advertising investments also dipped when compared to Q4 2023—with volatile spending, steady CPCs and mixed ROAS outcomes adding to the complexities of staying competitive.

This quarter served as a crucial reminder: to thrive in today's hypercompetitive ecommerce environment, brands must fine-tune their inventory strategies, optimize pricing and enhance advertising efficiency to maintain growth and profitability in the long run.

Key takeaways



Inventory growth

Amazon's aggregate on-hand inventory increased by 21.4% YoY, driven by strategic stock buildup in categories like Grocery and Pet Products.



Traffic patterns

Seasonal events like Prime Day and Turkey 5 drove significant traffic growth YoY across most categories, even beating out typical Q4 shopping peaks in some categories.



Sales & margins

Q4 sales grew YoY, but margins continued to erode across most categories. Amazon's gross margin pressures signal potential cost-cutting efforts heading into 2025.



Advertising performance

Ad spend overall declined compared to Q4 2023. CPC remained steady, while ROAS improved in a few categories, notably Toys.



Consumer behavior shifts

Procrastination shopping in December led to revenue losses due to OOS issues, reflecting a need for improved inventory allocation strategies during peak periods.





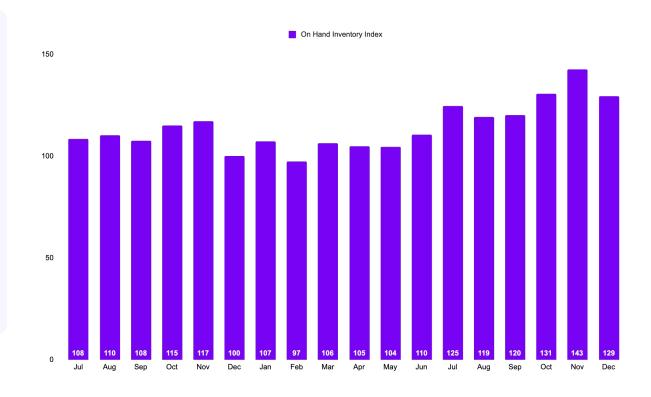
Total industry overview

Q4 2023 vs. Q4 2024 recap

Commerce Q

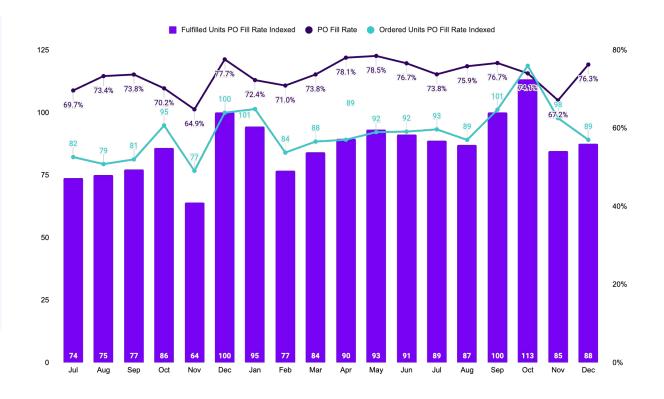
Aggregate inventory continues to rise

Amazon has shown steady growth in aggregate on hand inventory, with a 21.4% increase in Q4 2024 vs. Q4 2023.



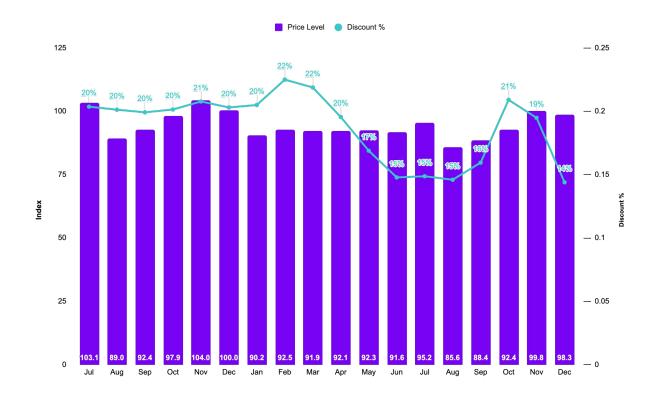
FULFILLMENT Fill rates & ordered units peaked in October

Ordered units and fill rate show significant improvement over Q4 2023.



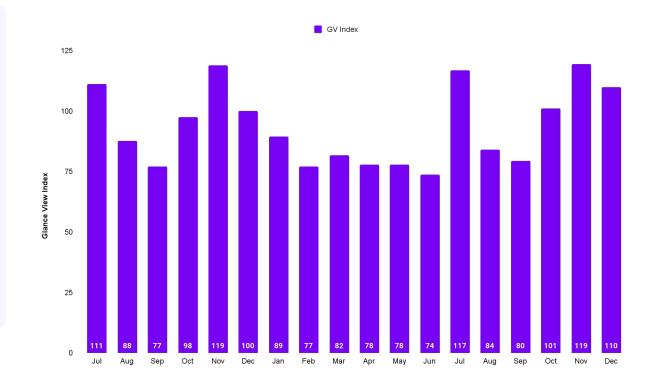
Aggregate prices increased in Q4

Q3 saw Amazon move through aged inventory as prices shifted back up in Q4. Discounts temporarily increased but fell below Q4 2023 levels.



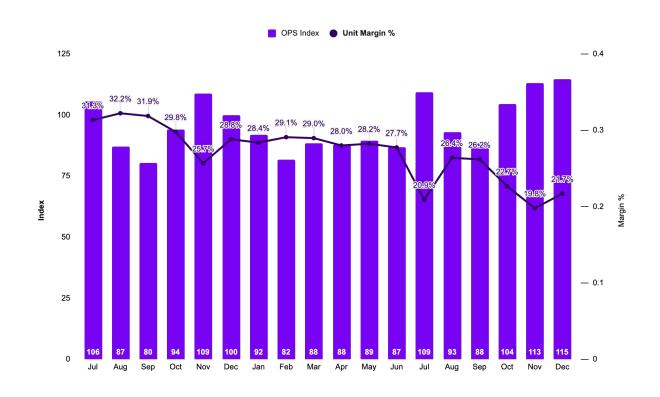
Total Q4 traffic increased YoY

There were clear seasonal trends in traffic as Prime Day and Turkey 5 peak shopping days drove traffic growth across categories.



Q4 Sales grew YoY as margins continue to decline

Amazon's gross margins continue to fall. Be prepared for a difficult AVN to start 2025 as Amazon looks for cost concessions.



AD SPEND | ROAS | CPC

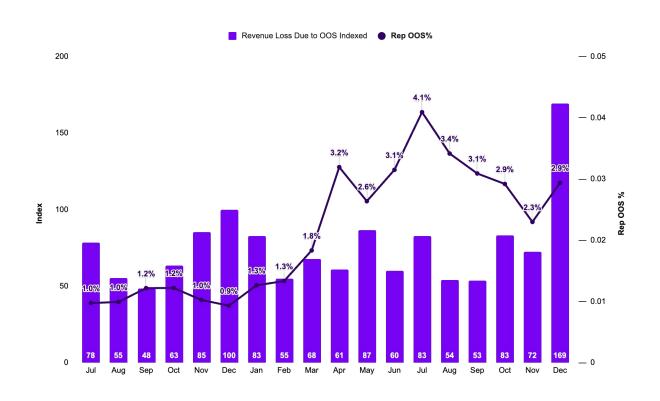
CPCs remained steady as ROAS improved & Q4 spend declined YoY

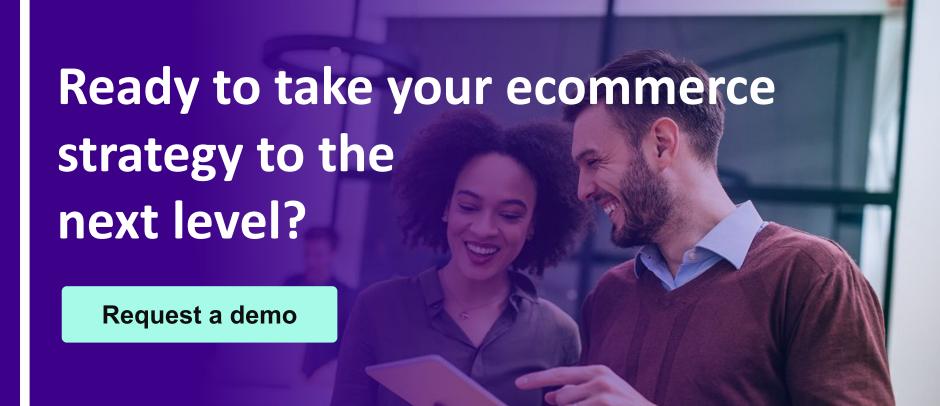
Cost per click showed relatively small variation YoY. Q4 ad spend declined year over year.



Procrastinating shoppers drove December's spike in revenue loss

On hand inventory peaked in November, as shoppers who searched late for gifts were met with OOS messages.



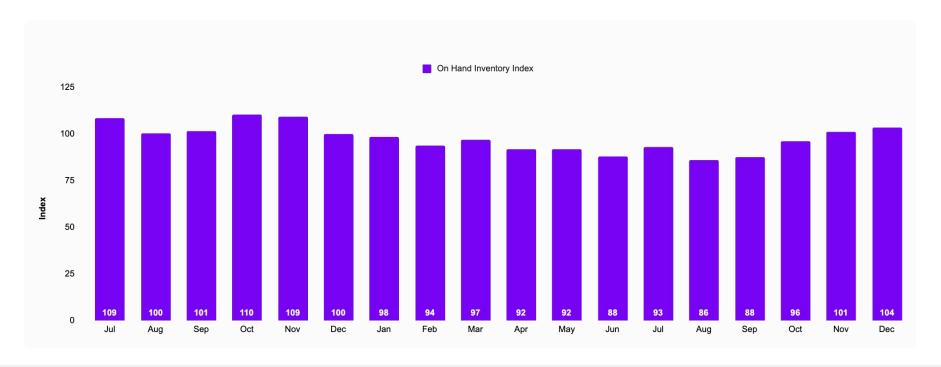


Baby Products industry overview

Q4 2023 vs. Q4 2024 recap

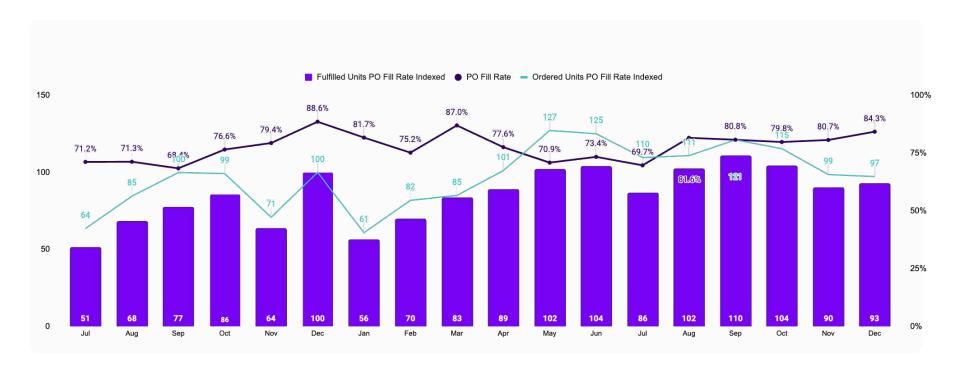
ON HAND INVENTORY

Inventory rebounded in December, with Q4 inventory down from the prior year



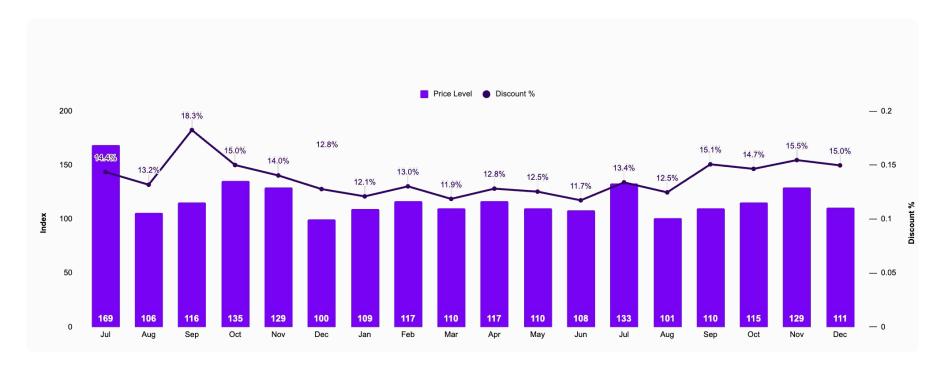
FULFILLMENT

Fill rates remained stable YoY as ordered unit volume declined at the start of Q4



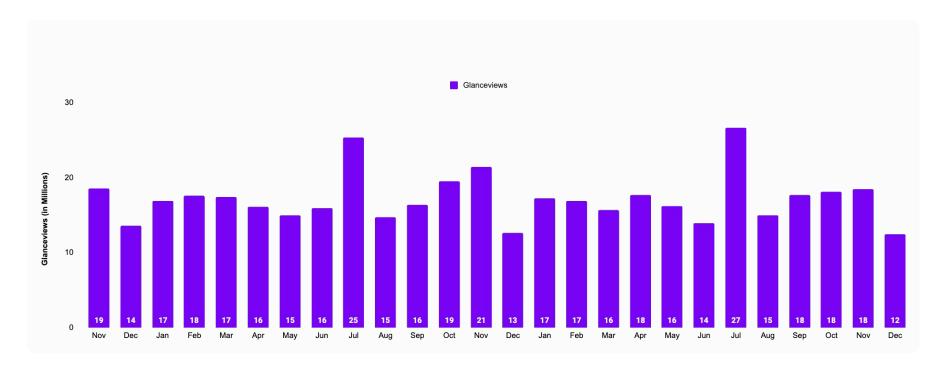
PRICE LEVEL VS. DISCOUNT %

Discounts increased as site prices climbed since the start of 2024



GLANCE VIEWS

Prime Day drove larger organic traffic increases than Q4



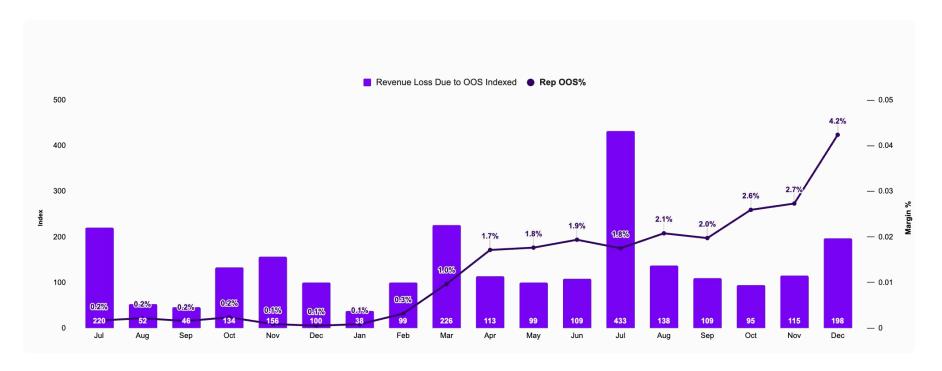
OPS VS. UNIT MARGIN %

Sales increased slightly as margins compressed



REVENUE LOSS DUE TO OOS

Revenue loss due to OOS increased with Prime Day accounting for the largest impact

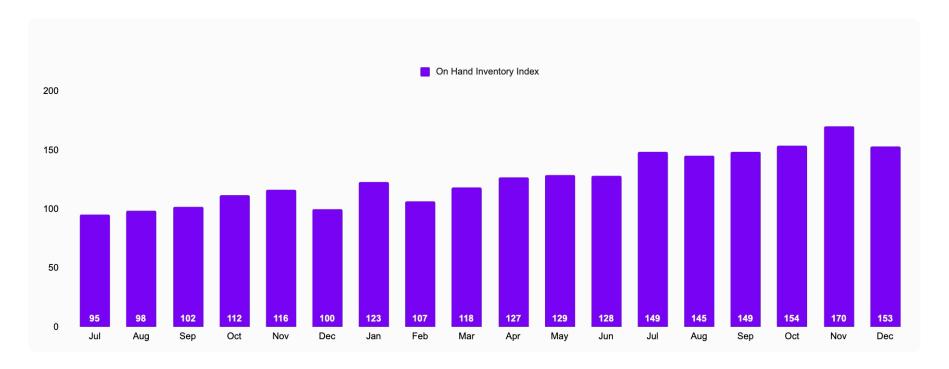






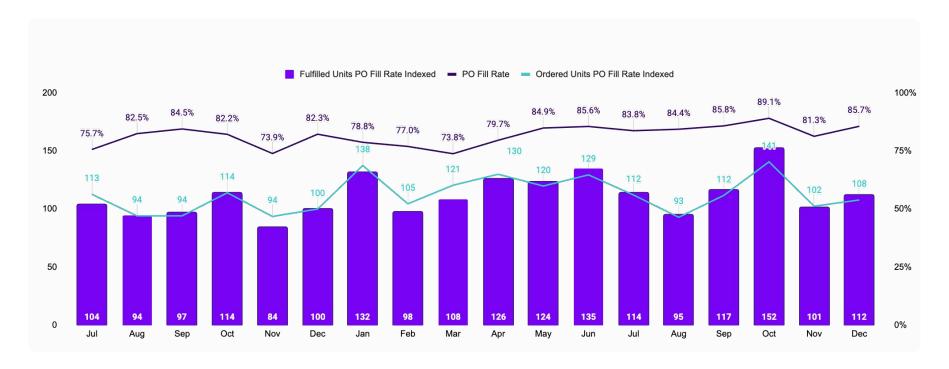
ON HAND INVENTORY

On hand inventory shows consistent growth as the category grows



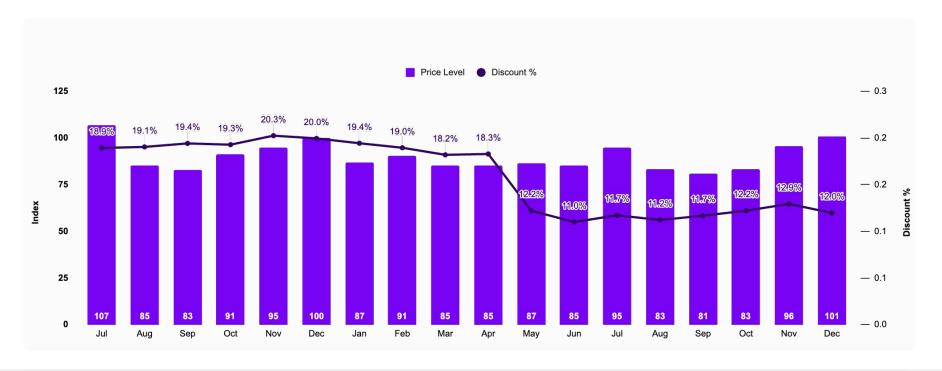
FULFILLMENT

Order efficiency improved as Amazon's inventory grew



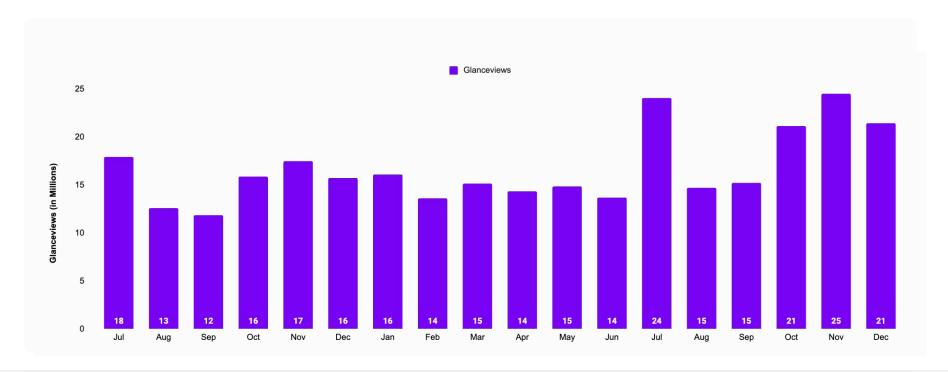
PRICE LEVEL VS. DISCOUNT %

Prices remained flat while discounts declined



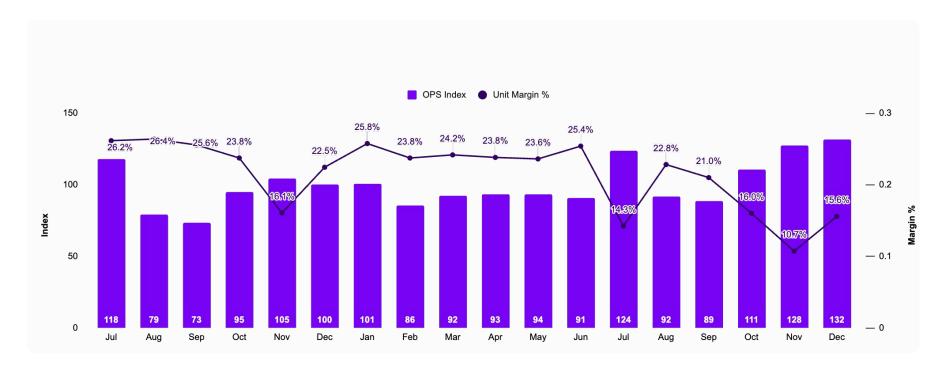
GLANCE VIEWS

The category saw seasonal spikes in organic traffic



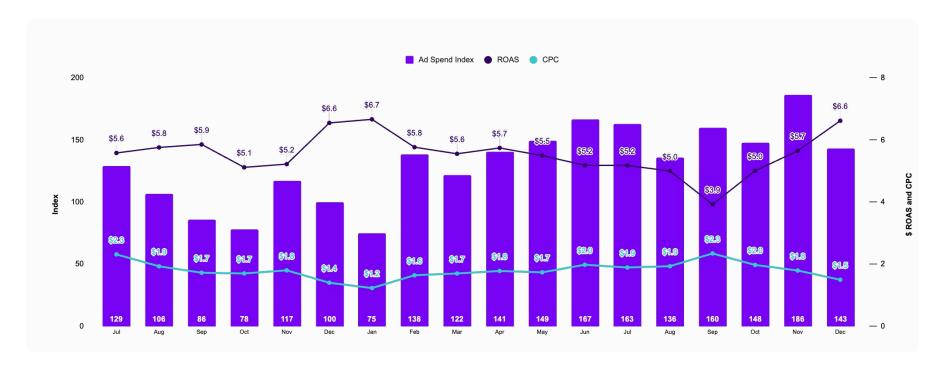
OPS VS. UNIT MARGINS

Margins eroded as sales increased



AD SPEND | ROAS | CPC

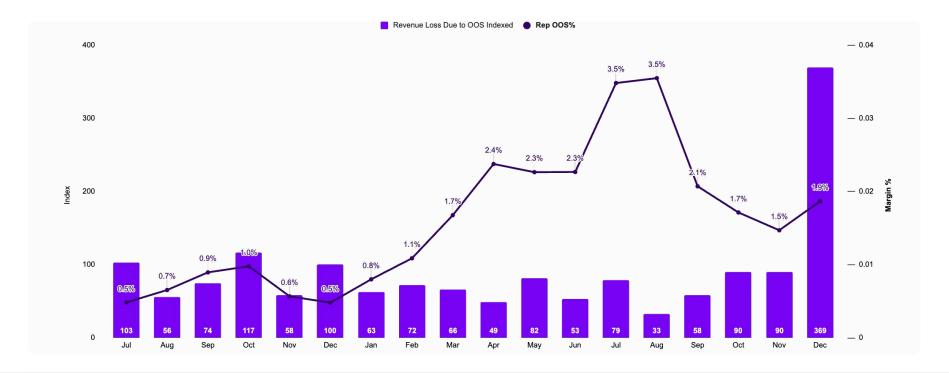
Ad spend increased, but isn't yet driving reduced returns in Q4



The state of retail ecommerce | Q4 2024 Commerce | Q4 2024 Beauty industry overview

REVENUE LOSS DUE TO OOS

December saw a spike in unavailability due to seasonal demand

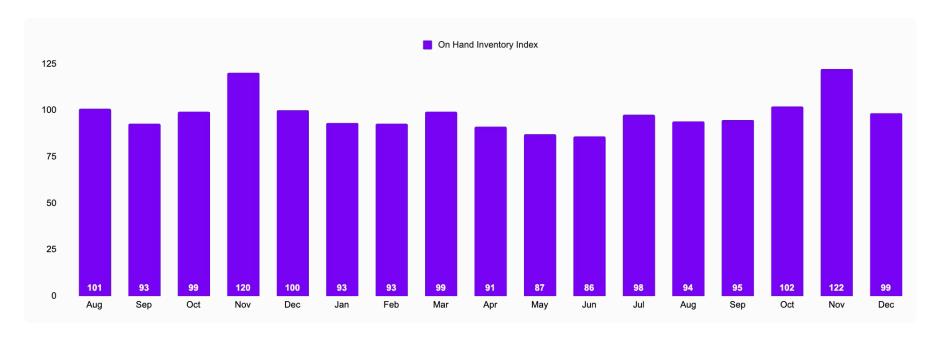




Electronics industry overview

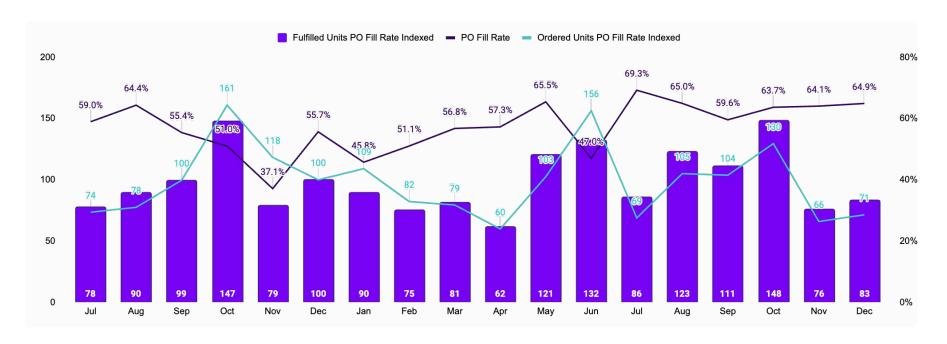
Q4 2023 vs. Q4 2024 recap

ON HAND INVENTORY Limited growth in on hand inventory signals weak category growth



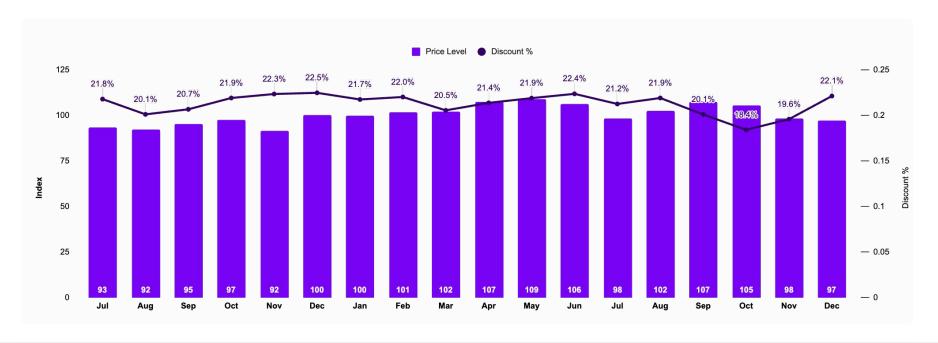
FULFILLMENT

Fill rates have improved as ordered units fall

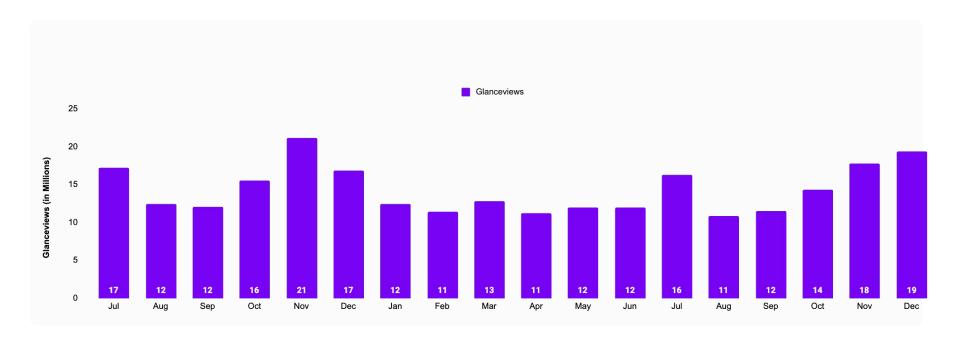


PRICE LEVEL VS. DISCOUNT %

Price levels & discounts held steady

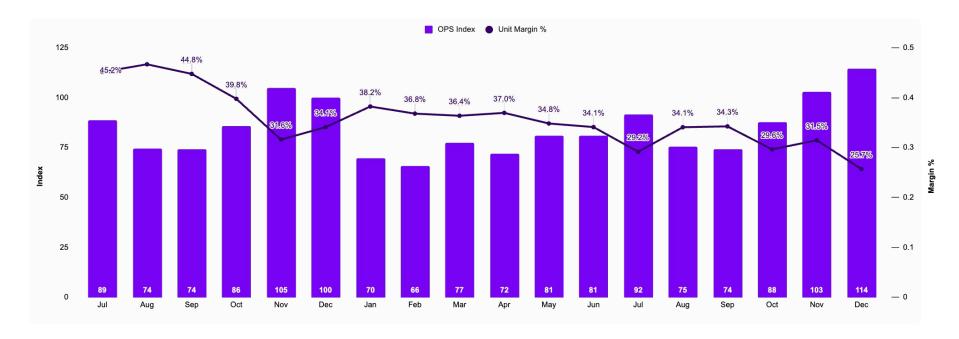


Q4 organic traffic is declining YoY



OPS VS. UNIT MARGIN %

Unit margins saw a consistent decline



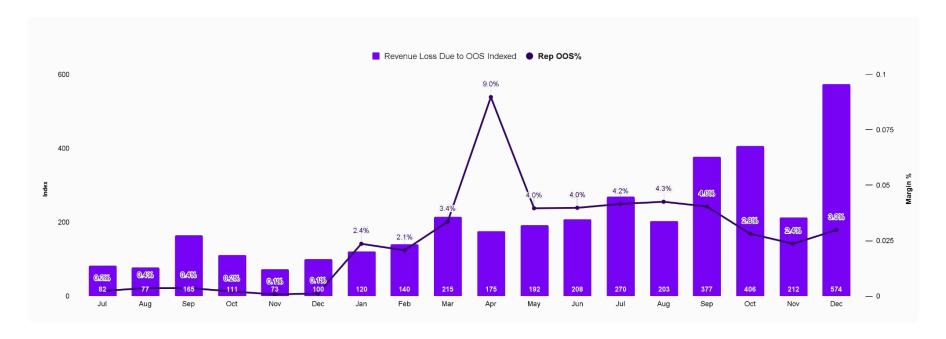
AD SPEND | ROAS | CPC

Ad spend is increasing to counter soft organic demand



REVENUE LOSS DUE TO OOS

Limited on hand inventory growth contributed to increasing OOS%

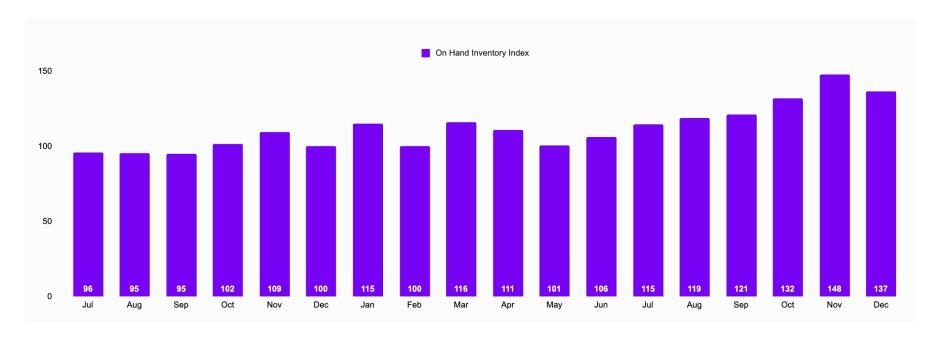






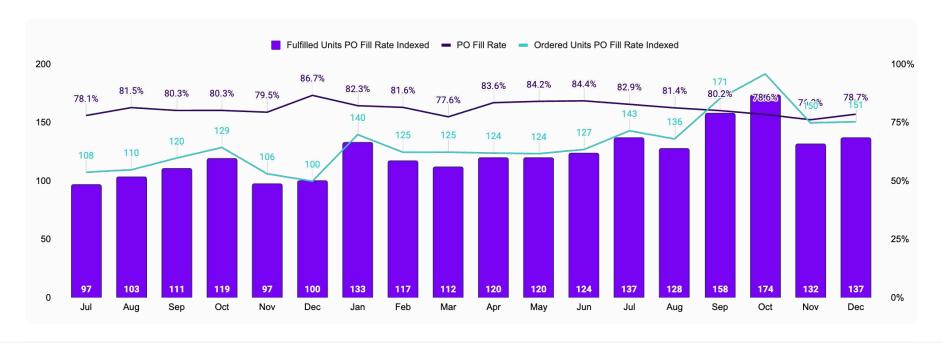
ON HAND INVENTORY

Grocery continues to grow as Amazon builds a more aggressive inventory position



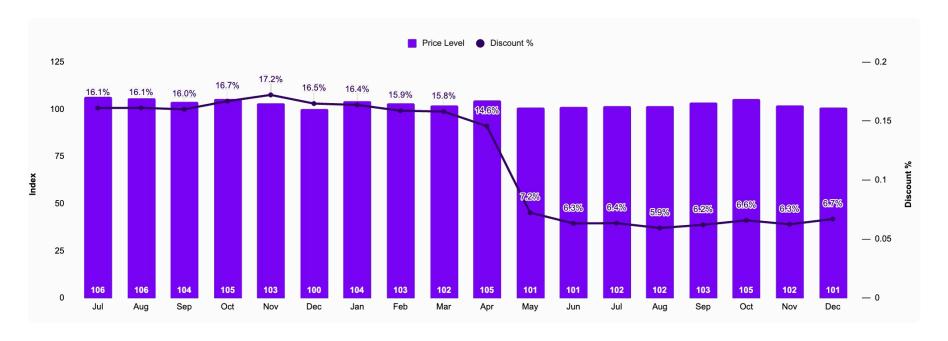
FULFILLMENT

With growing inventory, order efficiency also increased



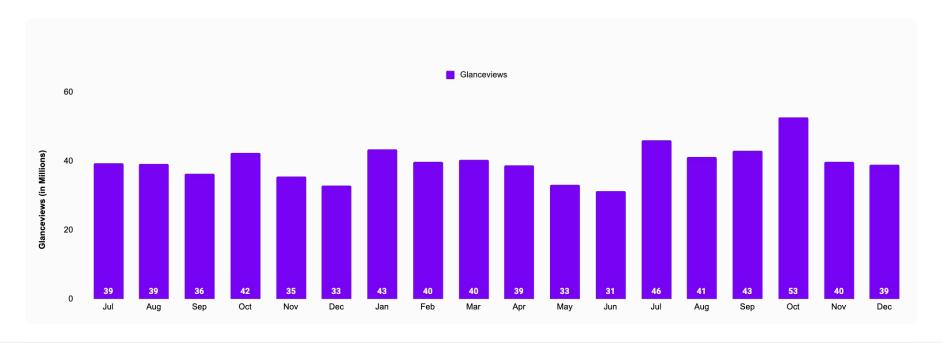
PRICE LEVEL VS. DISCOUNT %

Prices remained stable as discounts dropped



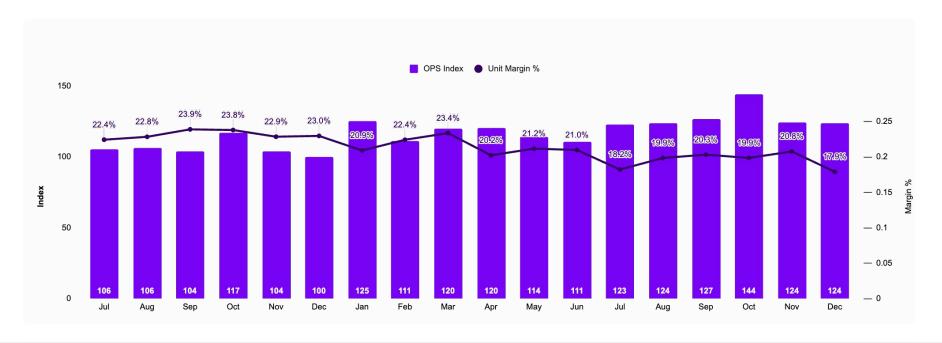
GLANCE VIEWS

Traffic continues to grow YoY



OPS VS. UNIT MARGIN %

Brands saw slight margin declines as sales continued to grow

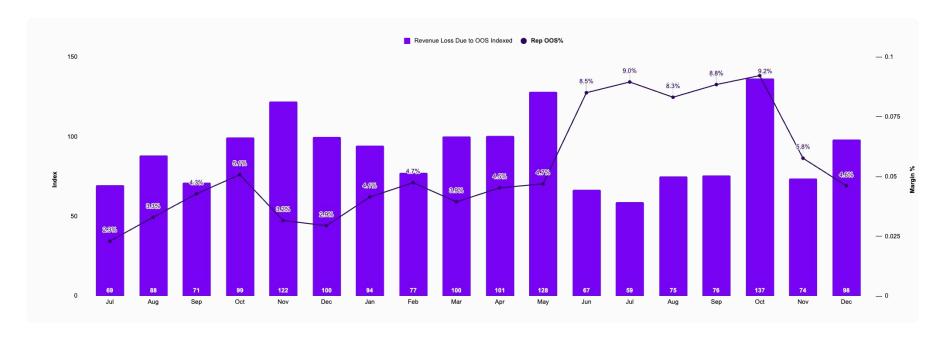


AD SPEND | ROAS | CPC Less ad spend competition & increased ROAS gives brands an opportunity to capture Q1 & Q2 share



REVENUE LOSS DUE TO OOS

Despite an increased inventory position, replenishable OOS% exceeded other categories

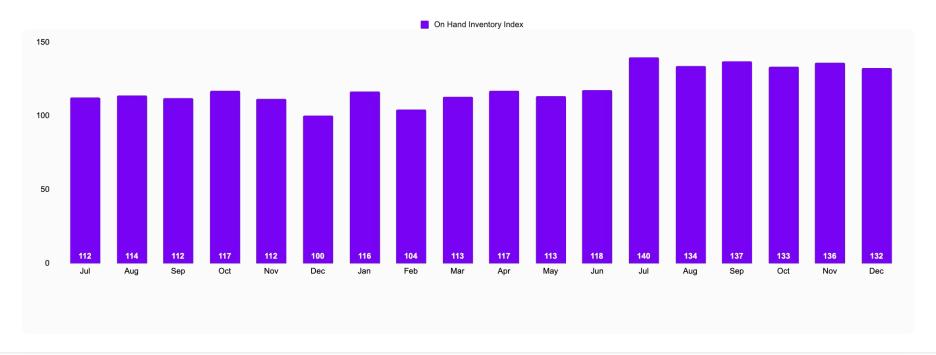






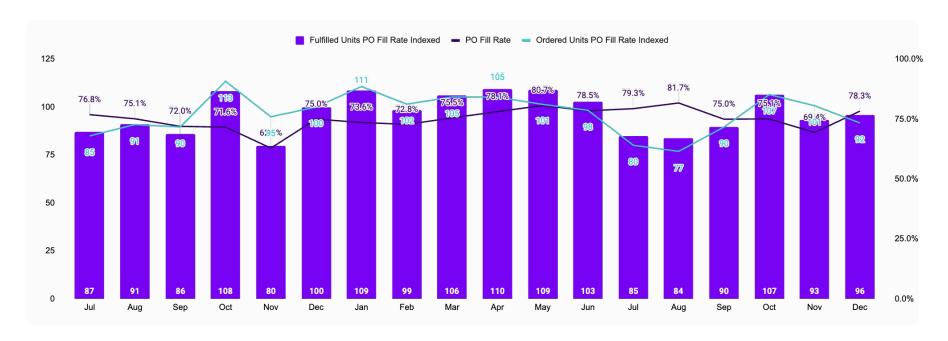
ON HAND INVENTORY

Amazon continues to stock up in a growth category



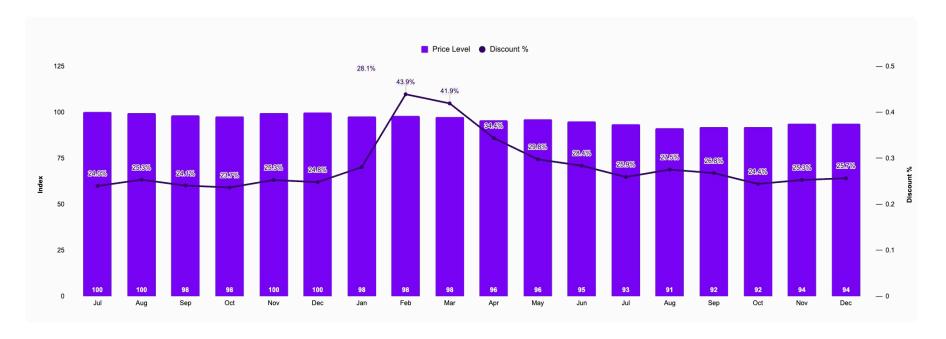
FULFILLMENT

Fulfillment efficiency holds steady as Amazon increases stock



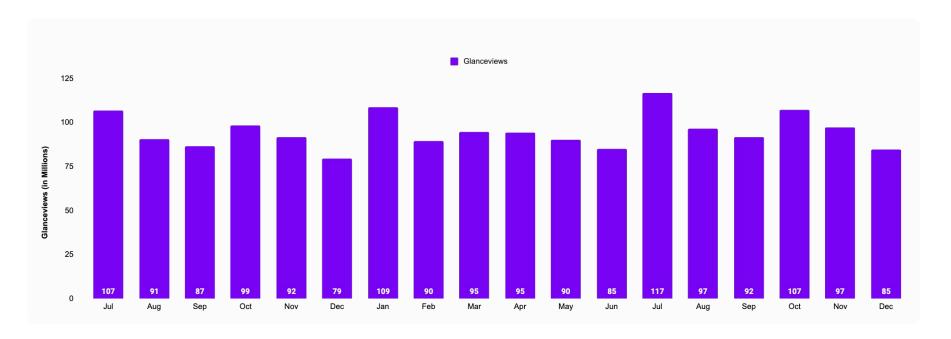
PRICE LEVEL VS. DISCOUNT %

Prices declined while discounts remained flat



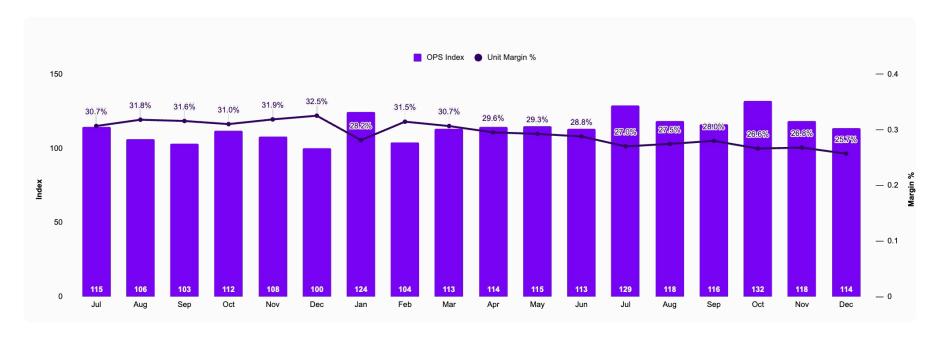
GLANCE VIEWS

Organic traffic increased as the category continued to grow



OPS VS. UNIT MARGIN %

Margins eroded in this growing category

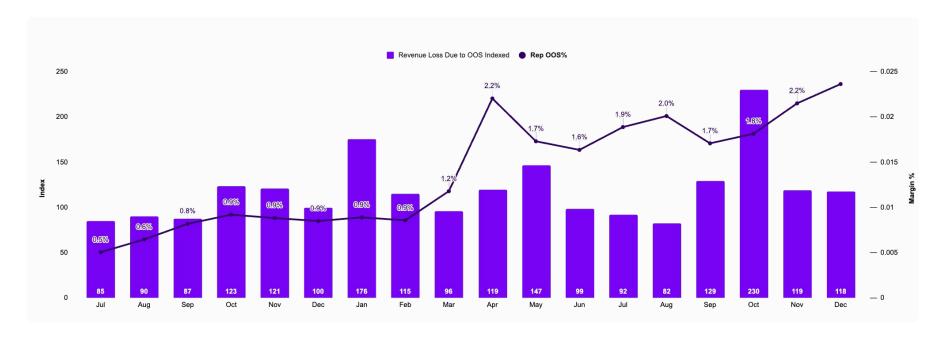


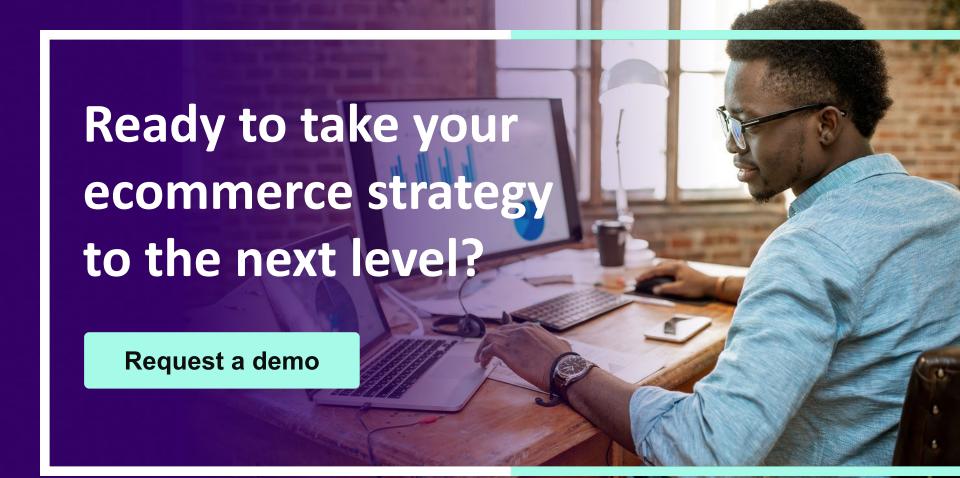
AD SPEND | ROAS | CPC Brands saw a sharp reduction in ROAS & ad spend with increasing CPCs



REVENUE LOSS DUE TO OOS

Revenue lost due to OOS steadily increased

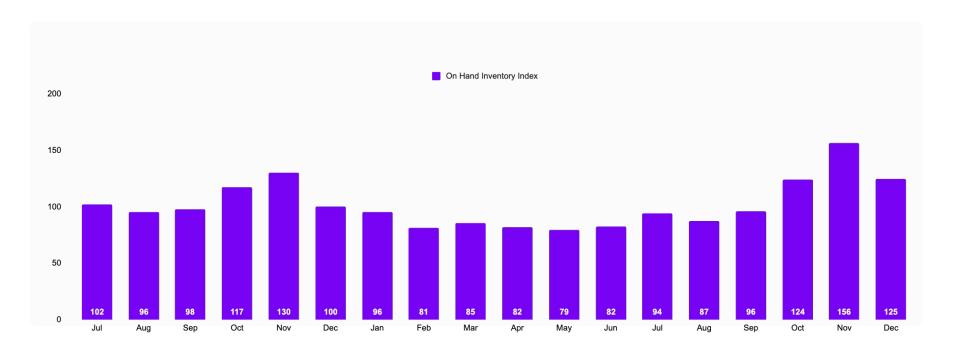






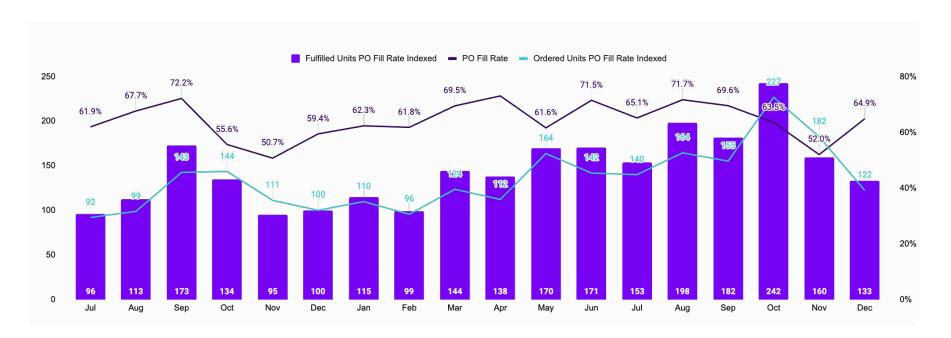
ON HAND INVENTORY

On hand inventory increased by 25% YoY



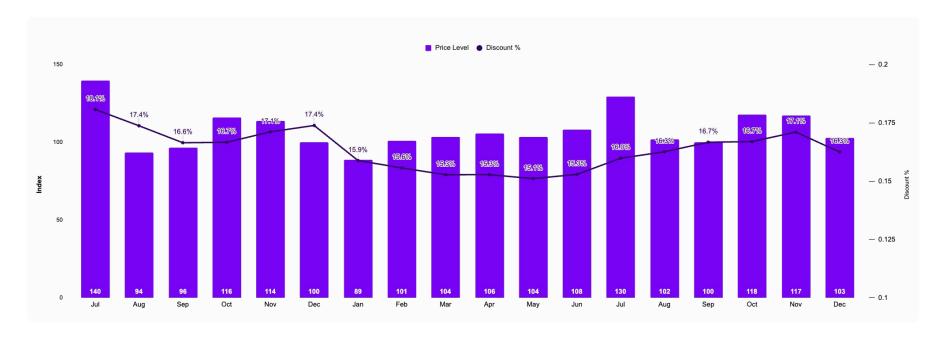
FULFILLMENT

However, order efficiency declined

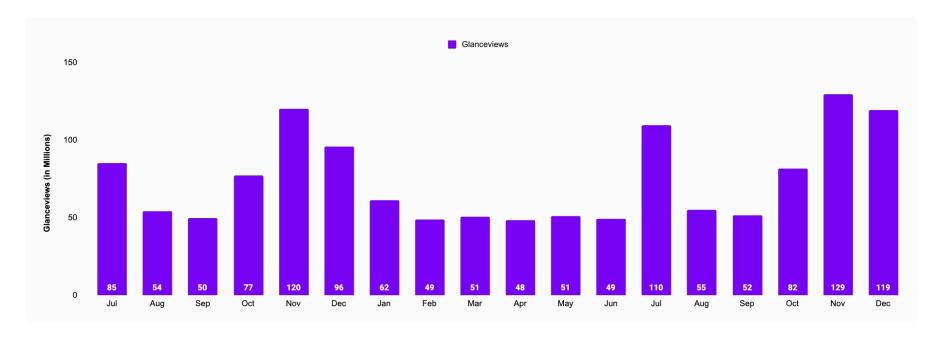


PRICE LEVEL VS. DISCOUNT %

Consistent site prices put discounts on the decline

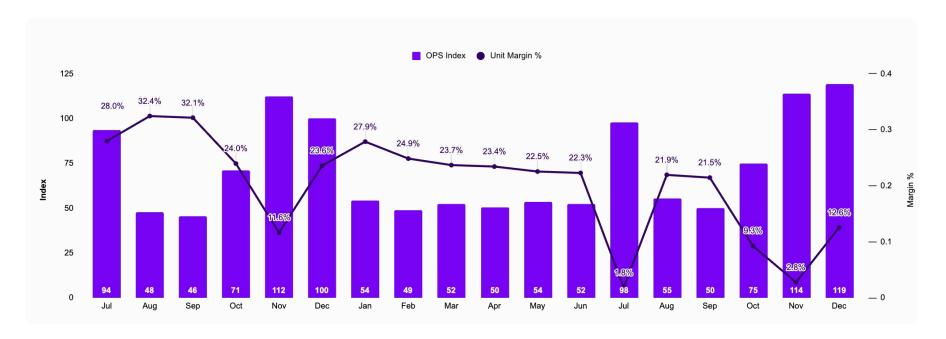


Brands saw growing seasonal traffic spikes



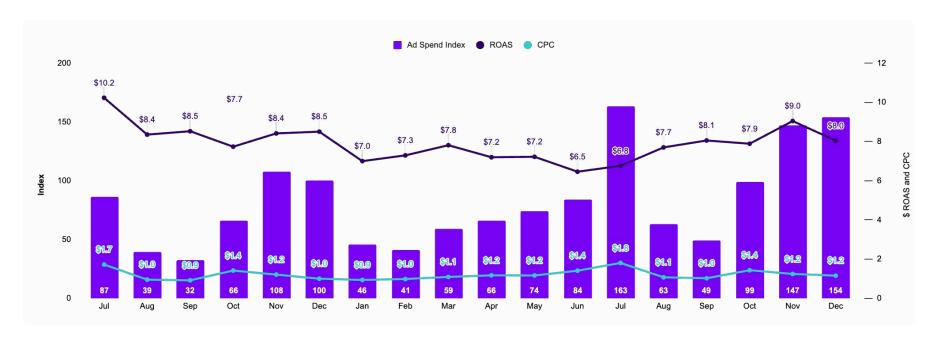
OPS VS. UNIT MARGIN %

Peak season category sales grew YoY with steady margin declines



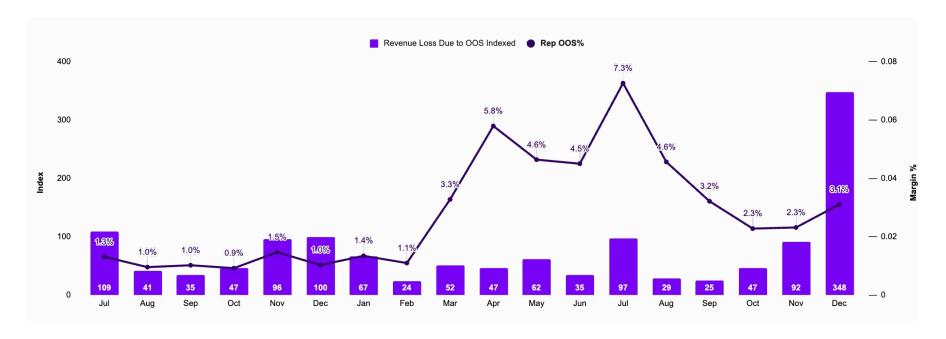
AD SPEND | ROAS | CPC

Ad spend competition increased around tentpole events like Prime Day



REVENUE LOSS DUE TO OOS

Replenishable OOS% declined in Q4, but had a larger revenue impact due to peak demand



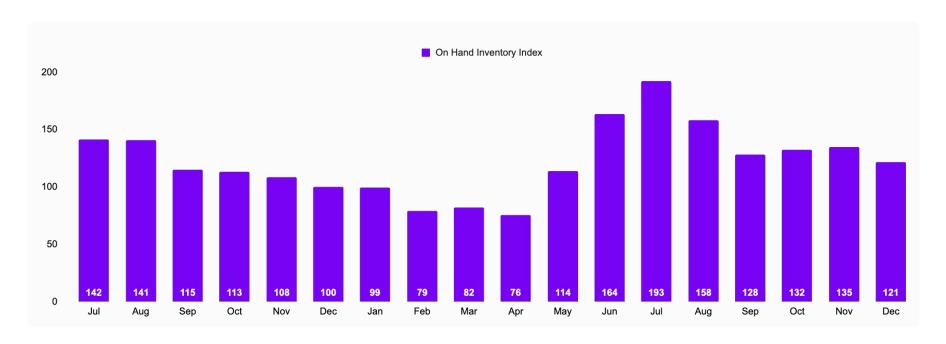


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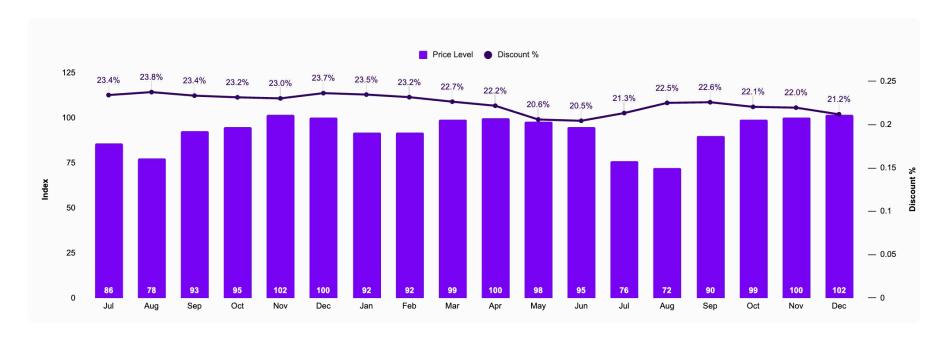
ON HAND INVENTORY

On hand inventory peaked over Prime Day, increasing YoY



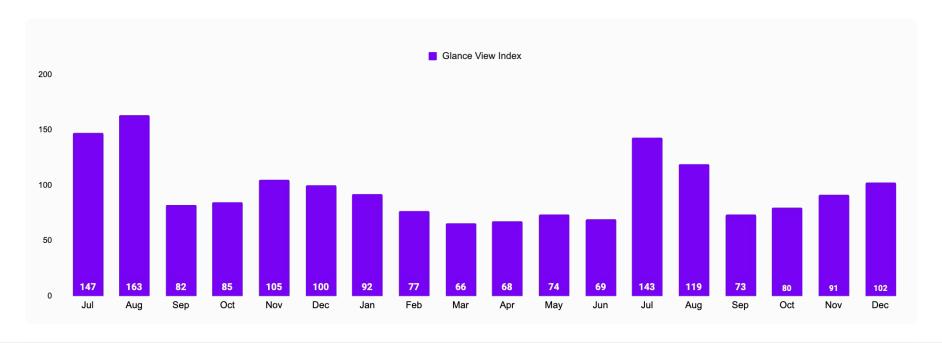
PRICE LEVEL VS. DISCOUNT %

Prices remained stable as discounts slowly degraded

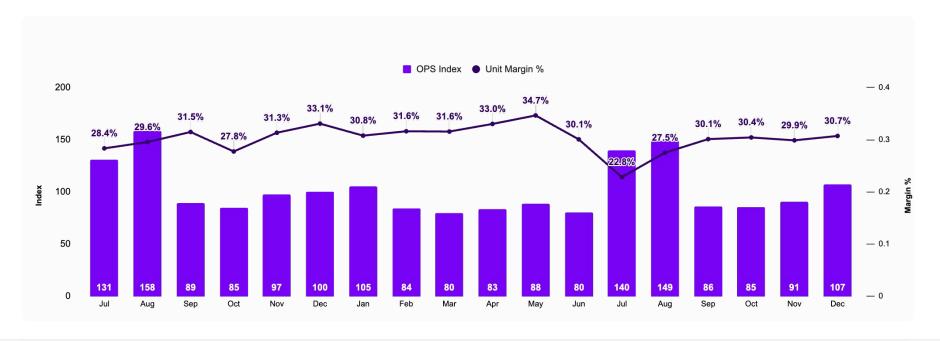


GLANCE VIEWS

Category traffic peaked around Prime Day & back-to-school events

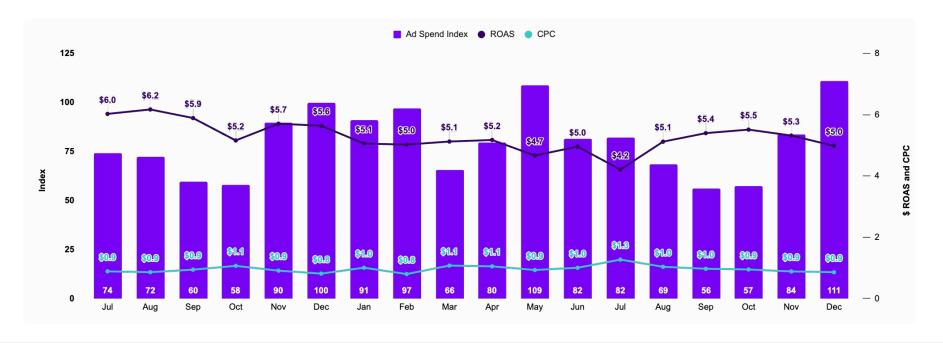


OPS VS. UNIT MARGIN % Unlike other categories, margins held steady



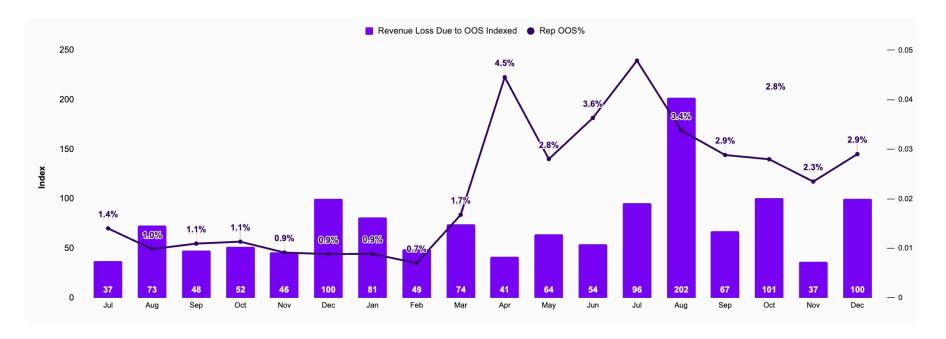
AD SPEND | ROAS | CPC

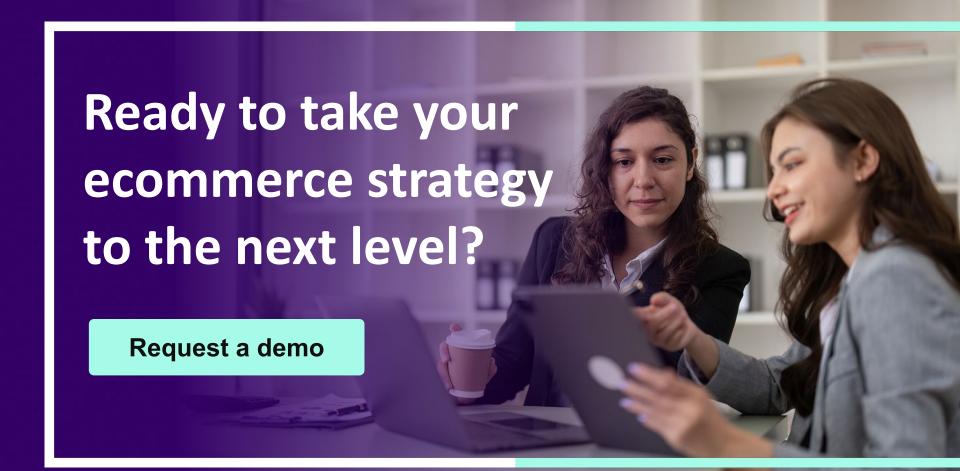
Despite intermittent ad spend spikes, ROAS & CPC performance did not improve



REVENUE LOSS DUE TO OOS

Replenishable OOS rates grew despite increased inventory position

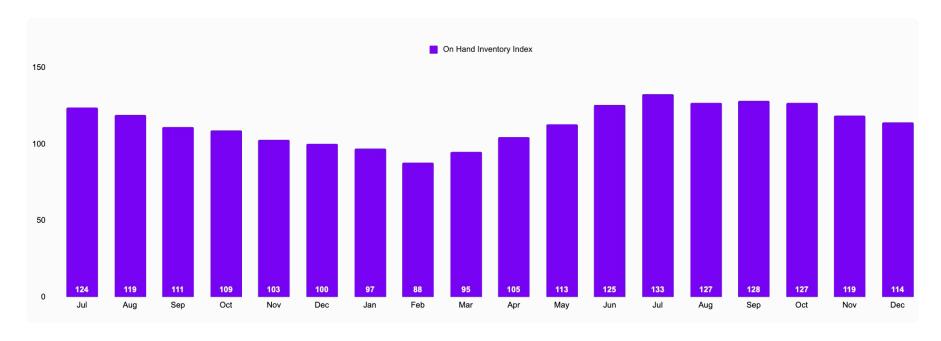






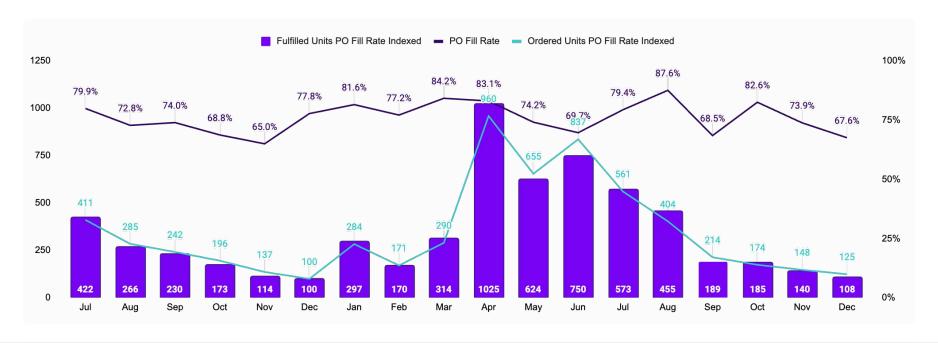
ON HAND INVENTORY

Inventory trends followed a seasonal curve with peak in summer; brands should expect Q1 to follow suit



FULFILLMENT

Amazon is carrying inventory from peak season into Q4 & beyond



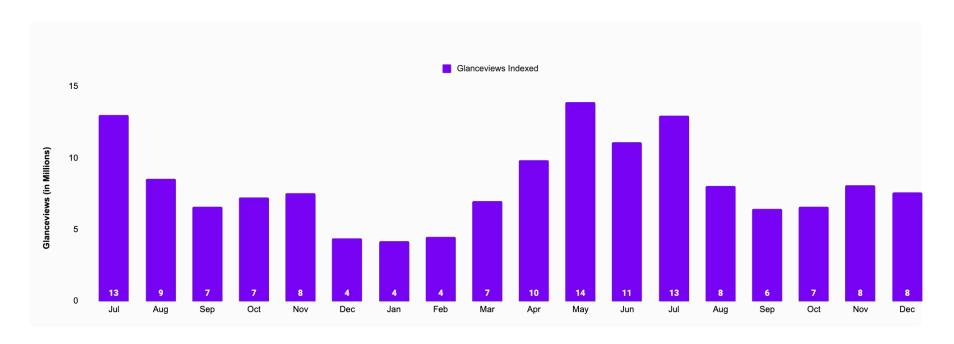
PRICE LEVEL VS. DISCOUNT %

Discount rates continued to decline as prices increased in Q4



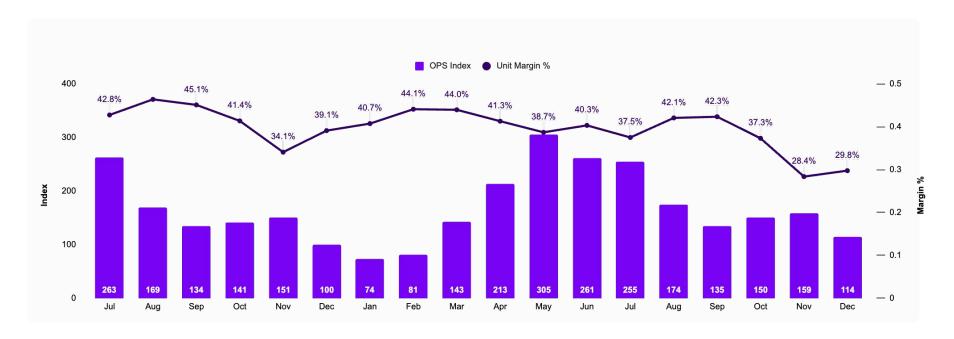
GLANCE VIEWS

The category saw highly seasonal traffic patterns with limited, but growing traffic in Q4



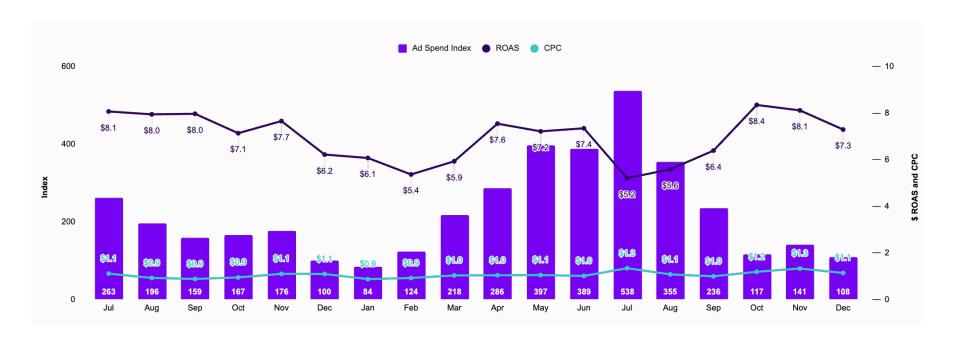
OPS VS. UNIT MARGIN %

Like most other categories, unit margins continued to contract



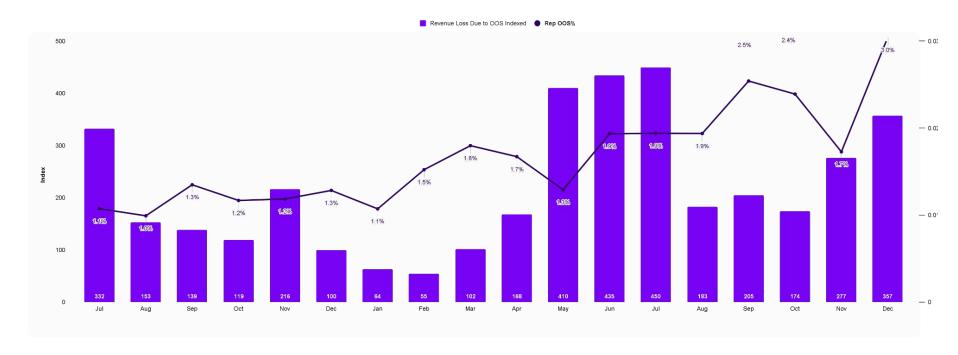
AD SPEND | ROAS | CPC

YoY peak season spend increased dramatically with a sharp decline in ad efficiency



REVENUE LOSS DUE TO OOS

Replenishable OOS% steadily increased, with the largest impact during peak spring & summer seasons



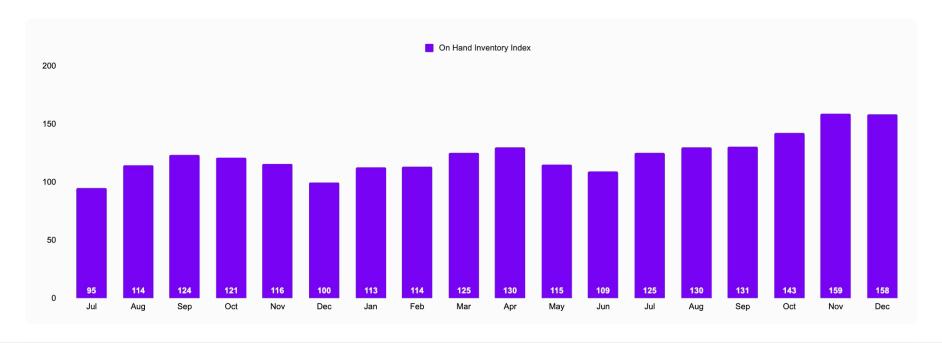


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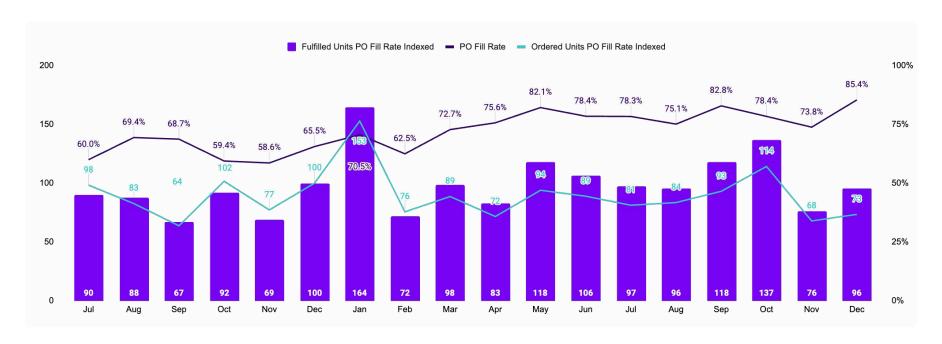
ON HAND INVENTORY

Pet Products, like other consumables categories, saw strong inventory growth



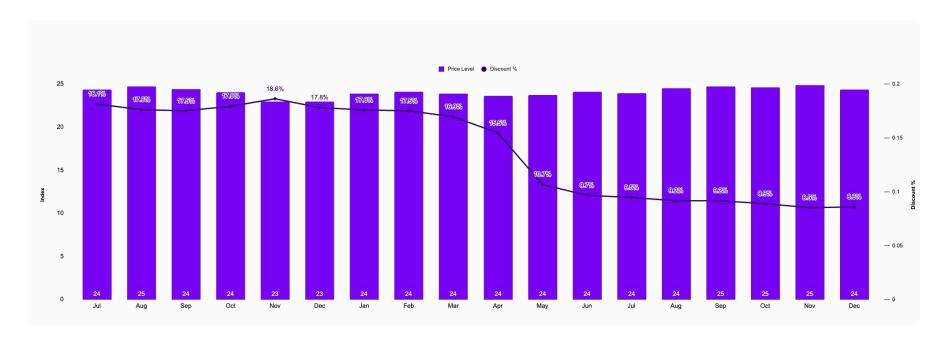
FULFILLMENT

With increased on hand inventory, fill rates also improved



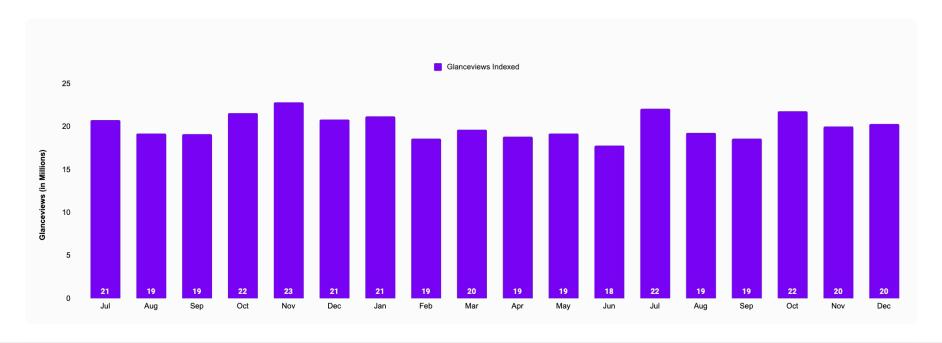
PRICE LEVEL

Discounts fell as prices in the category remained consistent



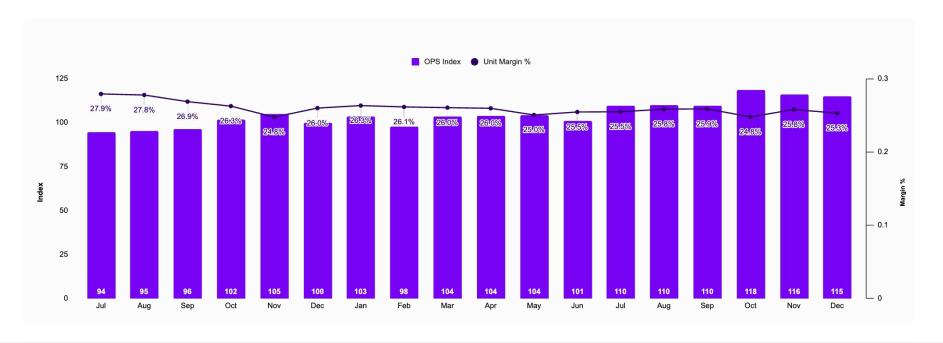
GLANCE VIEWS

Traffic was largely flat despite increasing sales



OPS VS. UNIT MARGIN %

Unit margins remained stable with increased sales



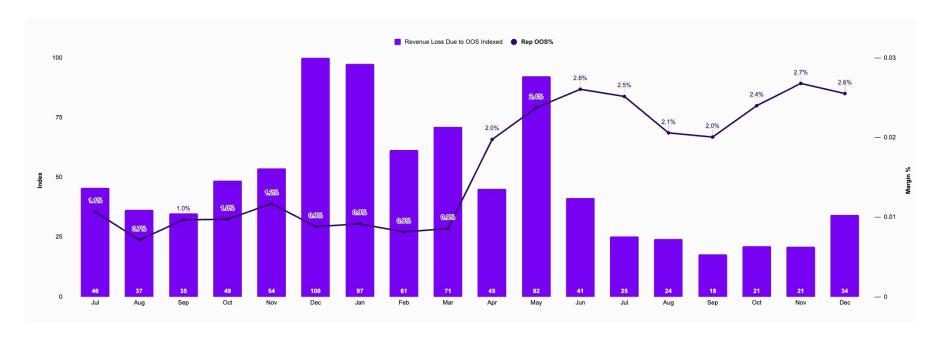
AD SPEND | ROAS | CPC

Brands pulled back on ad spend substantially throughout 2024 vs. Q4 2023



REVENUE LOST DUE TO OOS

Replenishable OOS% remains elevated, though financial impact has declined

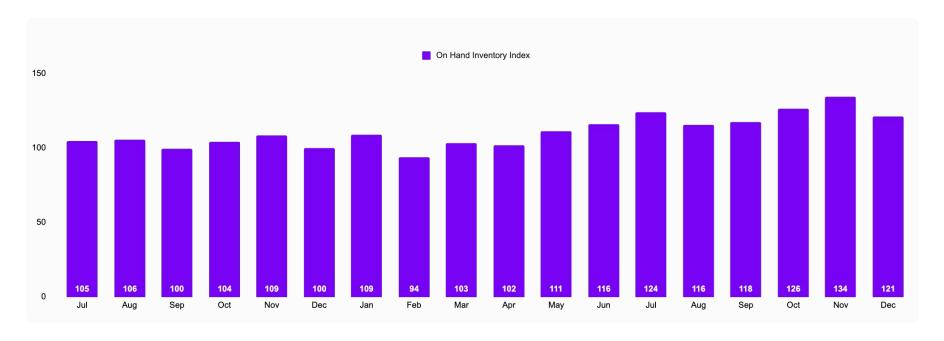






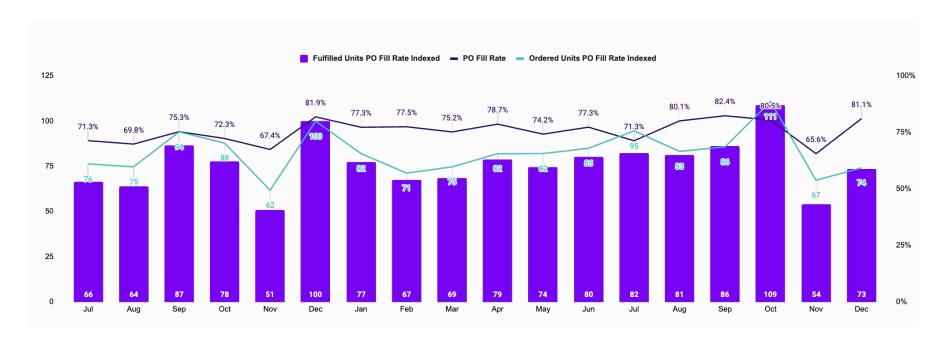
ON HAND INVENTORY

Amazon's on hand inventory showed steady growth



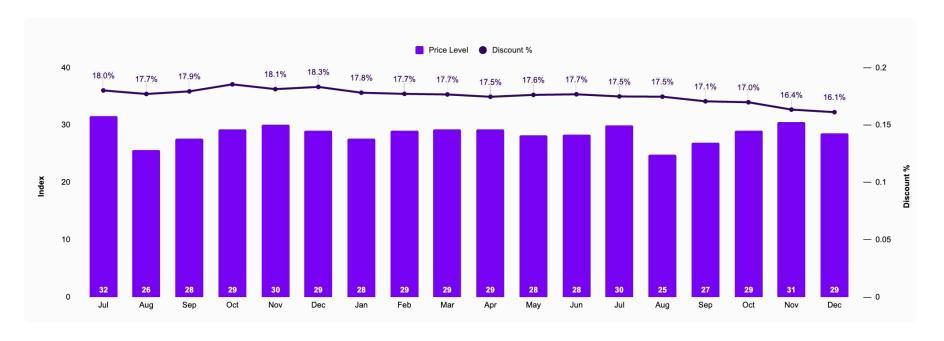
FULFILLMENT

As inventory increased, fill rates & order efficiency remained steady



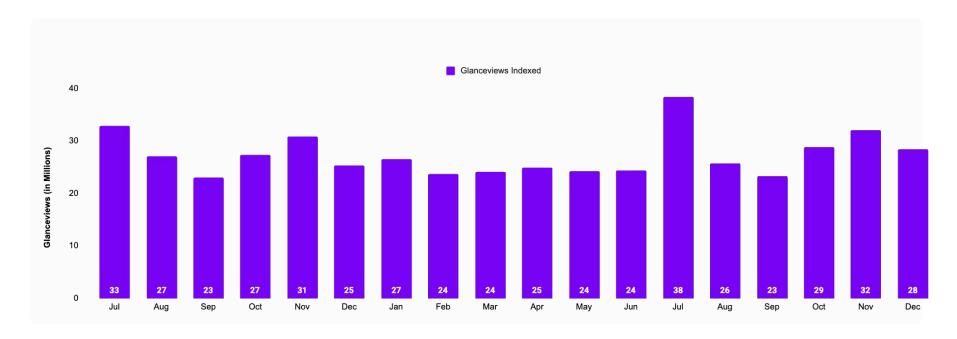
PRICE LEVEL VS. DISCOUNT %

Prices remained steady with a slight erosion in discount rate



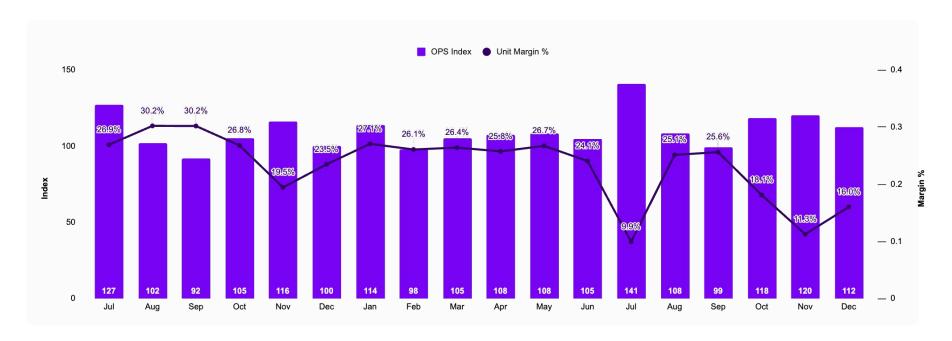
GLANCE VIEWS

Prime Day continues to drive peak organic traffic



OPS VS. UNIT MARGIN %

Prime Day outperformed the typical Q4 peak in sales as unit margins steadily declined

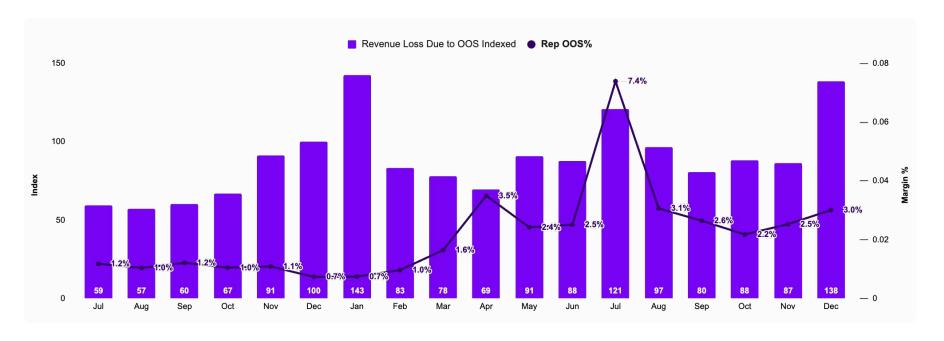


AD SPEND | ROAS | CPC Brands saw a steady decline in ROAS as spend increased, while CPCs remained largely unchanged



REVENUE LOSS DUE TO OOS

Replenishable OOS% increased despite increased inventory position





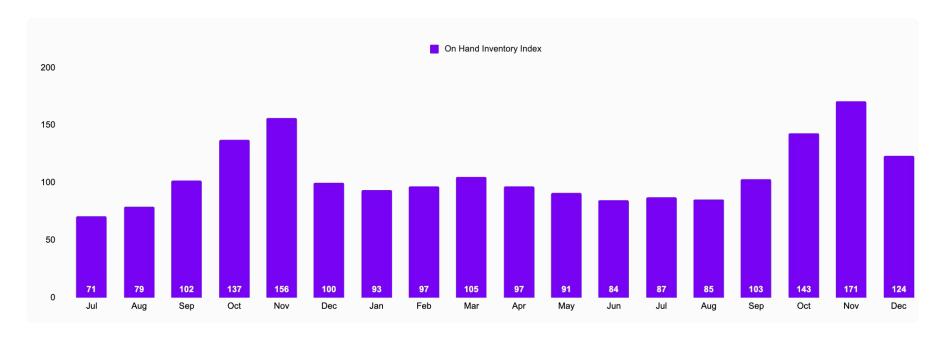
Request a demo

Toys industry overview

Q4 2023 vs. Q4 2024 recap

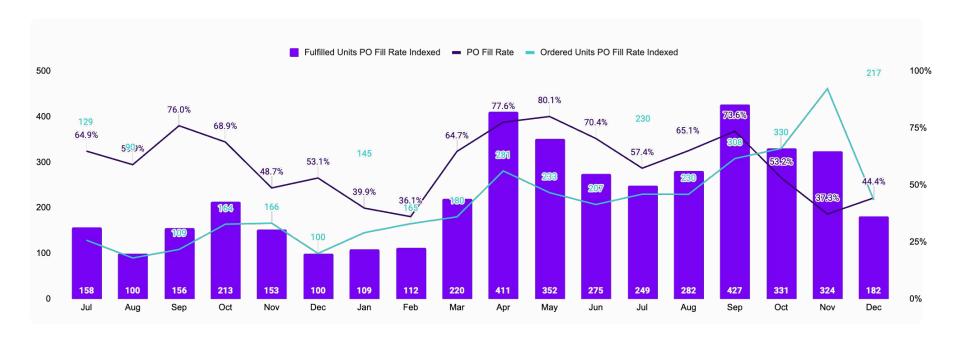
ON HAND INVENTORY

Post-Q4 sales spike, Amazon is carrying 24% more inventory than last year



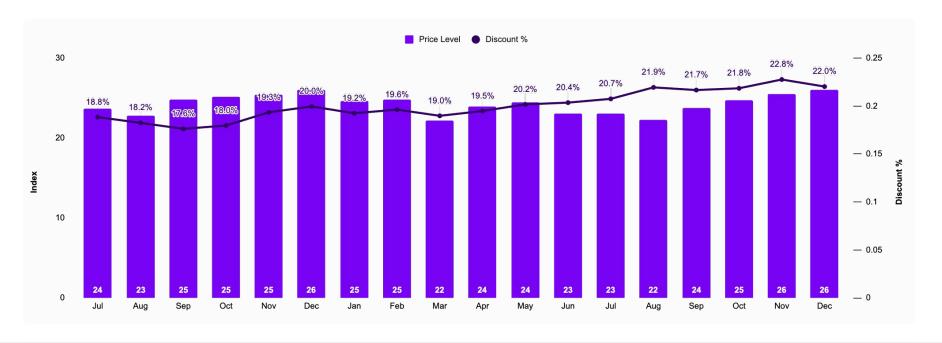
FULFILLMENT

Q4 fill rates sharply declined as ordered units increased

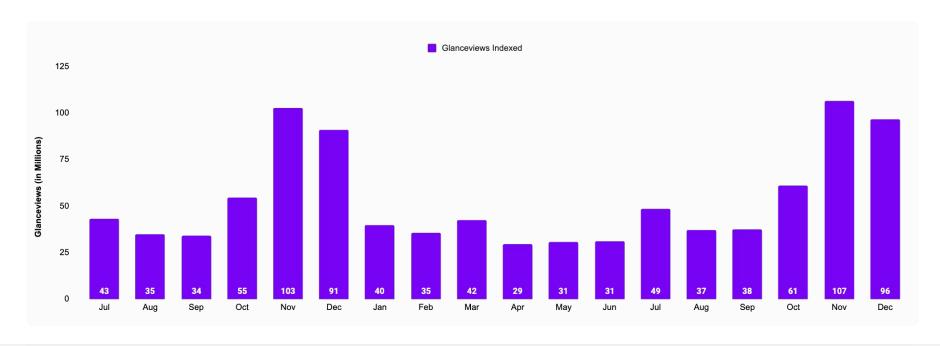


PRICE LEVEL VS. DISCOUNT %

Prices remained stable as discount percentages tracked up



Brands should expect seasonal spikes in traffic as YoY growth continues



OPS VS. UNIT MARGIN %

Unite margins steadily declined, with expected Q4 sales spikes



AD SPEND | ROAS | CPC

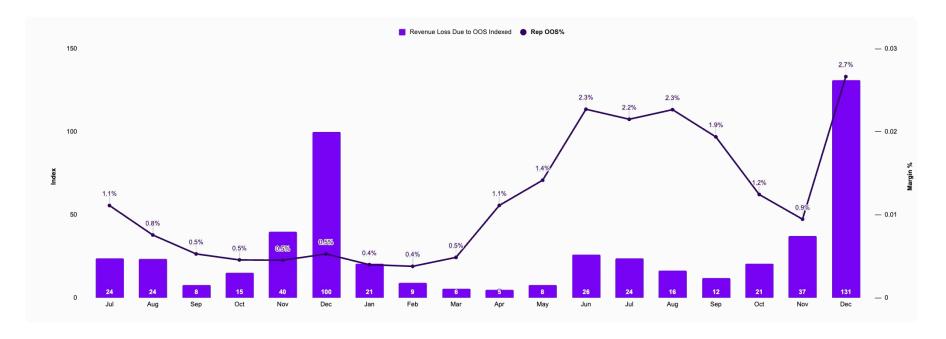
Despite increased seasonal ad spend, ROAS improved & CPCs remained flat



The state of retail ecommerce | Q4 2024 Commerce | Q4 2024 Toys industry overview

REVENUE LOSS DUE TO OOS

Seasonal revenue lost increased YoY as replenishable OOS% spiked



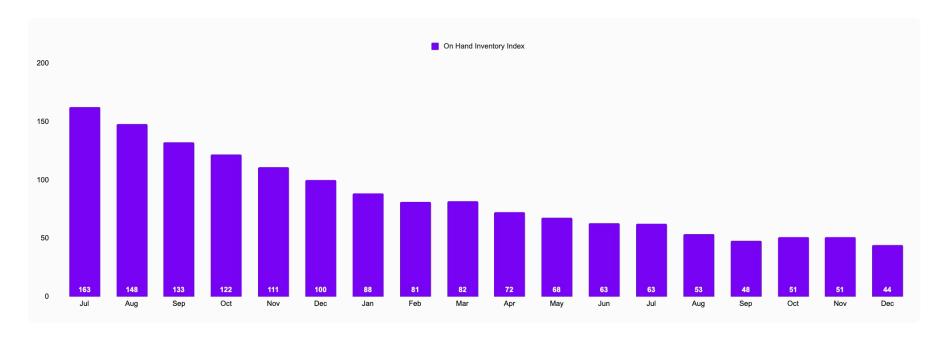




The state of retail ecommerce | Q4 2024 Commerce | Q4 2024 Furniture industry overview

ON HAND INVENTORY

Month-over-month on hand inventory has been on a steady decline since July 2023



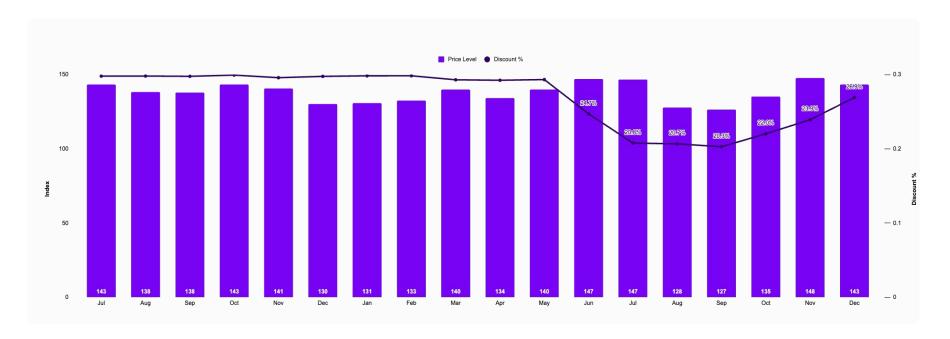
FULFILLMENT

Fill rates were well below other categories as on hand inventory declined



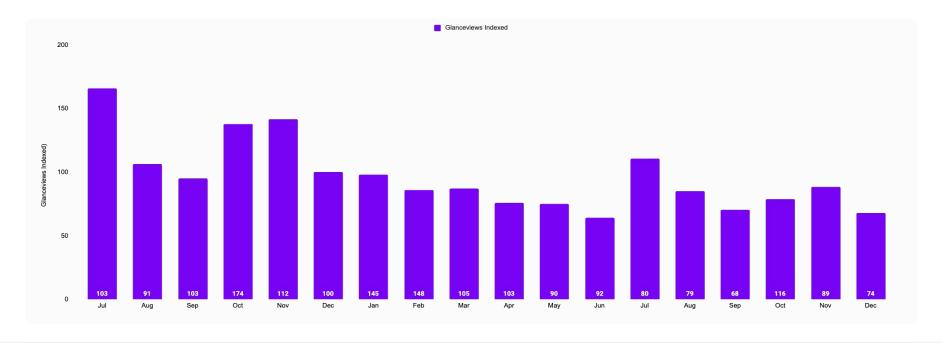
PRICE LEVEL VS. DISCOUNT %

Prices declined in Q3, rebounding in Q4 as discounts increased



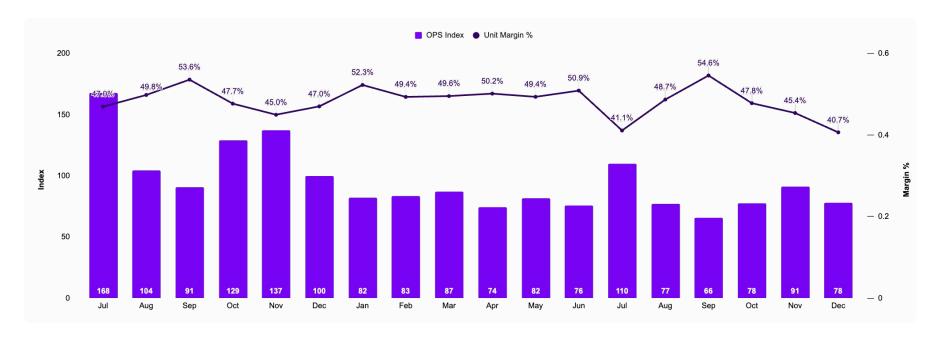
GLANCE VIEWS

Echoing the trend in on hand inventory, glance views steadily declined



OPS VS. UNIT MARGIN %

Sales declined consistently as margins eroded



AD SPEND | ROAS

ROAS remained steady with declining ad spend in the category



REVENUE LOSS DUE TO OOS

Lower inventory drove higher OOS which contributed to lost sales

