

# Ecommerce

## Automation 101: Inventory

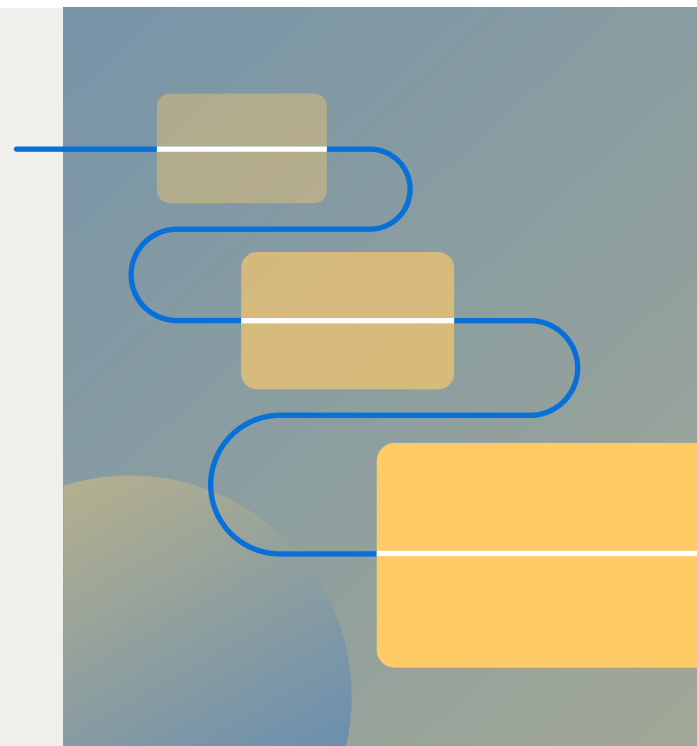
Use the power of automation to effectively manage inventory

Effective management of inventory has a direct impact on the overall profitability of your business. As your business scales and your assortment grows, tracking inventory can take up a lot of time and can prove to be quite challenging, especially for business owners that are wearing multiple hats. Automation helps drive efficiencies within your inventory management process, resulting in a clearer and more accurate picture of your inventory levels. With workflow automation you can keep a close eye on demand fluctuations to help you properly meet customer expectations.



Poor inventory visibility is one of the biggest challenges that businesses face when it comes to inventory management. Having poor visibility of your inventory can result in stockouts, over ordering of inventory, and overselling. These factors not only drastically increase costs—driving down profitability—but also negatively impact your customers' experience when engaging with your brand.

Automation helps you gain an accurate account of your stock, and streamline your inventory management processes by improving the overall flow of inventory from suppliers, to your warehouse(s), and finally to your customers. Shopify Flow has several inventory management templates for you to choose from based on your business needs, making it easier to properly manage your inventory and efficiently get your products in the hands of your customers.



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“Usual stock management involves human involvement, but by using Shopify POS and setting up Flow, we have now shaved a huge amount of time and eliminated human error. When dealing with a catalog of 6,000-7,000 products, that’s incredibly helpful. Flow makes it easy.”

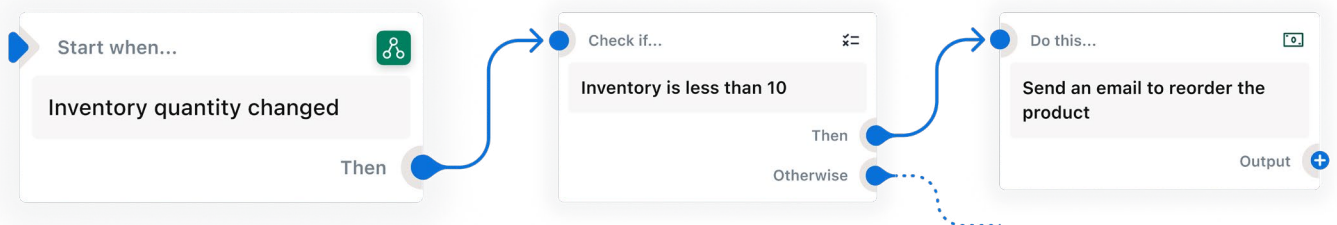
Panos Voulgaris, Creative Director

COZYKIDS

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Shopify Flow was built to help brands create the custom workflows that they need to automate tasks, processes, and campaigns within their store and across their apps.

Flow is based on a simple, no-code “[trigger, condition, and action](#)” format. Basically, a “trigger” is an event that Flow looks out for and which sets an automation in motion. A “condition” is the rule that determines if an action should occur, and the “action” is the task that is completed if the condition is met.



Here’s what that might look like for a workflow that automatically assesses real-time inventory levels:

- **Trigger:** Inventory quantity changed.
- **Condition:** If inventory is less than 10.
- **Action:** Send an email to reorder the product.

Empowering brands of all technical skill levels, Flow lets you quickly and easily install pre-built workflows or create entirely custom ones, all without needing to touch a line of code.



## Remove products from collections after a set period of time

One of the most popular collections that we see leveraged on Shopify is for New Arrivals. This section is often the go-to spot for loyal customers to check, especially if your brand has regular product drops. However, you're likely to alienate loyal customers pretty quickly if you don't keep this collection up-to-date. That's where ecommerce automation can help. Instead of manually updating the collection with new products, any newly released item is automatically tagged and added to the New Arrivals collection. Then, after 30 days the 'new' tag is removed and the item is removed from the collection, letting you put your release schedule on autopilot.



## Hide limited edition products after a drop

Build excitement for your brand by creating a sense of urgency and scarcity with limited release drops. Use this workflow to automatically hide unsold inventory after the specific window of time you set has ended, ensuring customers can't buy these exclusive, special edition items beyond the dates that you established.



## Get notified when inventory is low

Stay on top of your inventory management and be sure to reorder items as stock becomes low. Flow will automatically notify your inventory team to reorder low stock items, as well as notify your marketing team to pause efforts for products that are nearly out of stock. In addition, this workflow will add a low-stock tag which could be displayed on your store to create a sense of urgency among your customers.



## Standardize tagging for new products

Gain a better understanding of sell-through for new items by standardizing merchandising for new products based on title, SKU, color and more. This organization will enable a better understanding of customer demand for new products (e.g., what is working well and what is not working well) to inform future buying decisions.

Whatever your business needs—**build it.**

**1B+**

Automated decisions  
each month

**150+**

Custom use cases  
solved every week

**34K+**

Unique jobs completed  
by Flow

Whether your brand is big or small, proper inventory management is critical in building a long-lasting business. Accurately managing the flow of inventory positively impacts several areas of your business, from reducing operating costs to the ability to fulfill orders correctly and on time. Through automation you can take the manual work out of this process, reducing errors and inaccuracies, giving you back time to focus on other areas of your business.

Although we highlighted four inventory management use cases in this playbook, there are many more pre-built workflows available in the Shopify Flow template library. Additionally, remember that Flow templates can be tailored to meet your needs—meaning you can always adjust things like wait times, condition variables or tags to optimize your experience.

