

## 7 Steps to Prevent Product Launch Errors

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iStock/inxti 1. Avoid delays.

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## 1. Avoid delays.

**Production delays are the biggest culprits of derailed product launches, say manufacturers and retailers.**

In a world of global manufacturing supply chains, your production schedule needs to take into account everything from the availability of components to the timing of the Chinese New Year to the cost of freight.

“There was an instance where we were releasing a product and we couldn’t get enough reflectors from our vendor,” recalls Tara Maurel Yager, vice president of marketing for Olight. (Yager notes this incident happened when she was working for another company.)

“It was towards the end of the production cycle when this came up, and we couldn’t get the reflectors to come out right,” she said. Because there was no other place they could turn to for such a specialized part that late in the game, the entire timeline was jeopardized, causing almost a monthlong delay.

“That creates a negative impact,” she adds. “Retailers start to lose trust in your capabilities.”

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iStock/peppi18 2. Account for seasonal lead time.

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**Make sure that you get on retailers' radar when they're stocking up for the season.**

And make sure your production schedule is such that your product will be on shelves at the right time of year.

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iStock/dterminal 3. Don't price yourself out of the market.

### **3. Don't price yourself out of the market.**

**Look around and get a feel for pricing in the category of your planned product, experts advise.**

If store owners have to price your item at a premium compared with similar items in order to turn a profit, your product could languish on the shelf.

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iStock/TCmake\_photo 4. Don't shortchange your marketing.

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**Sometimes it can just be a matter of paying attention to all the opportunities afforded to you to sure you maximize your promotion potential.**

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Photos.com/Jupiterimages 5. Make sure your packaging works.

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**A common mistake that inventors make is to lose sight of their item's packaging as an effective sales tool once the item is on the shelf.**

This means packaging should be eye-catching and clearly explain what the product does.

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iStock/macgyverhh 6. Sell a brand, not a product.

### 6. Sell a brand, not a product.

**Understand your brand, and build a product around that. Some companies build a product and then try to build the brand identity.**

But that tactic often fails, because a product without a strong brand gets lost among the clutter. The market is so saturated, and everything is so loud these days. You need to be thinking about what your brand is and how you're different, and the overarching identity.

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iStock/Yasna Ten 7. Don't forget a video.

### **7. Don't forget a video. If a picture is worth a thousand words, a video speaks volumes.**

Always have a video ready. ... There's nothing that beats seeing the product in action, and you never quite know what's not going to be intuitive to the end user.

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