

Amazon Prime Day Counterfeiting: How Brands Can Prepare

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Amazon Prime Day 2025 drove \$24.1 billion in US online spending, up 30.3% year over year. Prime Day 2026 returns in June with record projections across more than 35 product categories. For brand owners, that surge in traffic and purchase velocity is both opportunity and risk: the same conditions that drive legitimate sales let counterfeit sellers monetize fake listings before brands can respond.

Prime Day 2025 was the largest in Amazon's history, and independent sellers saw a 32% sales increase during Prime Day 2024. When demand concentrates this intensely in a short window, counterfeit operations gain ready logistics, ready demand, and ready audiences. The question for brands isn't whether to strengthen enforcement during Prime Day, it's when. By the time demand peaks, reactive measures arrive too late.

\$2T+

Annual counterfeit goods sold globally **Human-Verified**

Every takedown reviewed by a person **15M+**

Counterfeit products Amazon seized in 2024 **Performance Partnership**

Costs covered by recovered assets

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Does counterfeiting increase during Amazon Prime Day?

Amazon doesn't publish a separate Prime Day-specific counterfeit metric, so claiming an exact percentage spike would be unsupported. The operational risk, though, clearly increases. Prime Day concentrates record consumer demand into a compressed timeframe, with category activity surging across electronics, beauty, apparel, toys, household essentials, and other mass consumer verticals.

Amazon's 2024 Brand Protection Report shows the company identified, seized, and appropriately disposed of more than 15 million counterfeit products worldwide in 2024. Its proactive controls blocked more than 99% of suspected infringing listings before brands even reported them. Those figures show both the scale of the problem and Amazon's detection infrastructure, but they also show why brands need their own Prime Day enforcement strategies rather than relying on platform controls alone.

The structural reality is straightforward: Prime Day creates a short window of elevated risk in categories already vulnerable to online counterfeiting. OECD research on counterfeit ecommerce trade identifies online commerce as a major distribution channel for fake goods, with more than 90% of counterfeit seizures linked to online purchases shipped by mail. When a promotional event concentrates massive consumer traffic into categories that are already primary counterfeit targets, the risk compounds.

Which product categories face the highest risk?

The highest-risk categories sit where historical counterfeit data overlaps with Prime Day merchandising priorities. Where those two factors converge, the risk is greatest.

Category	Why it's high-risk on Prime Day	Consumer safety risk
Apparel, footwear, accessories	Top OECD online counterfeit category; heavily featured on Prime Day	Low
Beauty and cosmetics	Leading ecommerce counterfeit category; named in EUIPO "Dangerous Fakes"	High – harmful ingredients
Electronics and accessories	Strong Prime Day demand; common OECD counterfeit category	High – unsafe components
Toys	Overlaps with early back-to-school and gift buying	High – lead, choking hazards
Household and home	Heavily merchandised on Prime Day; high visibility draws opportunists	Variable

US Customs and Border Protection warns directly that counterfeit goods frequently contain harmful materials, including lead and dangerous electronic components. For brands in cosmetics, electronics, and toys, consumer safety, not just lost revenue, is the biggest risk factor.

How does Prime Day create counterfeit opportunities?

Prime Day 2026 returns in June with expanded category coverage, a longer event window, and aggressive promotion across electronics, beauty, apparel, groceries, kitchen, household essentials, and other mass-market categories. Adobe's analysis of Prime Day 2025 showed electronics, toys, smartphone accessories, appliances, home improvement, and school supplies all growing in popularity. Those are the same categories counterfeiters target.

The event creates several conditions that favor counterfeit operations. First, traffic volume jumps, making individual fake listings harder to spot among the flood of legitimate searches. Second, purchase velocity accelerates as shoppers chase time-limited deals, shrinking the window for careful verification. Third, new sellers enter the marketplace specifically to ride the event, making it harder to tell established unauthorized sellers from one-time opportunists.

Worth knowing:

The risk isn't limited to product listings. Amazon and US Customs both note that criminals use seasonal demand surges to run impersonation scams, phishing for personal information, and fake seller accounts built to exploit the high traffic.

Why does proactive enforcement matter?

Brands that wait until Prime Day starts to strengthen enforcement are working reactively. By the time counterfeit listings gain traction in peak traffic, they've already captured sales, damaged brand perception, and possibly created customer safety issues. Reactive enforcement becomes cleanup, not prevention.

Proactive enforcement means strengthening brand protection 4-6 weeks before Prime Day begins. That timeline isn't an Amazon-published standard, it's a practical best practice based on how Prime Day preparation works. Amazon announces the event in advance, pushes sellers into preparation weeks early, and expects brands to have protection already in place rather than scrambling during the event.

Important:

Prime Day doesn't just increase sales. It increases visibility, traffic, and purchase speed in categories already known for counterfeits. Wait until the event starts and enforcement arrives after counterfeit sellers have already monetized their listings.

How should brands prepare for Prime Day?

The most effective preparation activates Amazon's brand protection tools before the event and lifts monitoring to match the elevated traffic.

Activate Amazon Brand Registry early

Amazon describes Brand Registry as a free program giving brand owners additional protection tools: reporting features, proactive controls, and enhanced content that helps separate authentic products from counterfeit listings. Brands entering Prime Day without it are reactive from the start. The program requires proof of trademark ownership and takes time to set up, so last-minute enrollment isn't practical.

Use Project Zero for eligible brands

Amazon describes Project Zero as a self-service tool that lets eligible brands detect and immediately remove counterfeit listings without waiting for Amazon's review. Access runs on an invitation basis after a brand shows effective use of standard Brand Registry tools, so eligibility needs to be established months ahead, not days before the event.

Serialize high-risk SKUs with Transparency

Amazon states that Transparency stops counterfeits through product serialization: each unit gets a unique code scanned before shipment, blocking fakes from reaching customers even inside Amazon's fulfillment network. It adds per-unit cost and planning, so it suits high-risk SKUs in categories like cosmetics, electronics, or premium goods rather than every product.

Audit storefronts and top listings

Amazon advises sellers to build Prime Day storefront versions and submit them for approval before the event. Clean, consistent product content also makes lookalikes, listing hijacks, and misleading offers easier to spot. Audit top SKUs, check images match current packaging, confirm titles and descriptions are accurate, and keep pricing consistent across listings.

Increase monitoring before, during, and after

Monitoring should move from routine cadence to peak-event cadence. Ramping up 4-6 weeks early catches early counterfeit activity and unauthorized sellers before traffic peaks. Daily checks during the event catch new listings in the surge. Post-event monitoring catches sellers who stay active after Prime Day ends but before normal monitoring resumes.

What does going beyond reactive takedowns look like?

Most brands treat Prime Day counterfeiting as a short-term problem: remove listings through [marketplace takedowns](#) during the event, then return to normal. That addresses symptoms, not underlying risk.

The brands that hold long-term marketplace control treat Prime Day as part of a broader anti-counterfeiting strategy. They monitor seller networks continuously, verify authorized distribution, map how products move through gray market channels, and use [enforcement data](#) to identify recurring bad actors rather than just removing individual listings. Human verification of each action, reviewed by a person rather than automated detection alone, cuts false positives against authorized resellers and parallel imports that automated systems miss.

For persistent foreign counterfeit operations that reappear after takedowns, [Schedule A cases](#) have emerged as the most effective US enforcement route. These are federal trademark and copyright lawsuits filed against many defendants in one action, typically in the US Northern District of Illinois. The procedure freezes marketplace and payment-processor accounts, seizes counterfeit merchandise, and recovers damages from dozens of foreign sellers in a single proceeding, reaching where individual takedowns fall short.

Key takeaways

- **Risk rises even without a published spike figure.** Prime Day concentrates record demand into categories already prone to counterfeiting.
 - **Five categories carry the most risk** – apparel, beauty, electronics, toys, and household goods, with cosmetics, electronics and toys posing genuine safety risk.
 - **Platform controls aren't enough.** Amazon seized 15M+ counterfeits in 2024 and blocks 99%+ of suspected listings, but brands still need their own strategy.
 - **Prepare 4-6 weeks early.** Proactive enforcement beats reactive cleanup once demand peaks.
 - **Schedule A cases close the loop** on persistent foreign sellers, freezing accounts and recovering damages across dozens of defendants at once.
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Frequently asked questions

Does counterfeiting increase during Amazon Prime Day?

Amazon doesn't publish Prime Day-specific counterfeit metrics, so an exact percentage increase would be unsupported. Operational risk clearly rises, though. Prime Day 2025 was Amazon's largest ever, Prime Day 2024 gave independent sellers a 32% sales increase, and Adobe recorded \$24.1 billion in online spending in 2025. The event concentrates record demand into categories already vulnerable to counterfeiting: apparel, beauty, electronics, toys, and household products.

How can brands prepare for Prime Day counterfeiting spikes?

Core steps: activate Brand Registry, use Project Zero if eligible, serialize high-risk SKUs with Transparency, audit storefronts and top listings, and increase monitoring 4-6 weeks before the event. The goal is to have protection in place before traffic peaks, not to react after counterfeit listings gain traction.

What types of counterfeits appear most during Prime Day?

The highest-risk categories combine historical counterfeit data with Prime Day merchandising: apparel, footwear and accessories; beauty and cosmetics; electronics and accessories; toys; and highly visible household products. For safety, cosmetics, electronics, and toys are the biggest concern because fakes may contain harmful materials or unsafe components.

When should brands start preparing for Prime Day?

Around 4-6 weeks before the event. That window lets brands detect early counterfeit activity, flag unauthorized sellers entering the marketplace, and put protection in place before traffic peaks. Amazon pushes sellers into preparation weeks ahead, so brand protection should follow the same timeline.

Which Amazon tools help prevent counterfeiting?

Three core tools. Brand Registry (free) provides reporting and proactive controls. Project Zero lets eligible brands remove counterfeit listings immediately without Amazon review. Transparency serializes individual units so fakes are caught before shipment. Each needs to be set up well before Prime Day, not during it.

What if counterfeit listings continue after Prime Day ends?

Persistent operations often reappear under new seller names or shift to other platforms after takedowns. For repeat infringement from foreign sellers, Schedule A cases provide a route to multi-defendant federal action, freezing marketplace and payment-processor accounts and recovering damages across dozens of sellers in one proceeding. It's typically used when individual takedowns can't keep pace with seller turnover.

Should I increase enforcement before Prime Day?

Yes. Not because of a publicly verified spike percentage, but because Prime Day dramatically increases traffic, sales velocity, and visibility in categories already prone to counterfeiting. Once demand peaks, reactive enforcement becomes slower and less effective. For beauty, fashion, electronics, toy, and household brands, waiting means enforcement arrives after sales are lost and safety issues may already exist.

What is Schedule A litigation and how does it help?

Schedule A litigation is a federal trademark or copyright lawsuit filed against many defendants in a single action, usually in the US Northern District of Illinois. It delivers court orders that freeze marketplace and payment-processor accounts, seize counterfeit merchandise, and recover damages from dozens of foreign sellers at once. It's the most effective route when counterfeiters keep returning after individual takedowns.

Sources

- [Amazon Prime Day 2026 Announcement](#)
 - [Amazon Prime Day 2025 Recap](#)
 - [Amazon Brand Protection Report 2024](#)
 - [Adobe Prime Day 2025 Online Spending Report](#)
 - [OECD: Mapping Global Trade in Fakes 2025](#)
 - [EUIPO & OECD Dangerous Fakes Report](#)
 - [CBP and US Chamber Counterfeit Warning](#)
 - [Amazon Brand Registry](#)
 - [Amazon Project Zero](#)
 - [Amazon Transparency](#)
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Is your brand protected before Prime Day traffic peaks?

Prime Day 2026 lands in June, and the categories with the biggest deals are the ones counterfeiters target hardest. Axencis runs human-verified marketplace monitoring and Schedule A enforcement against persistent foreign sellers, with costs covered by recovered assets under the Performance Partnership model.

[Get a Prime Day Risk Assessment](#)

About the author

Alex Zaika writes on brand protection, anti-counterfeiting, and marketplace enforcement for Axencis. Her work focuses on the practical side of protecting brands across global marketplaces, from proactive monitoring to legal recovery. For questions about brand protection strategy, [get in touch](#).

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