



5 Common Pitfalls Hurting Your MAP Program in 2025

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For brands managing MAP (Minimum Advertised Price) programs, challenges with their MAP provider can often feel like an uphill battle. From limited visibility into key sales channels to clunky workflows and insufficient support, these issues can undermine enforcement efforts and cause a ripple effect on revenue, team productivity, and even company culture.

Each of these problems is significant in isolation. But when multiple issues combine – such as incomplete data coupled with delayed implementation – their impact grows exponentially, leading to missed opportunities, weakened retailer trust, and mounting frustrations. Follow along as we break down five of the most common challenges brands face with their MAP provider and provide best practices and insights into how to overcome them.

Poor Coverage of Websites and Marketplaces

With the rapid rise of AI over the last year or so, increasingly sophisticated blocking measures from retailers have made it progressively more difficult for MAP providers to monitor the full spectrum of direct-to-consumer sites, marketplaces and resellers. Anyone who has been in the thick of MAP enforcement over the years knows that blocking is nothing new. As much as brands and retailers want pricing, assortment, promotional and other key data from ecommerce websites, retailers want just as badly to protect their sites from automated scrapers. Up until recently, retailers have employed teams of various sizes to prevent these key datapoints from being extracted. Today, however, brands are feeling the pain when MAP providers run into blocking measures. For many, it can take weeks – or even months – to circumvent these blocks, leaving brands feeling helpless and exposed to unauthorized discounting. The rise of third-party sellers, the ease of drop-ship businesses, dynamic pricing algorithms, and short-term promotions further complicate enforcement efforts.

Why It's Limiting

Without continuous, comprehensive monitoring, brands are unable to enforce their MAP policies effectively. Violations go undetected, eroding pricing consistency and damaging relationships with compliant retailers.

How It Gets Worse

Combine poor monitoring with delayed response capabilities, and violations can persist long enough to cause irreversible damage to brand equity. For example, retailers who rely on fair pricing may lose trust, while consumers might question the legitimacy of a product offered at drastically lower prices.

The Bigger Picture

Studies show that more than 31% of MAP monitoring providers fail to meet their delivery SLAs for at least two days each week. When paired with incomplete data, these delays amplify enforcement challenges, leaving brands vulnerable and scrambling to span the gap with manual efforts.

Solution

Before choosing a MAP provider, brands should plan to arm themselves with questions around what happens when the inevitable blocking arises. Once due diligence has been performed, they should focus on choosing a provider with advanced data extraction capabilities that can adapt quickly to new blocking techniques and consistently monitor high-risk sales channels.

Lengthy Implementation Times

The digital shopping world moves at a breakneck speed. Consumer buying cycles are shortening and opportunities for new customer acquisition must be seized as soon as possible. As such, brands know that the shorter the distance between signing up with a new provider and being “live” on the platform are critical. In spite of that, technology companies don’t always move at the speed required by their customers. Brands can often face long implementation periods (up to several months) with their MAP providers, delaying their ability to monitor violations effectively. The problem is particularly acute during key sales periods, such as holidays, when pricing violations spike and the cost of inaction grows significantly.

Why It's Limiting

Why It's Limiting Extended onboarding times mean lost revenue opportunities and a reliance on manual monitoring in the interim. When this happens “time-to-value” is greatly extended and the expected return from the brand is diminished. This inefficiency is so common, in fact, that over 45% of brands who have a MAP provider admit that at least part of their MAP enforcement still relies on manual processes.

How It Gets Worse

When lengthy implementation is paired with poor coverage or a lack of customization, teams are left frustrated, juggling manual efforts and insufficient tools. Over time, this not only damages morale and reduces the team's confidence in their ability to enforce policies effectively, but it invites pressure from the top to better manage the provider, only worsening the situation.

Solution

Brands should aim to identify MAP providers with proven, streamlined implementation processes. The best time for implementation questions happen prior to onboarding, early in the evaluation process. The right provider will be open, honest and transparent; seeking to minimize time to value and allowing brands to focus on enforcement when it matters most.

Overly Complicated Interfaces

The MAP solution your team ultimately selects should simplify the enforcement process, that's it. All too often, however, providers subscribe to the "more is more" approach and create overly complex systems that introduce unnecessary hurdles for teams. When day-to-day team members struggle to navigate complex or clunky interfaces that fail to align with real-world workflows, the result is wasted time and missed opportunities to act on critical data.

Why It's Limiting

Stakeholders spend too much time navigating the system rather than addressing violations, delaying enforcement and impacting productivity. This also can limit the team's ability to produce the necessary reports for internal stakeholders, leading to perceptions around inadequate performance or poor time management.

How It Gets Worse

When paired with incomplete data or slow implementation, a complex interface compounds the problem. Teams can lose trust in the tool's effectiveness and may revert to manual monitoring, further slowing enforcement efforts. When that happens, valuable company time and operational expenditures are wasted on a tool that doesn't live up to expectations.

The Bigger Picture

The data doesn't lie. Workplace inefficiencies cost organizations an estimated 20–30% of annual revenue, often due to tools that are poorly integrated into workflows.

Solution

Brands can get out ahead of this early in the evaluation process by showing up armed with a clear understanding of both the real-world and ideal workflow that they have in mind. By doing so, it will make the selection process much easier for everyone involved and you'll be able to move forward with a provider that offers intuitive, user-friendly interfaces designed to fit seamlessly into your team's actual workflow. The right system will prioritize ease of use, helping teams get in, grab the data necessary, act quickly and get back to their day.

Limited Customization and Workflow Alignment

Over the years, many MAP providers have stopped innovating. For many, it is better to offer a one-size-fits-all approach than to understand the nuances of each team's specific needs. Rigid, "MAP-in-a-box" solutions have sadly become the norm lately and fail to account for the unique needs of different brands. Without the ability to customize reports or tailor workflows, brands are forced to adapt their processes to the system rather than the other way around. Many who have purchased MAP solutions over the years have resigned themselves to this fact, and there is a sort of normalized pain that brands experience working with MAP providers.

Why It's Limiting

When MAP providers focus on reducing the operational costs associated with constant innovation, the engineering and development load is often the first to go. When that happens, customization is off the table and brands struggle to enforce policies through an intuitive workflow. Teams are left working harder, not smarter, to get the results they need.

How It Gets Worse

Add limited customization to poor support from Customer Success teams, and you've got a recipe for frustration. At that point, those tasked with MAP enforcement are forced to navigate workarounds while receiving little to no assistance, eroding morale and effectiveness.

Solution

Brands can get out ahead of this by internally agreeing to partner with a provider that prioritizes flexibility and allows brands to tailor their MAP solution to their unique goals. Customizable workflows and reporting capabilities are critical for maintaining both reputation and agility in a competitive landscape.

Weak or Inconsistent Support

Effective MAP enforcement requires a strong partnership with your provider. The right provider will view your team as an extension of their own and expect you to do the same. They should be held accountable for the delivery and support they provide and should do all they can to be the scaffolding you need. However, many brands report inconsistent or insufficient support, particularly during critical enforcement periods. This can come in the form of unreturned calls, unanswered emails, and extensive ticket/resolution delays.

Why It's Limiting

Without timely support, brands are left to manage violations and data discrepancies on their own, delaying action, introducing doubt into their enforcement efforts and reducing the effectiveness of their MAP policies.

How It Gets Worse

When it comes down to it, extensive response time and – in some cases – even being ghosted will damage not only your relationship with the provider but will have downstream impacts on your brand's reputation and customer loyalty. Weak support exacerbates every other issue on this list. Poor monitoring, rigid workflows, and lengthy implementation become insurmountable challenges when no one is available to provide timely assistance.

Solution

Brands who have experienced this sort of poor customer support address it early on by asking about Support Service Level Agreements and understanding the support structure offered by a provider. For those new to MAP, aim to choose a provider with responsive, knowledgeable support staff who can guide you through challenges and ensure your enforcement efforts stay on track.

A Compounding Problem

Each of these issues poses a challenge in isolation, but their combined effect can be devastating. Incomplete monitoring delays action on violations, while inefficient workflows drain productivity. Weak support leaves teams feeling isolated, and rigid systems limit a brand's ability to respond effectively. Together, these problems create a perfect storm that undermines MAP enforcement and brand health.

Final Thoughts

A MAP provider should be your ally in protecting brand value and enforcing pricing consistency. If your current solution isn't meeting these needs, it's time to explore a better approach. At Pervasive Mind, our team is highly knowledgeable and specializes in solutions that address these exact challenges, helping brands regain control and drive results. Let's start a conversation today.



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