

The Ecommerce Playbook

2027 EDITION • INTRO EDITION • FREE

How to pick, source, price and sell a product, built from real product checks, not opinions.

01 Pick a product that can make money

02 Where to sell: the US, UK and Germany

03 What one sale really costs in 2026

04 Marketing basics: creators before ads

36,713

US search terms read for our own product checks

48

popular US products checked against Amazon and real factory prices

28.8%

the US duty on a camping tent from China today. Before 24 July 2026 it was 16.3%.

4 chapters • 18 pages • Updated 6 October 2026 • Version 1.0

The full playbook (13 chapters) comes with every Launch Dossier.

Read this first

Most products fail. Not because nobody wants them, but because of **the costs nobody counted**. This playbook shows you how to count them, with real numbers from our own checks.

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Three boxes to look for

FROM OUR DATA • where the number comes from

Our own measured results: real searches, real Amazon pages, real factory listings, official tariff schedules. Every one is dated.

DO THIS FOR YOUR PRODUCT

What to do next. The step to take for your own product, and what the Launch Dossier does for you instead.

In the full playbook: what the full playbook adds to the chapter you just read.

Sources most sellers never check

Official tariff schedules are public but dense. Search and marketplace data comes through **paid data services most sellers never buy**. We combine both, dated, for every product we check. Full references are at the end.



Product research

What sells, at what price, and who owns the page.

- **Amazon page-1 listings**, prices, reviews and package sizes (Apify, Outscraper, DataForSEO)
- **Google Shopping** prices (Serper, SerpApi)
- **Our own product checks: 48 US products**, 5–6 October 2026



Market research

How many people search, and whether it is growing.

- **Google Ads keyword data: 36,713 US search terms**, with volume and 12-month history (DataForSEO)
- **Google Trends**, 5 years (SerpApi)
- **UN Comtrade**: what each country imports, and from where



Company and supplier research

Who makes it, for how much, and whether they are real.

- **Made-in-China.com supplier listings**: price, minimum order, package size
- **AliExpress** Affiliate API
- **Supplier websites**, fetched and checked for matching contact details



Logistics and customs

What it costs to get one unit to a customer.

- **USITC Harmonized Tariff Schedule**, including the Section 301 lists
- **USTR, CBP and the Supreme Court**: 2026 tariff and duty-free parcel rules
- **UK Trade Tariff** (HMRC) and the **EU tariff**
- **Amazon FBA fee tables**; our parcel and freight cost model



Marketing research

Who your buyers watch, and what it costs to reach them.

- **YouTube Data API**: creators, views, engagement
- **TikTok** (Apify) and **Instagram** (Graph API) creator profiles
- **Google Ads cost per click** (DataForSEO)
- **Meta Ad Library**

Pick a product that can make money

- The four tests every product must pass
- Why 36 popular products failed
- Seven ways supplier data misleads you

0 of 36

popular US products passed all four tests in our 5 October 2026 check

Demand is the easy part. Every one of these 36 products had real US search demand, **yet none passed**. A product has to pass four tests, in this order:

1 People already search for it

Real search volume in your country, steady or growing over 12 months. Not a feeling, not one viral video.

2 A newcomer can still sell

Page 1 has **young listings from small sellers that sell** every month, and no single brand owns the reviews.

3 It pays after every cost

Factory price, freight, duty, delivery, card fees and returns, **with money left for marketing and a profit**.

4 The supplier data is real

A factory price and box size that **match the product people buy**, not a carton, an accessory or a price per m².

FROM OUR DATA • US check, 5 October 2026: 36,713 search terms → 36 products

Why 36 products with real demand failed. **Crowded pages and costs beat demand every time.**



Seven ways supplier data misleads you

Each of these gave us a wrong number at least once, before we built a check for it. **Each one would have cost a seller real money.**

1. A carton priced as one unit

A "car seat" listed at **90 kg and 1.5 m³**: the export carton, not the seat.

Check: Compare the size with the top Amazon listing's box.

2. A different product, same name

"Car battery charger" came back at **\$5, \$19.29 and \$140** in three runs. The \$140 one was industrial.

Check: Ignore factory prices at or above the shelf price.

3. An accessory, not the product

A **\$3** "Nuna stroller" listing, against a **\$411** stroller.

Check: Ignore factory prices under 5% of the shelf price.

4. A price per square metre

A "\$60" pergola was **\$60–129 per m²**. About 11 m² makes it **\$660–1,430**, against \$508 on Amazon.

Check: Read the unit next to the price: m², metre, kg, roll.

5. Inches read as centimetres

A **21.8 kg** push mower in a **7.9 × 4.9 × 4.2 cm** box.

Check: More than 4 kg per litre is a misread size.

6. A weight that can't be right

An **18 g** portable breast pump in a **3.1 litre** box.

Check: Less than 20 g per litre is a misread weight.

7. A brand, not a product

"Nuna stroller" and "Thule roof rack": **page 1 belongs to one brand** you can't make.

Check: If one word leads a third of page-1 titles, it's a brand.

DO THIS FOR YOUR PRODUCT

Run the four tests before you buy stock. A Launch Dossier runs them for 3 products in your market and budget, sets aside bad supplier data with the reason, and shows what would make a near-miss work.

In the full playbook: how to choose a niche, read Amazon page 1 like a buyer, and the full product scorecard.

Where to sell

- Five ways to sell, compared
- Which one fits your money and time
- The US, UK and Germany at a glance

15%

Amazon's referral fee in most categories, on top of FBA fees (Amazon fee schedule, 2026)

Where you sell decides your costs before your product does. Amazon brings buyers but takes fees and control. **Your own store keeps the customer**, but you have to bring every visitor.

Way to sell	Money up front	Control	Speed	Best for
Amazon FBA	High: stock + freight up front	Low: Amazon's rules and fees	4–10 weeks to first sale	Products people already search for on Amazon
Own store (Shopify)	Medium: stock or dropship	Full: your brand, your customers	Days to launch, months to find buyers	Brands with a story and repeat buyers
Dropshipping	Low: no stock	Low: supplier's quality and speed	Days	Testing demand before you buy stock
TikTok Shop	Low to medium	Medium	Days, if creators post	Products that show well in a 20-second video
Etsy	Low	Medium	Days	Handmade, personalised, vintage

A simple rule

Test cheap, then commit. Prove people buy with dropshipping or a small first order. Buy a full container only when the sales are real.

Big and heavy changes the answer. Our tent loses money in its own store but leaves \$38 per sale before ads on Amazon, where FBA delivers it (extra-large size).

FROM OUR DATA • official sources, checked 6 October 2026

The tent's duty from China: **28.8%** in the US, **12%** in the UK and **12%** in Germany. But UK and German shelf prices include VAT (\$49 and \$47 of this tent's price), so the UK and Germany still leave less per sale.

In the full playbook: every way to sell in detail, and a two-page sheet for each country: marketplaces, tax registration, safety rules and the order to do them in.

DO THIS FOR YOUR PRODUCT

Pick one way to sell, not three. The Launch Dossier scores each way to sell for your product and budget, and shows the profit per sale for each.

The US, UK and Germany at a glance

Same product, three sets of rules. These are the ones that **cost new sellers money**.

	United States	United Kingdom	Germany
Where people buy	Amazon, Walmart, TikTok Shop, eBay, own stores	Amazon.co.uk, eBay, TikTok Shop, Etsy	Amazon.de, Otto, Kaufland, eBay, TikTok Shop (since 31 March 2025)
Tax on the sale	State sales tax. Marketplaces collect it for you; your own store owes it where you pass a state's threshold.	20% VAT. A seller based outside the UK who stocks goods in the UK must register from the first sale (no threshold).	19% VAT. One EU return (OSS) covers sales across the EU.
Duty-free parcels	Gone for every country since 29 August 2025; suspended indefinitely by CBP rule since 24 June 2026.	Parcels up to £135 are still duty-free, but the relief ends by October 2028 at the latest.	The €150 limit ended on 1 July 2026 : €3 per item type in each small parcel, until July 2028.
China duty on top of the base rate	Section 301 (7.5–100% by product) + 12.5% forced-labor duty .	Base rate, plus trade remedies on some products.	Base rate (EU), plus anti-dumping duty on some products.
Before your first sale	CPSC rules; a Children's Product Certificate for kids' products; FCC for electronics; Prop 65 warnings for California.	UKCA or CE marking where required; product-safety rules (OPSS).	Packaging register LUCID (free, but marketplaces block you without it; fines up to €200,000). An EU responsible person on every listing (GPSR, since 13 December 2024). WEEE registration for electronics.
Buyers expect	Fast, free delivery.	Fast delivery; eBay is a real second channel.	14-day returns by law, and many pay by invoice (PayPal, Klarna).

What one sale really costs in 2026

- The costs between factory and customer
- US tariffs: what changed and when
- Why the box size decides

28.8%

the US duty on a camping tent from China today. Before 24 July 2026 it was 16.3%.

A factory price is the smallest part of most products' cost. Here is every cost of one real product we checked: a bubble dome tent that sells for \$297 in the US and costs \$70 at the factory.

FROM OUR DATA • our Launch Dossier run, 27 September 2026; duty: USITC HTS 6306.22.90

Factory price		\$70
Sea freight		\$37
Import duty		\$20
Delivery to the buyer		\$150
Card fees		\$12
Returns		\$27

Full bar = the \$297 shelf price

Every cost before marketing: **\$317, against a \$297 price**. Delivery alone is \$150: at 29 kg the box is over the parcel limit (30 kg and 0.15 m³), so it goes as freight.

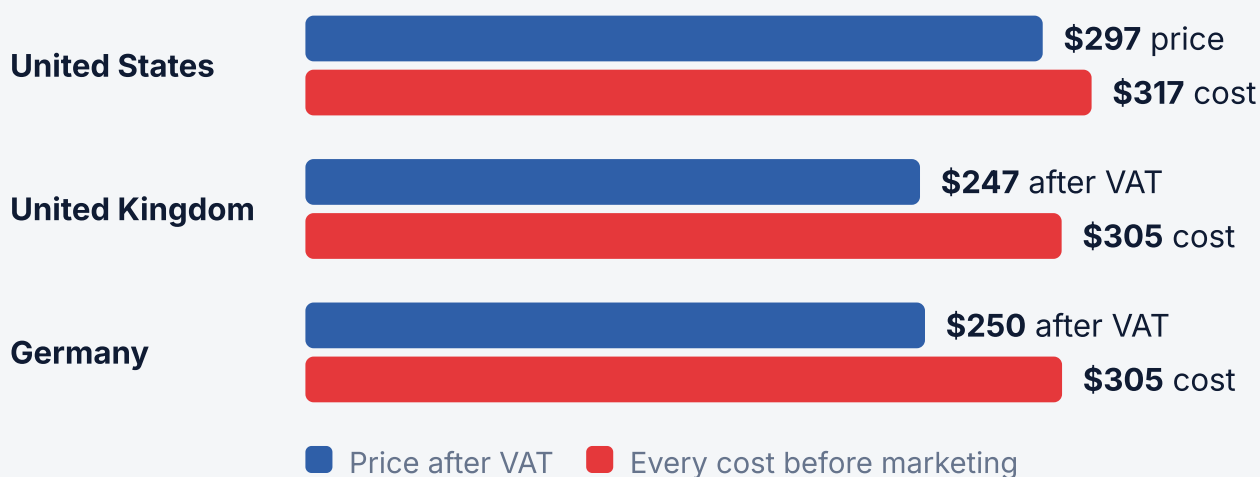
US tariffs: what changed and when

- 2 May 2025 ● China parcels lose the \$800 duty-free limit
- 29 Aug 2025 ● Parcels from every other country lose it too
- 20 Feb 2026 ● Supreme Court strikes down the IEEPA tariffs
- 24 Feb 2026 ● 10% global tariff (Section 122) starts, for 150 days
- 24 Jun 2026 ● CBP suspends duty-free parcels indefinitely, by rule
- 24 Jul 2026 ● Section 122 ends; forced-labor duty starts (12.5% for China)

That's why AliExpress orders used to arrive with no duty, and **new ones don't**. Sources: CBP, USTR, Supreme Court, Federal Register (references at the end).

The same tent in three countries

Official duty for each country, and the same freight, delivery and returns. In the UK and Germany the shelf price includes VAT, so the seller keeps less of it. **The tent loses money in all three**, for the same reason: delivering a large box.



The box decides

Shrink the box from 62 × 51 × 49 cm to 60 × 50 × 48 cm and it **ships as a parcel instead of freight**. Nothing else changes:

-\$83

per sale after marketing,
today's box

\$6

per sale with a box 2 cm
smaller each way (delivery
\$150 → \$78)

\$60

with that box and a factory
price of \$35 instead of \$70

DO THIS FOR YOUR PRODUCT

Ask the factory for the packed box size first. Before you negotiate the price. The Launch Dossier computes the profit per sale in each country with official duty, and when a product fails, the box size and factory price that would make it pass.

In the full playbook: duty tables for the US, UK and Germany, sea vs air freight by weight, Amazon's fees for sending stock, and a quote calculator you can fill in.

FROM OUR DATA • premium check, 6 October 2026: 12 products, \$199–\$3,937

Expensive products fail differently. Of 12 products priced \$199–\$3,937, 2 cleared Amazon and **none passed on cost**. An electric bike at \$580 cost \$488 to land and deliver: a 57.5 kg box needs freight delivery.

Marketing basics: creators before ads

- The order that wastes the least money
- The ad math in one line
- How to pick a creator

\$1.96

cost per click on Google for one product in our US check. At that price, ads alone didn't pay.

Your budget per sale is **what's left after every cost**. Spend it in this order:

- 1 Fix the page first**
Photos, a clear title and answers to the top complaints in your competitors' 1- and 2-star reviews. Ads can't rescue a page that doesn't convert.
- 2 Creators before ads**
Pay creators a commission per sale, or send free product. **You pay for results, not for clicks.**
- 3 Post short videos yourself**
One product, one problem, one 20-second video. Free, and it tells you which angle works.
- 4 Ads last, with a limit**
Only once you know your conversion rate. **Cost per sale = cost per click ÷ conversion rate.**

FROM OUR DATA • second US check, 5 October 2026

From our second US build: at \$1.96 a click, **3.4% of visitors would have to buy** for ads to pay. A new store converts **about 2%**. Plan on creators paid per sale.

Picking a creator: four checks

- ✓ Median views per video, not followers
- ✓ Engagement rate on the last 10 posts
- ✓ Audience in your selling country
- ✓ A public business email

DO THIS FOR YOUR PRODUCT

Shortlist 10 creators before you order stock. If you can't find 10 who fit, that's a warning sign. The Launch Dossier lists 10 creators per product, with views, engagement, country, a public contact and an offer that pays only on sales.

In the full playbook: platform by platform: TikTok Shop affiliates, Instagram, YouTube, Amazon, Google and Meta ads, with budgets and messages.

Free tools for each way of selling

Every tool here is free to use or has a free plan. Checked on 6 October 2026. **No tool paid to be here.**

Way to sell	Find a product	Find a supplier	Sell	Market	AI help
Amazon FBA	Amazon Best Sellers, Google Trends, Keepa (free extension)	Alibaba, Made-in-China	Seller Central (Individual: no monthly fee, \$0.99 per sale)	Creators who link to your listing	Amazon's AI listing tool in Seller Central
Own store (Shopify)	Google Trends, Meta Ad Library	Alibaba, Made-in-China, Global Sources	Shopify (3-day trial, then \$1/month for 3 months)	TikTok and Instagram posts, creator gifting	Shopify Magic (built in), ChatGPT / Claude free tiers
Dropshipping	AliExpress, TikTok Creative Center	AliExpress via DSers (free plan)	Shopify + DSers	Short videos, creator commission	Canva and CapCut free plans for ads
TikTok Shop	TikTok Creative Center (top products and ads)	Alibaba, local wholesalers	TikTok Shop Seller Center (free to join, commission per sale)	TikTok Shop affiliate creators	CapCut free plan
Etsy	Etsy search bar, Google Trends	Your own workshop or local makers	Etsy (\$0.20 per listing + 6.5% per sale)	Pinterest, Instagram	Canva free plan for photos and mock-ups

Three free checks before you spend anything

1

Meta Ad Library

See every ad a competitor runs on Facebook and Instagram, and how long it has run. **Ads that run for months are ads that pay.**

2

TikTok Creative Center

Top products and top ads on TikTok by country. Free, no ad account needed.

3

Your country's tariff tool

USITC HTS (US), UK Trade Tariff (UK), EU TARIC (Germany). Search the product, read the duty line.

In the full playbook: the paid and AI tools for each way of selling (Amazon, Shopify, WooCommerce, dropshipping, TikTok Shop, Etsy), with prices, what each is best at, and when it's worth paying.

Bubble dome tent, United States

NOT NOW Run 27 September 2026 · 51 sources · 5 factories (all grade A) · 10 creators

A Launch Dossier tells you when not to sell, with the numbers, and **what would change the answer**. This one said no.

+53%

US search interest vs last year. The demand is real.

80%

of page-1 reviews held by the top 3 listings

-\$83

per sale in your own store, after marketing

One sale, own store, US	USD
Shelf price	\$297
Factory price	-\$70
Sea freight, 200 units	-\$37
Import duty 28.8% + US customs fees	-\$20
Freight delivery to the buyer	-\$150
Card fees	-\$12
Returns	-\$27
Marketing budget	-\$63
Profit per sale	-\$83

What would make it work

- ✓ A box under the parcel limit (30 kg and 0.15 m³) and a factory price of \$35: **\$60 per sale** after marketing.
- ✓ Or sell it on Amazon, where FBA delivers it: **\$38 per sale** before ads.
- ✓ Or pick one of the 2 alternates the dossier ranks for your budget.

FROM OUR DATA · time saved, sourced per task

Doing this research by hand takes about **41 expert hours**: reading searches, Amazon pages, factory listings, tariff lines and creator profiles. Our estimate uses published times for each task, applied to this real run.

The full playbook, and a dossier for your product

This intro shows the method. The full playbook (13 chapters, about 60 pages) gives you every step, and **the Launch Dossier does the research for your own market and budget.**

The full playbook

1. Choose a niche and a product
2. Where to sell, country by country
3. Real costs and profit per sale, with 2026 duty for the US, UK and Germany
4. Find and check suppliers: Alibaba, Made-in-China, Global Sources, 1688
5. Messages to suppliers in English and Chinese: quote, samples, price, invoice
6. Dropshipping after duty-free parcels ended
7. Amazon FBA from China: prep, labels, freight, Amazon's inbound fees
8. 3PL warehouses and shipping from your own store
9. Compliance: CPSC, FCC, Prop 65, UKCA, CE, GPSR, LUCID, WEEE
10. Marketing: creators, TikTok, ads and a budget per sale
11. Your toolkit for each way of selling: free, paid and AI
12. Country sheets: United States, United Kingdom, Germany
13. The 30-day launch checklist, and when to stop

Also inside

- ✓ 10 supplier messages in English and Chinese
- ✓ 2026 duty for the US, UK and Germany
- ✓ Tools for 6 ways of selling: free, paid and AI
- ✓ A 30-day checklist with stop signs

How to get it

It comes with every Launch Dossier, at no extra cost.

Two steps from here

STEP 1 • FREE

Opportunity Match

3 product opportunities for your market and budget.
No card.

STEP 2 • LAUNCH PRICE

\$9 Launch Dossier

Your pick in depth + 2 alternates: profit after every cost, official duty, graded factories, 10 creators, a 30-day plan and the full playbook.

YOU DECIDE

Go, wait or switch

An honest verdict for each product, and what would change it.

Join the founding list at siteneuro.com/ecommerce

We email you the day research opens, with the \$9 launch price.

About SiteNeuro

SiteNeuro builds websites and growth systems for small businesses. SiteNeuro Ecommerce is our product research arm: it checks what to sell, where, and what it really costs, before you spend on stock. **siteneuro.com**

Know someone starting out?

Send them the free intro: siteneuro.com/ecommerce/playbook

REFERENCES

Where every fact comes from

Checked on 6 October 2026. Rules change: this playbook is reviewed every quarter and within a week of any tariff change.

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8. EU Council: €3 duty on small parcels from 1 July 2026: www.consilium.europa.eu
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10. EU General Product Safety Regulation (EU) 2023/988: eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2023/988/oj
11. Amazon Seller Central fee schedule: sell.amazon.com/pricing
12. UN Comtrade: comtradeplus.un.org

Our own data: US product checks of 5 October 2026 and 6 October 2026, and Launch Dossier run out_glamping_US_v5c (27 September 2026). Money is computed by the same code as every Launch Dossier. This playbook is general information, not legal or tax advice. Check the rules for your product with the official source before you import.