

# 6 QUICK TIPS FOR WINNING THE AMAZON BUY BOX

According to a recent Forrester report, 39% of online shoppers in the US start their product searches on Amazon — compared with only 11% who begin on Google.<sup>1</sup>

Given this trend, it's not enough just to list your products on Amazon. You need to be as visible as possible on this supremely influential marketplace. One of the most effective ways of getting your products seen on Amazon is winning the coveted Buy Box. According to Amazon, obtaining the Buy Box increases sellers' chances of selling a product.<sup>2</sup> Although Amazon doesn't reveal exactly how it determines which sellers earn the Buy Box, there are some tried-and-true tactics you can take to help you own this prized piece of Amazon real estate.

## TIP 1: GAIN SOME EXPERIENCE

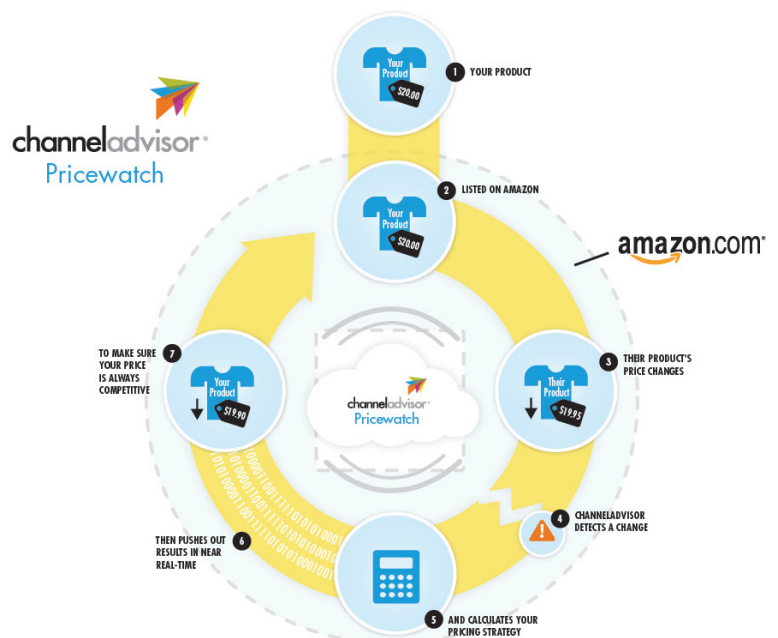
Unfortunately, you shouldn't expect to earn the Buy Box immediately after signing up as an Amazon seller. Amazon wants to make sure Buy Box owners know their way around the marketplace before granting them this special status. You'll need at least three to six months of selling history and/or order history, though the specifics will vary by category. And pay attention to category: just because you're Buy Box-eligible in one category doesn't mean you'll have that same status in other categories.

Another reason why newbies aren't eligible right away is because you'll need some time for your customer-satisfaction metrics to accumulate. (Obviously, you'll want to strive for the best possible — more on that below.) Also note that only sellers with Professional seller status are eligible for the Buy Box.

## TIP 2: COMPETE WHERE YOU CAN ON PRICE

When selecting who wins the Buy Box, Amazon considers your total price, which includes shipping cost. Many retailers mistakenly think that price is the only aspect that Amazon takes into consideration, and while it is the most important aspect, we've seen sellers that don't have the lowest price win the Buy Box.

So how do you make sure your Amazon prices are competitive? Try the ChannelAdvisor **Repricer with Pricewatch**, which constantly monitors Amazon to detect any price changes in products you carry. If it registers a change, it uses the business rules you've set to strategically adjust your price. And with the preview features, you'll be able to test out business rules and see where you are in your quest for the Buy Box, as well as view the current Buy Box owner for each of your listings.



<sup>1</sup> <http://www.wsj.com/articles/google-preps-shopping-site-to-challenge-amazon-1418673413>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.amazon.com/gp/help/customer/display.html?nodeId=200989570>

### TIP 3: DOUBLE-CHECK YOUR AVAILABILITY

Before awarding you the Buy Box, Amazon needs to be sure that you have the inventory available to handle customer demand. Amazon also wants to ensure that you can quickly fulfill these products to keep customers happy. Having zero stock in an item is an almost definite disqualifier for the Buy Box.

When planning out your stock levels, look beyond your current (or even short term) product demand. It doesn't hurt to have deep stock in an item, so if sales momentum increases significantly — especially as a result of Buy Box visibility — you don't stock out.

### TIP 4: FULFILL CONSISTENTLY — OFFER PRIME, FBA AND FREE SHIPPING

Part of the popularity of the Buy Box is how easy it is for buyers. A shopper simply clicks then knows that they'll receive that product quickly, in good condition and for a reasonable price. Amazon wants to make sure that a retailer that wins the Buy Box is capable of delivering consistently across all orders. Prompt shipping is also essential, preferably within a couple of days of order placement.

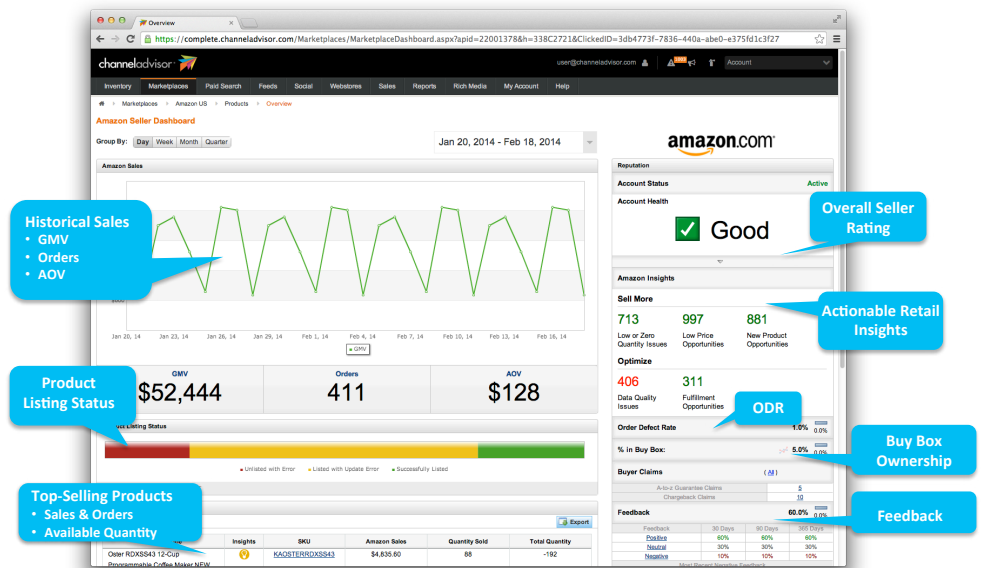
It is for these reasons that you should consider using Prime and FBA — even if it's just for your top-selling products — so that the onus is on Amazon to deliver your products and so that you have the benefit of its top-notch fulfillment infrastructure. Also, while Amazon doesn't say that using FBA helps retailers win the Buy Box, retailers that use FBA tend to have better feedback and better delivery, which leads to winning the Buy Box. And think of it from Amazon's perspective: who better to trust to provide an excellent delivery experience than itself?

Can't do FBA? At minimum, offer free shipping or a variety of shipping options, such as expedited.

### TIP 5: WATCH YOUR ORDER DEFECT RATE

Order Defect Rate is all about customer service — Amazon's hallmark — and how well you're taking care of customers after they've made their purchases. Three factors contribute to your Order Defect Rate:

1. **Negative Customer Feedback:** The customer's experience is paramount on Amazon, so seller feedback is important. Aim to handle all negative feedback (ratings of one or two stars) quickly and judiciously.
2. **A-to-z Guarantee Claims:** Amazon also measures how often customers are returning your products, as this is another measure of a negative customer experience.
3. **Service Chargebacks:** Amazon tracks credit card chargebacks as well. It's difficult to monitor all these moving pieces, which is where ChannelAdvisor's Amazon 360 Dashboard can come in handy.



The **Amazon 360 Dashboard** pulls together all the disparate metrics you need to keep track of into one clean, easy-to-navigate dashboard, so you can see at a glance your seller standing, your ODR, your top-selling products, your negative feedback, your A-to-z claims, what orders need to be shipped and more.

## TIP 6: COMMUNICATE, COMMUNICATE, COMMUNICATE

Don't leave customers in the dark. When it comes to customer service on Amazon, it's better to communicate too much than too little. Tell your customers when their item shipped and when it should arrive — and update them on any glitches along the way. On the flip side, if a customer reaches out to you, make sure to follow up with a speedy reply, even on weekends. Responsiveness to your customers' questions and concerns shows customers (and Amazon) that you value their business and builds a foundation of trust for future transactions. Make sure you have the infrastructure and scheduling in place to allow you to respond to customers quickly and accurately. Amazon measures customer service in several different ways, and you can check your Account Health to see how you're doing. While certain metrics such as Order Defect Rate, Cancellation Rate, and Late Shipment Rate may weigh more heavily when considering Buy Box status, Amazon considers all the available metrics.

Staying tuned in to all aspects of your account health is a great way to not only make sure you're working toward winning the Buy Box, but also earning customer respect and trust.

To summarise: While Amazon can never guarantee Buy Box placements, if you sell via FBA, you're automatically eligible to win the Buy Box. If you're not, you must meet all of the conditions listed below:

- 1. Type of selling account:** You must have a professional account.
- 2. Metrics:** Your Order Defect Rate, Cancellation Rate, and Late Shipment Rate are metrics that determine eligibility—the better you perform, the higher your chances are of becoming Buy Box eligible.
- 3. Order volume:** So that Amazon can accurately assess your performance, it requires that you have sufficient order volume (which varies among categories).

## NEXT STEPS

To learn more about how ChannelAdvisor can help you win the Buy Box, contact us at [ausales@channeladvisor.com](mailto:ausales@channeladvisor.com) or 1 300 887 239. And to get the latest e-commerce news and tips delivered straight to your inbox, [subscribe to our monthly newsletter](#).