

# How to Win the Buy Box in 2026



# Introduction

In 2026, the Buy Box is a signal of how competitive your entire operation is, not just your product. Amazon's algorithm has evolved beyond simple price competition. Today, winning the Buy Box requires consistently delivering the best overall customer experience by balancing price, fulfillment, delivery reliability, and operational performance. As performance thresholds tighten, even small inefficiencies can cost you visibility, sales, and margin.

While Amazon once saw explosive seller growth, the landscape is shifting. Approximately 165,000 new sellers joined Amazon in 2025, a 44% decline from 2024 and the lowest level in nearly a decade, according to Marketplace Pulse. This signals a move away from a flood of new entrants toward a more mature and consolidated marketplace.

At the same time, competition has intensified in a different way. China-based sellers now account for more than half of top-performing sellers, increasing pricing pressure and operational sophistication across categories. The rise of platforms like Temu and Shein has further accelerated this shift, pushing faster supply chains, aggressive pricing strategies, and higher consumer expectations around speed and value.

## What's New:

- Updated OTDR Enforcement
- Expanded OTDR Protection Requirements
- Updated SFP Shipping Policies
- Seller-Fulfilled Refund Policy Changes
- Commingling Has Ended
- FBA Prep & Labeling Services Discontinued (Jan 1, 2026)
- 2026 FBA Fee Increases & Inbound Defect Fee Hikes
- May 2025 Algorithm Update: Multi-Factor Ranking
- Mandatory Prepaid Return Labels for Seller-Fulfilled Orders (Feb 8, 2026)

Whether you're a new seller looking to establish a foothold on Amazon or an experienced retailer seeking to stay ahead of the curve, this guide will equip you with the knowledge and tools you need to succeed.

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# What Is the Buy Box?

On Amazon, there is no limit to the number of sellers that can operate on the platform or the amount of products that they can offer. This allows the same products to be sold by many retailers, each competing for the maximum amount of sales.

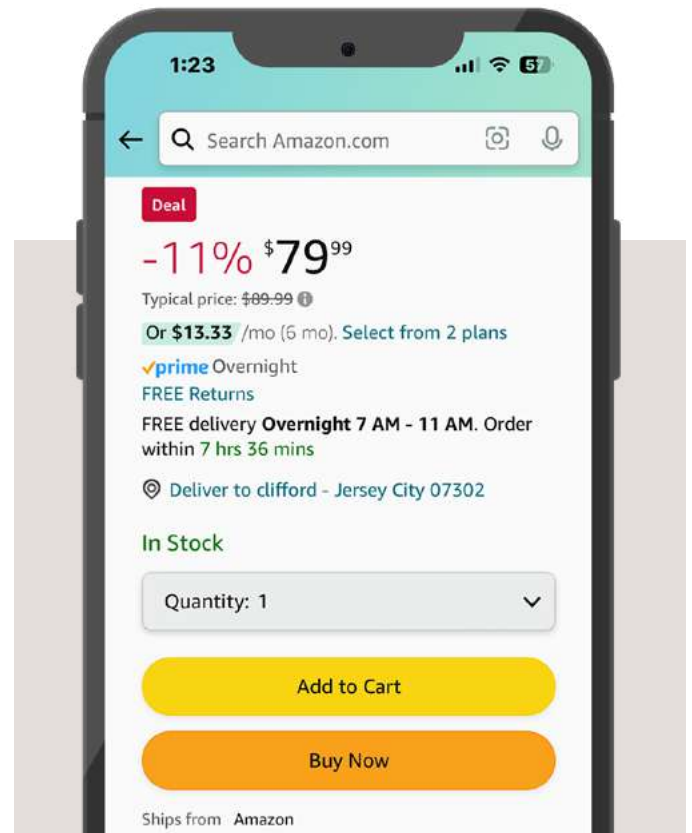
“ All third-party sellers hope to see their products appear in the illustrious Amazon Buy Box, also known as the Featured Offer.

When a shopper lands on a product detail page, Amazon’s algorithm chooses one seller whose details appear in the Buy Box – the white box on the right-hand side of the page. When a customer clicks on the “Add to Cart” button or “Buy Now” button, the sale goes to the seller in this box.

This seller, commonly known as the Buy Box “winner,” will make far more sales than any other seller for that product.

On a desktop, laptop, or tablet, all of the product information appears on one page. To purchase a particular product, buyers will either go straight to the Buy Box, choose a seller from the “Other Sellers on Amazon” box, or click on the link that will take them to all sellers’ offerings on the Offer Listing page.

On both Amazon mobile and the Amazon app, however, the customer has to scroll down a vertical chain of information, and the Buy Box appears directly beneath the product image and price. The “Add to Cart” button appears prominently on the app and mobile, as does the “Buy Now” button. If shoppers like what they see, there is no reason for them to scroll down any further.



Buy Box sales receive a greater lift when transacted on a mobile phone.

In addition, there is a small box dedicated to “Other Sellers on Amazon,” which can be found after the Buy Box and above the product’s details on Amazon’s mobile and app versions. This area only shows pricing for one alternative new or used item, while linking to another page containing information for all other sellers of the same product.

Since the “Other Sellers on Amazon” space is not as prominently featured as the “Add to Cart” button, “Buy Now” button, or the Featured Offer pricing and shipping information, mobile shoppers are much more likely to purchase from the Buy Box, which is why sellers who do not win this coveted spot – or optimize their listings across desktop and mobile – are at a major competitive disadvantage.

## How Important Is the Buy Box?

Amazon’s commitment to innovation and a customer-first mentality have made it a go-to shopping destination for consumers as well as an integral channel for any seller’s or retailer’s e-commerce strategy. With more than 310 million active customer accounts worldwide and a growing reliance on AI-powered shopping assistants, the platform remains one of the most critical revenue channels for brands and sellers.<sup>1</sup>

That scale is only becoming more important. Third-party (3P) sellers now account for over 60% of total units sold on Amazon, and marketplace revenue continues to grow at a steady pace. In 2025, Amazon’s 3P services revenue surpassed \$160 billion globally, driven by increased seller adoption, advertising expansion, and cross-border commerce.<sup>2</sup>

Understanding how it works, therefore, is critical for sellers who want to tap into the profit potential that this coveted piece of online real estate offers.

“ A product in the Buy Box will sell four times more than the same product without the Buy Box.

Over 80% of Amazon’s marketplace sales take place through the Buy Box, and this number greatly increases with Amazon mobile sales. It is vital for sellers to understand how Amazon determines who acquires the desired Buy Box position, as it has the capacity to make or break an online business.

Amazon Percent of Units by Third-Party Sellers



Source: Amazon Quarterly Results

<sup>1</sup> Market.US  
<sup>2</sup> Marketplace Pulse

# How the Buy Box Works

As a customer-centric company, Amazon's goal is to offer the best possible end-to-end experience for its shoppers. The Buy Box, or Featured Offer, was created with the objective of comparing multiple offerings of the same product in order to determine which will give the customer the highest level of satisfaction and showcase Amazon's commitment to operational excellence.

The Amazon Buy Box uses an algorithm designed to help customers find the best possible value for their money. It does this by determining which product offering provides the best balance of high seller performance and competitive prices — two critical variables in a seamless customer experience.

When determining which product offering will win the Buy Box, the algorithm first determines which of the competing offerings meets all of the necessary minimum requirements. It then breaks down each eligible offering into many different variables, and evaluates each one relative to the other sellers offering the same product.

Amazon's algorithm evaluates which offer delivers the best overall customer experience, balancing:

- Total price (not just lowest price)
- Delivery speed and reliability
- Fulfillment method
- Inventory availability
- Seller performance history

“ Today, Amazon increasingly prioritizes **delivery promise accuracy and consistency over theoretical speed**, meaning sellers who reliably meet expectations often outperform those who overpromise and miss.”

## Buy Box Rotations

Amazon has long abandoned the idea of giving the Buy Box to a single seller for very popular products. Instead, the Buy Box is shared between several sellers, with their “share” of the Buy Box determined by the variables mentioned below.

For example, if there are 10 perfectly equal sellers all competing for the Buy Box of the same product, each might get 10% share. This means that each seller's offering will be shown in the Buy Box for 10% of each day.

Alternatively, a relatively high-performing seller could have 70% of the Buy Box, an average seller could have 25%, and a lower-performing seller, 5%. Therefore, instead of saying that a seller wins or loses the Buy Box, the correct description is that a particular seller has a lesser or greater share of the Buy Box.

It is important to note that Buy Box rotations do not always take place. When they do, Amazon allocates Featured Offer share based on real-time performance signals, including price competitiveness, fulfillment reliability, and delivery accuracy.

Sellers do not receive equal rotation. Higher-performing offers receive disproportionately higher visibility.

However, if the Buy Box winner's metrics change, such as the price of the product or the amount of available stock, Amazon may rotate to another seller before the one-hour time period is up. These changes, however, are not instantaneous, and could take as long as 15 minutes to be updated.

## Beating Amazon to the Buy Box

Sellers often ask why Amazon itself seems to always be the Buy Box winner, and if it is possible to ever beat it to that highly sought-after position. Overall, the Buy Box treats Amazon as a seller with perfect customer experience metrics. Therefore, if a merchant has near-perfect customer metrics, or a very low landed price, that seller will often share the Buy Box with Amazon, or even beat the company if the price is low enough.

## When No Seller Qualifies for the Buy Box

There are two instances in which no seller will win the Buy Box. In these cases, the Buy Box will show a “See All Buying Options” button, and the buyer will be taken to the Offer Listing page (also known as the “More Buying Choices” page), which lists all merchants who sell the product in order of landed price only.

The two instances are listed below:

**1. When no seller meets the requirements to win the Buy Box,** or sellers that do meet the requirements have substandard seller metrics.

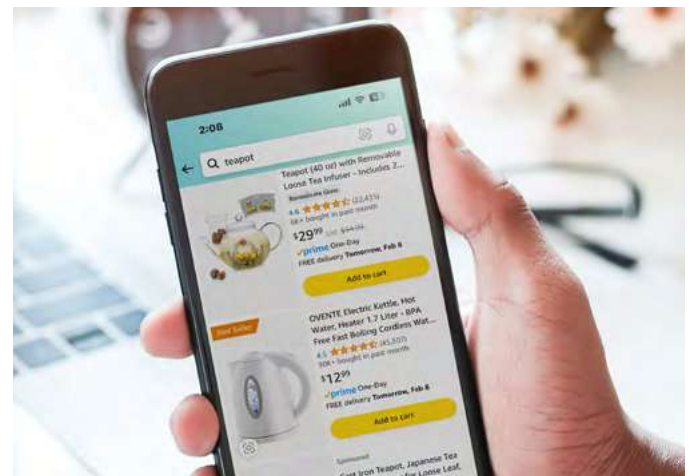
**2. When the sellers’ prices are deemed unreasonable because they are higher than the list price.** The list price is the full retail price — suggested by the manufacturer or supplier, or estimated according to standard industry practice — found below the product name on the product detail page.

## Owning the Buy Box

It is also possible for a seller to have already secured the Buy Box for a product. This is most common for Private Labels and brands, as they only sell their own branded products with unique codes (ASINs) and Buy Boxes — meaning they don’t have to compete with other sellers for the Buy Box on the same product and ASIN.

However, there are occasions when an unauthorized seller can list a counterfeit version of your product on the platform — commonly known as “hijacking” a product’s Buy Box. These unauthorized operators take advantage of product listings without permission, using the credibility and visibility of well-known brands to promote counterfeit or unauthorized items.

To report an unauthorized seller, file an Amazon Infringement Report as soon as possible. Here, a seller will attach ownership and authorization documentation, a detailed description of the infringement, and other supporting information.



# Buy Box Requirements

When competing for the Buy Box, the seller has to first meet the three key criteria listed below:

## 1. Must Have a Professional Seller

Only sellers paying Amazon the monthly subscription fee for a Professional Seller account will be considered for the Buy Box. Merchants with Individual Seller accounts cannot compete for the Buy Box.

## 2. Must Have Buy Box Eligibility

In order to win the Buy Box, a seller must be Buy Box-eligible for the product. This status is awarded to experienced Professional Seller account holders who have spent time selling on the Amazon platform. They must also possess high levels of performance.

To check Buy Box eligibility:

- Click on the Inventory tab in Amazon Seller Central and select **“Manage Inventory”**.
- Click on the **Preferences** tab.
- Select **“Buy Box Eligible.”**
- At the bottom of the page, click **“Save Changes.”**
- A **“Buy Box Eligible”** column will now show the eligibility status for each ASIN in your inventory.

Please note that sellers may see that they are eligible to win the Buy Box for some products, but not for others. If a seller believes to have met all the required criteria and has not been awarded Buy Box-eligible status, the seller can contact Amazon seller support directly to request to be considered for this status.

“ In order to be Buy Box-eligible, a seller needs to fulfill certain criteria.

## 3. Must Be Selling a New Item

The item being sold must be new. Used items, along with new items that do not win the Buy Box, are showcased in the “Used and New” area, which features the availability for items not promoted in the Buy Box and links to the full Offer Listing page with details on all available products.

Certified refurbished items generally have their own unique ASINs, and therefore do not compete with new merchandise for the main Buy Box.

Since the Buy Box for new items always appears first, and most sellers sell new items, the focus of this guide is on optimizing this crucial space. However, sellers of used items can benefit as well from this material, since many of the same best practices still apply.

# Secondary to the Buy Box

## Other Sellers on Amazon

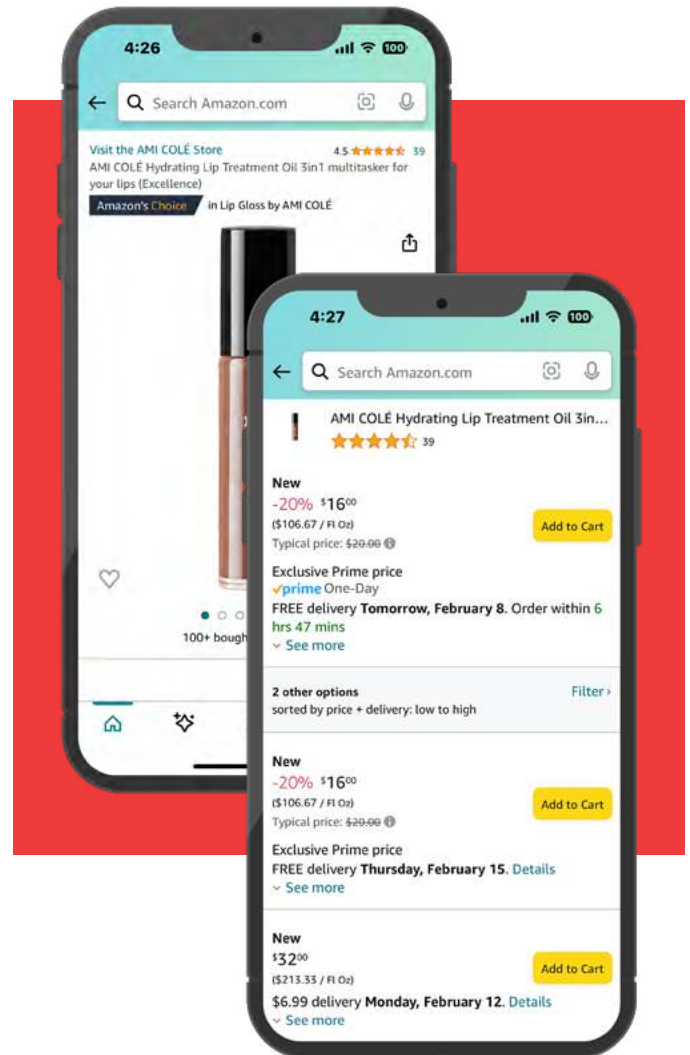
A seller who does not win the Buy Box still has a chance of appearing on the product detail page by being placed in the “Other Sellers on Amazon” box, which appears directly below the box for “Used and New” items. Although this is not as ideal as winning the Buy Box, a seller who is featured in the “Other Sellers on Amazon” box has more of a chance of making sales than other sellers.

“ The Buy Box is not the only way to make sales on Amazon.

Sellers who appear in the “Other Sellers on Amazon” box must possess all three aforementioned requirements necessary to qualify for the Buy Box and to be eligible for the Featured Offer. Up to three listings are selected to appear in this box, which also provides pricing, shipping details, plus a link to the Offer Listing page.

## Offer Listing Page

The Offer Listing page displays all sales listings for a product offered by a variety of sellers, regardless of condition and whether they qualify for the Buy Box or not. The Offer Listing page can be selected from the “used and new” section and is presented as a slide-in module on a product’s page. Amazon orders each offering on the list based on a variety of important factors, such as customer feedback ratings and pricing, and the list can be filtered by the shopper as well as by Prime eligibility, free delivery eligibility, and item condition.



# Variables That Affect the Buy Box

Once product eligibility has been determined, Amazon then compares multiple variables of each offering to determine which provides the best overall value for the customer. The weights assigned to each variable can change on a product-to-product or a category-to-category basis.

Therefore, even though a seller could be losing to a competitor on one product, the same seller could be beating the same competitor on another unrelated product.

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**Amazon considers many different factors in determining who wins the Buy Box. The importance of each variable can change according to the product.**

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It is vital to remember that all variables are measured relative to their competitors' offerings. For example, having an on-time delivery score of 98% could have a negative effect on winning the Buy Box if a near identical seller has a 99% rating. However, the chances of winning the Buy Box would increase if the seller was competing against someone with a 96% rating.


At the end of the day, Amazon's algorithm will never be fully understood by the outside seller. However, a sophisticated optimization solution like Feedvisor's award-winning algorithmic repricer can detect these changes is how today's leading sellers and retailers can maintain visibility into these key variables in real time, so they can analyze the data and take automated actions that drive results.

## 1. Fulfillment Method: Fulfillment By Amazon (FBA)


The most important variable considered by Amazon's Buy Box algorithm is the item's fulfillment method. Amazon considers its own fulfillment service to have perfect scores for multiple variables, including Shipping Time (also known as Transit Time), On-Time Delivery Rate, and Inventory Depth.

Until recently, it was much more likely for merchants who use FBA to win the Buy Box. Although a Fulfillment by Merchant (FBM) seller could still beat an FBA seller to the Buy Box, doing so would require high relative scores in all areas and/or a very low price.

For this reason, utilizing FBA has always been the quickest and easiest way to drastically improve one's chances of winning the Buy Box. Ultimately, though, this has to be a strategic business decision for the seller, as it has many other implications and should be carefully thought through so logistics can be planned properly. An FBA product appears on the Offer Listing page as follows:

**Exclusive Prime price**  
 **prime** One-Day  
**FREE delivery Tomorrow, February 8. Order within 6 hrs 47 mins**

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**Ships from** Amazon.com  
**Sold by** Ami Cole  
 (18 ratings)  
**94% positive over last 12 months**

### Important 2026 FBA Operational Changes

- FBA Prep/Labeling Ended (Jan 1, 2026): All units must arrive fully prepped and labeled; no more poly-bagging, FNSKU labeling, or bundling by Amazon
- Commingling Ended (March 31, 2026): Brand owners with Brand Registry no longer need Amazon barcode stickers; resellers must use FNSKU labels on all units

## 2. Fulfillment Method: Seller Fulfilled Prime (SFP)

With Seller Fulfilled Prime, high-performing, qualified sellers have the option of displaying the Amazon Prime badge on orders fulfilled via their own warehouse or third-party logistics providers, allowing them to maintain control of their fulfillment operations.

This is especially useful for sellers of large or heavy products, since using FBA requires them to pay an additional cost to ship the products to an Amazon fulfillment center. By eliminating these shipping and handling fees, as well as FBA long-term storage fees, sellers are able to offer lower prices, or increase their margins on these products.

### Best Products for Seller Fulfilled Prime



High-value items



Products with seasonal or unpredictable demand



Items with variations



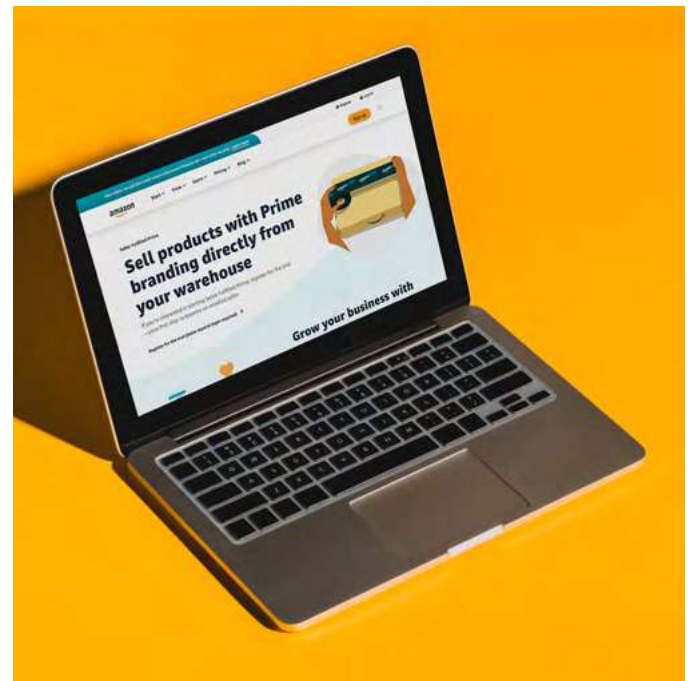
Slow-moving goods



Inventory that requires special handling or preparation

Sellers have the option to leverage Amazon's Buy Shipping services for their shipping needs, allowing them to benefit from Amazon's negotiated rates and service levels. The shift to Seller Fulfilled Prime (SFP) not only brings cost savings but also reshapes the competitive landscape, influencing how sellers compete and secure the coveted Buy Box.

Customers have a higher tendency to pay more to a Prime badge owner and with that badge, sellers in turn have a greater chance of winning the Buy Box.



To be eligible for SFP, sellers need to prove their ability to meet Prime customers' expectations for service by meeting certain criteria before, during, and after a trial period. It's important to note, Seller Fulfilled Prime has evolved from a one-time qualification program into a continuously enforced performance model, where eligibility and visibility are reassessed based on ongoing delivery and operational performance.

**The pre-qualification criteria are as follows:**

- ✓ Have a **domestic US address** as your default shipping address
- ✓ Have an **Amazon Professional** selling account
- ✓ Meet the following criteria over the past **90 days**:
  - Self-fulfilled at least 100 packages
  - Cancellation rate less than 2.5%
  - Valid tracking rate greater than 95%
  - Late shipment rate less than 4%



Sellers wishing to sign up for Seller Fulfilled Prime must complete a trial period to show they meet the requirements. The Prime badge will NOT be displayed on items enrolled in Seller Fulfilled Prime during this time, however, order processing must still be handled with a zero-day handling time.

**The criteria to pass the Seller Fulfilled Prime trial include:**

- ✓ **Participate** for 30 days
- ✓ Ship **100 or more packages** from Prime trial orders
- ✓ An **on-time delivery rate** of at least 93.5%
- ✓ A valid **tracking rate** of at least 99%
- ✓ A **seller-initiated cancellation rate** of less than 0.5%
- ✓ Meet minimum thresholds for **one-day and two-day delivery speeds** as viewed by Prime customer detail page views

Once the trial period is successfully completed (after a minimum of 100 orders meet the criteria above) sellers will automatically be enrolled into Seller Fulfilled Prime and enrolled ASINs will display the Prime badge to customers. Seller Fulfilled Prime performance is now evaluated continuously, with metrics assessed on a rolling, weekly basis rather than static evaluation windows. Sellers must consistently meet thresholds to maintain Prime eligibility and Buy Box competitiveness.

**The requirements to maintain Seller Fulfilled Prime status include:**

- ✔ **Free same-day, one-day and two-day delivery** for Prime customers
- ✔ **Free nationwide standard shipping** for all customers
- ✔ Meet minimum thresholds for **one-day and two-day delivery speeds** as viewed by Prime customer detail page views
- ✔ An **on-time delivery rate** of at least 93.5%
- ✔ A valid **tracking rate** of at least 99%
- ✔ A **seller-initiated cancellation rate** of less than 0.5%
- ✔ Ship and deliver Prime orders **on weekends** (Saturday, Sunday, or both)
- ✔ Offer **Free Returns** on items weighing under 50 lb
- ✔ All **post-order customer service** inquiries are managed by Amazon
- ✔ Sellers must **set order cut-off times** to at least 2:00 p.m. local time Monday-Friday and 10:30 a.m. on weekends
- ✔ The same **ASIN cannot be listed** as both Seller Fulfilled Prime and non-Prime. Identical offers on the same ASIN are considered the same

Amazon has historically suspended sellers who failed to meet any certain metric. Thanks to recent changes, sellers now have a three-strike allowance per program requirement. This provides sellers with greater flexibility to address issues. Nevertheless, reaching the three-strike limit necessitates a return to the pre-qualification process, representing a significant reset within the program.



### 3. Landed Price

The landed price is the total amount that the product is sold for on Amazon. This includes shipping in the United States, and shipping and VAT in the UK and Europe. A lower landed price will increase the seller's Buy Box share. This is another simple variable to manipulate, as it is the only one that the seller can control directly and instantly.

If the seller's overall performance metrics are inferior to those of the competition, then the seller will need to lower the price of the product to gain a greater share of the Buy Box. The lower these metrics are, relative to the competing sellers, the lower the seller needs to drop the price in order to compete for the Buy Box.

**Price is certainly key to winning the Buy Box. However, on its own, it is not enough.**

Conversely, the higher the seller's performance metrics are in relation to the competition for a specific product, the higher the price may be raised while still holding on to a healthy share of the Buy Box. A higher seller rating and lower Order Defect Rate means the same item can be sold at a higher cost and maintain the same share of the Buy Box.

“ Having a true price optimization platform in place like Feedvisor's award-winning technology can help you beat out Buy Box competition by having a solution that will automatically adjust prices for optimal impact based on real-time market data and operational insights.

A product's landed price can be seen on the Amazon product page as follows:

The screenshot shows an Amazon product page with the following details:

- One-time purchase:** \$16.00 (\$106.67 / Fl Oz)
- prime One-Day** and **FREE Returns**
- FREE delivery Tomorrow, February 8.** Order within **6 hrs 48 mins**
- Deliver to clifford - Jersey City 07302**
- In Stock**
- Buy 2 or more, save 8%** Discount by Amazon [Terms](#)
- Quantity: 1** (dropdown menu)
- Add to Cart** (yellow button)
- Buy Now** (orange button)
- Ships from Amazon**
- Sold by Ami Cole**
- Returns:** Eligible for Return, Refund or Replacement within 30 days of receipt
- Payment:** Secure transaction

## 4. Shipping Time

Another essential metric Amazon looks to determine Buy Box positioning is the time in which the seller promises to ship the item to the customer. Sellers who can offer faster options for shipping are more likely to be prioritized at the Buy Box.

For certain time-sensitive products and categories, such as birthday cards and perishable goods, the impact of this metric on the Buy Box will be even higher, since customers often demand swift shipping on such items.



Amazon arranges Shipping Time (also known as Transit Time) into several default brackets, with more specific options available within each time frame. The default Transit Times in the U.S. are:

2-4 days	5-8 days	14-28 days
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Please note that the term “days” refers to business days, and does not usually include Saturdays or Sundays, unless weekend delivery is enabled. Holidays are also taken into account.

Again, jumping between the brackets will have greater significance than moving within them. For example, sellers who improve their Shipping Time from seven days to five days may see an increase in their Buy Box share. However, improving it from five days to three or two days will have a much greater effect.

A product’s Shipping Time is reflected in the time which the item is promised to arrive to the buyer. It can be seen on the Offer Listing page as follows:

<b>Strawberry ...</b>	<b>Sangria Time</b>	<b>Tanger-ring...</b>
\$2 <sup>28</sup>	\$2 <sup>28</sup>	\$2 <sup>99</sup>
<del>\$3.29</del>	<del>\$3.29</del>	<del>\$3.29</del>
<b>In Stock</b>	<b>In Stock</b>	<b>In Stock</b>
FREE Delivery	FREE Delivery	FREE Delivery
<b>Mon, Feb 19</b>	<b>Tomorrow</b>	<b>Tomorrow</b>

**Note:** Two important changes to transit time took effect on October 25, 2024.

**1. Automated Handling Time:** Amazon will enable automated handling time if your manually set handling time is two or more days slower than your actual handling time. This feature adjusts the handling time for each SKU based on your historical order processing speed. If automated handling time is enabled for this reason, you won’t be able to disable it.

**2. Transit Time for Shipping from China to the Continental US:** The maximum transit time for shipping from outside the US to the continental US has been reduced from 28 days to 20 days. Sellers who previously set their transit time at 14-28 days will be automatically updated to 14-20 days. New transit time ranges for shipping from China to continental US are 2-4 days to 14-20 days.

## 5. Stock Availability

There must be available stock of the item the merchant is trying to sell. Typically, if the item is not in stock, the seller cannot win the Buy Box. The Buy Box will not show “out of stock,” and instead it will just rotate the position to another seller. It is important to use inventory planning best practices to keep your popular products in stock.

However, there are exceptions to this rule, such as a backordered item. Today, most products can be listed as “backordered,” with a note that is visible in the product page. With a backorder, the seller will accept orders for the item, even though the product is not yet fulfillable and will only be shipped at a later date. Customers will see that the item is not available for shipping until the restock date.

Amazon also recommends that sellers only offer backorders if they can fulfill orders within 30 days. These recommendations apply to pre-ordered products as well, which allows shoppers to place orders on items in advance of their release dates.

Backordered items can be featured in the Buy Box, but items that are immediately fulfillable are favored. Therefore, avoiding backorders should be a priority for all sellers.

## 6. Order Defect Rate

The Order Defect Rate (ODR) is a combination of three different metrics:

- The Negative Feedback Rate
- The A-to-Z Guarantee Claim Rate
- Credit Card Chargeback Rate

Amazon adds these three numbers together to work out the percentage of the defective orders that were sent. It includes all orders with at least one defect shown as a percentage of total orders that occurred during a given 60-day time frame.

**A seller's ODR (Order Defect Rate) takes into account multiple metrics. The higher the percentage, the less likely the seller is to win the Buy Box.**

While this score only has a relatively medium-level impact on the Buy Box algorithm, sellers with more than a 1% ODR may incur significant penalties, including account deactivation. Ideally, this number should always be kept below 1% to have a serious chance of winning the Buy Box.

**Order Defect Rate Formula**

$$\text{ODR} = \frac{\text{Number of orders with defects}}{\text{Total number of orders}} \times 100$$

## 7. Valid Tracking Rate

Valid Tracking Rate is defined as the percentage of packages shipped with a valid tracking number, divided by the total number of packages that have been shipped and confirmed.

**Sellers are required to provide valid tracking numbers of at least 99% across all product categories.**

Tracking is not required for heavy/ bulky freight shipments, or items shipped in Standard Mail or First Class Mail envelopes. Failing to do so will not only have a detrimental effect on Buy Box share but could also lead to sellers losing their ability to sell in that category.

Valid Tracking Rate is calculated according to promised delivery date data over the course of a 30-day period. You may have to wait up to 72 hours for these reporting metrics to be accurately updated and reflected in Amazon Seller Central.



Starting January 15, 2025, VTR will be measured on all orders shipped through any shipping service provider, not just those integrated with Amazon for scan data. VTR will be calculated as follows:

- For US shipments, a tracking ID is valid if Amazon records at least one physical carrier scan.
- Sellers shipping to the US from China, Canada, American Samoa, or the US Minor Outlying Islands must provide tracking information:
  - Packages under \$5 (excluding taxes, including shipping) require one valid carrier scan.
  - Packages \$5 or more require two valid carrier scans: one when the package arrives at the carrier facility, and one at delivery or attempted delivery.
- Sellers shipping to the US from India or the UK must provide tracking:
  - Packages under \$15 (excluding taxes, including shipping) require one valid carrier scan.
  - Packages \$15 or more require two valid carrier scans: one when the package arrives at the carrier facility, and one at delivery or attempted delivery.

## 8. Late Shipment Rate

Late Shipment Rate is the number of orders shipped later than the expected ship date. The expected ship date is calculated based on the handling time you set in Seller Central (in the Manage Your Inventory section). If you do not set a handling time, the default is one day for SKUs already handled in one day or less.

It is recommended, therefore, to ship and confirm shipment by the expected ship date.

Ideally, this number should be kept below 4% in order to positively impact one’s chances of winning the Buy Box.

A rate above 4% could result in account deactivation. This metric is measured according to both 10-day and 30-day periods.

This metric can be seen in Amazon Seller Central and only applies to seller-fulfilled orders.



## 9. Feedback Rating

This is the culmination of all of the feedback that a seller has received from customers and is grouped by the last 30 days, 90 days, 12 months, and Lifetime. The most recent feedback has the greatest effect on the Buy Box. In the below example, the 30-day feedback score was 98%, giving the seller 4.8 stars out of a maximum of five stars.

This metric can be seen in Amazon Seller Central and is displayed as follows:

★★★★★ | 97% positive in the last 12 months (2354 ratings)

	30 days	90 days	12 months	Lifetime
Positive	98%	98%	97%	95%
Neutral	1%	1%	2%	2%
Negative	1%	1%	1%	3%
Count	159	471	2,354	3,993

Only customers who have spent at least \$50 on Amazon in the last 12 months can submit ratings and reviews.

## 10. On-Time Delivery

This is the percentage of orders that buyers received by the estimated delivery date and is based on valid tracking information.

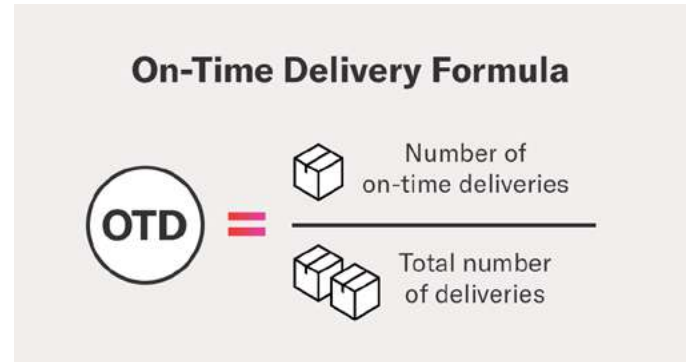
To have seller-fulfilled products listed on Amazon, you must maintain a 90% OTDR without promise extensions. Amazon recommends a 95% OTDR for all seller-fulfilled orders. This does not apply to FBA offers.

Amazon has updated how it measures On-Time Delivery Rate (OTDR). Now, OTDR reflects the percentage of your tracked seller-fulfilled orders delivered by the original seller-promised “Deliver by” date—before any promise extensions are applied. Previously, OTDR was measured after these extensions were factored in.

**As of February 28, 2026**, Amazon now deactivates only the specific listings most responsible for a low OTDR (not the entire catalog), with conditions on how to qualify for that protection.

To calculate OTDR without promise extensions, Amazon uses a 14-day evaluation window. Data is pulled from shipments with a promised delivery date within the last 21 days, excluding the most recent 7 days, as those shipments may still be in transit.

Promise extensions, which account for potential delays like extreme weather or transportation constraints, may still adjust the delivery date shown to customers, but they no longer influence OTDR calculations. This change means sellers must meet their originally set handling and transit times to maintain a strong OTDR.



This metric can be seen in Amazon Seller Central. If it meets Amazon’s targets for On-Time Delivery in tandem with an impressive Valid Tracking Rate, Amazon may give you the ability to offer reduced shipping or handling times on items in your inventory.

A shipped unit will be considered OTDR compliant if it was delivered on or before the “Deliver by” date shown on Seller Central. Alternatively, compliance is also met if all three of the following conditions apply:

- The SKU was assigned to a shipping template with Shipping Settings Automation (SSA) enabled.
- Your account has automated handling time enabled.
- You purchased an “OTDR Protected” shipping label through Amazon Buy Shipping.

## 11. Customer Response Time

While initially believed to have little effect on the Buy Box, it is now evident that Customer Response Time plays a part in determining the Buy Box share.

Amazon gauges response time by determining whether a seller is answering buyer messages within 24 hours including weekends and holidays. If a seller leaves too many messages unanswered for 24 hours or more, the chances of that seller winning the Buy Box will severely decrease, in addition to a decline in their overall seller performance. It is important to note that responses to every customer message are included in these statistics, so it is important to respond to each one.

Sellers should also know that auto replies do not count as responses, but should a message not need a response like a thank-you note from a customer, make sure to check the “Mark as no response needed” box in the reply area within 24 hours so that the system will discount this message from the total metric, having neither a positive nor negative effect.



## 12. Feedback Count

This is the total number of buyers that have given the seller feedback. This metric has a dual purpose. First, it is used to accurately weigh the Feedback Rating between sellers with a long history and a lot of feedback, and newer sellers with a short history and less feedback.

It is also considered a key metric in and of itself, and sellers with a high score are more likely to win the Buy Box over a seller with a low score, relative to all other metrics being equal.

This metric can be seen in Amazon Seller Central and is displayed as follows:

	30 days	90 days	12 months	Lifetime
Positive	95%	94%	94%	90%
Neutral	3%	3%	2%	4%
Negative	3%	4%	4%	6%
Count	111	340	865	3,163



### 13. Inventory Depth and Sales Volume

Amazon prefers to give the Buy Box to sellers who have enough inventory to deal with the increased demand that the Buy Box may create. For that reason, sellers with a larger current inventory, consistent sales, and a strong stock history may be granted a greater Buy Box share.

The strength of the stock history is determined by how much time in the last 30 and 90 days the seller has been out of stock of this item. However, historical stock amounts do not seem to be taken into account. Even if a seller maintains a low stock level, they will be preferred over a perfectly equal competitive seller who has frequent fluctuations in stock quantity and often goes out of stock.

These metrics have not been proven to have a strong effect on the Buy Box when compared to other higher-impact metrics. They may be used to distinguish between sellers who have very similar performance ratings, and/or are bidding on very popular products, although we have not seen any strong proof of this. This metric is hidden and cannot be seen in Amazon Seller Central.

**Amazon will not award the Buy Box to a seller whose merchandise is frequently out of stock.**

### 14. Cancellation and Refund Rates

The Cancellation Rate is the number of orders canceled by the seller pre-fulfillment as a percentage of total orders calculated during a given seven-day timeframe, and only applies to seller-fulfilled orders. **There are no exemptions to the cancellation rate metric for Seller Fulfilled Prime.**

Customers can cancel an order within 30 minutes of placing it without any action required from the seller. If a cancellation request is made after 30 minutes, the seller can still cancel the order without affecting their cancellation rate metric.

The current cancellation rate requirement is 0.5% or less.

Meanwhile, Refund Rate is the number of orders refunded to the customer post-fulfillment.

These metrics can be seen in the Amazon Seller Central and are displayed as follows:

#### Customer Metrics Data

	7 days	30 days
Pre-fulfillment Cancel Rate	3.57% (2)	1.21% (3)
Late Shipment Rate	0% (0)	0% (0)
Refund Rate	1.79% (1)	6.05% (15)

#### Important 2026 Refund Rate Updates:

Amazon has made two significant changes to the seller-fulfilled refund process effective in early 2026. First, effective January 26, 2026, the FBM refund processing window extended from two business days to four calendar days before an Automated Refund is triggered – giving sellers more time to assess returned items. If you do not process a refund within four calendar days of receiving a return, Amazon may issue an automatic refund and you will not be eligible for SAFE-T claim reimbursement (except in limited circumstances). Second, effective February 8, 2026, all U.S. seller-fulfilled orders must use Amazon's Prepaid Return Label (APRL) program, removing the previous exemption for high-value items. Amazon automatically issues the prepaid return shipping label to the buyer through Buy Shipping Services, reducing refund cycle times from 14 to 7 days. Exemptions still apply for Handmade products, certified pre-owned watches, non-physical items, dangerous goods, and extra-large or heavy items.

## 15. Nationwide Delivery Coverage

Amazon requires that products in all size categories – Standard, Oversized, and Extra Large – offer fast shipping within the contiguous United States. All Seller Fulfilled Prime offers must include nationwide standard shipping to both Prime and non-Prime customers in the lower 48 states and the District of Columbia. These offers are eligible for Prime branding, and the Prime customer page views will count toward your delivery speed calculation.

When a product is equipped with a Prime shipping template, irrespective of its sizing tier, it is inherently accompanied by a guaranteed minimum delivery speed of 3-5 calendar days. Sellers are unable to modify this default setting. Sellers can define regions for faster delivery speeds such as same-day, one-day, and two-day options. All regions, regardless of speed, qualify for Prime branding and are subject to monitoring based on the delivery-speed requirement.

The notable change is that sellers can now have the Prime badge nationwide for oversized and extra-large SKUs. Previously, this ability was limited to the specific regional area where the seller operated.



Courtesy of Amazon

Size tier	Definition
<b>Standard-size</b>	<p>An item will be considered standard-size if its package weight and dimensions meet all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The length (or longest side) is 18 inches or less</li> <li>■ The width (or median side) is 14 inches or less</li> <li>■ The height (or shortest side) is 8 inches or less</li> <li>■ The weight is 20 lb or less</li> </ul>
<b>Oversize</b>	<p>An item will be considered oversize if its package weight and dimensions exceed any of the standard-size conditions but do not meet any of the extra large conditions.</p>
<b>Extra large</b>	<p>An item will be considered extra large if its package weight and dimensions meet any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The length (or longest side) is 96 inches or more</li> <li>■ The length plus girth is 130 inches or more (girth is 2 x height + 2 x width)</li> <li>■ The weight is 50 lb or more</li> <li>■ The item is a television and the length (or longest side) is 40 inches or more</li> </ul>

## 16. Delivery Speed

Delivery speed measures how often Prime customers view products with specific advertised delivery speeds.

Amazon has expanded the delivery speed calculation for featured offers to include all page views from Prime customers in the contiguous US, regardless of the shipping option. This update also incorporates Sundays and holidays in the calculation, resulting in increased delivery speed metrics across all size tiers.

Additionally, orders will now be categorized as Prime when a Prime customer purchases an offer from a Prime shipping template, regardless of the chosen shipping option. This is a shift from the previous criteria, where orders were deemed Prime only if a Prime or non-Prime customer selected one-day or two-day delivery for an offer linked to a Prime shipping template.

The new delivery speed metrics are as follows:

Size tier	Same day	≤ 1 day	≤ 2 days
<b>Standard Size</b>	N/A	≥ 30%	≥ 70%
<b>Oversize</b>	N/A	≥ 10%	≥ 45%
<b>Extra Large</b>	N/A	N/A	≥ 15%



# Buy Box Misconceptions and Myths

Before you begin exploring new strategies and solutions for maximizing your share of the Buy Box, we must first dispel the myths about what the Buy Box is not. A plethora of articles have been written about how to outsmart the Buy Box and, while many of them may work in specific situations, these are generally oversimplified, outdated, or incorrect.

**Below are the most common fallacies about the Buy Box:**

## Lowest Price Point Manipulations

This theory claims that a seller who undercuts the lowest competition by a certain percentage and then takes off an extra penny will always win the Buy Box. After testing this theory extensively with multiple products, at multiple price points, and in multiple categories, it is evident that this is not a fixed rule. The idea may have gained popularity because when it was tested on low-end products, it created a lot of false positives.

Although lowering prices can increase one's chances of winning the Buy Box, the claim that a certain magic bullet equation will guarantee the Buy Box certainly holds no truth. Continually lowering the price creates price wars between sellers, driving down profit margins on all sides. It is crucial to avoid these scenarios by employing holistic, data-driven optimization solutions that allow you to achieve an optimal balance between pricing and profits.



**Tech Tip:** Using price optimization technology like Feedvisor's powerful, "AI-first" platform can help you further grow revenues and profits by pinpointing the optimal pricing for each of the products in your inventory. Instead of focusing solely on pricing your product the lowest to outbid competitors, Feedvisor's technology experiments with raising the prices and monitors how the market — including consumers and other sellers — adjusts.

## The 2% Rotation Rule

Another false assumption is that if a seller's price is within 2% (or another percentage) of the current Buy Box winner, that seller is guaranteed to win the Buy Box at least a certain percentage of the time, as the Buy Box rotates between sellers.

Again, there are no statistics or evidence to support this theory. Although it appears to work when tested, this is very likely another example of false positives. Buy Box rotations do exist, but this has nothing to do with the 2% rotation rule.

While we will explore the integral role that rotations play in Buy Box allocation, the assumption that they can be manipulated entirely by price has been proven wrong time and time again. Sellers and retailers need to have solutions in place that can holistically take into account all the key factors that will affect your chances of winning the Buy Box.

## Pricing is Irrelevant When Owning the Buy Box

Securing the Buy Box isn't the sole solution for optimizing sales and profits. While you might not face direct competition for the Buy Box on a particular ASIN, it's essential to remain vigilant regarding competitors offering complementary or substitute products.

Consider this — 36% of customers stress the significance of conducting research before making a purchase, and 60% of them choose to do so on Amazon.<sup>1</sup> Even if you have secured the Buy Box, customers are still evaluating it in comparison to the myriad of alternatives available. Most importantly, customers are scrutinizing your price, with 77% highlighting it as a crucial factor in their purchasing decisions.<sup>2</sup> Are they likely to find a better deal elsewhere? Is your product priced higher compared to the competition?

With this in mind, it's crucial to strategically price your products in alignment with competitors to achieve your business goals, whether it's boosting sales, expanding market share, or other objectives. There are three types of competitors to consider: Competing, Complementary, and Substitute.



**Complementary:** A product that enhances or goes well with another product.



**Competing:** A similar offering that serves the same or similar purpose as another product

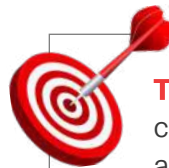


**Substitute:** An alternative that can fulfill the same consumer need or desire as another product.

To establish a strategic advantage, brands should consider various factors influencing the demand and pricing of their products when formulating their pricing strategy, including:

- Shipping Costs
- Inflation
- Overall Market Trends
- Your Customer's Budget
- Your Competitor's Prices

Combine all of these factors with the data on the pricing trends of competitive products to accurately reflect demand sensitivity to price, shaping an informed pricing strategy.



**Tech Tip:** Given the likelihood of your catalog featuring more than one SKU and the ever-changing nature of the marketplace, manually tweaking prices for all your items can quickly become a time-consuming and confusing task. Swap your manual approach for dynamic pricing technology that adjusts prices on a more active and informed basis, rather than relying on occasional gut instinct changes on a monthly or quarterly basis.

<sup>1</sup> Feedvisor 2023

<sup>2</sup> Feedvisor 2023

## Final Thoughts

The key to Buy Box success in 2026 lies in more than just having the lowest price. In a marketplace crowded with millions of sellers, securing and maintaining your Buy Box position requires a deep understanding of ever-evolving marketplace dynamics. With competition growing fiercer and consumer behavior changing rapidly, staying ahead demands innovation that pushes the capabilities of traditional pricing strategies.

To stay competitive, sellers must be able to adapt to real-time market fluctuations, including shifts in demand, competitor activity, and inventory levels. This is where intelligent solutions come into play. AI-powered tools can analyze these ever-changing factors and dynamically adjust your pricing strategy, factoring in everything from competitor signals to market trends, all in real time.

By harnessing these capabilities, sellers can not only secure their Buy Box share but also drive demand, maximize margins, and stay ahead of the competition. With AI as a cornerstone of your strategy, you're empowered to make data-driven decisions that ensure sustained growth and long-term Buy Box success.



# The Amazon Buy Box Cheat Sheet

Metric	Impact on Buy Box	Definition	Best Way to Win the Buy Box	For Buy Box	Time Period That Metric Impacts the Buy Box
<b>Fulfillment Method</b>	Very high	How the seller ships the item	FBA or Seller Fulfilled Prime	FBA/FBM/SFP	Current
<b>Stock Availability</b>	Very high	If there is available stock of the item the seller is trying to sell	100%	Avoid stock-outs and backorders	Current
<b>Delivery Speed</b>	High	How often Prime customers view products with advertised delivery speed	Higher is better, but depends on sizing tier		45 days
<b>Landed Price</b>	High	The total price plus shipping	Lower is better		Current
<b>Shipping Time</b>	High	Time it takes to ship the item	Up to two days	Less than 14 days	Current
<b>Order Defect Rate</b>	Medium	Negative Feedback Rate + A-to-Z Claim Rate + Chargeback Rate	0%	Less than 1%	60 days
<b>Valid Tracking Rate</b>	Medium	Deliveries sent with full tracking information	100%	Greater than 99%	30 days
<b>Late Shipment Rate</b>	Medium	Number of orders shipped later than the expected ship date	0%	Less than 4%	30 days
<b>On-Time Delivery</b>	Medium	Orders that were delivered on time	100%	Greater than 95%	14 days
<b>Feedback Rating</b>	Medium	Total of all feedback the seller has received	Higher is better; most recent is most important		Lifetime
<b>Customer Response Time</b>	Medium	How long the seller takes to reply to the customer	Up to 12 hours	Less than 24 hours	Last 90 days
<b>Feedback Count</b>	Medium	The number of customers that have given feedback	Higher is better		Constant
<b>Inventory Depth</b>	Low	How often the seller runs out of stock	Lower is better		Last 90 days
<b>Cancellation Rate</b>	Low	How often the seller cancels an order	0%	Less than .5%	7 days
<b>Refund Rate</b>	Low	How often customers ask for a refund	Lower is better		7 days

# The Amazon Acronym Glossary

**ASIN: Amazon Standard Identification Number**

A unique 10-digit code assigned to each product sold on Amazon. ASINs are the same across all Amazon sites.

**BMVD: Books, Music, Video, and DVD**

A category of items sold on Amazon. Amazon actually began as an online store for BMVD products, and its terms for them still remain slightly different than all other categories.

**EAN: European Article Number / International Article Number**

A 13-digit code that is given to retail products and can be found either on the outer packaging of a product or the back cover of a book, below the bar code.

**FBA: Fulfillment By Amazon**

When Amazon is in control of the seller's entire shipping and handling process. The seller pays a service fee and ships inventory to an Amazon warehouse. When an order is placed, Amazon employees select, package, and ship the item to the buyer.

**FBM: Fulfillment By Merchant**

When the seller is in control of his entire shipping and handling process. Instead of paying a service fee and shipping inventory to Amazon to handle, the seller uses his or her own resources and sends the items directly to the buyer.

**FNSKU: Fulfillment Network Stock Keeping Unit**

This unique identifier is the way that Amazon identifies a product as unique to the seller who has sent it to the Amazon fulfillment center. It is printed on product labels.

**GTIN: Global Trade Item Number**

The umbrella term used to cover several numbers used to identify every product sold on Amazon. It includes UPC, ISBN, and EAN, among others.

**ISBN: International Standard Book Number**

Every publicly printed book is assigned one of these (usually) 13-digit numbers. It is located on the packaging and/or back cover of the specific product located above the bar code.

**MAP: Minimum Advertised Price**

A supplier's pricing policy that prevents a seller from advertising prices below a specific amount.

**MSRP: Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price**

The price at which the manufacturer recommends the retailer sell the product. It does not necessarily correspond to the price retailers actually set.

**SFP: Seller Fulfilled Prime**

With SFP, sellers can display the Prime badge on listings that they fulfill from their own facilities.

**SKU: Stock Keeping Unit**

This is a number/ letter combination used to identify a billable item in a company's inventory. Companies use SKUs to manage inventory effectively using computerized systems, rather than having to keep track of everything manually.

**UPC: Universal Product Code**

A 12-digit scannable bar code that is used to track retail items in many countries, including the USA and UK. It is located below the barcode on the packaging of an item or the back cover of a book.

# Maximize Buy Box Share with AI-Powered, Inventory-Aware Dynamic Price Optimization

Experience our cutting-edge dynamic price optimization platform for private labels and brands and AI-driven algorithmic repricer for competitive sellers. Our groundbreaking AI reduces inventory fees while optimizing sales and profits.



- ✓ Award-Winning AI-Powered Dynamic Pricing**  
Harness advanced AI to optimize pricing for every ASIN across all catalogs, preempting competitor moves to win higher Buy Box share without compromising margins.
- ✓ Inventory-Aware AI**  
Seamlessly integrate real-time inventory data with AI-driven pricing and ads to predict fees, adjust prices, and optimize your ad strategy—maximizing profits and minimizing risks.
- ✓ AI-Driven SPA Campaign Automations**  
Leverage impactful advertising optimization to automate bids, keyword research, targeting and budgets to boost campaign performance.
- ✓ Understand Competition, Inventory, Traffic, and Brand Strength**  
Deep machine-learning algorithms constantly assess the competitive landscape, brand strength, and demand in tandem with price elasticity and seasonality to determine the optimal price.
- ✓ Bespoke Pricing Strategies for Each ASIN**  
Customize your pricing strategy to your unique business needs with an array of profit to revenue-oriented across your entire catalog.
- ✓ Actionable Customized Reporting**  
Get ahead with customized reporting across Brand, Operational, Inventory, and Competitive Analytics—driving smarter decisions and better results.

**TRY US FREE TODAY**

“ Feedvisor has played a crucial role in helping us dominate the Buy Box on Amazon. Their cutting-edge AI technology and expert approach to advertising and pricing optimization have driven substantial growth in our visibility, revenue, and market share.”

- Alex R., Senior E-Commerce Manager