

# THE BEGINNERS GUIDE TO DROPSHIPPING DOMINATION



**"EVERYTHING  
AROUND YOU...  
WAS MADE UP BY  
PEOPLE THAT  
WERE NO  
SMARTER THAN  
YOU"**

*"Life can be much broader once you discover one simple fact: Everything around you that you call life was made up by people that were no smarter than you and you can change it, you can influence it, you can build your own things that other people can use.*

*Once you learn that, you'll never be the same again." -Steve Jobs*



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# *Chapter 1*

# The 1950s

While the word "dropshipping" was coined quite recently, the process has been around since the 1950s.

Mail order catalog companies would send catalogs to as many people as possible, and then use outside fulfillment centers to fulfill their orders.



Along with the mail order business model, door to door salesmen would take payment and orders, and then have a third party company ship the items directly to paying customers.

Then came the internet, which basically took over the mail order model. World retail giant *Amazon.com* is said to be the first to dropship on the internet, selling books from local Seattle book stores who were willing to dropship for them.



Since then, many companies, both large and small have taken advantage of the convenience and "win win" nature of the dropshipping business model, *Fab.com*, *Zappos*, & *Wayfair* to name a few.

While there are many companies who provide a traditional, fully white label dropshipping setup, many sellers instead, simply find the best products for the best price at large websites such as eBay, and resell them in their own stores.



This act has grown rapidly in popularity recently due to the ultra cheap prices available on sites such as AliExpress, an offshoot of Alibaba, the worlds largest wholesale marketplace.

AliExpress keeps the wholesale pricing of Alibaba, but allows for orders with no minimum order quantity.

Because dropshipping working so well for the wholesalers of Alibaba, many more manufacturers and sellers are opening up to the idea of white labeling their goods for resell.



While shipping from companies who don't white label their products may seem ridiculous, it is actually surprisingly common practice as well.

Because of the ludicrous ease of opening an online shop today, dropshipping is often done by individual, independent shop owners, in a more brand driven and curated way.



## *Chapter 2*

# **A Brand With A Cause**

Millennials now make up the largest portion of our population, and millennials will only buy from and support brands who have a vision that is larger than just commerce.



This fact is important because it means that everyone who has a vision, has a chance.

When dropshipping, it's easy to think, "I don't have the lowest prices, so I'll never sell anything" or "I don't have a huge marketing budget, so no one will find me", but this just isn't true anymore.

All you need is a quality collection of products, and a marketing plan which resonates with people.



So how do I do that?

Well, sourcing products with Sellful is easy. Sellful is the only dropshipping platform which allows you to import products with name brands, and have them delivered directly from fortune 50 companies to your customers.

Coming up with a marketing plan that has impact? Well, let's get in to that right now...



## *Chapter 3*

# What to do, and how to do it

When coming up with a brand, you should always think about these three things:



1.) Is everything under the brand visually appealing and modern.

2.) Would I, myself, buy from this company?

3.) Is it the first or best of it's kind?

If you can answer yes to all three of these questions, then you have a winning brand.



# Make it pretty.

Don't even think about launching if you're unsure about your logo or website design. Just don't do it.

If you would rate your favorite online shop a 10/10 visually, and only rate your own a 6 or a 7, then you have a problem.

Studies have shown that 94% of first impressions of a website are based on visual appeal, and positive first impressions lead to higher satisfaction.



Tools such as Sellful's logo maker and demo content import make it easier than ever to make your website and brand look good.

If for some reason, it isn't working out for you, and you can't reach that 9 or 10 out of 10 visual score, then go ahead and hire a freelance designer to help you, these guys and gals can really prevent headaches for you.

A good freelancing site is Upwork.com. For minor changes and fixes, you can also contact Sellful support.



The most underrated design aspect in all of the internet is photography. Good photography is honestly, the key to everything visually in an online store.

Places such as Pexels.com, Unsplash.com, and AdobeStock.com have amazing photography that you can use for free or cheap.

Search for images related to your products, and add them to your shop as part of your brand's message.



# Make It Trustworthy

One of the main reasons why visual design is so important on a website, is because of the trust it garners.

When a website looks cheap and poorly designed, a potential customer both subconsciously and contentiously thinks "if they don't care enough to make their website look good, there is no way that the product is high quality ", it's really that simple



Other small details such as an "about us" page, and privacy policy page make a huge difference too.

The about us page is an opportunity to expand your brand's message.

Remember, millennials and future generations really want to give their money to people who they like. You should keep that in mind throughout all of your branding efforts.



# Make Sure It's Necessary

Be the first, or the best.

Always view your product from the customer's perspective. If you were in their shoes, would you choose your product over another product? Why or why not?

The answer is usually one of a few things:

- 1.) Price
- 2.) Convenience
- 3.) Brand recognition



When dropshipping, price is still admittedly the most important metric in online selling, and while brand loyalty may eventually overtake it in the future, its importance will never go away.

Having the best price might not mean what you think it means, the best price is actually relative to convenience and brand recognition.



For example, a pair of \$20 "Nike" brand shoes whose origin is suspect, shipped from China within 30 days, versus a pair of \$50 Nike shoes which are almost guaranteed authentic, shipped domestically from a well known company in 2 days are two very different products.

When trying to be the best on the pricing end, be sure to note all factors involved.

You can be the best by offering better convenience to your customers, or just have better advertising visibility as well.



# Choose Products That Will Sell

No matter how good your branding is, you're going to need products that people want.

- 1.) Sell products that you understand.
- 2.) Take advantage of always popular products.
- 3.) Keep up with trends.



If you're already familiar with an industry, possibly because you already work in said industry, or you're a frequent customer of the industry, then you have a unique advantage.

You know what these products should cost, you know who the industry leaders are etc.

Along with that, you can use data which is freely available to everyone to see what the most popular products are in yours and other industries...



Spyfu.com is a great website which allows you to see data on all search terms made on Google.

You can see the amount of searches for specific keywords, and see all of the websites who advertise on those keywords.

With this data, you can see exactly who the competition is, and compare that competition to the search volume being performed.



A low amount of competition, and a high search volume equals likely success.

You should also keep in mind the profit margin on your marked up prices. A good profit margin when dropshipping is 10%, but I've seen much higher and much lower.

If you are able to sell something at a higher volume, it may make up for a lower profit margin. Marking up shipping could benefit your bottom line as well, it all depends on the market.



## *Chapter 4*

# Manage expectat ions

The true day to day of a dropship shop owner is handling customer support, mostly returns and shipping delays.



Returns and refunds can really hamper your profit when dropshipping, so be sure to check the product quality and shipping history (reviews) on all dropshippers that you ship from.

In my experience, clothing products have a very high return rate because of sizing issues. This is especially true for clothing products from China.

Be sure to do your research on all products that you add to your shop.



Unhappy online customers in the modern age are able to file what is called a "chargeback" on their credit/debit cards.

Chargebacks are extremely difficult to fight against as a seller, and should be avoided at all cost.

To avoid this, be sure to keep your customers happy, even if it means partial refunds or paying for return shipping.



The overall key to really managing expectations is to be honest about what you have, and what you're capable of.

Be open about shipping times, and choose products that are high quality.

Returns will happen, but a good shop which has everything spelled out ahead of time will have a much lower return rate.



# Getting Paid

The easiest way to get paid is Paypal, but through Sellful, you can also use 20 other payment gateway providers, or use a traditional merchant account.

Keeping chargebacks at a minimum is important because it keeps these payment providers off of your back, a high rate of chargebacks is grounds for account closure.



# *Chapter 5*

# Stand Out

So we've established that it's very easy to make an online shop in this day and age, and that a brand and vision is very important, so how do we stand out among the sea of competitors? One word, advertising.



# Types Of Advertising

There are 5 main types of online advertising that you can use for your shop.

Search Engine (Google, Bing)

Social (Facebook, Instagram)

Display Ads (Content Sites)

Influencer (Youtube, Blog Posts)

Email Marketing (Newsletters)



# Search Engine Optimization

SEO is basically the act of making your website easier for search engines such as Google to read.

You follow unwritten rules set by Google's search algorithm, and hone the content of your pages to specific keywords or phrases that you want google to pick up on.

There is plenty of information on SEO available on various blogs from around the internet.



Along with SEO, you can pay for display ads on the top of search engines.

These ads will cost more or less depending on the search optimization of your website, so it's still important to optimize your site when paying for search ads.

Search ads are very effective when you're selling products in a specific niche that people are actively searching for, but less so for products that are unique or hard to describe.



# Social Ads

To have a successful social media campaign these days, it is no longer necessary to build a large like or follow fan base.

Facebook for example only shows your post to about 16% of users organically, so in order to effectively market on the site, you need to pay for it.



Facebook allows you to target users on both Facebook & Instagram who have visited your competitors sites recently, making it very easy to find people who are in the market for your products.

It also allows you to spend as little or as much as you want on ads, while showing an estimated visitor and click through rate.

For brand focused online shops like yours, Facebook & Instagram ads can be the most effective form of marketing available.



# Display Ads

Display ads are ads shown on websites or blogs.

Display ads can be very effective if you pair a quality, high traffic content site with a brand focused retail shop in the same niche.

You can contact owners of websites to determine advertising rates, or use platforms such Google Adwords or Outbrain to target specific websites.



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# Influencer

Influencer marketing involves having a popular online personality talk about or review your product.

For example, you could send a youtuber a box of products from your shop, and the youtuber would either review, or simply talk about your products to their fan base. They'd then include a link to your shop along with a promo code provided by you for their fans to use on your site.



You can either pay them up front for this service, attach a commission to the promo code, or both.

There are platforms such as Famebit which can connect you to influencers in your niche, but honestly, it's very easy to just direct message or email them with any offers.

Influencer marketing can be very very powerful for certain niche's.



# Email Marketing

Have you ever noticed that every website you go to has a little popup asking for your email address? When you add your email address, it is added to an email marketing list so that you can later receive news and promos from the website

Every shop should have an email list, it's one of the most simple and effect forms of marketing.



# *In Conclusion*

## **JUST DO IT**

The hardest part of any venture is just mustering up the courage to start. Once you get past that, you're well on your way to success.

Make sure everything looks good.

Be sure to keep your customers happy.

Spend as little money marketing as possibly until you're confident that you know what's going on.

Always be learning.

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