

# HOW TO GET YOUR PRODUCTS ON BIG RETAILERS' SHELVES



Getting your brand on the shelves of a big retailer is an exciting step for any small business. But it will require a lot of preparation to convince a buyer to stock your product.

Don't worry though as business support network Enterprise Nation has got it covered with this guide to selling your products to retailers in four steps:

## 1 Is your business ready?

A major retailer will provide you with a national presence but it will be very demanding in terms of delivery. Dream big but start small!

Consider starting with local markets, pop-ups or e-commerce. You will need to prove your consumer model and be ready to deliver before selling to big retailers.



## 2 Make your brand retail ready

Big retailers will often consider supporting a new brand as a jump into the unknown so your job is to minimise the risk by proving the value of your brand and that your products will meet the retailer's sales expectations.



### DO YOUR RESEARCH

- Know the market: Who are your closest competitors and why?
- Know your target: What need will your product fill? Is it ethical, health, innovation etc?
- Know your unique selling point (USP). Branding is absolutely fundamental in the success of this. Don't adapt your tone of voice to the retailer. Have your brand position set and stick to it
- Know what will make the difference in store for your brand. Is it branding, pricing, promotion?



### GET SELLING

- Retailers will want to see that you already have traction in the market. Any proof you can bring to that meeting will help you close a deal
- If you have already made sales before approaching the buyers, it will help build trust in your brand. Consider selling your products through online marketplaces
- Work your social presence. Buyers always keep an eye on social media for trends and upcoming brands
- Keep on top of admin. Keep your books up to date and always have a very close eye on cash flow



### BE READY TO DELIVER

- Evaluate your capacity of production, stocking and delivery
- If you are producing from home, there might be a point where you can no longer keep up with the volume. Think long term and be ready to outsource if necessary
- Big retailers in industries such as food and beauty will expect you to have specific accreditation certificates



### DON'T FORGET THE PACKAGING!

- Keep in mind how your product will look on the shelves
- Make sure your packaging stands out, fits the product's purpose and shelf life and shows your USP

## 3 Get in touch

### FIRST CONTACT

Who's the right retailer for you?  
Look at the brands they are selling,  
and how your product fits their  
offer and customer base.

Be proactive and do your research  
to find the correct decision maker.

Struggling to find the right  
contact? Try trade press, ask your  
network, use LinkedIn or directly  
call the company and ask.



Start with a brief email. It should take  
no longer than 60 seconds to read it.

#### INCLUDE:

- ✓ A brief description of your brand  
and why it's right for the retailer
- ✓ Link to your website, social media  
profiles and strong photography
- ✓ Any awards, press coverage and  
other strong testimonials
- ✓ Suggested selling price
- ✓ Be brief, honest and avoid salesy  
wording



After two or three days, follow up with a phone call to ask how the buyer would  
like to take things forward. Would they like you to email over more information,  
schedule a call or book in a meeting?

Not getting a response? Contact the assistant buyer or the buyer's admin  
assistant and ask for advice on a better time or way to get in touch.

## 4 Ready, steady, pitch!

Congratulations you made it to the pitch! Remember that retailers are looking for  
a strong brand so tell your story, show your USP but keep it short and simple.  
The most important thing to communicate is how your product will help the  
retailer grow their business.

### Three key things you need to tell retailers:



#### YOUR BRAND

Why is your brand different and  
how will it stand out?  
How will it fit with their current  
offerings? Don't be tempted to  
criticise your competitors. Focus  
on your own strengths.



#### PRICING

How much will it cost them?  
How much will they be able  
to sell it for?  
How well will it sell in the  
stores? Reference your  
previous sales.



#### MARKETING

How will you promote your  
brand? How will the  
consumer know that the  
product is available in-store?  
Most buyers will expect you  
to have a marketing plan.

Remember that the best retail products have the highest margins, fastest sales  
and smallest store footprint!

## Learn more

- [Events: Meet big retail product buyers at Enterprise Nation's Exchanges](#)
- [Tips: Five things you must prepare before pitching to a retail buyer](#)
- [Video: How to pitch big brand buyers](#)
- [Webinar: How to get your products listed in big retail stores \(MEMBERS ONLY\)](#)
- [Webinar: How to get food and drink products retail ready \(MEMBERS ONLY\)](#)



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