# SAFETY GUIDELINES

HOW TO KEEP YOUR AMAZON ACCOUNT SAFE FROM SUSPENSION

Having coached Amazon sellers for over a decade, we've had our fair share of clients who were in the dark about selling policies and guidelines. We know what it takes to not only stay under the radar of the Amazon Seller Performance team, but to also run your business operations smoothly.

1 MIND YOUR OWN AMAZON BUSINESS

What works for others may not work for you, and that includes minor policy violations. Even if other sellers carry on doing the very thing you've been sent a warning for, this doesn't mean Amazon will turn a blind eye to your slip-up. If you want your business to thrive, you should lead by example.
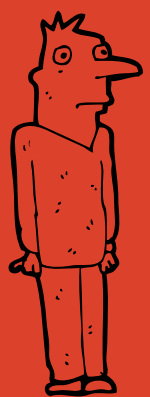
2 DON'T MISS YOUR CHECK-UPS

Monitor your performance indicators every day. Even if not all of Amazon's metrics can lead to it suspending your selling rights, they are clear indicators for good selling practices.

Every business is different, so to make sure you spot a declining trend and correct it in time, we suggest that you set your own performance standards. This will help you achieve consistency and prevent downtime. Here's what you should check every day:

- Order Defect Rate
- Cancellation Rate
- Late Shipment Rate
- Return Dissatisfaction Rate
- Valid Tracking Rate
- Customer Service Dissatisfaction Rate
- Contact Response Time
- Perfect Order Percentage
- Feedback and Seller Rating
- Notifications and Warnings

3 DEMAND TO KNOW YOUR SUPPLY CHAIN

Learn the ins and outs of your supply chain. Understand what makes your suppliers tick, where they source their merchandise, what guarantees they can offer, how they can prove the authenticity of their products, and how willing they are to foster long-term business relationships. Research their competitors, and be prepared to switch at any moment.

If Amazon should ever question the authenticity of your items or the condition you've sent them to the FBA fulfillment center, a supplier must be trusted to provide itemized invoices, QC certificates, and warranties for the entire stock. Back everything up to an external hard-drive, server or Cloud service, or a combination of these.

4 | MIND THAT COMMINGLED INVENTORY

Should you decide to have commingled inventory, then consider the fact that an FBA order can just as well be fulfilled using your goods or someone else's, and that the choice is up to Amazon. Unfortunately, if a faulty item is sent back by the customer, this could count against you even if the merchandise was not yours.

That's because merchandise from multiple sellers is bundled up together, and Amazon wouldn't be able to tell one from the other. So, opting for commingled inventory means that you share responsibility for its integrity with strangers, and not being able to see what others send into an FBA warehouse yourself puts your Amazon account at risk.

You'd be better off using the Labeled Inventory option instead.
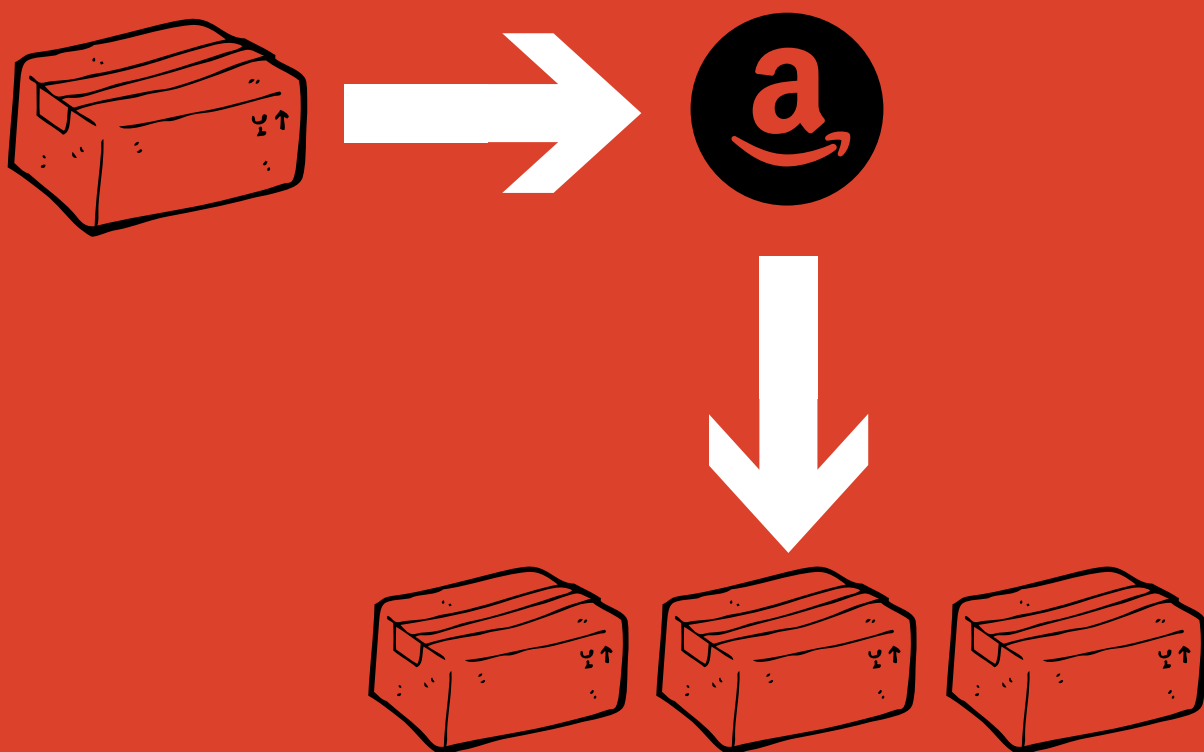
5 | FINE-TUNE AND FOCUS

Make no mistake, Amazon means what it says when it tells you to go above and beyond. Its customers have come to expect the same level of service from marketplace sellers as they get from the no.1 online retailer itself. So make sure your staff, machines, suppliers and couriers can live up to the expectation.

So, maintain prompt communications with the customers, resolve complaints and claims efficiently, issue discounts as a token of goodwill, be indulgent with your refunds, use the best packaging within your means, and ship your orders well within the deadline.

6 | FRUSTRATING FEEDBACK?

Feedback is the only way customers will put in a good word for you, but one of several ways that they can damage your business on Amazon. Information you can learn from testimonials is priceless.

Harnessing the good as well as the bad from recent feedback and rating examples will help you settle issues that affect your current status on Amazon, your eligibility for the Buy Box and ultimately your profitability. Also, it will help iron out internal problems with far-reaching effects - the kind that will determine your future on Amazon.

7 | GIVE AMAZON THE TIME OF DAY

It goes without saying that you simply can't afford to ignore an announcement, a notification or a warning from Amazon. The reason behind it may not be clear-cut, so ask Amazon for additional information, if needed.

Also, investigate the reasons behind the change, the criticism or the action taken against you. At times, the most useful insights come straight from the customers, so don't hesitate to let them know you need their input.

8   FOSTER FAIRPLAY

Amazon operates a 'suspend now, ask questions later' policy, so keep an eye on your reviews. The slightest suspicion that your products or reviews are fakes can cost you days worth of sales, in the best of cases. In the worst case scenario, you'll be shut down and banned from selling on Amazon.

9   CHECKLIST? CHECK LISTINGS

Set aside a few minutes each week to check your listings, or do it whenever you have a spare moment. Whenever one seller updates a product page, the change can affect all the other sellers for that product. Since not all of these changes will be announced via email, you can end up listing something that doesn't match your product 100%, which is against Amazon guidelines.

10   DROP THE DROP-SHIPPING

Supplier

Seller

Customer
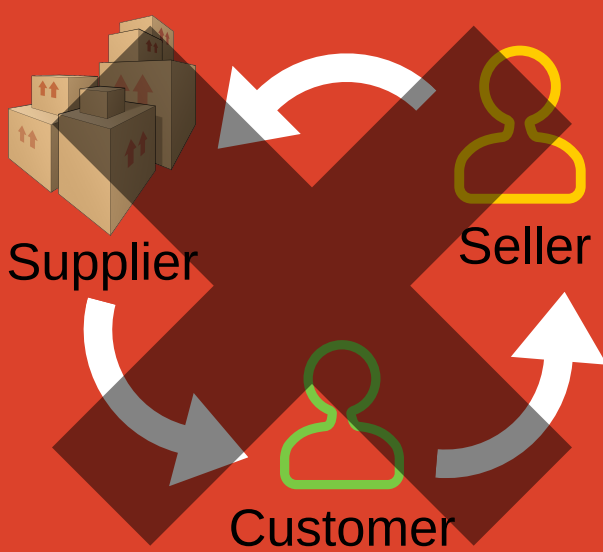
If you're tempted to let third parties, suppliers or partners do the shipping for you, think it through. As an Amazon seller, you can only make your mark by providing an outstanding product or service. When you let other businesses do the packaging, shipping or sourcing for you, your quality control is minimal.

Being a third-party seller on Amazon has its perks, but you will only be able to enjoy them if you know and abide by Amazon's rules.

To find out more about what it takes to keep your Amazon account in good standing, contact us at services@sellerengine.com

SellerEngine