

THE WHOLES^ALE FORMULA

What to Ask (and not ask) A Manufacturer/Wholesaler

In this module, we are going to cover questions that you should and should not ask a wholesaler or manufacturer. We will start by covering questions you should never ask under any circumstances. Do you sell to Amazon vendors? Problem with this question is that it implies you are indeed an Amazon seller, which can put you on the back foot immediately with some companies. It's important that you never willingly give away information that could be detrimental to you getting approved for an account. We do not hide that we sell on Amazon. If asked, we do disclose that we are an Amazon seller.

Do I need a commercial address? This question is in the same vein as the last. It implies that you do not have a commercial address. This qualifies as information that you should not voluntarily give away.

Next, we will cover questions that you should not ask before being approved, but in some cases, are acceptable to ask after you have been approved. What is your MOQ? We do not ask what the MOQ is when applying for accounts. It can imply that you are not a legitimate seller that is restricted in the purchasing power you have. You could always ask about MOQ after you have been approved and are looking to make a test order. We've also found that the MOQ is almost always in the paperwork you sign upon being approved with a company.

Can you ship my products to Amazon? Never ask this question unless a company knows you sell on Amazon and you have built a strong relationship with them, or they openly advertise that they ship direct to Amazon.

Can I have Amazon exclusivity? This is another question that we advise not asking on a first date. You should build a strong relationship with a company before trying to obtain exclusivity. You can see a theme among these examples and it's that we don't typically ask a lot of questions that are in the application process. We view this as a time to best represent yourself and questions can come after you've been approved.

That leads us to questions you should ask after you have been approved. What time of terms and payments do you accept? This is a good question to ask for your own sake. Different companies offer different types of payment options and terms. For instance, some companies only accept checks and that may not be possible for you. We generally like to pay with credit card when the option is available because it offers us 2% cash back on a purchase.

Where are your FOB points? This will give you a better idea for how long shipping will take when you order from a company, which can help you with scheduling your replenishment cycles.

Do you offer shipping breaks and discounts or any volume discounts? This is a critical question to ask because taking advantage of these types of discount opportunities is a great way to create additional margin for a product.

Are you offering any specials or do you regularly have specials? Some companies have seasonal and quarterly specials on their products and it is important to ask about them and know when they might be coming up. They aren't always privy to tell you about these specials unless you ask. This is also a question you can ask when reordering because you don't want to miss out on a special that you didn't know about.