

# THE WHOLESALE FORMULA

## Module 5 – Brand Gating and Authorization

Hey guys, Eric here. In this video, we are going to cover brand gating as it applies to Amazon sellers and how to overcome this restriction to become an authorized seller of that brand. As Amazon grows, they are becoming more streamlined and stricter in their policies. This may sound annoying, but in our opinion, it will only help us in the long run. Let's begin.

So, what is brand gating? Brand gating is a relatively new phenomenon on the Amazon platform. Essentially, brand gating is a restriction on a brand that requires Amazon approval to sell it, even if you have sold it before. This recent development has been frustrating for many sellers, while others have found it downright impossible to navigate. Maybe this hasn't affected you yet, but it probably will at some point.

So, clearly, the goal is to become approved to sell that brand. This is also known as brand ungating. This video will show you how to do just that, but first let's discuss brand gating a little further.

There's actually some good news about brand gating. It rewards legitimate retailers who are doing the things we teach in The Wholesale Formula. Brand gating serves as a barrier to entry which keeps out any of the bad actors as Amazon calls them. These are sellers who sell counterfeits, etc. This forces them to either become professional or risked being locked out of a brand. We love high barriers because jumping them sets you apart from your competition.

So, don't despair about this change. Instead, embrace it as it will only make you a more professional seller; one who serves as a brand partner to the companies that you work with.

Currently, there are two different ways to become brand approved.

The first of these "ungating measures" is that you must provide 3 Invoices from the manufacturer.

All invoices must have the following criteria to be considered valid by the Amazon Brand Ungating team.

- Invoices must be dated in the past 180 days or reflect the delivery or purchase of listed products in the past 180 days.
- Invoices must contain the names of the products purchased
- Documents must contain your name and contact information for your business (eg address phone number, email or website)
- Documents must contain the issuer's name, address, phone number and email address or website

What we have found from submitting invoices is that the MORE information on these invoices, the better. Similarly, we have found that packing slips do not work! You have to have invoices.

As far as distributor invoices are concerned, it is unclear at this point if they would work. I would presume that they would as distribution is a widely-accepted practice, but I cannot verify this as we have not used distribution invoices to be ungated.

If you were to try and use a distributor invoice, I would want the distributor to be listed as an authorized distributor for the brand or to have a letter from the brand with all of the relevant information that you will find in the Letter of Authorization template stating that this distributor is an authorized distributor of the brand.

Remember, you should be going for evidence beyond the shadow of a doubt with Amazon. They want to see succinct evidence that comes in by the truckload.

The second ungating measure is Letter of Authorization from the Manufacturer. This has been the one that we have been using, particularly to become ungated on NEW brands that are brand restricted.

We have the exact Letter of Authorization template that we use attached below, and in the files section of the Facebook group.

Here are the criteria that a Letter of Authorization must contain, all of which are present in our template.

- Legible
- Dated within the last 90 Days
- Includes the manufacturer name and contact information
- Includes your legal business name or the name which corresponds to your Account Information page in Seller Central
- Includes your Physical Address
- Must be in English

It is important to mention that Amazon is incredibly picky with these. If it is missing even one piece, you can, and likely will be denied. Similarly, if it is not easily identifiable it will be denied.

So, what do you do if you get denied? Re-check your work with a fine-toothed comb. This is VERY important. Go over everything letter by letter, check the website for the company to make sure that the information you have listed matches... Check everything.

Our initial reaction is that Amazon has done something wrong because we have a Letter of Authorization, when in reality, many times, Amazon has rejected it because something did not match and failed their checklist. However, if everything checks out, and you have thoroughly reviewed, you can re-submit your Letter of Authorization or Invoices for approval again. If you are denied again, we like to open a case and simply ask what we are missing, or what we need to add. I would say the following:

"Thank you for your thorough review of our Brand Application. We understand the importance of these verification steps, and the necessity to keep out bad actors. With that in mind, we want to make sure that we are submitting the necessary information to make this review process as easy as possible for the Brand Ungating team.

Fortunately, we are in direct contact with the brand owner, and can get anything that you need to make this process easier. Similarly, we will use this to get the correct information for you going forward with future ungating requests.

Thank you for your help."

You will likely receive an answer. Some of these are helpful, while some are not. If you get a helpful answer (usually about 20% of the time) you will know exactly why you were not ungated in the first place. If you do not, you should again, review your application then submit and include the following note:

"Please have a member of the US Based Leadership Team review based on the legitimacy of our [invoices/Letter of Authorization]. Our Letter of Authorization contains the following (Legible, Dated in past 90 days, Includes Manufacturer Information, Includes our Legal Business Name, Includes our Physical Address and is in English) - which are the guidelines for approval."

If you are denied without review by the US Based Leadership Team, you should open the case, and say the following:

"Please escalate to review by the US Based Leadership team based on the legitimacy of our [Invoices/Letter of Authorization].

We appreciate your thorough review of our request for Ungating for [Insert Brand Name]. We are approved vendors of this brand, and they are well aware that we sell products on the Amazon platform. Please re-review our information, and let us know what is missing, such that we can expedite this process and get you the information that you need.

Our current Letter of Authorization contains the following elements which are required for approval:

- Legible
- Dated in the Past 90 Days
- Includes the manufacturer name and contact information
- Includes our legal business name which corresponds with our Account Information page in Seller Central.
- Includes our Physical Address
- Is in English

Thank you for your thorough review. Our goal is to be in full compliance with all Amazon standards, and we have tried to represent this with the information presented.

Thanks again,

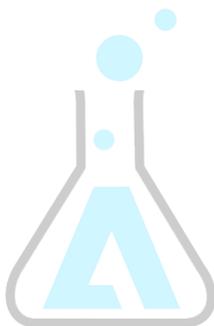
[Your Name]

[Your Title]"

Rinse and repeat the process. If you get denied several times without review from the US Based Leadership team, you can send a message to [jeff@amazon.com](mailto:jeff@amazon.com) asking that the process be reviewed. Be succinct, present the facts, and ask that they have it reviewed by a member of the Executive Team.

Again, I realize that the process seems cumbersome. Many people throw in the towel, but remain diligent and do the work if necessary.

In the end, these restrictions will help protect our business as we are operating in congruence with Amazon's current agenda. Don't forget to review our newest template for the Letter of Authorization below! That wraps it up for this video. Thanks for joining me and I'll see you next time.

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