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## Marketplaces: How to effectively use the sales channel in the fashion industry

Today, marketplaces are growing steadily. More than 75% of all online orders are made through online platforms for selling and buying goods. At the business conference of the 35th International Fashion Exhibition Central Asia Fashion Spring-2025, experts discussed how to successfully launch any brand of goods on marketplaces and shared life hacks that contribute to successful sales on online platforms.



The CAF business conference Spring -2025 discussed how to successfully bring any brand of goods to marketplaces

Madina Dosanova, head of the CIS development department at Wildberries, noted that in 2024 the platform saw a significant increase in sales - by 99.23% compared to last year - and the number of registered entrepreneurs - 120,000. The TOP 10 categories with the highest sales growth were: garden equipment (+409%), electric transport (+253%), motorcycle goods (+226%), garden tools (+143%), finishing materials (+133%), furniture (+113%), curtains and accessories (+109%), automotive goods (+104%), jewellery (+95%), building materials (+94%). There are 2 large warehouses in Kazakhstan with a total area of 263,000 sqm and plans to double the number of order picking points.

Wildberries promotes the development of exports of light industrial goods. In comparison with 2023, in 2024 Kazakhstan showed a growth of 35%, Russia - 28%, Belarus - 71%, Kyrgyzstan - 98%. The top 10 light manufacturing exports are shirts, suits, trousers, T-shirts, coats, dresses, waistcoats, jackets, skirts and hoodies. From October 2024 Wildberries will accept certificates and declarations of conformity for light industrial goods issued in Kazakhstan. All information about the shipment of goods is transmitted through the Unified Labelling Operator Tañba. The cost of a labelling code is 2.9 tenge including VAT.

*«In 2025, we plan to make a number of significant improvements. First, the advertising account will be fully localised - the site and personal account will be translated into Kazakh. In addition, we will launch a full marketing account that will include all advertising integrations, including jam subscriptions and other promotional tools. Previously, merchants had difficulty topping up - they had to use third party cards. In the first*

*half of 2025, we will solve this problem and provide convenient ways to top up. This year we have already introduced a system of delivery of goods by sellers. Now sellers can independently organise delivery within the platform, without the need to take goods to the warehouse and pay for their distribution. In the personal account you can set up delivery zones, which makes the process more convenient and flexible,» - says Madina Dosanova.*



Head of the CIS Development Department at Wildberries Madina Dosanova

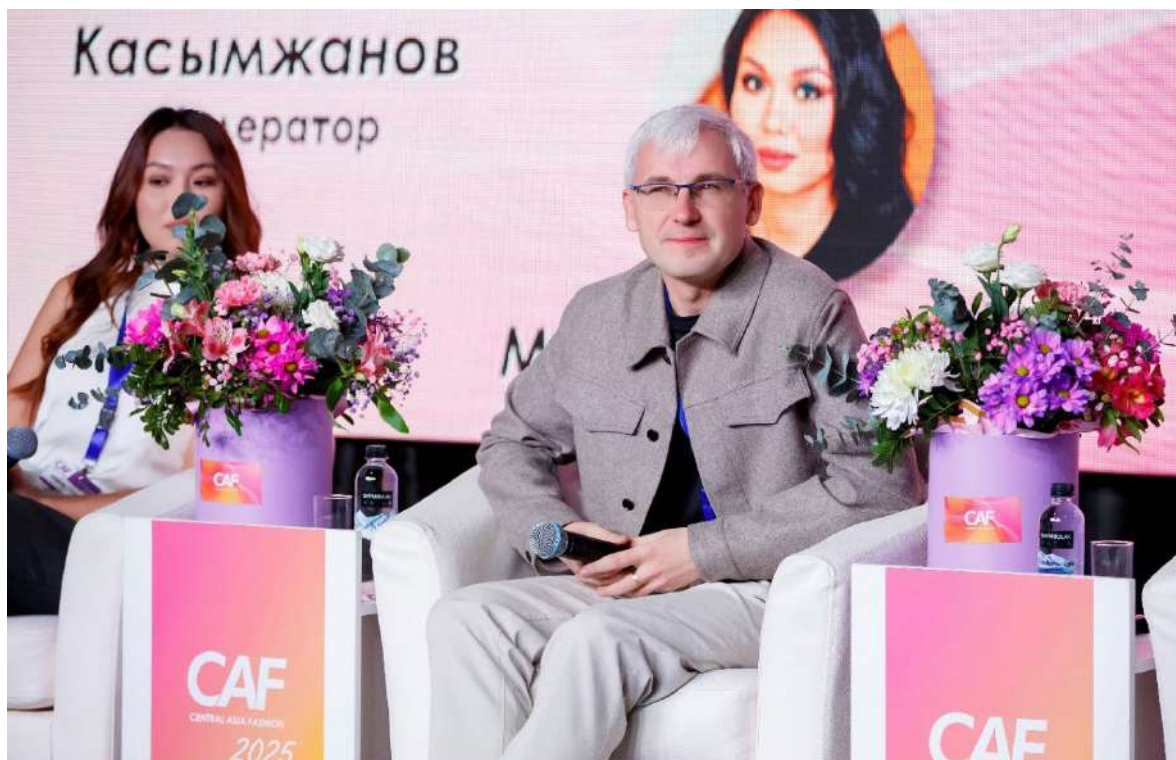
Igor Shanchenko, a TOP seller with a monthly turnover of 50 million rubles, MPSellers ambassador, shared his experience of successful cooperation with Wildberries. He is convinced that marketplaces offer excellent business opportunities: the company started with an investment of 300 thousand rubles and in three years became the number one in its category.

The businessman believes that marketplaces should not be seen as just a platform for selling goods: *«In fact, the winner is the one who can count, analyse and develop a strategy. At the same time, the platform provides equal opportunities for everyone - not only big brands, but also small entrepreneurs, including representatives from Kazakhstan, sell successfully here. The marketplace is an ecosystem in which promotion and advertising play a key role. Bringing cards to the top allows you to increase sales, and it is important to understand what factors influence this. The first, of course, is the quality of the goods. If the goods are of poor quality, no amount of promotion will help. Success starts with the right choice of products. Many sellers underestimate the opportunities that open up at events such as Central Asia Fashion. There are manufacturers from many countries, including China, Turkey and Italy, with whom you can easily negotiate favourable delivery terms. The second is promotion and advertising. On marketplaces, advertising is a key tool for growth. Currently, 90% of the cards in the search results are advertisements and only 10% are organic. This means that those who manage advertising campaigns competently have an advantage».*

Igor Shanchenko also emphasised the quality of the content. Good advertising will drive traffic to the product page, but if the card is poorly designed, there will be no sales. It is important to pay attention to quality photos, descriptions, reviews and video reviews. Without well-thought-out content, cards will simply «disappear» in the stream of merchandise. Competitive pricing is another important factor. It is advisable for entrepreneurs to always analyse the market and set the price 3-5% lower to attract buyers. If it is not possible to lower the price, you must add benefits: gifts, bonuses, exclusive offers.

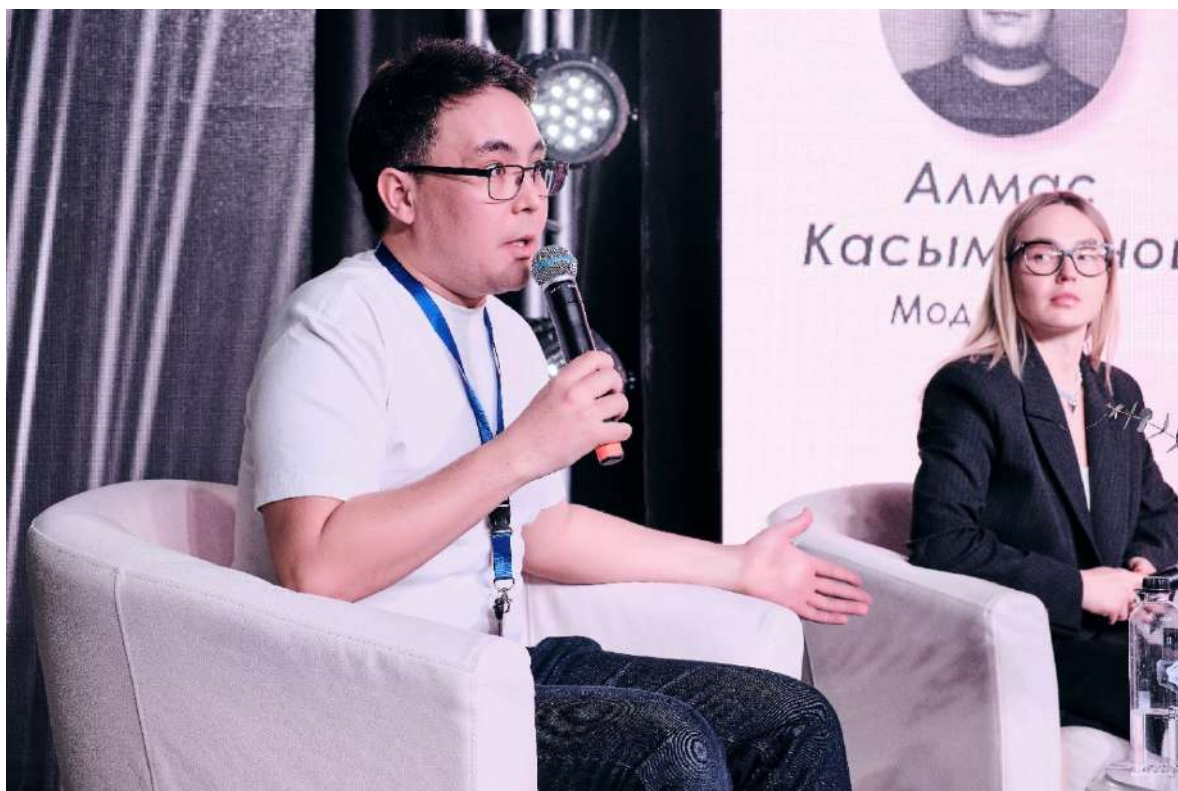
Success in marketplaces depends largely on making the right product choices. To do this, you need to use analytical tools that allow you to assess demand, sales dynamics and seasonal trends. Igor Shanchenko made several recommendations: *«You need to analyse last year's trends. If you are planning to enter the market in a certain season, do not read tea leaves. Use analytics services that show which products were most in demand*





TOP -seller Wildberries , MPSellers Ambassador Igor Shanchenko

*during the same period last year, and put them up for sale in advance, 1.5-2 months before the season starts, to have time to get ratings, reviews and increase organic traffic. Analysis of new products and trends is essential. In addition to seasonal products, it is worth paying attention to new products that have recently been launched and are already performing well. Analytics services allow you to track which products have gained popularity in the last 1-2 months. When analysing, it is important to understand why the product has become popular: colour, style, features, technical characteristics, etc. If a competitor is selling a particular product successfully, there is an opportunity to replicate this success by adapting the product to your brand. Other analysis tools include marketplace monitoring (Wildberries, Ozon, Amazon), which allows you to track the dynamics of searches and identify products that users are actively looking for. Instead of adapting SEO to existing searches, you can do the*



Founder of the analytical company Market Mind, seller , expert in the field of e-commerce Almas Kasimzhanov

opposite - look for products that are already in demand by the audience and offer them. For example, if search queries show a 409% increase in interest in the «garden and summer cottage» category, this is a signal that this area is promising».

An expert at the CAF Business Conference drew the audience's attention to an important fact: in the past, the strategy for working on marketplaces was to enter with a large assortment but a small number of items. Now, however, the most effective approach is to focus on a limited number of items and work on promoting them. It is better to choose 3-5 key products and bring them to the top than to spread out on dozens of cards and waste resources on advertising. This method allows not only to optimise the budget, but also to avoid zero cards and excessive costs.

The moderator of the business session, founder of the analytical company Market Mind, seller , expert in the field of e-commerce Almas Kasimzhanov agreed with the speaker and noted that it is important for entrepreneurs on any marketplace to take into account the main rule - do not try to cover several niches at once, moving from clothing to technology or other categories: *«It is much more productive to focus on several items, actively promote them, increase sales and only then expand the range. This approach will save you time, money and resources and ensure maximum profit».*

Kaspi's leading sellers in the \$2.2 billion women's apparel category shared their knowledge and insights about marketplaces: *«Before achieving high results, we went a long way by optimising the assortment, content and logistics. The first step was to create 63 women's garments in different colours and variations, and then to create 800 product cards. This approach allowed us to cover a wide range of buyers by offering different styles and shades. Quality content is very important! We realised that on marketplaces, the visual component plays the role of a salesman, helping the customer to choose a product in an offline store. That is why we did not skimp on the photo shoots: we did up to 10 shoots per card, tested 10 models and 10 photographers to get the perfect content. Why is this important? Because on marketplaces, the CTR indicator is important - the clickability of the card. A good photo has a direct impact on conversion. Quality content is a long term investment. Photos stay relevant for 5-10 years, so it pays to invest in professional photography. You cannot save money by photographing yourself or relatives. It is important to test different faces to find a model that appeals to the audience. Before we joined the marketplace, we used to trade through Instagram, but we had delivery problems. The marketplace completely eliminated logistics headaches, simplified tax issues and allowed us to scale due to a larger audience reach. However, as sales grew, a new problem arose - we didn't have the time to produce the number of goods we needed. This forced us to look for more efficient production, which led to a reduction in costs and an increase in margins».*



TOP -seller Kaspi Vyacheslav Kim (center) received many questions from the audience

Vyacheslav Kim reported that on marketplaces, especially Kaspi, the margin can reach 250-300%, and in some cases even 1000% (depending on the niche): *«It's important to understand the price range that works for your*



*product category. Let's say that T-shirts should cost up to 8,000 tenge at peak, with a cost price of 1,000 tenge; suits sell best at around 30,000 tenge, with a cost price of 5,000-8,000 tenge. At the same time, marketplaces are more suitable for the middle and lower segments. Luxury goods are more difficult to promote because the marketplace audience is focused on more affordable prices».*

The topic of selling on Kaspi was continued by Artem Bukhonin, a leading expert on marketplaces and e-commerce in Kazakhstan, co-founder and head of the largest entrepreneurial community Sellers.kz, and author of training programmes on marketplaces. According to him, it was much easier to sell on Kaspi in 2021 than it is now: *«You upload a product card and it starts selling immediately. Now the situation has changed: only those who invest in promotion have sales. The rest are in decline. In the face of fierce competition, dumping remains a key success factor and sellers continue to fight for the lowest price. This leads to falling margins and losses for small sellers. The lack of individual cards is a negative. If every seller had their own product card, competition would be based on quality of content and promotion rather than lower prices. It is also difficult for small sellers because the marketplace relies on large suppliers. 90% of the market is controlled by big players. Kaspi bonuses help to some extent in the fight against dumping, but this is a weak tool. If the platform allowed brands to close and compete not only on price but also on promotion, the situation could change for the better».*

The three main factors for success on Kaspi in 2025 are content (high quality photos and product descriptions), price - competitive but not underpriced, and a closed brand (registering a trademark and working under your own brand). If at least one of these is missing, it is difficult to make money on Kaspi.



Expert on marketplaces and e-commerce in Kazakhstan, co-founder and head of Sellers.kz,  
author of training programs on marketplaces Artem Bukhonin

*«Why is it so important to close a brand? Back in 2022, I said that without your own brand, there is nothing to do on Kaspi. But until now, most vendors have not registered trademarks and have not protected their products. As a result, their cards are vulnerable to copying, and their profits fall. If your product is trademarked, you can create unique cards that are protected from dumping. Otherwise, the platform and other sellers will be able to use your cards for their own interests. Registering a trademark is not difficult. Kaspi now requires proof of production, but there are several ways to do this, such as attending trade shows like Central Asia Fashion and negotiating with suppliers. You can also make minimal changes to the product to prove production, such as removing the sleeves from a T-shirt and adding an emblem. Once your brand is in the system, you have the exclusive right to create product cards without competition. This means you can avoid a price war and work with a comfortable mark-up. The formula for success on Kaspi in 2025 is this: if your cards have no competitors, start advertising and reviewing. And do not rely only on Kaspi, use external traffic - social networks, bloggers, advertising,» - the expert concluded.*

Another important marketplace is Lamoda, the first online fashion and lifestyle platform in the CIS. Ainura Rakhimzhanova, head of the marketplace department at Lamoda.kz, reports that more than 1,300 brands are represented on the platform in Kazakhstan. The platform works exclusively with official representatives, providing customers with original products and high-quality service: *«If you have a registered brand, you can become our partner by providing the necessary package of documents. This is necessary because we have a strict policy and do not sell fakes. If a brand has two official representatives in Kazakhstan, for example Adidas, we will only work with one of them. Our goal is to provide our customers with genuine products with convenient and fast delivery. Lamoda focuses on a high level of customer service. Our couriers are not just delivery people, but sales representatives who have been trained in the fashion industry. Not only do they deliver orders promptly, but they can also advise customers and help them with their choices».*



Marketplace Department Lamoda.kz Ainura Rakhimzhanova

Lamoda actively supports Kazakh designers. The website has a special «Made in Kazakhstan (Made in KZ)» section, which showcases local brands. The platform notes the growing demand for local products and sees that Kazakhstani designers are already competing with global luxury brands due to their high quality and environmental friendliness.

*«We not only highlight local brands on the platform, but also support them with marketing tools to help them attract new customers and increase awareness, »* - emphasises Ainura Rakhimzhanova.

Larisa Grigorieva, lawyer, ex-director of the legal department of Tsvetnoy department store, ex-stockist, speaker at Moscow Fashion Week, spoke about the legal aspects of working with marketplaces, how to protect your brand and minimise risks: *«The first thing you should pay attention to is the terms and conditions you agree to when working with marketplaces. We are used to clicking the 'I have read' button and moving on without looking at the details. Many people do this when installing applications on their phones or interacting with marketplaces, and then face unpleasant consequences. It is very important to read the terms and conditions carefully and do the math».*

To avoid counterfeiting and tax risks, it is important to register a trademark. This provides legal protection for the brand, prevents illegal use by competitors and makes it easier to control counterfeits on the marketplace. Before starting work, it is important to define a scheme of interaction with the platform. If it is a full collaboration, the marketplace will take care of storage, logistics and delivery. If it is a showcase, the marketplace provides a platform for the sale, but the seller takes care of the delivery. If the product requires special storage conditions, such as special packaging or delicate handling, it is more profitable to handle the delivery yourself. Controlling commissions and working conditions is also important, as marketplace commissions can change; a missed letter about new conditions can also lead to losses.





Lawyer, ex -director of the legal department of Tsvetnoy Department Store, ex -Stockmann, speaker of Moscow Fashion Week Larisa Grigorieva

Larisa Grigorieva urged sellers to consider legal issues, especially brand protection against counterfeiting and handling returns: *«If your brand is unique and in demand, sooner or later there will be copies. To protect your rights, you need to register a trademark and an industrial design if the product has a unique design. For example, it is difficult to protect a plain white T-shirt, but it is possible to protect an ornament, a pattern or a trademark. Keep an eye out for counterfeiting and, if you see it, make a complaint to the marketplace. Returns are also one of the main problems when working with marketplaces. To minimise this, use video recording methods of packaging - this is especially relevant for mid-range and premium products. This will allow you to prove the condition of the product when it was shipped. A detailed description of the product on the card is also an excellent method, as the more accurate the information, the less likely it is to be returned. Include a sizing chart with explanations on how to measure correctly, fabric properties and care recommendations, style, colour and other important parameters. Kazakhstan has a 14-day return period, so it is important to take this factor into account in your sales strategy»* .



CAF experts Spring -2025: (from left to right) Larisa Grigorieva, Almas Kasimzhanov, Madina Dosanova, Igor Shanchenko, Ainura Rakhimzhanova, Artem Bukhonin, Vyacheslav Kim

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