

WORLD FIRST

The Beginner's Guide to Selling on Tmall Global

TMALL GLOBAL
天猫国际



Welcome

Over the past years, businesses have seen the importance of accessing new markets and expanding operations globally. By targeting international consumers, brands and retailers can tap into favourable economic conditions or consumer trends that may not be present in domestic markets.

Tmall Global is one such channel that can open up opportunities to sell into China, which boasts almost 40 percent of the world's digital buyers¹.

At WorldFirst, as a part of Ant Group (an affiliate of Alibaba), we specialise in helping businesses sell overseas and accelerate their growth.



Contents

¹ <https://www.shopify.com/enterprise/global-ecommerce-statistics>



Introduction to Tmall Global

Officially launched in 2014, Tmall Global is part of the Alibaba e-commerce ecosystem and was designed for international brands to connect with domestic Chinese consumers. Unlike sister brand Tmall, Tmall Global allows sellers to reach a Chinese audience without having to set up a physical presence in China or hold a Chinese business license.

Tmall itself is an offshoot of Taobao, which was founded in 2003 as a consumer-to-consumer platform. As Taobao expanded over the years to encompass small merchants and larger retailers, Alibaba Group separated Taobao and Tmall into two distinct platforms to differentiate the value proposition of each.

	Taobao	Tmall	Tmall Global
Platform	C2C platform	B2C platform	B2C platform
Sellers	Individuals & businesses	Businesses	Businesses
Legal entity	Not required	Inside China	Outside China
Bank account	Chinese	Chinese	Own country
Best for	Individuals	Brands with a Chinese presence	Brands launching in China
Warehouse and fulfilment	Inside China to Chinese consumer	Inside China to Chinese consumer	Outside China or bonded warehouse to Chinese consumer

A snapshot

Audience²



Trends and categories on the rise⁵

Furbaby boom: Freeze dried cat food, beauty products for cats & dogs

Healthy eating: Beauty supplements and health products

Haircare: Premium hair products and extended range of hair regime products

Skincare: New focus on high-performance ingredients

² <https://www.alizila.com/alibaba-tmall-global-china-gen-z-female-consumers/>

³ <https://www.alizila.com/chinas-gen-z-lead-demand-for-imports-on-alibabas-tmall-global/>

⁴ <https://marketingtochina.com/what-to-sell-on-tmall-in-2020-top-sales-in-china/>

⁵ <https://www.alizila.com/top-5-cross-border-retail-trends-to-watch-that-are-captivating-chinese-consumers/>

Different Business Models for Sellers

There are four main business models⁶ to drive sales on Tmall Global; your objectives and existing brand awareness will determine which model is best for you.

Flagship store: Operated by brand owners who hold a trademark for the brand, or merchants with the authorisation from brand owners to operate. Suitable for larger, more established brands.

Ministore in TMG Direct Import (TDI): For those wanting to start a business and test the Chinese market. Low start-up and operating cost.

TMG Direct Import (TDI): A direct consignment model, where merchants sell fast-moving goods on a lifestyle supermarket and the Tmall Global TDI team takes care of product listings, marketing, sales and fulfilment.

International Overseas Fulfilment (IOF): Suitable for brands who want to list their products and sell directly. Uses Alibaba warehouses in their region for direct fulfilment to ensure low logistic and storage costs for businesses.

Fees and costs*

	Flagship ⁷	Ministore ⁸	TDI	IOF
Deposit	Yes	Yes		
Annual Fee	Yes	No	Direct consignment model	Wholesale model
Commission	Dependent on category	Dependent on category		

*Other fees may apply, such as transaction fees and return fees

⁶ <https://merchant.tmall.hk/en>

⁷ <https://merchant.tmall.hk/wow/z/import/pegasus-no-head/KidCfnaMmdYEyWhPf7A5>

⁸ <https://merchant.tmall.hk/wow/z/import/pegasus-no-head/6ZXKKcbcMMEZbGKs2Xfd>



How to open up a store

1

Make sure you qualify to open a store on Tmall Global

The requirements vary slightly depending on what kind of store you want to open, but the common requirements include:

- Being registered as a business outside of mainland China
- Proof of brand ownership / trademark registration of brand

2

Apply to open a store

Contact the Australian Tmall Global team or queries related to flagship stores and ministores. The team will then discuss the registration process, including payment of deposits and the annual service fee. For the IOF business model, different requirements apply; [contact the team](#) for more information.

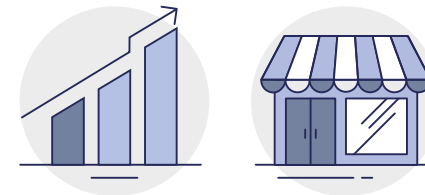
[Contact the team](#)

3

Set up your store or product listing and start shipping

Once your store is approved, you'll need to register an Alipay Global account and Taobao account. If you're opening a flagship store, you'll also be required to sign a contract and register with Cainiao, Alibaba Group's logistics arm. For ministores and TDI, you can simply ship your products to a bonded warehouse in China for distribution by Tmall Global. The IOF business model ships from a local warehouse in Australia or New Zealand.

4



Grow traffic to your store or products

Use a combination of on-platform and off-platform tools to market your store and grow brand awareness.

Marketing your store

If you open a ministore, the in-house third party team will manage your product listings, sales, marketing and domestic delivery to the customer. Similarly, sellers using the IOF business model can lean on Tmall Global for branding and marketing, both on- and off-platform.

Flagship stores, however, are responsible for driving traffic and sales growth themselves, and there are several tools on the platform, as well as global marketing campaigns to assist sellers to do so.



Key sales periods and marketing campaigns⁹

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Queen's Day

Coinciding with International Women's Day, this shopping festival targets female consumers with discounts and promotions to pamper themselves.



618 Carnival

The second largest shopping festival in China, 618 Carnival takes place from the end of May to mid-June, offering consumers almost a month of deals and exclusive products.



Double 11

Also known as Singles Day, this shopping festival happens yearly on 11 November. In recent years the pre-sale period has extended this festival to a week. In 2022, over 1,000 overseas brands on Tmall Global achieved YoY GMV growth of more than 100%.¹⁰

External marketing tools



Influencer and KOL marketing

Influencers in China can hold a lot of sway, so partnering with the right ones can really boost brand awareness.¹¹



Social media platforms

Little Red Book, Douyin (TikTok), Kuaishou, Zhihu are just some of the social media and lifestyle apps that can help local Chinese consumers discover new brands and products.

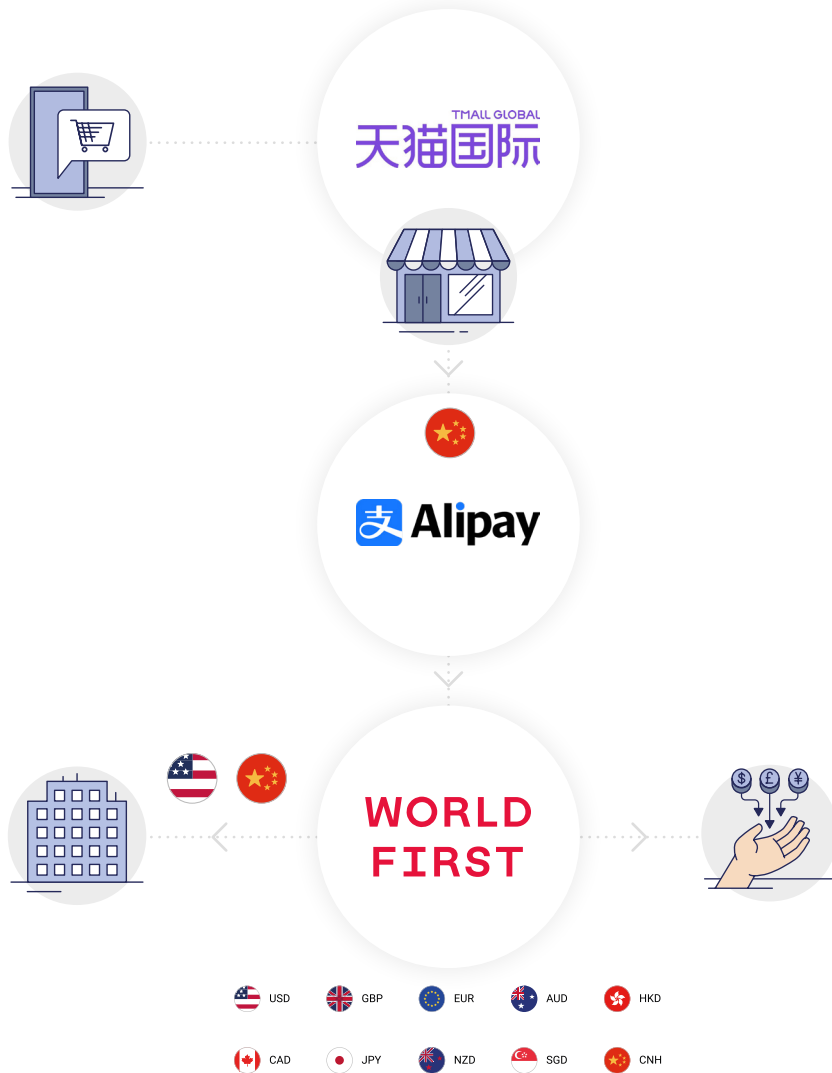
⁹ Information provided by Tmall Global

¹⁰ <https://www.alibaba.com/en-US/document-1527973176561106944>

¹¹ <https://www.adchina.io/selling-on-tmall-global/>

How to get paid

To sell on Tmall Global, you need to open an Alipay Business account in order to collect funds. Tmall Global will transfer your funds to your Alipay Business wallet. You can then use your World Account to receive and hold funds and keep them there until you're ready to transfer them home or use them to pay a supplier.



How WorldFirst can help

WorldFirst is an international payments business helping online sellers and SMEs take their businesses global, backed by our multi-currency accounts and network of more than 60 online marketplaces around the world.

Established in the UK in 2004, WorldFirst became part of Ant Group in 2019. We offer inclusive and affordable services to small and medium-sized businesses and online merchants.

With the World Account, you can simplify your cross-border collections via a seamless and secure platform and pay suppliers fast. **For more information on how WorldFirst can help your business, contact the local Australian team.**

Collect. Convert. Pay. Manage.

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