Our last blog post about how Amazon’s algorithm ranks products was a huge hit, but everybody kept asking us one question...

Are there any quick hacks you can use to rank a new Amazon product FAST?

I’m happy to report that YES – there are several.

Here’s the most effective tricks, hacks, and schemes you can use to rank your new product on Amazon quickly...

**Hack #1 – Winning the Buy Box**

As an Amazon seller, you need to know how to win the Buy Box. This is a crucial part of successfully selling on Amazon, especially if you’re not creating and manufacturing your own products.

Here’s an example of what it means to win the Buy Box:
Of the 20 sellers for this product, only 4 of them are shown on the product page. You can bet that these four sellers are getting most of the sales for this listing...

If you’re one of the 16 losers for this product, what could you do to win the Buy Box?

**Important Buy Box Metrics**

First, let’s take some time to review known Buy Box metrics. They can basically be grouped into three categories. For reference, you can see the first page of sellers for the kettlebell listing above, shown to your right.

**Pricing! –** This is without a doubt the most important Buy Box metric.

Even though the image of the product listing above says that there are other offers “from $15.65”, closer inspection of the listings reveals that those cheaper options are actually more expensive once you take shipping into account.

By default, Amazon lists products on this page in order of Price + Shipping, and that carries into the Buy Box unless one of the other metrics are way out of whack.

**Shipping Performance** – Amazon puts an enormous priority on fast, hassle-free shipping for their customers. That’s why they encourage sellers to use their Fulfilled by Amazon program.
Shipping performance includes a number of individual metrics, including Order Defect Rate (ODR) and Perfect Order Percentage (POP), both of which we talked about in our last post on Amazon ranking factors.

**ODR (Order Defect Rate)** is how many orders are cancelled, returned, shipped improperly or get negative feedback for any reason.

**POP (Perfect Order Percentage)** is how many orders go perfectly smoothly without any customer intervention.

Amazon also keeps track of how often you run out of stock, so try to maintain a 100% in-stock rate.

**Seller Rating** – It seems to me that the magic number for seller rating is 90%.

The listings shown to your right are a great example. Every seller on the first page has a 90% rating or above. However, you can see that a seller with a 90% rating ranks higher than a 100% rating. It seems that as long as you hit 90% positive feedback, anything extra won’t have a huge impact on the Buy Box.

Conversely, it’s uncommon for a seller with a <90% rating to win the Buy Box.

**How to Win the Buy Box**

One of the top sellers you see in the list above is WayFair. As I was poking around Amazon, I noticed them showing up a ton in our searches. They have over 200,000 reviews and this seller clearly knows what they’re doing… Just about every item in their shop is winning its Buy Box.

You can see another of their Buy Box-winning products below, shown here from inside their Seller profile shop:

Shipping performance includes a number of individual metrics, including Order Defect Rate (ODR) and Perfect Order Percentage (POP), both of which we talked about in our last post on Amazon ranking factors. So, what are they doing right? What are the specific
steps to win the Buy Box? Turns out, there are only two:

1. **Make sure you're eligible** – Your product must have the same ASIN as the listing you want to be featured on (more on this below). You also must meet all the criteria listed above.

2. **Lower your price** – If you're eligible, pricing is pretty much the sole determining factor. All you have to do is find out what your competitors are selling your product for, and offer to sell and ship it for one cent less. Voila, you rank higher in the Buy Box.

3. **Use Fulfilled By Amazon** – You'll get a special orange Fulfillment By Amazon icon (see above) on your seller listing when you use FBA. You'll also be able to compete on Amazon Prime listings, which is reason enough to join by itself. Plus, Amazon is constantly trying to push sellers onto FBA, so the sooner you hop on the bandwagon, the more rewards you'll reap.

   (NOTE – While lowering the price is certainly a good strategy to rank higher, it is not always a good long-term business strategy. You do NOT want to compete on price alone, as this will only start a price war/race to the bottom)

**Hack #2 – ASIN Piggybacking**

If you know how to win the Buy Box, your earning potential on Amazon instantly skyrockets. One of the most powerful tactics you can use is ASIN piggybacking.

Here's how it works:

1. Identify a successful non-unique product and find its ASIN. It will be listed in the Product Details section of the product listing. (shown below)

2. Research the manufacturer to figure out how you can start reselling the product for yourself. Find out how much it will cost wholesale, and calculate what it will cost you to ship. **Is there room between that number and $0.01 less than the current Buy Box-winning price for you to make a profit?**

3. **If the answer to #2 is YES,** contact the manufacturer and start selling. You’ve just found a gold nugget!

4. **If the answer to #2 is NO,** you may still be able to work out a special deal with the manufacturer if you ask for it. However, if you don’t think it’s worth it, look around for other products in the same niche... Chances are, there’s money to be made on a slightly lower ranked product.
Blackhat ASIN Piggybacking

As you can probably guess, some sellers have developed a blackhat form of ASIN piggybacking. Basically, it involves finding knockoffs of popular products and listing them with the same ASIN as their non-knockoff counterparts.

This works because the process Amazon uses to identify and spend misleading sellers is extremely cumbersome. The seller whose listing is being illegitimately piggybacked has to order one of the suspected counterfeit seller’s products to prove that it is indeed a different product.

It should be noted here that Amazon doesn’t have anything against selling cheap knockoffs. They just don’t like it when you lie about what it really is or who really made it. So, I’m not telling you this method because I condone it, but merely to keep you informed doesn’t Amazon seller. Someday it could happen to you!

In order to keep your ASIN piggybacking above the table, make sure that you’re shipping the exact same product – with the same brand, SKU and manufacturing code – as the listing you’re trying to piggyback.

Hack #3 – Custom URL Queries

The other really common follow-up request we had after our last post was for more information on how Amazon uses URL queries for search results and what you can do to take advantage of that.

To show you what's going on behind the scenes when you use Amazon, let's start by looking at the URL for a search term you might want to rank a product for. When I search for “stove top espresso makers” from Amazon’s home page, here’s the URL that we get, shown in the image below:

In case you can’t see, this is the URL:

http://www.amazon.com/s/ref=nb_sb_noss_2?url=#search-alias=3Daps&field-keywords=stove+top+espresso+maker
Our last blog post about how Amazon’s algorithm ranks products was a huge hit, but everybody kept asking us one question… Are there any quick hacks you can use to rank a new Amazon product FAST?

I’m happy to report that YES – there are several. Here’s the most effective tricks, hacks, and schemes you can use to rank your new product on Amazon quickly…

Hack #1 – Winning the Buy Box

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Here’s an example of what it means to win the Buy Box:

If we dissect this URL, it’s easy to see that the `&field-keywords=` string is what Amazon uses to ID which search results to show. The `/s/?url=search-alias` is how Amazon tells itself to query a search results page, automatically sorted by best-sellers.

So, if we’re building links or promoting this page, we could strip the URL down to this:

```
http://www.amazon.com/s/?url=search-alias&field-keywords=stove+top+espresso+maker
```

Quick Note: For some reason, removing the `?url=search-alias` returns a different set of search results… Not sure why, but either way make sure you keep that in if you want to make it look like someone searched for that keyword from Amazon.

Now, let’s see what happens when we click on a product from the search page:

```
http://www.amazon.com/Primula-Aluminum-Stovetop-Espresso-Coffee/dp/B001J1L59E/ref=sr_1_2?ie=UTF8&qid=1422041743&sr=8-2&keywords=stove+top+espresso+maker
```

The part of the URL that’s bold is all that you need to bring up this product page in your browser. Everything else is there to tell Amazon how the viewer arrived at the listing.

You can see the `&keywords=stove+top+espresso+maker` tells Amazon that I arrived at the listing by searching for “stove top espresso maker”.

There are a couple other keyword strings to be aware of. You may have to do some experimenting one your own to figure out specific URL string combinations that delivers the page you want to see, but knowing these queries will give you a great starting point:

`&node=` is what Amazon uses for categories. If you click on “All Departments” and enter the Kitchen & Dining category, you’ll get this URL:

```
http://www.amazon.com/kitchen-dining/b/ref=sd_allcat_ki?ie=UTF8&node=284507
```

Just like with the `&field-keywords=` string, the only part of the URL necessary to tell Amazon to bring us to the “Kitchen & Dining” category is the `&node=` query, in this case `&node=284507`. So, if we wanted to link to this page, you could strip down the URL to this:

```
http://www.amazon.com/s/&node=284507
```

`&field-brandtextbin=` is another URL string you’ll want to be familiar with. It’s what tells Amazon to filter your search by a brand name. Since many customers already know what brand they want, you may be able to use this query for tracking and SEO purposes.
To bring everything we’ve learned about custom URL queries together, let’s say we wanted to bring up the search results page for the term “espresso maker” in the Kitchen & Dining category, filtered by the Breville brand. Here’s what the URL would look like:

http://www.amazon.com/s/?field-keywords=espresso&20maker&node=284507&field-brandtextbin=breville

One important thing to note here the use of the &20 character instead of the + character in the URL. This tells Amazon to separate your keywords with spaces instead of actual plus signs.

How to Use Custom URL Queries

You may remember that Amazon keeps track of which products people end up buying after searching for a given keyword. They then use that data to help them decide which products are most relevant to the original search term.

This means that you can drive traffic to a product page using a custom URL and make Amazon think all those people came from a search result for your target keyword or brand. That way, every sale you make from that link counts toward that specific search term’s relevancy!

Make sense? No? Don’t worry, here’s a real-life example:

Let’s say you want to make this product rank higher for the “best espresso maker” keyword in the “Breville” brand:

![Amazon Product Page](image)

You could theoretically make Amazon think that every visitor to this page came from the search page for “best espresso maker”, filtered to the Breville brand, by directing traffic to this URL:

http://www.amazon.com/Breville-BES870XL-Barista-Express-Espresso/dp/B00CH9QWOU/?field-keywords=best%20espresso%20maker%20&field-brandtextbin=breville
Now, every purchase a visitor makes through that link would count as coming from our target search term, “best espresso maker”.

Keep in mind, this isn't 100% proven to work, but everything we know about Amazon's ranking algorithm tells us it should. Plus, the absolute worst-case scenario is that you're driving extra sales to one of your products... Amazon isn't like Google where they'll punish you for trying to optimize for their search engine.

By the way, if you've got lots of capital, you can fast-track this process yourself:

1. Search for a term you want to rank a product for
2. Click on your product
3. Buy it
4. Change your IP (make sure to clear your cache) or get on a different computer.
5. Repeat!

Of course, it you had that much capital – it may be better to spend them on Amazon Product Ads.

**Hack #4 – Vendor Powered Coupons**

If you’re an Individual Seller with a Pro Merchant account, a Professional Seller or a Vendor, then you can use Amazon’s built-in promotion tools. The savviest of shoppers always make use of Amazon's daily deals.

You can access these deals for yourself by clicking on the today’s deals link in the top-most navigation menu next to the Amazon logo (underlined in green below). That link will take you to a page like this:

As you can see, this section of Amazon’s website is almost a department unto itself. Promotions are given their own unique links and listing pages. The part I'd like to draw your attention to is the Coupons link, highlighted in the blue box above. This page takes you to a list of Amazon’s most popular Vendor Powered Coupons (VPC) in a variety of categories. See the page for yourself below:
Scrolling down the page, we see coupons for Outdoor Gear & Clothing, Grocery & Gourmet, Baby, Household Supplies, Electronics, Personal Care Appliances, Kitchen, Industrial & Scientific, and Other Coupons. There are coupons categories for just about everything except for digital content!

Here's what a coupon page looks like:
Depending on your seller status, you can create your own VPCs for any products you sell.

**What Can You Do With Vendor Powered Coupons?**

Lots of stuff!

Here are three straightforward ways to make the most of your VPC promotions:

1. **Promote VPCs just like you’d promote any other Amazon product listing.** Coupon pages have their own independent sales rank. So, if you’re a new seller or trying to compete in a tough niche, you may be able to get more eyes on your product by promoting a coupon for it instead of the listing itself.

2. **Create a bigger discount or coupon than your competition.** This is a similar tactic to winning the Buy Box... Since Amazon tries to give customers the best possible deal, you only need to offer a little bit better of a coupon than your competition to maximize your chances of getting showcased on the Coupons page.

3. **Promote your VPCs on third-party deals sites.** This is a really sweet hack that can get you decent levels of traffic with very little effort. Simply search Google for “submit a deal” and you’ll get a list of 500,000+ websites that all want to showcase your deals. Submit your coupons to 10 of these sites per day (not all of them will take online coupons) and if your deal is eye-catching enough, you should start seeing some steady traffic flowing in.

4. **Give your VPCs out to friends and family in exchange for reviews/sales metrics.** This is also an awesome hack, which most of our clients use with great success. You can set up a VPC and discount your product down to your total costs (so you’re not taking a loss on each sale, but breaking even). Then give this VPC out to friends and family, and have them buy it through Amazon on their own. Most people will be ecstatic to receive such a deeply discounted product, and you’ll get a ‘Verified Purchase’ review – as well as a boost in your initial sales data!

   **Important** – For #3 to work you really need to offer a standout deal. The penny-pinching you can get away with on Amazon probably won’t be enough to get you featured on the most popular Daily Deals sites.

Again, not everybody can make use of Vendor Powered Coupons or Amazon’s other built-in promotion tools. However, if you have the right type of account, be sure to check them out!

**Hack #5 – Automated Tools for Amazon Sellers**

Finally, no discussion of Amazon hacks would be complete without talking about the most important part of scaling any e-Commerce business...

Automation!

As you continue reading, we’re quickly going to look at three of the most powerful ways you can automate selling on Amazon.
Please note! This is not one of those posts where we’re secretly trying to get you to buy a bunch of stuff. We’ve found free alternatives where possible, and there are no affiliate links anywhere in this guide.

### 1. Keyword Research

One of the most common questions we hear from entrepreneurs transitioning from SEO for Google to selling on Amazon is, “How do I find good keywords?”

Well, the short answer is that there is no built-in keyword tool for Amazon.

Sorry.

However, you can manually perform keyword research for Amazon. (1) **Identify a popular root keyword in Google’s Keyword Planner**, then (2) **enter that keyword into Amazon’s search bar followed by a letter** to (3) **get Search Suggestions for that keyword.**

You can see this process in action below:

![Image of Amazon search suggestions for juicer a and b](image-url)
It won’t take long for you to realize that manually finding and recording the Search Suggestions for even one root keyword would quickly turn into a huge task.

What if you had a tool that automated this whole process for you?

Turns out, there’s a 100% free tool that does exactly that – it’s the KTD Amazon Keyword Tool. When you enter a keyword, it automatically queries Amazon’s search box for all the long-tail Search Suggestions for your keyword + each letter of the alphabet.

If you want a premium alternative, we’ve heard good things about MerchantWords (not an affiliate link), but keep in mind that these types of services don’t get their data from Amazon… At least not fully. They typically use a system that pulls data from major search engines, identifies matching queries in Amazon, and then use an algorithm to combine that data and give you estimated traffic numbers. Still may be worth checking out for some.

2. Product Re-Pricing

Once you win the Buy Box a few times, you’ll start running into a problem… Your competitors using the exact same tactics on you that you’re using on them. They’ll undercut you by a small amount to get placed above you in the Buy Box for your products.

What can you do about it?

Easy – invest in a tool that automatically reprices your products so that you always stay on top of the Buy Box. This is almost a requirement when you have lots of products for sale; there’s just no way to stay on top of pricing for all of them.

You have a few options if you want to invest in a product repricer, but the best one we’ve found is Sellery. It’s a straightforward application that gives you control over when and by how much you reprice your products. Here’s a screenshot of the interface:
For more info, here’s what one of their tech. guys had to say about how their system works and what it can do after Amazon updated their API a couple years ago:

*This new API lets us provide real-time repricing (basically we can make changes to your prices as your competitors make changes, rather than waiting an hour to see if any changes need to be made), 100% accurate knowledge of Amazon’s offer, featured merchant status of your competitors and we’ll always know the lowest FBA offer, even when the “bucket” system would make it unavailable.*

An alternative to Sellery is RepricerExpress. It does pretty much everything Sellery does with a similarly easy-to-use interface. The perks are that it’s a flat monthly rate instead of commission-based, and it claims to be one of the fastest large-volume repricers on the market.

**(NOTE – Be careful when using Repricing Tools, and be sure to keep a close eye on all your product prices. Repricing errors are not unheard of, and they can be devastating.)**

### 3. Listing, Inventory & Shipping Management

Finally, large volume sellers and vendors, especially those who sell their inventory across multiple platforms, will inevitably need a tool to manage inventory and shipping.

If you’re an Amazon-only seller, the best tool we can recommend is InventoryLab. It’s an all-in-one inventory management system. You can create product listings, keep track of shipments and inventory, manage income and expenses, and analyze your business’s growth and performance over time.

If you’re an Amazon seller AND an eBay seller (or a NewEgg seller, or one of the other six supported platforms), we recommend SellBrite. It sacrifices the accounting, financial and analytics tools of InventoryLab in favor of multi-channel inventory and listing management tools.

For example, SellBrite automatically keeps inventory for your Amazon store, eBay store and Etsy store all synced up so that you’re never showing duplicate products. You can also manage multiple stores on the same channel (if you have two Amazon accounts, for example). You can learn more about specific features on their website.

**Final Words**

Selling on Amazon doesn’t have to be intimidating, even if you’re a new seller. It’s the largest e-Commerce platform in the world, and now you have all the tools you need to make the most of it. But in the end, nothing beats getting your hands dirty and actually
putting these Amazon ranking hacks to work!

What are you waiting for? Get out there and make some money!

**TL;DR**

- Win the Buy Box by making sure your offer is eligible, accurate, and priced a penny lower than the competition.

- Get easy sales by piggybacking on the ASINs of successful products.

- Drive traffic to your product pages using custom URL queries to “trick” Amazon into ranking your products for high-volume search terms.

- Create Vendor Powered Coupons if you’re competing in a tough niche because they’ll have their own independent Sales Rank.

- Automation is the ultimate secret to seller growth – identify which tools will help you make the most sales.

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Will Mitchell is a serial entrepreneur and Founder of StartupBros. You can learn more about him at the [StartupBros About Page](https://startupbros.com/about).