Retail Reshaped | E-Commerce Keynote | Nov 17th, 2026

The D2C Revolution Is Not Happening

6 Theses on Where Brands Really Sell in 2026



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ECDB

A vast number of brands analyzed, illustrated at the example of Care Products brands

Numerous consumer brands in seven categories. Excerpt from ECDB Brand Analytics: Care Products.



Source: ECDB Brand Analytics, 2026.

ECDB

Ten data sources help examine the brands in detail

No single source determines a brand figure. The result is modeled intelligence, not a 1:1 transaction feed.

THE TEN SOURCES

ONLINE OFFLINE

Transaction data

Billions of card transactions per month

ONLINE

Google Shopping data

Offer data in 94 countries

OFFLINE

Brand store network

Store count and sales area per brand

ONLINE

Website scraping

Catalogs, availability and prices

ONLINE

Keyword and traffic analysis

Search demand and visits for brand terms

ONLINE

Customer reviews

Review volume as a sales signal on retailer sites

ONLINE OFFLINE

Public data

Annual reports, filings, associations, statistics

ONLINE

Amazon analytics data

Brand performance on 10 marketplaces

ONLINE

ECDB DTC revenues

Modeled GMV of brand-owned online shops

ONLINE

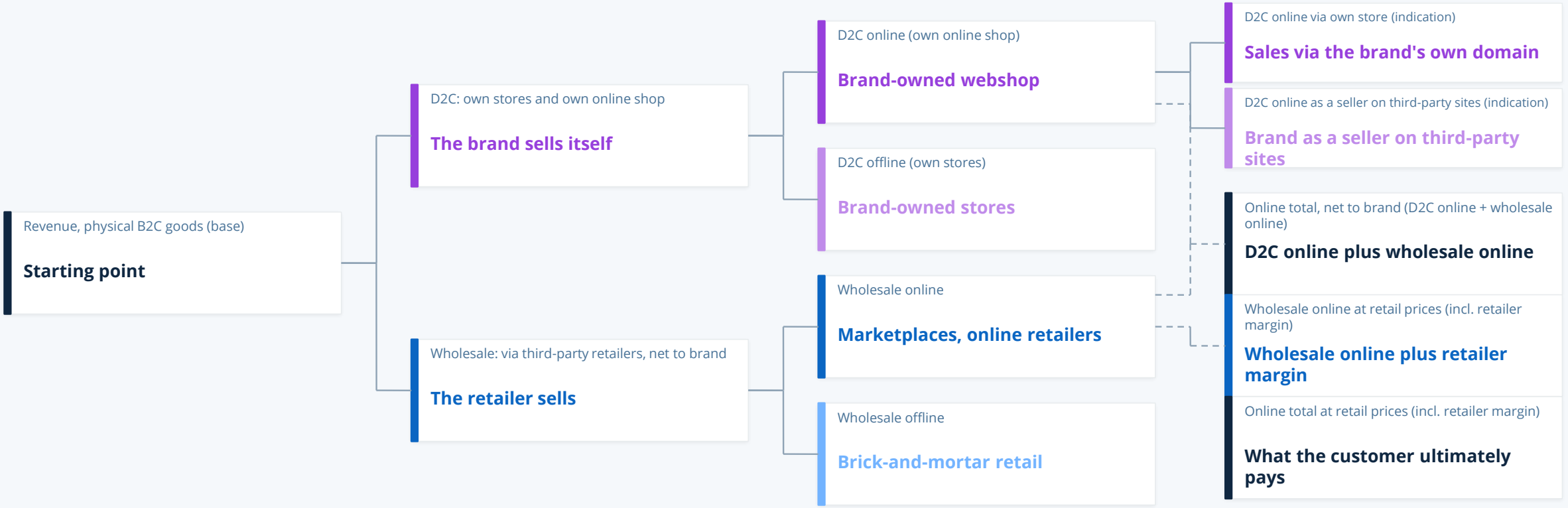
ECDB retailer category data

Category shares per retailer and market

Notes: ONLINE = online data source, OFFLINE = offline data source. Brands' online revenue at retail value FY2025 (US$ 1,000bn) against the global e-commerce market 2025 (US$ 4,911bn, ECDB Market WOR). In scope: B2C brands with physical products. Out of scope: automotive, services, digital, B2B, private labels, licensed categories.

Source: ECDB Brand Analytics, 2026; ECDB Market Report WOR, 2026; Google Merchant Center, 2026.

The distribution tree: a brand's revenue, split by seller and channel

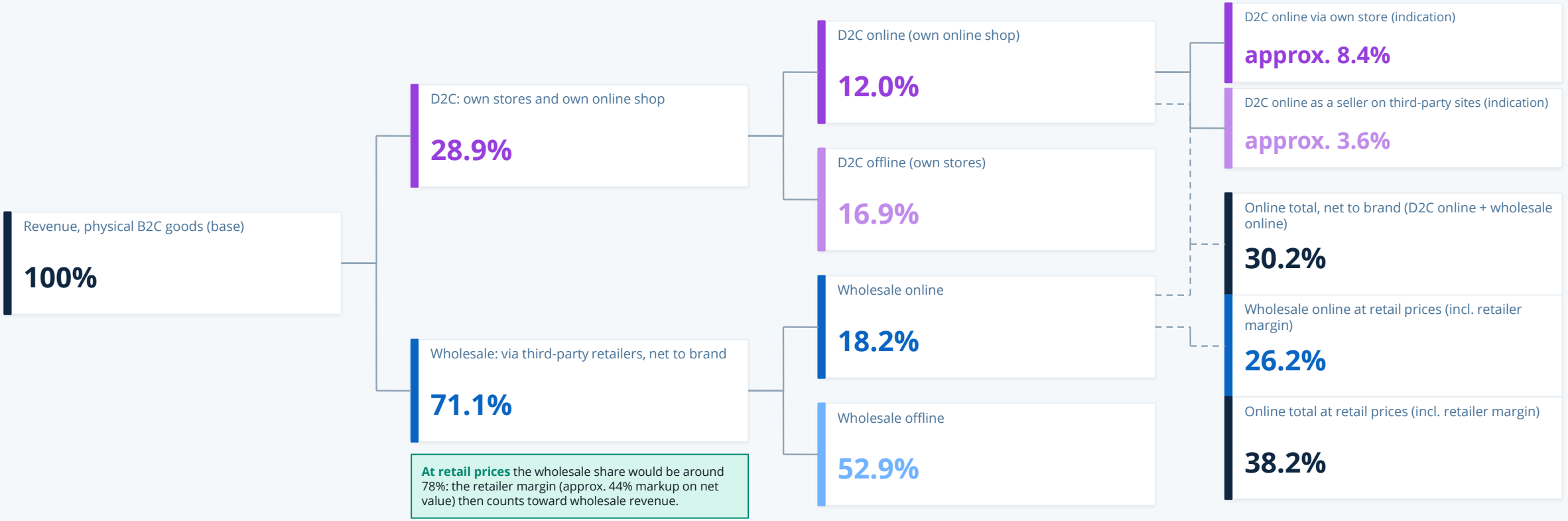


How to read: First level by seller: the brand itself (D2C) or a retailer (wholesale). Second level by channel: online or offline. The right-hand column states the online channels once net to brand, i.e. what the brand books, and once at retail prices, i.e. what the customer pays.

Notes: ECDB Brand Analytics methodology: brand revenue of physical B2C goods, channel attribution per brand and country from transaction, retailer and marketplace data. The figures for the 1,017 brands follow on the next page.

Source: ECDB Brand Analytics, 2026.

The distribution tree: 71% wholesale, 30% online, 12% in the brand's own online shop



How to read: All values as a percentage of the physical B2C revenue of the 1,017 brands (US$ 2,617bn, FY2025). Branches add up to the parent box; the retail-price boxes additionally include the retailer margin.

Notes: Comparable brand set FY2025, net to brand. Shares calculated from channel totals (D2C online 314, D2C offline 442, wholesale online 476, wholesale offline 1,385bn US$). The split of D2C online into own store and sales via third parties is available per brand in the tool; approx. 70/30 is an indication from brand examples (adidas 75/25, LEGO 70/30, Bottega Veneta 67/33), not an aggregated ECDB figure. Retail-price estimate for wholesale: 44% markup (from wholesale online 476 to 686bn US$) applied to total wholesale revenue; 1,861 x 1.44 = approx. 2,680bn US$ against D2C 756bn US$.
Source: ECDB Brand Analytics, 2026.

Six theses on brand retail strategy

01

The D2C Revolution Is Not Happening

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The category sets the online share, the brand sets the channel mix

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Brands in a category choose similar retailers, but with different success

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The majority of brands use marketplaces as a sales channel

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TikTok Shop is a media channel with a checkout, not a sales channel

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Agentic commerce strengthens marketplaces and weakens brands' own stores

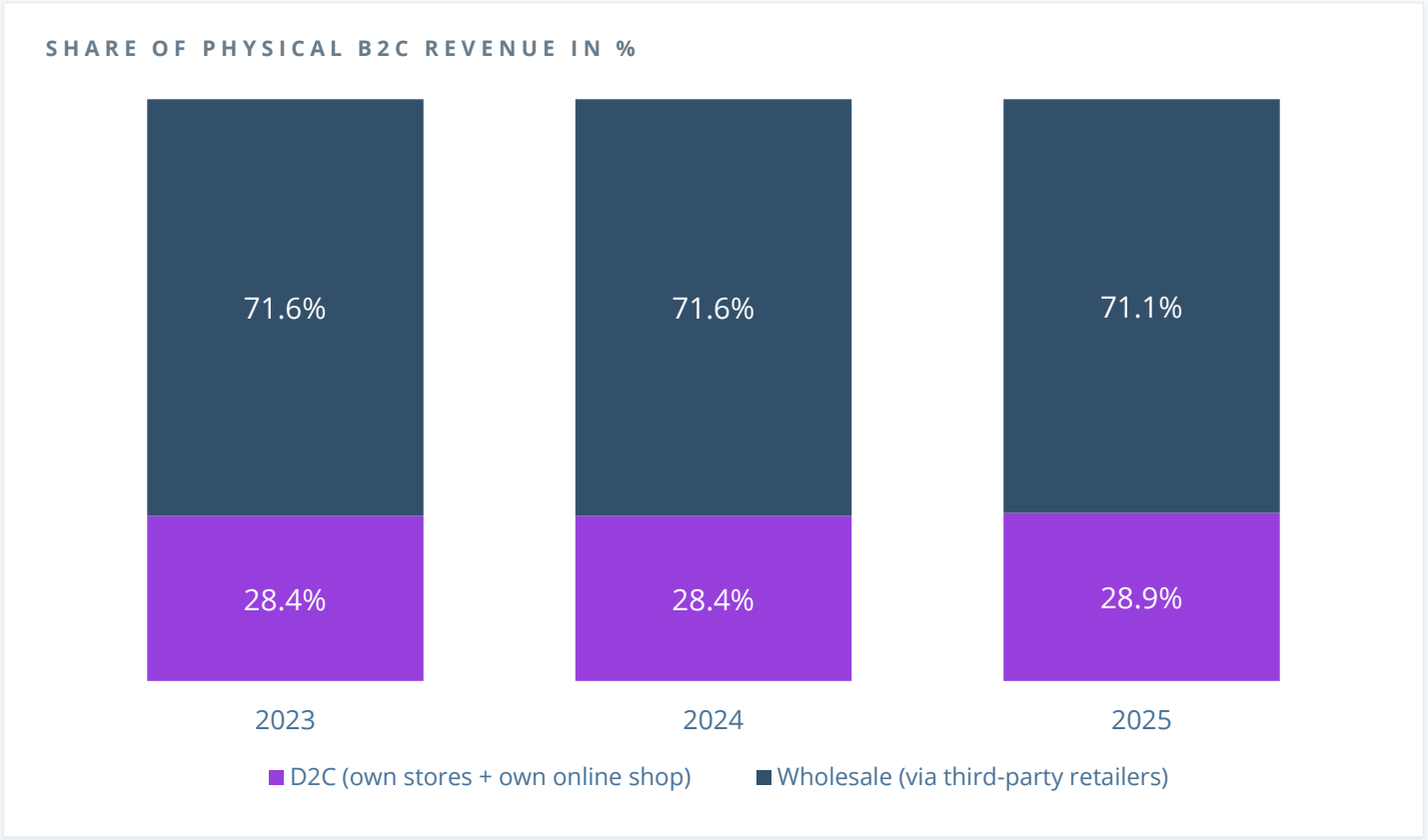
Notes: All shares refer to the physical B2C revenue of the 1,017 brands in the universe, net to brand (before retailer margin), unless stated otherwise.

Source: ECDB Brand Analytics, 2026.

ECDB

Thesis 1: The D2C revolution is not happening; the mix shifts by half a point in two years

D2C and wholesale share of the physical B2C revenue of the 1,017 brands, 2023 to 2025, net to brand.



Two years, half a point

The D2C share of brand revenue rose from **28.4% to 28.9%**. Wholesale remains the backbone of distribution at **71%**.
The only channel with clear momentum is the **brand's own online shop: +7.2% per year**. Own stores grow at 4.3%, wholesale offline at 4.0%.
In absolute terms, retail even grows twice as fast: **+US$ 146bn wholesale versus +US$ 77bn D2C** in two years. The D2C revolution is not happening. It is happening online, and it shifts the mix by a quarter point per year.

28.9%

D2C share 2025 (2023: 28.4%)

+7.2% p.a.

Own online shop, fastest channel 2023 to 2025

Notes: Comparable brand set across all three years. D2C = own stores plus own online shop, wholesale net to brand before retailer margin. Base: 2,394 / 2,462 / 2,617bn US$ (2023 / 2024 / 2025). Increases: wholesale 1,715 to 1,861, D2C 679 to 756bn US$. Shares calculated from channel totals.

Source: ECDB Brand Analytics, 2026.

The big players correct course on D2C: Nike and Adidas return to retail

What brands themselves report, and how it fits the ECDB data.

NIKE

Eleven negative quarters in digital, back to Amazon

- Nike Digital: down 12% in fiscal 2025/26, down 13% in Q1 2026/27, the eleventh consecutive negative quarter. Wholesale grows 6% and once again carries 61% of brand revenue.
- Nike has been selling on Amazon again since 2025.
- **ECDB: nike.com and Nike's online brand revenue are declining while retail grows.**

Nike 10-K FY2026; Nike Q1 FY2027; Hypebeast, April 2026; ECDB.

ADIDAS

Wholesale remains the largest channel at 60%

- Under CEO Gulden, wholesale has played a central role again since 2023; in 2023 to 2024 inventories and retail relationships were cleaned up so that growth through retail is possible in 2025 to 2026.
- **ECDB: Adidas 40% D2C, 60% wholesale; adidas.com carries only 12% of online revenue, Tmall and Amazon together 14%.**

Adidas Annual Report 2025; eMarketer, March 2023; ECDB Brand Analytics.

D2C NATIVES AND MARKETPLACES

The second wave moves into retail

- Allbirds, Glossier, Brooklinen, Our Place: digitally born brands are partnering with Amazon, Walmart and department stores because customer acquisition costs have risen.
- Amazon GMV 2025: US$ 830bn, 69% of it via third-party sellers; 1P and 3P both grow 9%.
- **ECDB: marketplaces up 14% per year, D2C online shops up 7%.**

eMarketer 2023/2024; Marketplace Pulse, February 2026; ECDB.

The data and the brands say the same thing

For the big players, D2C was never a volume model but a margin and data model. As soon as customer acquisition costs and inventory risk eat up the margin, volume returns to retail. The ECDB time series shows exactly that: a half-point shift in two years, no channel switch.

60%
Adidas wholesale share 2025 (Nike FY2026: 61%)

69%
Amazon GMV via third-party sellers 2025

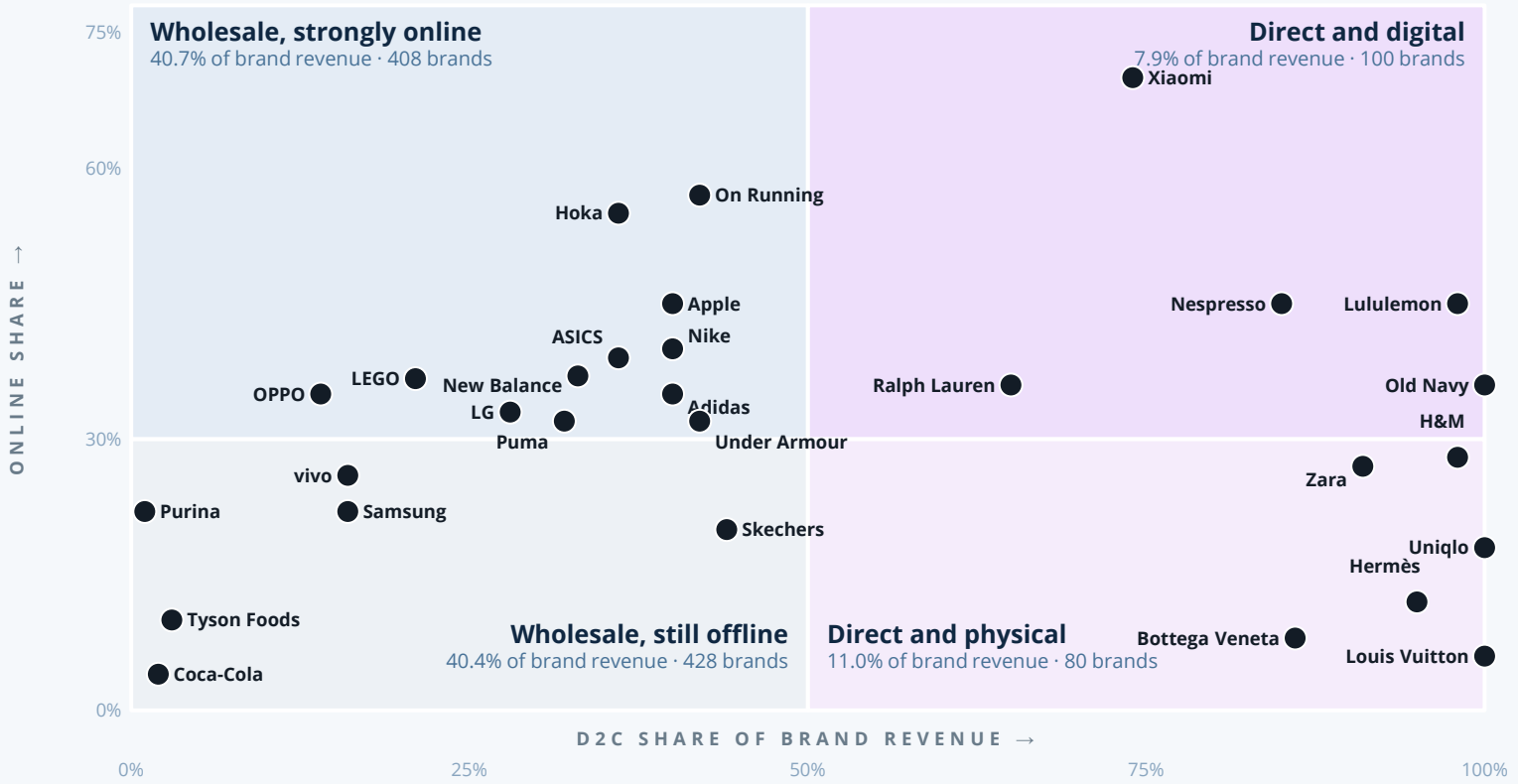
+0.5 pp
D2C share in the universe, 2023 to 2025

Notes: External statements are company and press figures, not ECDB metrics. ECDB figures: Brand Analytics (brand revenue, channel ranking) and Store Profiles (nike.com GMV), live query September 2026. Marketplace and webshop growth (+14% / +7%) are store GMV figures and cannot be reconciled with the brand-revenue channel growth rates on page 5.

Source: Nike; Adidas; Hypebeast; eMarketer; Marketplace Pulse; ECDB (ecdb.com).

Thesis 2: The category sets the online share, the brand sets the channel mix. Four routes to the customer

Route-to-market matrix, physical B2C revenue FY2025. Percentages = share of the quadrant in total brand revenue.



Wholesale, strongly online

Volume runs through retailers that are themselves largely online. Marketplace and pure-player performance is the lever.

Nike · Adidas · Puma · ASICS · LEGO · Apple · LG · OPPO

Direct and digital

The brand owns the customer and the channel. The own webshop is the business, not a side channel.

Lululemon · Xiaomi · Old Navy · Ralph Lauren · Nespresso

Wholesale, still offline

Classic FMCG distribution. Shelf space decides; online is a small, growing share.

Skechers · Samsung · Tyson Foods · Coca-Cola · Purina · vivo

Direct and physical

Own store networks carry the volume. Digital is a showcase rather than a channel, mostly by design.

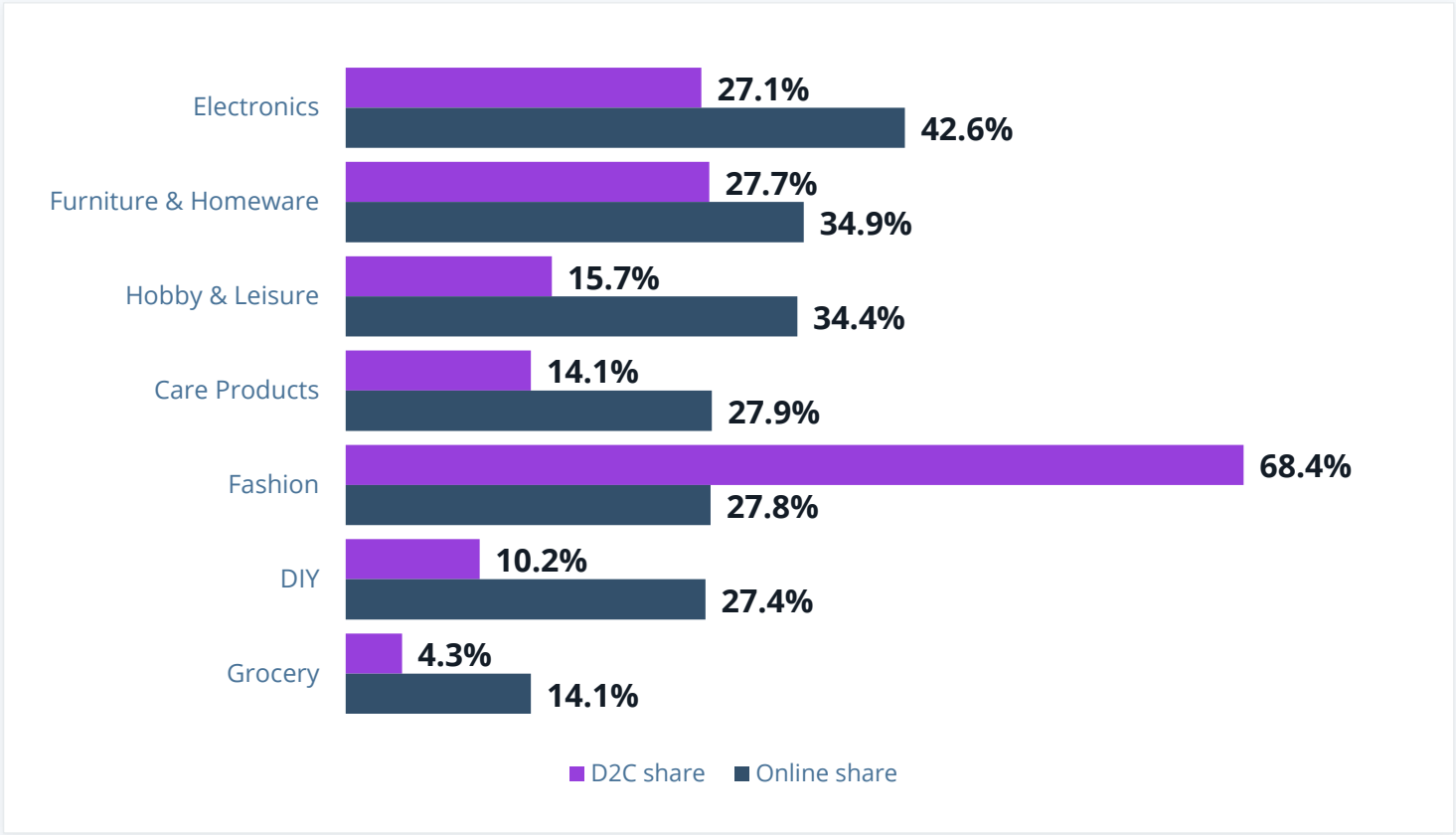
Bottega Veneta · Zara · Louis Vuitton · Uniqlo · H&M · Hermès

Notes: Dividing lines: 50% D2C share (vertical line), 30% online share (horizontal line). Quadrant shares = share of total captured brand revenue FY2025 (1,016 brands). Brand positions: sportswear set, LEGO and Bottega Veneta from Brand Analytics; other brands positioned indicatively from top-15 ranking, quadrant assignment and webshop revenue.

Source: ECDB Brand Analytics, 2026.

The category determines how much goes online, the business model how direct

Online share and D2C share of physical B2C revenue per ECDB category, FY2025, in percent.



Two independent questions

Electronics is the most online category at **42.6%**, Grocery the least online at **14.1%**. The order follows shipping economics and basket value, and it is stable.
The D2C share follows something else: **Fashion is 68.4% direct** because fashion brands operate their own stores. **Grocery is 4.3% direct** because food brands will never do that.
Both axes move independently. That is why a single channel benchmark is misleading.

3.0x

Online-share range, Electronics to Grocery

16x

D2C-share range, Fashion to Grocery

Notes: Revenue-weighted within each category. D2C share comprises own retail and own online shop. The rest is wholesale via third-party retailers.

Source: ECDB Brand Analytics, 2026.

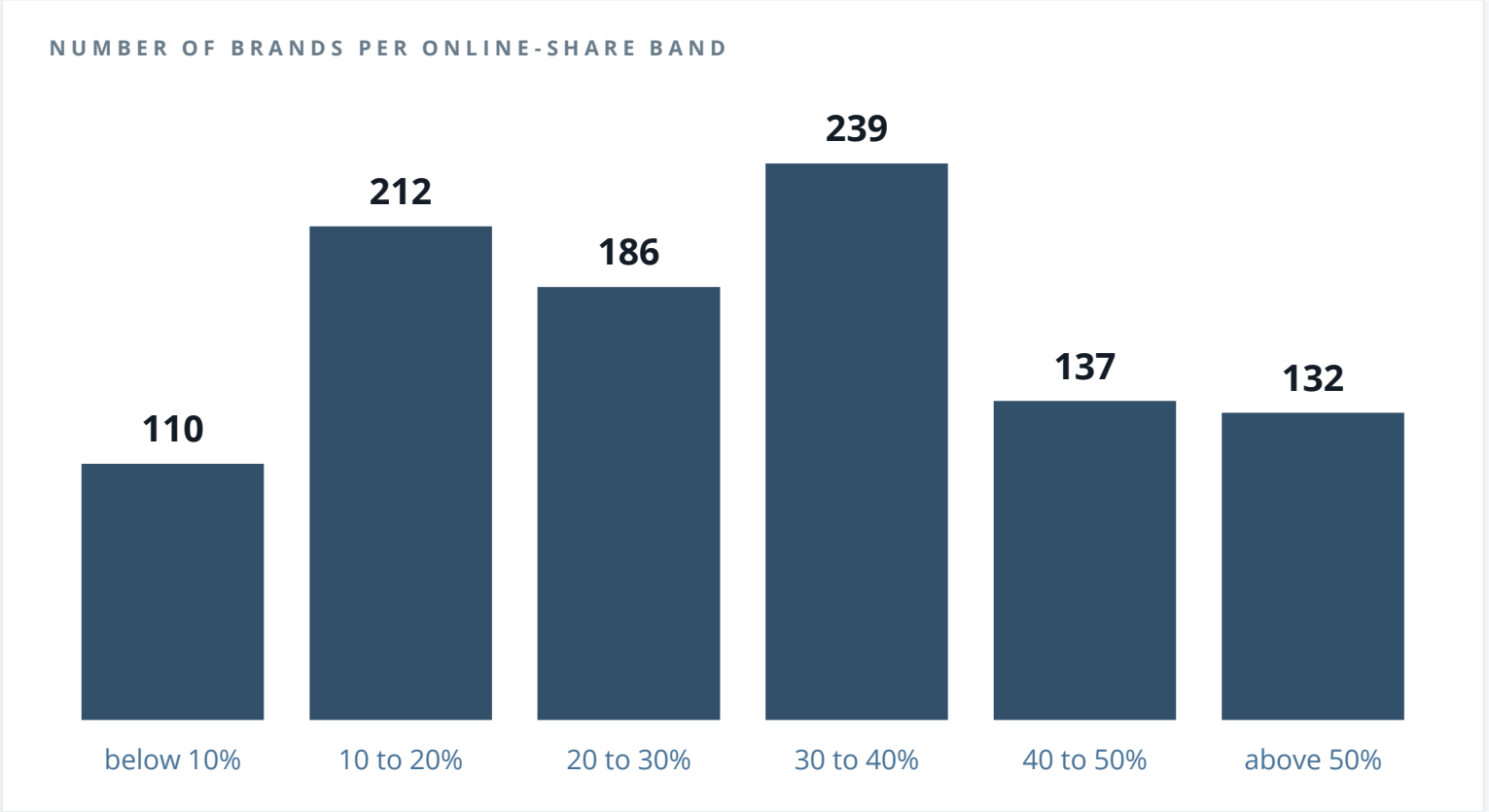
ECDB

Online is 30% of brand revenue, and almost no brand is average

Number of brands by online share of physical B2C revenue, net to brand, FY2025.

The average hides the brand

Across the universe, **30.2%** of brand revenue is online. Hardly any individual brand sits there: **110 brands** are below 10% online, **132 brands** above 50%.
A category average is therefore a poor planning input. The channel mix is a brand attribute, set by distribution policy, not a market constant.



30.2%
Online share, net to brand

38.2%
Online share at retail value

110
Brands below 10% online

132
Brands above 50% online

Notes: Online share net to brand = own online revenue plus net-to-brand value of online wholesale. At retail value, including retailer margin, the same universe reads 38.2% online.

Source: ECDB Brand Analytics, 2026.

Thesis 3: Brands in a category choose similar wholesale partners, but with different success

Platform rank in each brand's channel ranking, all domains of a platform combined, own shops excluded, 2025. Twelve brands from three categories.

SPORTSWEAR

Platform	Adidas	Nike	Puma	ASICS	In top 10
Tmall	2	2	2	2	4 of 4
Amazon	3	5	4	6	4 of 4
Douyin	4	4	10	3	4 of 4
Walmart	9	3	6	12	3 of 4
Zalando	–	8	7	–	2 of 4
JD.com	–	12	–	5	1 of 4

Tmall at rank 2 for all four brands, Amazon and Douyin in the top 10 for all of them.

BEAUTY AND PERSONAL CARE

Platform	Nivea	Maybell.	Garnier	Dove	In top 10
Amazon	9	3	3	3	4 of 4
TikTok Shop	8	6	4	1	4 of 4
Shopee	2	7	5	10	4 of 4
Tmall	1	1	–	6	3 of 4
Douyin	3	5	–	7	3 of 4
Mercado Libre	4	9	7	–	3 of 4

Amazon, TikTok Shop and Shopee for all four brands, Tmall for three at rank 1 to 6.

CONSUMER ELECTRONICS

Platform	Samsung	LG	Sony	Bose	In top 10
Amazon	3	2	2	3	4 of 4
Walmart	5	10	11	7	3 of 4
Flipkart	6	5	8	–	3 of 4
Tmall	–	8	1	2	3 of 4
JD.com	–	9	5	6	3 of 4
Costco	2	4	–	–	2 of 4

Amazon at rank 2 to 3 for all four, followed by the same four platforms at three brands each.

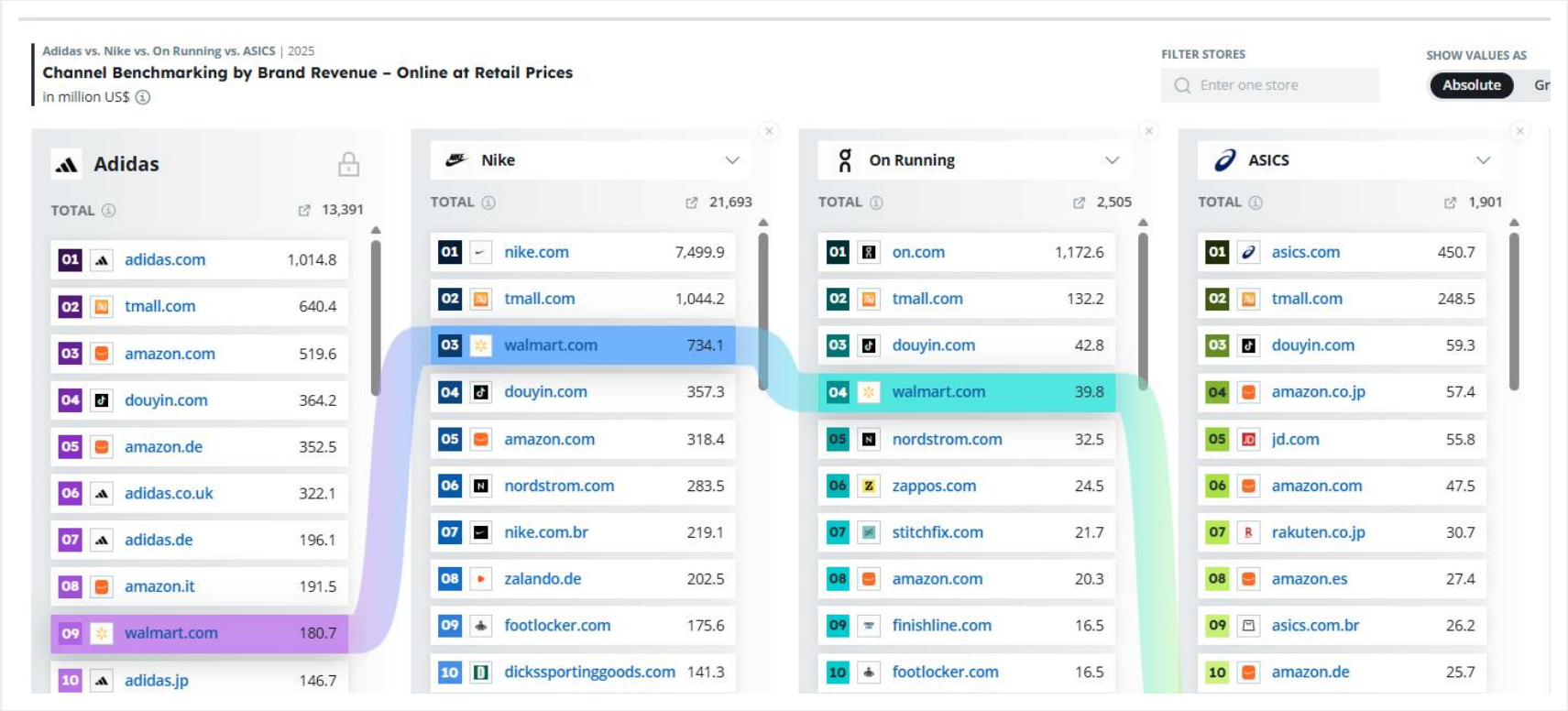
The pattern: The shelf is the same within each category. Sports brands meet at Tmall, Amazon and Douyin, beauty brands at Amazon, TikTok Shop and Shopee, electronics brands at Amazon, Walmart, Flipkart and the Chinese platforms. The choice of partners does not explain success; execution on the same partners does.

Notes: Channel ranking per brand by online brand revenue 2025, worldwide. Platforms with several country domains (Amazon, Shopee, Mercado Libre) counted by their best domain. Number = rank, gray = rank 11 to 12, dash = not in the top 12.

Source: ECDB Brand Analytics (data layer: channel ranking per brand), live query November 2026.

Same shelf, different order: Walmart is Nike's channel no. 3, Adidas' no. 9, ASICS' no. 12

Channel benchmarking component: online brand revenue per store at retail prices, Adidas, Nike, On Running and ASICS, 2025, in US$ m.



Brand Analytics, channel benchmarking component (excerpt: rank 1 to 10)

Same shelf, different order

Own shop: rank 1 everywhere, but on.com carries 47% of online revenue, nike.com 35%, asics.com 24%, adidas.com 8%.
Tmall: rank 2 for all four. China is the second most important online location for every sports brand.
Walmart: rank 3 for Nike (US$ 734m), 4 for On, 9 for Adidas, 12 for ASICS. Zalando: Nike rank 8, Adidas 14, On and ASICS not in the top 18.
The same platforms, but each brand has its own ranking. A category benchmark would force all four onto an average that none of them has.

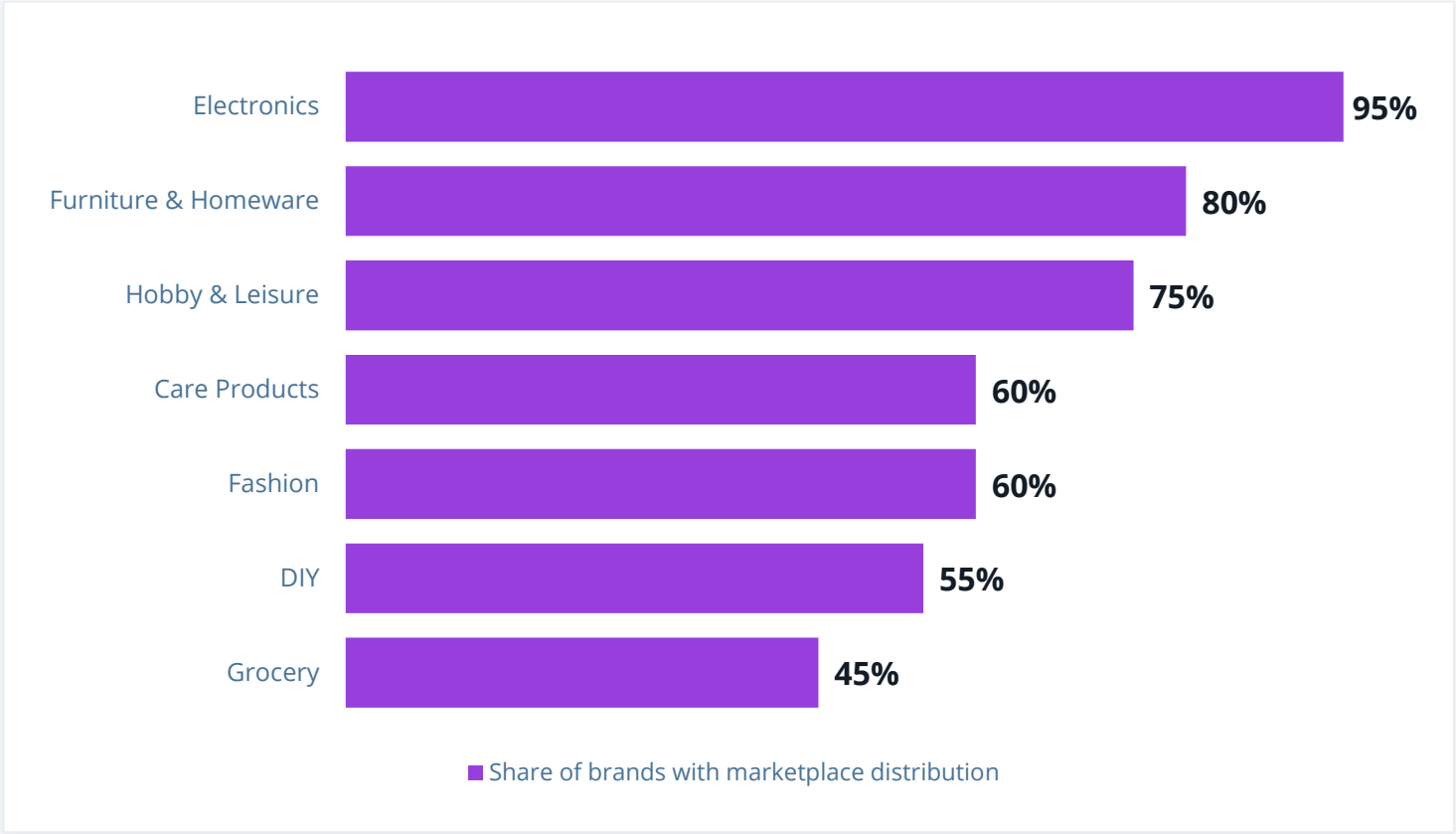
Notes: Values at retail prices, including retailer margin, hence higher than the net-to-brand figures on the other pages (Nike online at retail prices US$ 21.7bn versus US$ 16.3bn net). Own-shop shares calculated from the component totals.

Source: ECDB Brand Analytics (channel benchmarking component, online revenue at retail prices 2025).

ECDB

Thesis 4: The majority of brands use marketplaces as a sales channel

Share of brands per ECDB category that use marketplaces as a sales channel, 1,017 brands, FY2025, in percent.



Marketplace is the norm, not the exception

In six of seven categories, the majority of brands sell via marketplaces. Electronics leads at 95%, Furniture & Homeware and Hobby & Leisure follow at 80 and 75%. Care Products, Fashion and DIY sit at 55 to 60%. Only Grocery stays below half at 45%: food brands run through supermarket webshops and delivery services, not marketplaces.
Amazon alone reaches 70.1% of all 1,017 brands. The question is not whether marketplaces belong in distribution, but which ones in which region.

95%

Electronics: highest marketplace share

45%

Grocery: only category below 50%

Notes: Marketplace distribution = at least one marketplace (platform with third-party sellers such as Amazon, Tmall/JD, Douyin/TikTok, Shopee, Mercado Libre, Temu, Flipkart, Walmart, Zalando, Otto) in the brand's channel ranking. Share = brands with marketplace distribution among all brands in the category, unweighted.

Source: ECDB Brand Analytics, 2026 (channel ranking per brand, Amazon share of universe).

Presence of selected brands on Amazon, Tmall, Douyin and Temu

Availability of 30 brands from seven categories on platform groups, all online stores captured by ECDB per brand (up to 100), 2025.

Brand	Own shop (rank)	Amazon	Tmall / JD / Taobao	Douyin / TikTok	Walmart / Target / Costco	Zalando / Otto / About You	Shopee / Lazada	Mercado Libre	Temu / AliExpress	Stores total
Adidas	1	●	●	●	●	○	○	○		100
Nike	1	●	●	●	●	●	○	○		100
Puma	1	●	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	100
LEGO	2	●	●	○	●		○	○	○	100
Samsung	1	●	○	○	●	○	○	○	○	100
Dyson	6	●	●	●	●	○	○			100
Nivea	–	●	●	●	○	○	●	●		100
Hugo Boss	1	●	○	●	○	●				79
Philips Personal Health	7	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	100
Bosch Home Appliances	6	●	●	○	●	○	○		○	100
Miele	1	○	○			●				73
Lululemon	1		●	●			○			18
Zara	1	●	●	●						6
Apple	1	●	○	○	●		○	○	○	100
Barilla	–	●		○	●				○	46
Dove	–	●	●	●	●		●	○	○	100
Birkenstock	1	○				●				47
Haribo	2	○			●					46
Gillette	35	●	○	●	●		●	●	○	97
Sony	4	●	●	○	○	○	○	○		100
Ralph Lauren	1	○	●	●	○	○	○			100
Uniqlo	1		●	●						6
Lindt	1	○	●	○	●			○		74
Gucci	1	●	●							32
New Balance	1	●	●	●	●	○	○	○		100
On Running	1	●	●	●	●	○	○			100
Garnier	–	●		●	○		●	●	●	77
Bose	1	●	●	○	●	○	○	○		63
Coca-Cola	13	○	●	●	●	○	●	○	○	100
Pampers	–	●	●	●	●	○	○	○		100

● in the brand's top-10 channels ○ available, rank 11 to 100 blank = not listed

28 of 30
on Amazon (22 in top 10)

26 of 30
on Tmall / JD / Taobao

26 of 30
on Douyin / TikTok (18 in top 10)

18 of 30
on Zalando / Otto / About You

11 of 30
on Temu / AliExpress

Notes: Channel ranking per brand by online brand revenue 2025, up to 100 stores per brand (ECDB provides a maximum of 100; below 100 the list is complete, at 100 a platform may sit below rank 100). Filled dot = at least one domain of the platform group in the top 10, open dot = listed at rank 11 to 100. Own shop: rank of the main domain.

Source: ECDB Brand Analytics (data layer: channel ranking and brand revenue per store), live query September and November 2026; online brand revenue 2025 in US$.

ECDB

D2C on the marketplace: the rule in China, the exception in Europe and the US

How brands use marketplaces: as their own seller (D2C online via third parties) or as a supplier (wholesale), FY2025.

LEGO · D2C ONLINE US$ 739M



Four fifths of LEGO's revenue is wholesale. Of the D2C online share, 30% runs as a first-party seller on third-party platforms. The largest online channel is still amazon.com, not lego.com.

BOTTEGA VENETA · D2C ONLINE US$ 62M



The luxury brand refuses open marketplaces. The D2C online third via third parties consists of curated luxury e-tailers such as mytheresa.com and farfetch.com.

Three marketplace logics

China: the marketplace is the D2C shop. For 15 of 30 brands examined, Tmall sits at rank 1 or 2, from Adidas via Sony, Gucci and On to Nivea, Bosch and Coca-Cola. Tmall and Douyin flagship stores are usually operated by the brand itself. Direct sales without an own domain.

US: Amazon and big-box retail. Amazon, Walmart, Costco and Best Buy carry the volume. Whether Amazon revenue is D2C (seller) or wholesale (vendor) depends on each brand's model; Brand Analytics reports both separately.

Europe: partner programs instead of pure marketplace. Zalando, Otto and Breuninger appear only in fashion and home appliances. Hugo Boss: hugoboss.com US$ 425m, zalando.de US$ 117m, amazon.de US$ 23m.

15 of 30

Brands with Tmall at rank 1 or 2 of their online channels

30%

of LEGO's D2C online revenue as a seller via third parties

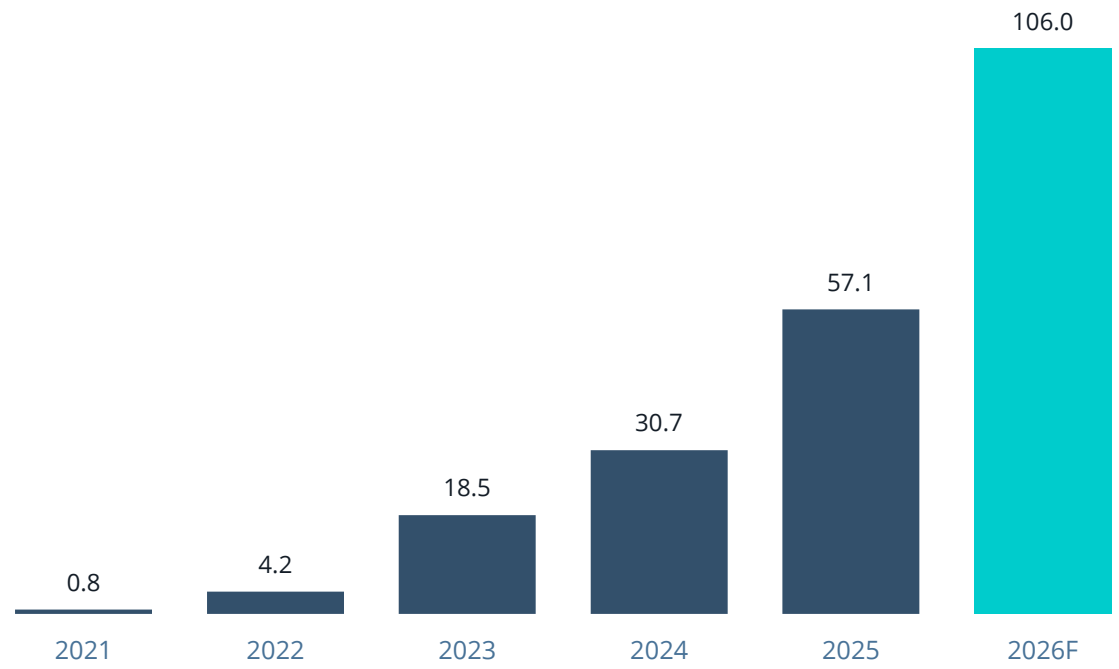
Notes: D2C online via third parties = marketplace revenue booked by the brand as the seller (seller model); wholesale online = retailer revenue with the brand's goods (vendor model). Classifying Tmall flagship stores as brand-operated is an interpretation, not an ECDB metric. Brand figures in US$ bn/m.

Source: ECDB Brand Analytics, 2026 (LEGO, Bottega Veneta); ECDB Brand Analytics (data layer: channel ranking and brand revenue per store), live query September 2026; online brand revenue 2025 in US$.

Thesis 5: TikTok Shop is a media channel with a checkout, not a sales channel

TikTok Shop GMV worldwide 2021 to 2026F in EUR bn and regional split 2025.

TIKTOK SHOP GMV WORLDWIDE, EUR BN



WHERE THE REVENUE COMES FROM, GMV 2025

69%	Southeast Asia (ID, TH, VN, MY, PH, SG)
22%	US, largest single market
7%	Europe (UK 4.6%, ES 1.0%, FR 0.6%, DE 0.6%, IT 0.3%)
1%	Latin America and Japan

The fastest channel ECDB measures

Europe reaches **EUR 4.1bn GMV in 2025 (+86% vs. 2024)**, two thirds of it in the UK. Continental Europe is 18 months old: DE, FR, IT and ES together EUR 1.4bn, less than Temu in Spain alone. Market share below 1.2% in every country.

Notes: GMV = gross merchandise value across all TikTok Shop markets (domain tiktok.com), in EUR; 2026 = ECDB forecast. Country shares are a snapshot. External check: Momentum Works/Tabcut estimate US$ 64.3bn for 2025 (+94%), same trajectory.

Source: ECDB Dossier TikTok in Europe, September 2026 (Core Intelligence store, retailer and market level; Shopper Analytics beta, UK/DE panel); Lengow/Kalodata Q2 2026; TikTok Seller Center.

TikTok Shop has a 1% market share in Europe, 0.3% in Germany. Temu is five times as big, Amazon 47 times

GMV 2025 by country in EUR bn, share of national e-commerce and global GMV growth 2026F.

Country	Amazon	Temu	TikTok Shop	TikTok share of e-commerce	Temu ÷ TikTok
United Kingdom	71.6	4.4	**2.63**	1.7%	1.7x
Germany	58.3	5.6	**0.35**	0.3%	15.9x
France	23.4	6.4	**0.36**	0.5%	17.9x
Italy	24.9	3.0	**0.15**	0.4%	19.2x
Spain	12.6	2.5	**0.57**	1.1%	4.3x
Europe-5	**190.8**	**21.8**	**4.07**	**1.0%**	**5.4x**

Growth 2.5 times Temu's, on a base one fifth of Temu's

In the five large markets Amazon sells **47 times** as much as TikTok Shop, Temu **5 times** as much, less than three years after its own European launch and without a single creator.
Germany is the largest continental market and TikTok's weakest: **0.3% market share** after 18 months. Temu reached ten times that in its first 18 months in Germany.
Only in the UK, with a four-year head start, is the ratio close. The continent's lag is chronological, not structural. For now.

+86%

TikTok Shop worldwide, GMV 2026F vs. 2025

+35%

Temu worldwide, GMV 2026F vs. 2025

+11%

Amazon worldwide, GMV 2026F vs. 2025

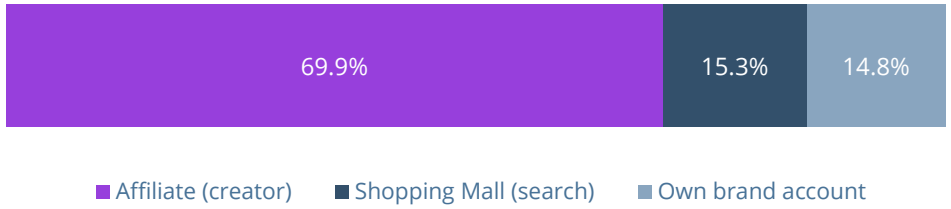
Notes: GMV 2025 in EUR. Amazon = retailer level (all Amazon domains), Temu and TikTok = store level (temu.com, tiktok.com). Country values = global GMV x country share (calculated estimate). Market share = TikTok GMV / national e-commerce revenue 2025. Growth = global GMV growth.

Source: ECDB Dossier TikTok in Europe, September 2026 (Core Intelligence store, retailer and market level; Shopper Analytics beta, UK/DE panel); Lengow/Kalodata Q2 2026; TikTok Seller Center.

70% of revenue runs through creators, the take rate is 24 to 28%: whoever works on camera wins

Revenue sources TikTok Shop continental Europe Q2 2026, cost of a 50-euro sale in Germany and the strongest brands.

REVENUE SOURCES, DE/FR/IT/ES, SHARE OF GMV IN %



WHAT A SALE COSTS, GERMANY, TAKE RATE IN %

9%

Mall sale: platform fee only, no creator

24%

Affiliate sale: platform fee plus 15% creator commission

27.5%

Affiliate plus Smart Promotions (approx. 3.5%): the full take rate

THE BRANDS WINNING ON TIKTOK SHOP EUROPE

Brand	Category	GMV 180 days, EUR m	Why it works on TikTok
Shark Ninja	Kitchen appliances	~73	Air-fryer demo as content, 93% affiliate
medicube	K-beauty	~39	13,000 creators in the UK, top 3 only 8% of revenue
Halara	Athleisure	~35	Try-on content, EUR 25 to 30 price point
DREAME	Robot vacuums	~9	+78 to +517%, EUR 170 to 213 with demo
made by Mitchell	Make-up (UK)	6.9	First brand with US$ 1m in 24 hours, then a Boots listing

The pattern

Demonstrability beats brand awareness: air fryer, serum, robot vacuum, everything with a before-and-after in 30 seconds. Nike, Samsung and L'Oréal appear in no top 10. Two price zones, nothing in between: EUR 10 to 40 impulse or EUR 110 to 240 hero device. The 60-euro middle belongs to Amazon. Creator army instead of hero creator: mature brands depend on their top 3 for under 10%, young continental brands for 55 to 62%.

Notes: Revenue sources and formats: Kalodata estimates DE, FR, ES, IT, Q2 2026 (reliable for ratios, not for absolute values). Platform fee 9% in the EU since January 2026 (launched at 5%), creator commission set by the seller (open 10 to 15%, targeted 15 to 30%+). Brand GMV: 180 days to Aug. 30, 2026, Kalodata.

Source: ECDB Dossier TikTok in Europe, September 2026 (Core Intelligence store, retailer and market level; Shopper Analytics beta, UK/DE panel); Lengow/Kalodata Q2 2026; TikTok Seller Center.

ECDB

Thesis 6: Agentic commerce strengthens marketplaces and weakens brands' own stores; the agent becomes the shelf

Outlook for brands: four arguments why AI shopping agents strengthen marketplaces and weaken the brand's own store. Deliberately pointed, no measured data.

Selection

The agent searches where everything is listed

OUR HYPOTHESES

- The agent queries one catalog with millions of items, not twenty brand shops.
- Machine-readable product data counts more than brand storytelling.
- Whoever is not in the catalog does not exist for the purchase.

Pro marketplace

Checkout

The agent buys where the checkout is

OUR HYPOTHESES

- Payment, logistics and returns are already agent-ready on marketplaces.
- One account, one checkout: the agent buys where it is authorized once.
- Trust sits with the marketplace and the agent, not with the brand.

Pro marketplace

Own shop

The own shop's advantage dissolves

OUR HYPOTHESES

- Staging and content are invisible to the agent; it sees attributes, price, availability.
- Search and paid traffic lose value when the agent searches instead of the customer.
- What remains: service, loyalty, exclusives. Relationship channel instead of revenue channel.

Pro marketplace

What brands do

Become readable for the agent

OUR HYPOTHESES

- Product data as a sales asset: complete and consistent across all marketplaces.
- Run marketplace flagships like the main channel, not a side channel.
- Give the own shop a new rationale: membership, service, exclusives.

Notes: Deliberately pointed hypotheses for discussion, derived from the structural shifts in this talk: wholesale online (US$ 476bn) is already 1.5x the brand's own online shop (US$ 314bn), 28 of 30 brands examined are listed on Amazon. Effects vary by market maturity and category; no measured data.

Source: ECDB analysis, 2026.

ECDB

What brands should do now

Four recommendations, independent of the individual theses.

01

Run wholesale as the core business

71% of revenue runs through retailers. Manage every retail partner like a channel of your own: benchmark rank, revenue and growth per retailer against the peer group, and close gaps at the same partners.

02

Decide marketplaces by region and model

Not whether, but where and how: Tmall and Douyin as your own flagship in China, Amazon as seller or vendor in the West, Shopee and Mercado Libre in the growth markets, Zalando and Otto as a partner model.

03

Size the own shop honestly

The brand's own online shop carries 12% of revenue. Run it like a retailer, with a revenue target and pricing logic, and give it a clear role: service, membership, exclusives. D2C share is not a goal in itself.

04

Treat product data and prices as a sales asset

TikTok Shop and shopping agents read attributes, prices and availability, not brand storytelling. Complete, consistent data across all channels and demonstrable products decide visibility.

Notes: Implications are the speaker's interpretation of the ECDB analysis.

Source: ECDB Brand Analytics, 2026.

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E-Commerce Market Intelligence. Because Guessing Isn't a Strategy.

The Foundation Behind Every Insight in This Report

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