

The 2026 Wholesale Landscape:

Driving Growth in Today's Fashion Market





Beige

Trench Coat

Delivery: October

Units Ordered: 6

Cost:	USD 950.00
Retail:	USD 2300.00

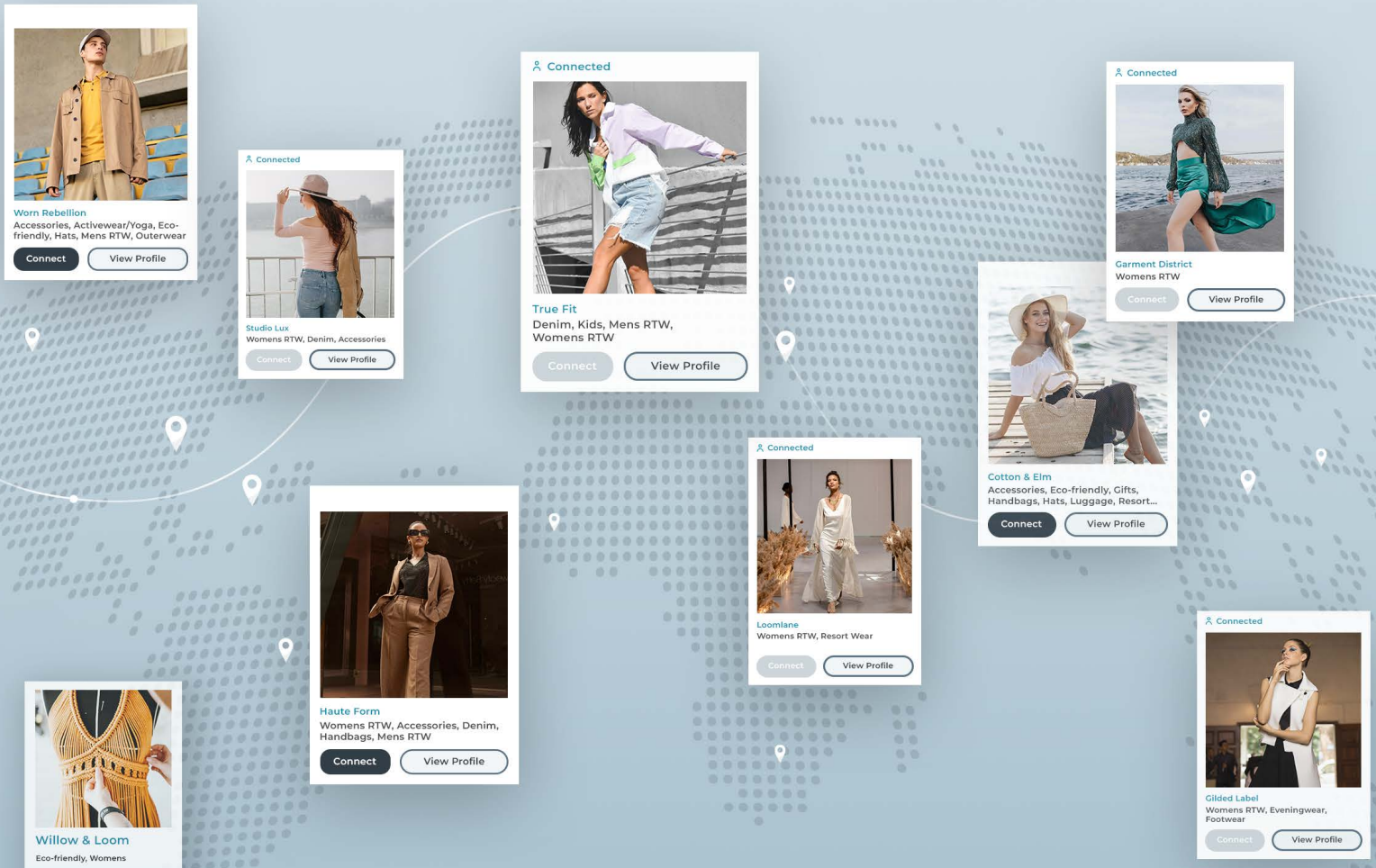
JOOR

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The fashion industry's tumultuous period of tariff changes appears to be coming to an end, with a calmer and more encouraging climate on the horizon for brands and retailers in 2026.

We've analyzed transaction data on JOOR and gathered feedback from our extensive global network of brands and retailers to understand how the industry is changing for the better. This whitepaper presents key data-driven insights from this analysis, along with practical strategies to help you prepare for a successful year ahead.





1 | Brands Are Tapping Into Wholesale's Potential

Confidence has returned to both brands and retailers following tumultuous times, and the fashion wholesale sector emerges as a continued source of growth. In a recent JOOR survey, **73% of brands reported their current sales are equal to or greater than last year**, with 44% noting that wholesale sales volume in particular has risen. In a positive sign, retail buyers are also eagerly returning to market after last year's challenges. **Nearly two-thirds (64%) of buyers reported having a flat or higher open-to-buy budget compared with last year**, indicating the wholesale industry shows no signs of slowing.



MAJORITY OF BUSINESS COMES FROM WHOLESALE

Brands stated that 54% of their overall sales volume comes from wholesale distribution, reinforcing the importance of this channel to their business.

WHOLESALE REMAINS THE MOST PROFITABLE CHANNEL

55% of brands confirm wholesale is their most profitable channel, compared to DTC retail stores and e-commerce—a trend that is continually increasing.





Given that wholesale is not only their largest channel but also their most profitable, it's no surprise that 98% of brands surveyed are looking to grow their wholesale business, up from 93% last year. Of those seeking wholesale expansion, nearly all (91%) are interested in adding additional retail partners, making the ability to establish new wholesale connections essential.

BRANDS ARE CREATING SMARTER COLLECTIONS

95% of brands confirmed that they will be showing a collection this season, but it's unlikely that these will be complete collections of new styles. Over the past three years (2023 to 2026), the number of brands developing a new full-sized collection has dropped from 86% to 81%. Instead, there's been a dramatic increase in brands opting to show a capsule of new styles (rising from 19% to 30%) and those showcasing evergreen styles (surging from 15% to 28%).

More brands are looking to maximize the productivity of their bestselling designs by updating them in varying ways to provide customers with newness and appeal to buyers. Being able to showcase proven financial winners highlights the brand's ROI potential to retailers. However, this strategic approach to collection creation doesn't just benefit buyers; it also helps keep product development and operational costs down for brands and gives them the best chance of a high sell-through rate.



Delivery Window:
03.15.2026 - 06.15.2026

Wholesale:
USD 180

Material:
Silk, Cotton





2 | Buyers Are Prioritizing Newness & Efficiency



When asked about their buying habits, 84% of buyers confirmed they are currently looking to discover new brands, with 42% reporting high interest at the moment (up from 34% last year). This indicates that buyers' confidence has returned and they are once again actively looking to add to their assortments. When asked about the factors driving their discovery of new brands, offering something different and keeping up with trends were the two most important elements, underscoring the enduring allure of the next big thing in fashion.

Lower price points, however, are becoming increasingly important to buyers. 35% of those surveyed cited this as a key factor when selecting new brands, up from 25% in the last 3 years. While the market shows promising indicators, buyers are aware that consumers remain budget-conscious and are therefore keen to offer a range of price points to appeal to diverse customer needs. In response to shifts in consumer priorities, sustainability has decreased in its relative importance to buyers over the past few years, as consumers place less weight on this factor when making purchase decisions.



One factor that has remained constant in recent years is the continued compression of buying cycles, with retailers looking to place orders on a shorter lead time. As the fashion industry continues to increase in speed, the ability to build assortments quickly and purchase products that are immediately available to ship is now more important than ever for retailers. However, 86% of buyers report that they do not currently have a tool for visualizing their assortment, highlighting a poignant gap between their goals and capabilities.

MAKING BUYING MORE EFFICIENT

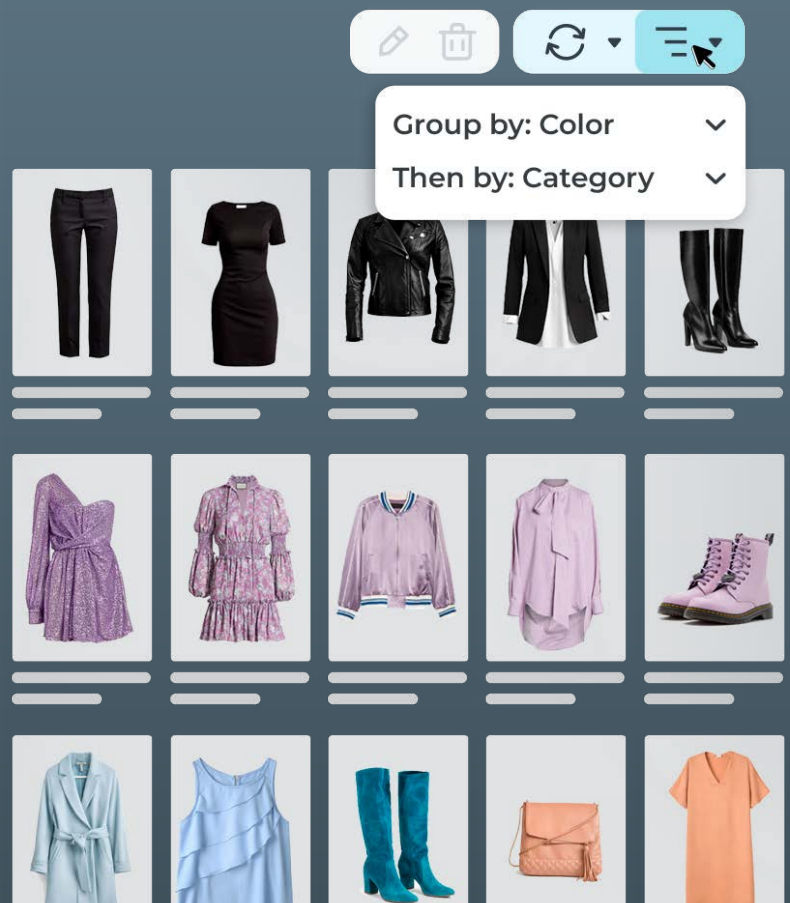
JOOR's Visual Assortment Tool was created to help modern buyers gain clarity over upcoming inventory so they can better optimize their investment. Being able to see an entire buy makes it easier to identify gaps and overlaps across categories, colors, and styles, and can help buyers pinpoint the items needed to strengthen their assortment.

A visual tool that optimizes product selection and aggregates orders across multiple brands and wholesale platforms in one place accelerates the buying process, enabling brands to better meet their consumers' needs.

“The Visual Assortment tool on JOOR has been a game-changer for our buying process. It makes building and organizing assortments incredibly intuitive, allowing us to see the full collection visually and make smarter, more confident decisions. It’s especially helpful for planning buys across categories and price points.”

MJ MARY JANE'S
CLOTHING & GIFTS

- Mary Jane Clothing & Gifts





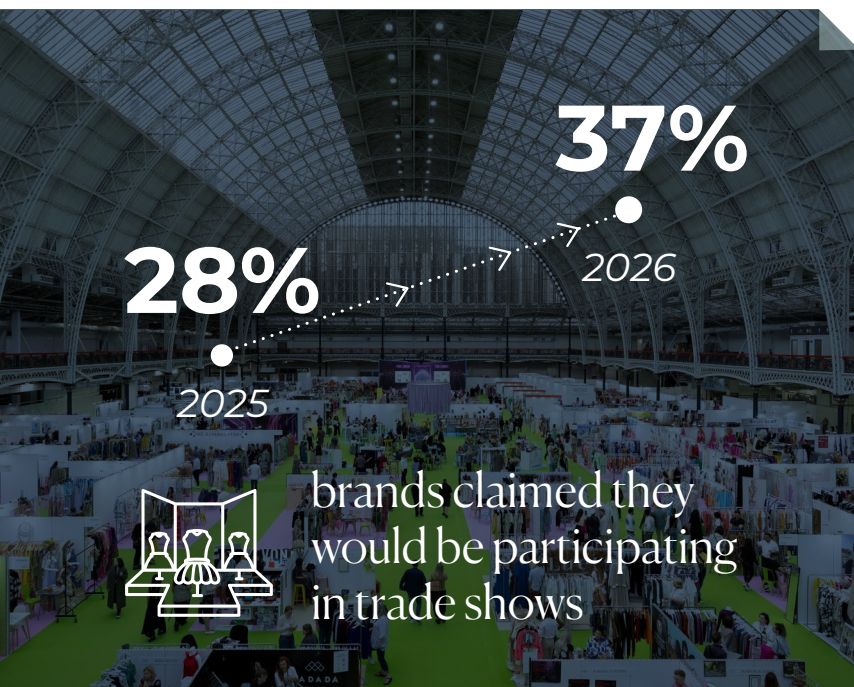
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Flexibility Is Fundamental

As brands look to expand their wholesale partnerships and retailers look to discover new brands, making connections is of paramount importance to forging new relationships. **Leveraging a combination of both in-person and virtual appointments becomes a key element of success**—offering flexibility, providing responsiveness, and facilitating business growth.

RENEWED INTEREST IN TRADE SHOWS

While 85% of brands will host appointments in their showrooms this season, there has also been a renewed interest in trade shows. 37% of brands claimed they would be participating in trade shows this year, up from 28% last year.



As trade show participation returns to the historical levels last seen in 2023 and 2024, brands' desire for in-person connection is clear. The types of relationships that can be forged face-to-face are extremely valuable and long-lasting, so it should come as no surprise that more and more brands are understanding and capitalizing on the value of the trade show, in particular as an avenue to increase visibility to potential new wholesale partners.

INCREASING EMBRACE OF VIRTUAL

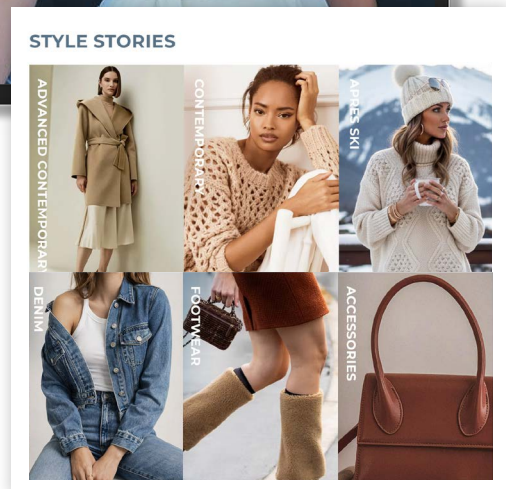
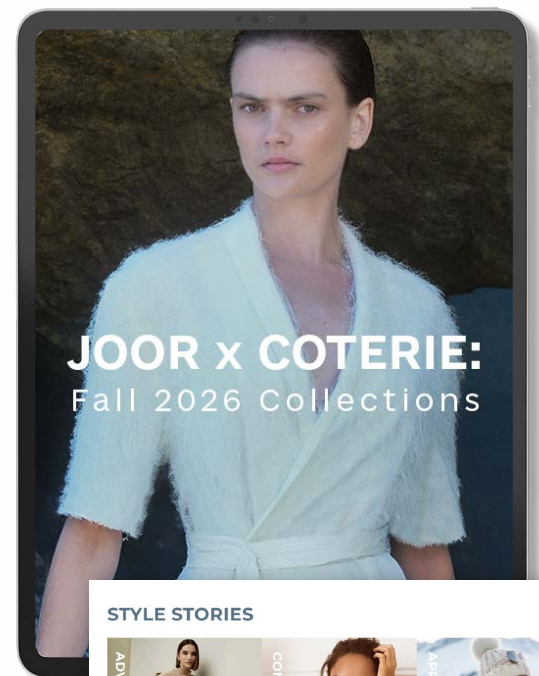
88% of buyers said they will attend market this season, with a notable increase opting for a full schedule of appointments (65% this year, up from 53% last year). This once again highlights the increased interest in wholesale as the fashion industry returns to form. Interestingly, **43% of buyers surveyed said they will conduct the majority of their appointments virtually this year**, up from only 35% last year. 12% even said they would go entirely virtual this season, up from 6% last year.

Remote working has remained a popular choice for many buyers post-pandemic, thanks to its cost-effectiveness and efficiency amid busy international schedules; however, this increased demand for digital appointments may also reflect a continued shift towards an all-year-round buying approach. While trade shows remain important to buyers, having options to do business outside the traditional selling season is equally essential.

THE HYBRID APPROACH

With these statistics in mind, it seems clear that a hybrid approach to wholesale is crucial to capture the largest market share and operate in a way that best suits your business and clients. To highlight the importance of flexibility, this year, we launched JOOR x COTERIE: Fall 2026 Collections, a unique digital extension of the iconic New York trade show that allowed buyers to browse brands and place orders two weeks before the in-person event began and for six weeks after.

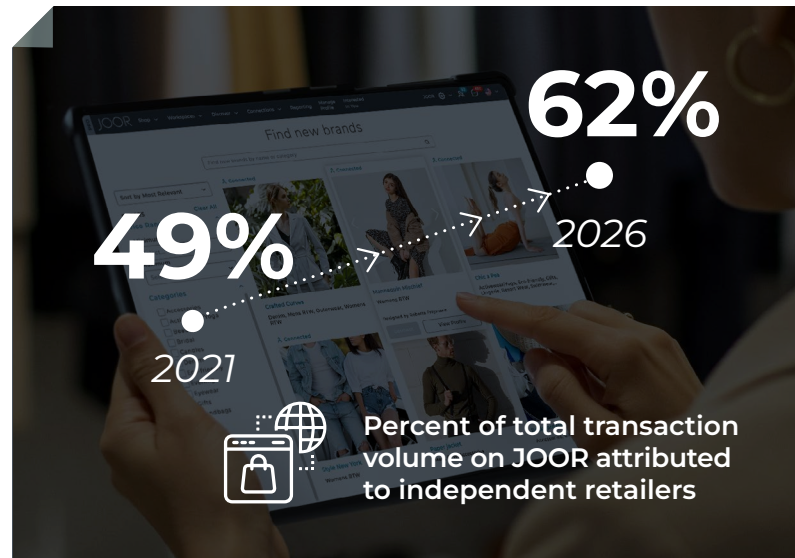
Bringing the event to life online not only maximized exposure and selling opportunities for brands exhibiting but also gave buyers an extended chance to engage with the show. When an unprecedented snowstorm hit New York days before the event and flights in and out of the city were stopped, our digital expansion proved a vital lifeline to buyers who were unable to travel. It meant the business did not have to slow or stop operations despite the weather crisis, underscoring the value of the hybrid approach.



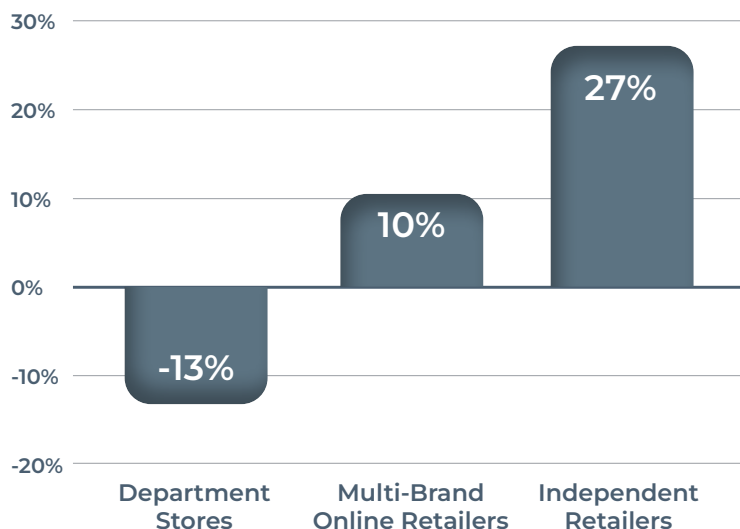


4 | Independent Retailers Continue To Rise

We have reported extensively on the growing independent retail sector for the past two years, and it appears the momentum in this channel of distribution continues to accelerate. Over the past five years, the share of total transaction volume on JOOR attributed to independent retailers has increased from 49% to 62%.



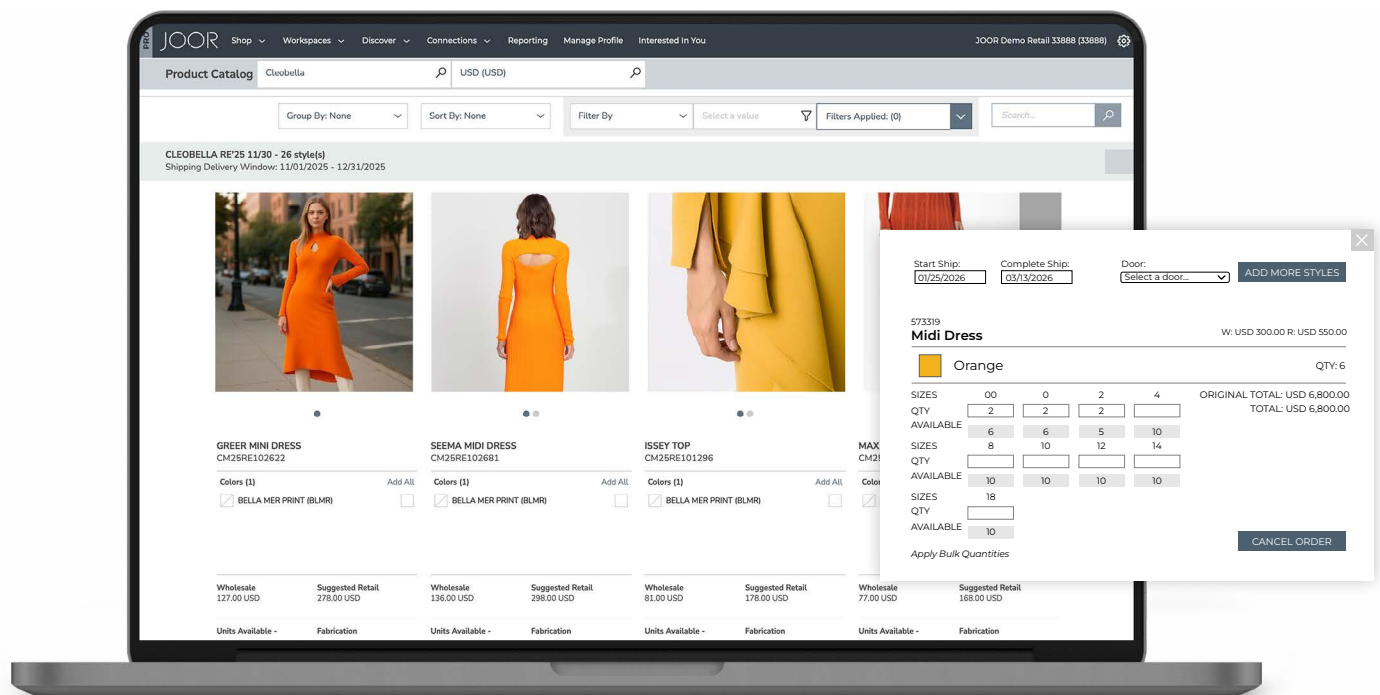
Like-for-Like Retailers' Purchases 2020 vs. 2025



This shift becomes all the more apparent when analyzing the same retailers' purchases in 2020 versus 2025. This past year, like-for-like independent retailers ordered 27% more than they did five years ago, whereas enterprise retailers' transaction volume declined by -4%. Within the enterprise segment, department stores saw the most dramatic decline of -13%, partially offset by increases in other enterprise categories such as multi-brand online and off-price retailers.

This increase in transaction volume coming from independent retailers translates directly into wholesale growth for brands. When asked about selling to independents, 51% of brands have seen growth in this channel YoY, compared to only 39% who have experienced growth with multi-brand e-commerce sites and 31% with department stores.

Partnering with independents is also appealing to brands as these types of stores closely align with their priorities when evaluating new retail partnerships. While brand mix carried and financial stability remain the most important factors to consider, this year, **58% of brands cited distance from other points of distribution as a key factor (up from 46% last year)**—something smaller, specialty boutiques are often able to offer.



JOOR PAY

Amount: USD 1,800.00

Payment

Select your preferred payment method. All transactions are secure and encrypted.

Pay with Card

VISA MASTERCARD AMERICAN EXPRESS

Bank Transfer

BT

PayPal

PayPal

REACH VERIFIED

By completing your order, you will check out with Reach US, our preferred international seller, and agree to the [Terms of Service](#) of Reach US.

Complete Payment

49% of brands also claimed payment terms were a key factor in choosing a new retail partner, a significant increase from 30% last year. It seems now more than ever, there appears to be a growing concern for being paid in a timely manner. As some major department stores faced uncertainty this year, indie stores that may place smaller orders but offer more favorable payment terms are becoming an extremely valuable alternative for brands.



WAYS TO WIDEN YOUR INDEPENDENT NETWORK

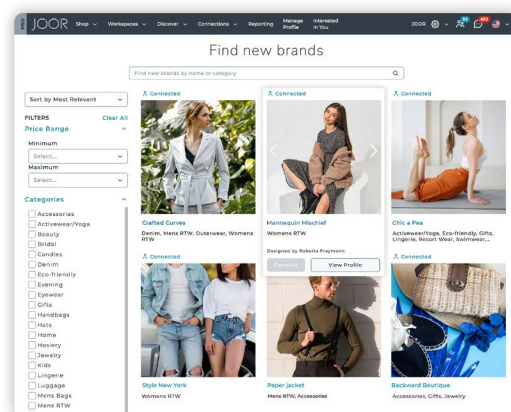


THE JOOR 100

Each year, we unveil the JOOR 100, a highly curated list of the leading independent retailers from around the world that we believe showcase the best in product curation and customer understanding. You will find the JOOR 100 seal on their brand profiles within our platform, making it easy to identify.

JOOR DISCOVER

Our brand-buyer matchmaking tool can be incredibly useful in finding new independent retail connections in your region and beyond. Members of JOOR can log in to the tool, apply filters to find retailers that align with their brand offering, and use our auto-generated prospecting emails to maximize networking success.



JOOR PASSPORT

In the last year, we have hosted several JOOR Passport shows to spotlight specialty stores with a proven track record of high-quality stock and deep category expertise. Highlights include *Step Into Style: The World's Best Footwear Retailers* and *In The Bag: The World's Top Handbag Retailers*. These showcases are a unique and highly valuable resource for brands looking to identify new retail partners.

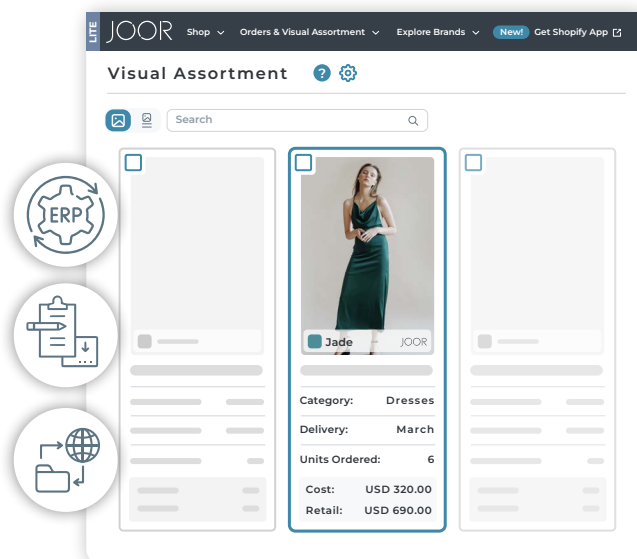


5 | How To Capitalize On Wholesale's Upward Curve

FOLLOW THESE THREE ACTIONABLE STEPS TO MAXIMIZE WHOLESALE'S POTENTIAL FOR YOUR BUSINESS.

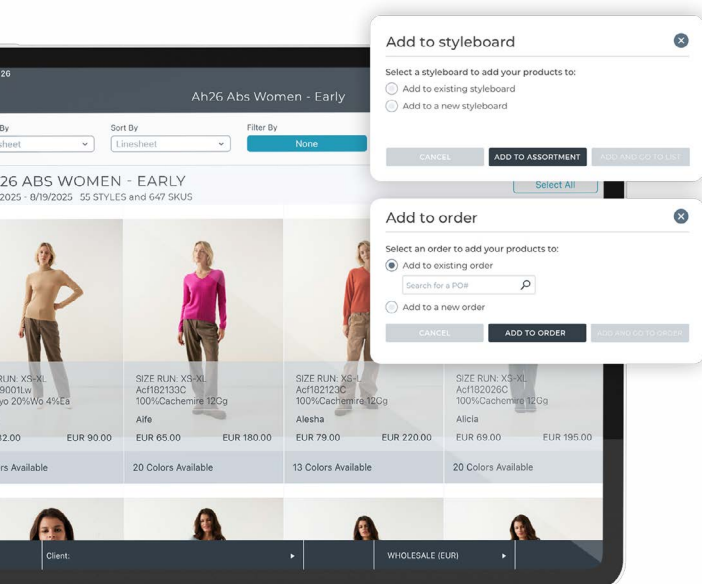
1 *Embrace Technology To Increase Efficiency*

Buying cycles are moving faster, and as a result, wholesale processes need to be streamlined. JOOR integrates with over 100 ERPs and offers brands a wide range of tools to increase efficiency. For retailers, these include our Visual Assortment Tool and Product Sync App for Shopify, which speed up assortment planning and product information transfers.



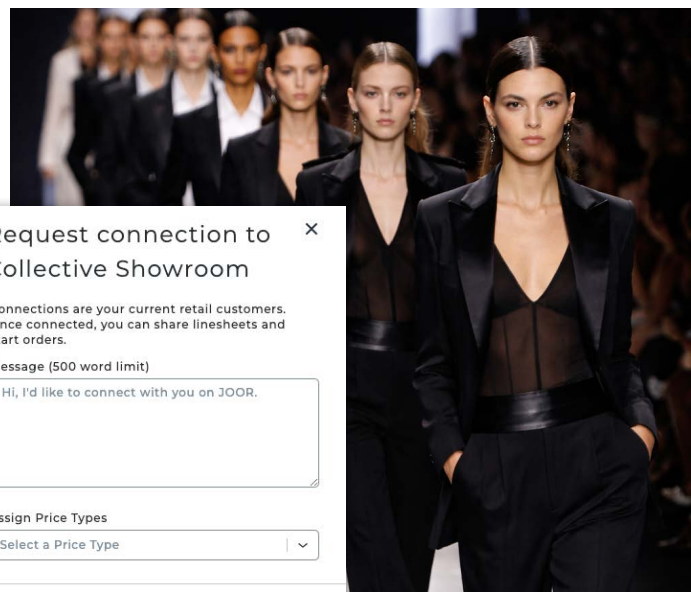
2 *Adopt A Hybrid Approach*

As buyers become increasingly interested in virtual appointments, brands that can offer flexibility will be favored. Alongside trade show attendance, make use of tools such as virtual showrooms and digital linesheets to maximize your selling potential to buyers who prefer to conduct business online. At in-person events such as showroom appointments, use the JOOR iPad app to help buyers seamlessly browse digital linesheets and place orders with real-time inventory updates.



3 *Never Stop Connecting*

The wholesale channel continues to strengthen and grow, and both brands and buyers are continually seeking new connections. The JOOR platform is open 24/7 and offers constant access to the best fashion connections in the industry. Networking, whether to build new relationships with independent retailers or to strengthen long-standing retail partnerships, has never been easier.



Request connection to Collective Showroom

Connections are your current retail customers. Once connected, you can share linesheets and start orders.

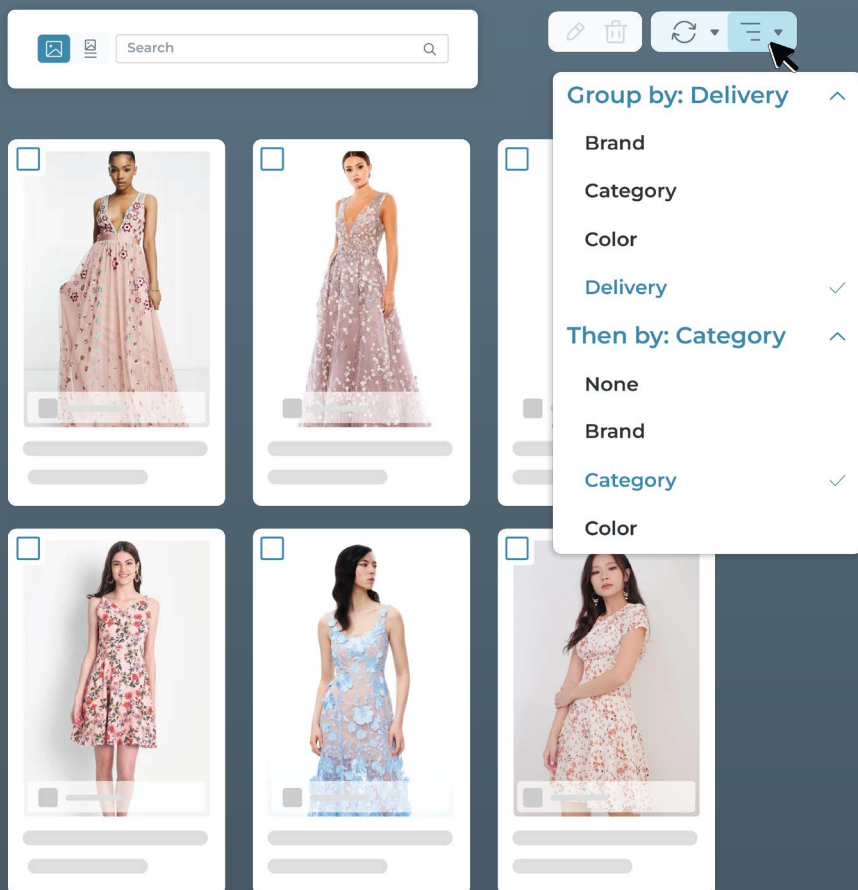
Message (500 word limit)

Hi, I'd like to connect with you on JOOR.

Assign Price Types

Select a Price Type

Send



CONCLUSION

To thrive in wholesale fashion today requires flexibility, access to innovative tools, and a deep understanding of brand and buyer behavior. Adopting a hybrid approach to business and leveraging the capabilities of a digital B2B platform like JOOR are critical to achieving success in today's retail environment. Brands and retailers looking to drive growth must streamline their processes and maximize their efficiency with the latest technology.



Retailers

Streamline your wholesale process.
joor.com/retailers



Brands

Grow your wholesale business.
joor.com/brands

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