

Mark Denkler

NSRA President





The **National Shoe Retailers Association** is a 111-year-old organization that represents a third of the independent shoe stores in the United States. Over 50% are family shoe stores carrying men's, women's and children's shoe stores.

Members include high end and discount stores as well as, fashion, comfort, and athletic stores. With almost 1,700 members, our members range from 1 store to 250 stores.

The independent market has historically been brand driven. However, most brands start their distribution by independent retailers first noticing the new product and building the brand.

A lot of this growth is increased sales at the stores and then additional stores are added as positive sales are shared among store owners.

Brands drive the customer to the stores, but a curated selection of imports combats direct-to-consumer from the brands, differentiates a store's shoe selection, and increases profits.

Nike started with Phil Knight selling shoes from the trunk of his car.

Margot Fraser introduced the Birkenstock brand to U.S. in 1966 and it now accounts for over \$1 billion U.S. dollars in sales.

U.S. retail stores shop their local shows and usually attend one major show:

Atlanta Shoe Market
(Largest shoe only show)

MAGIC | PROJECT Las Vegas
MAGIC | COTERIE New York

Dallas Market Center



For Imports, U.S. buyers attend:

MICAM Milano
Expo Riva Schuh

Items to consider:

Minimum orders per order are acceptable as one needs volume to make importing profitable. However, large restriction on minimums per style or color is a barrier. Consider, even large independent stores will want to test product and large minimums prevent them from testing your product.

Timing. The U.S. has many different temperatures. Spring product can be sold in the southern states as early as November.



Entry to the United States Market

Importing has its advantages with lower costs. When buying first cost they like a return of 4 times first cost or 3-times landed cost.

- Experienced buyers will want FOB (*Free on Board from the port or airport*) or Ex works (*from the factory*).
They will use their own forwarding company to arrange transportation, documents and duties.
- New Buyers prefer shoes delivered directly from factory to their U.S. store as the logistics of transportation is beyond their expertise.
Some companies have a flat price for the U.S., and this is easiest for the store's buyer.

Shoes are a tactile as buyers want to touch and try on potential shoes.

Buyers are reluctant and rarely purchase new product from an emailed catalogue. Imports dropped during the pandemic as U.S. buyers would not buy digitally from new shoe companies.

Therefore, entry is preferable by the following ways:

Limited Exposure:

Showing at MICAM Milano or Expo Riva Schuh.

United States Exposure:

- a. Attend the Atlanta Shoe Market show
- b. Attend the MAGIC or COTERIE shows in Las Vegas and/or New York
- c. Hire an Agent for the U.S. market – NeroGiardini

Questions?

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