



The Retail Pitch Calendar

How To Leverage Perfect Timing
To Catch A Buyer's Attention,
Have Them Eagerly Review Your
Products And Get Into More Stores.



WELL HELLO, FRIEND!

I hope you're as excited as I am, because what you are about to learn is going to place you leaps and bounds ahead of your competition. This first-of-its-kind resource guide contains *never before* published information that retail insiders have kept to themselves for decades... that is until now.



If this is the first time we are meeting, it's best I go ahead and introduce myself. My name is Mia Bell and I am the CEO & Founder of MIA BELL BRANDS, a leading wholesale sales representation and business development firm for brilliant natural beauty & eco lifestyle brands. My team and I are passionate about helping young brands expand into more retailers across the U.S and teach them how to *thrive* in the marketplace. It's

WELL HELLO, FRIEND!

our goal to bring healthier options to store shelves! And we absolutely delight in doing so. Sure, if you ask me today, I'd say that I am fairly confident when it comes to sales but it wasn't always that way.

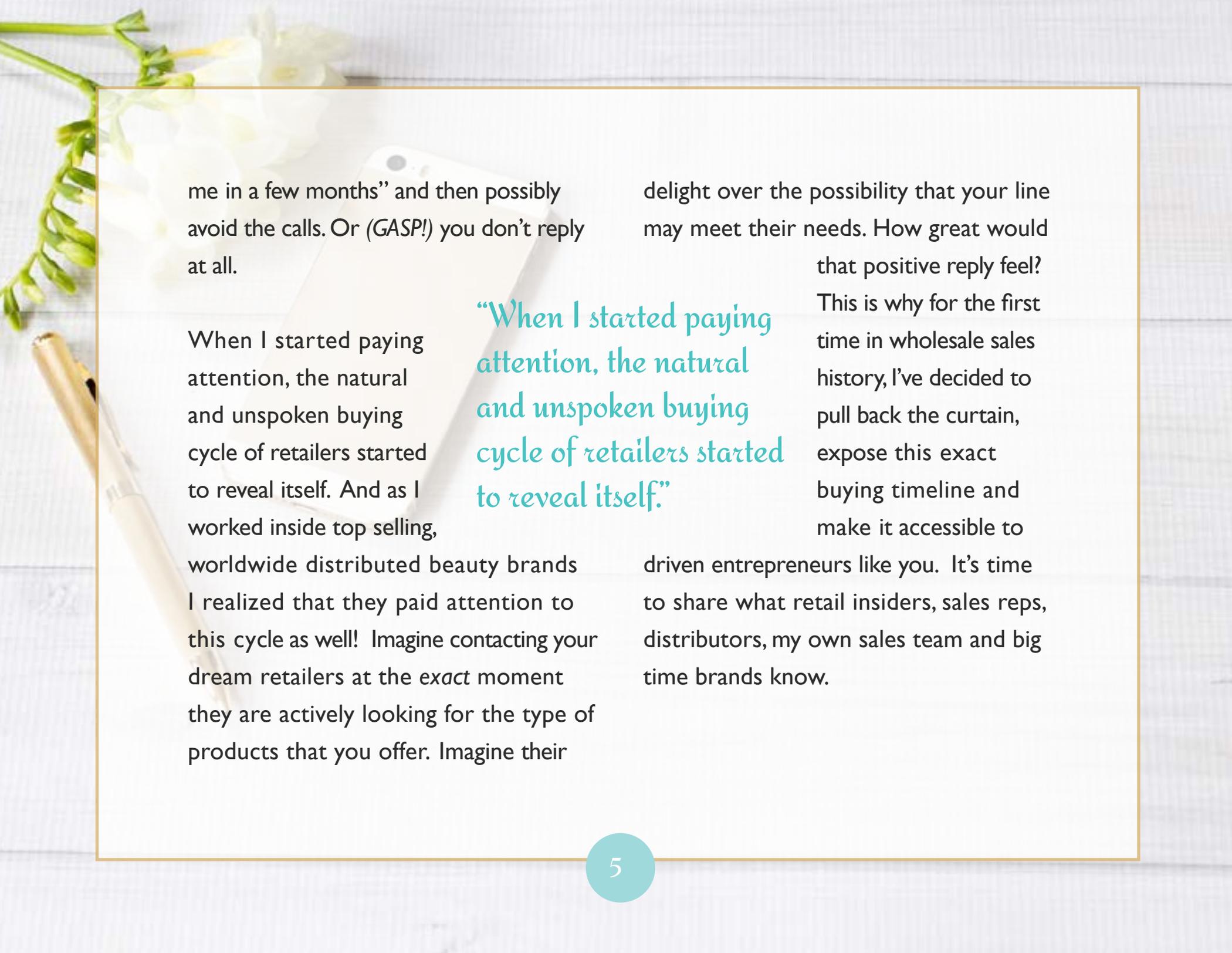
Armed with a list of targets and an office phone, I remember sitting in a cubicle early in my career and being absolutely *terrified* of making calls. With sweaty palms, dry mouth, stomach queasiness and wanting to be anywhere BUT there, I bravely prepared for the hours of rejection that would follow. *Have mercy!* Hearing 'NO' was absolutely soul crushing. Though I held hope that one day it would get better and NO would become YES. And it did! I've sparked partnerships with prominent retailers like Neiman Marcus, Whole Foods, Urban Outfitters, Anthropologie and much more. I continue to do so and have trained dozens of sales teams as well as brand founders how to do the same. Want to know what the biggest discovery was that changed everything?



Timing Can Be Your Biggest Ally

What I learned through years of tweaking my own approach and working in multi-million dollar corporate sales teams was this - there are several factors that influence how receptive a Retail Buyer is to you. One of the biggest factors? TIMING. Much of the rejection that you've received when asking for a sale was never directed at YOU, your timing was simply OFF. What you presented at that particular time was not significantly important enough to the Retail Buyer. It wasn't a priority

to them. And again, let me stress that most of the time rejection has *nothing* to do with you and what you have created. Be proud of your product line! What leads to rejection is that you may have pitched your amazing product to a Buyer when they weren't actively seeking it out. When it wasn't on their hot list of product types to buy for that upcoming season. Think about it. How would you reply to a request that wasn't immediately important to you? You'd say "no thank you." Maybe you'd say "get a hold of



me in a few months” and then possibly avoid the calls. Or (*GASP!*) you don’t reply at all.

When I started paying attention, the natural and unspoken buying cycle of retailers started to reveal itself. And as I worked inside top selling, worldwide distributed beauty brands I realized that they paid attention to this cycle as well! Imagine contacting your dream retailers at the *exact* moment they are actively looking for the type of products that you offer. Imagine their

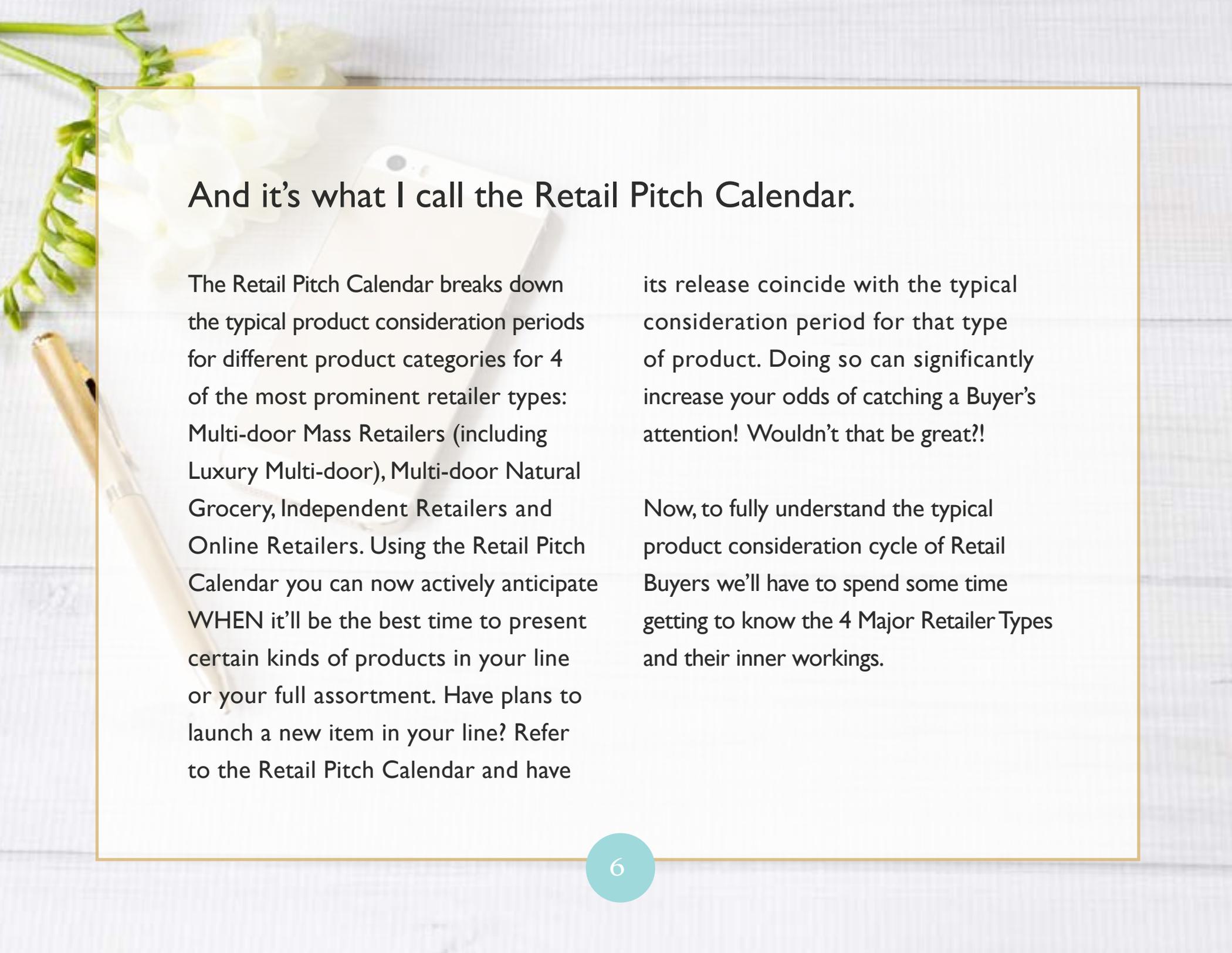
“When I started paying attention, the natural and unspoken buying cycle of retailers started to reveal itself.”

delight over the possibility that your line may meet their needs. How great would

that positive reply feel?

This is why for the first time in wholesale sales history, I’ve decided to pull back the curtain, expose this exact buying timeline and make it accessible to

driven entrepreneurs like you. It’s time to share what retail insiders, sales reps, distributors, my own sales team and big time brands know.



And it's what I call the Retail Pitch Calendar.

The Retail Pitch Calendar breaks down the typical product consideration periods for different product categories for 4 of the most prominent retailer types: Multi-door Mass Retailers (including Luxury Multi-door), Multi-door Natural Grocery, Independent Retailers and Online Retailers. Using the Retail Pitch Calendar you can now actively anticipate WHEN it'll be the best time to present certain kinds of products in your line or your full assortment. Have plans to launch a new item in your line? Refer to the Retail Pitch Calendar and have

its release coincide with the typical consideration period for that type of product. Doing so can significantly increase your odds of catching a Buyer's attention! Wouldn't that be great?!

Now, to fully understand the typical product consideration cycle of Retail Buyers we'll have to spend some time getting to know the 4 Major Retailer Types and their inner workings.

The 4 Major Retailer Types Explained

As the go-getter that you are, you most likely already have your sights set on certain types of retailers. You may even have specific names! As you grow your business, the network of retailers that you stock could one day be vast and plentiful. And they can operate differently from each other. It's not rare to find that even retailers within the same category have their own set of rules and prime product consideration periods! This is why we'll take the time to briefly get to know the different categories of retailers that you'll encounter along the way...

1. MULTI-DOOR MASS MARKET RETAILERS (INCLUDES LUXURY MULTI-DOOR RETAILERS)

It's quite possible that you have some major names on your retailer wish list. Heck yes! Dream big! Multi-door Mass Market Retailers are companies that have many locations and cater to a variety of consumers through their wide range of products and affordable prices. They may not be known for selling timeless, high-quality merchandise or for their stellar service but they absolutely try to meet every need and want of their customers. If something is trending, surging, or 'hot right now' you better

believe they'll have it at a reasonable price. Buyers in this channel work within strict product consideration schedules and lead times. For example, want to hopefully get in for Holiday? If you pitch them in October you're out of luck. They've made their Holiday buying decisions in August! By October, they've already moved on to scouting product for the following year. Why do they work so far in advance? They are multi-million or multi-billion dollar companies; they are successful because

they plan ahead and execute everything with precision to make the most impact and profit...for them and YOU. There are shelf schematics they have to figure out for any new product line they carry (aka where and how are you going to fit). The marketing & art departments get looped in to create your campaigns that will run. Buyers then ensure that you are delivering product to their distribution centers by the cancel date (yes, there is an order cancel date). By using the Retail Pitch Calendar as your guide, you'll be reaching out with great timing. What happens if a buyer says you reached out too soon? Well, better be early and wait for their product

period to open than be late and miss the opportunity completely!

Luxury Multi-door Retailers such as those on the level of Saks Fifth Avenue, Neiman Marcus, and Sephora are also included in this category because they work similarly as far as product consideration periods and lead times. The only difference is that they cater to the opposite spectrum- the more affluent consumer. If your product line is positioned as luxury and you plan on reaching out to Luxury Multi-door Retailers you would still want to go by the timeline shown for Multi-door Mass Market Retailers on the Retail Pitch Calendar.

2.

MULTI-DOOR NATURAL GROCERY

According to TIME Magazine, the organic food industry has grown to more than \$35.1 billion since 2013. With its boom, a newfound consumer awareness of healthy living through other types of products has emerged. This means that what was once limited to upscale grocery like Whole Foods is now making its way onto the shelves of more mainstream grocery chains. It's no surprise to see a section dedicated to NATURAL in them. And that means their Buyers are actively looking to meet this surge in demand

with top of the line brands like yours! However, just like Multi-door Mass Market Retailers, space is highly competitive. Because they oversee hundreds to *thousands* of new inquiries a year, Buyers in this channel also work with very strict product consideration periods and longer lead times. They rarely deviate from their cycle which is why it's important to know EXACTLY when they are open and eager to see your product. Typically, you'll find Buyers in this channel scouting products months ahead of their season. Summer

collections can be selected as early as February! This is again to ensure proper planning as far as your shelf placement, advertisement and order fulfillment so that you have the best rollout possible. While the handy Retail Pitch Calendar is an excellent guide to these specific periods of opportunity, it's best to still ask Buyers in this category for their product consideration schedule as they individually could be operating on a unique timeline.

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3.

INDEPENDENT RETAILERS

Independent Retailers are typically single brick & mortar locations (physical shop) that are owned and operated by one proprietor or group of co-owners or a family. There's a minimal amount of employees and their sales volume (when compared to Mass Retailers & Mass Grocery) is relatively small. However, don't discount them just yet! Many of the big brands we know of today started growing their vast empires **first** with Independent Retailers. This is because they are technically easier and

simpler to sell into, service and nurture. These are your spas, boutiques, gift shops, salons, fitness studios, single location food co-op, mini resorts and more. So if you are just starting to wholesale your products or are a young brand needing to get more retail experience under your belt, Independent retailers can be the smartest way to go. Mass and "big box" Retail Buyers will always ask for your stockist list upon first meeting. Showing them an extensive and strong list of independent retailers that carry

your product will definitely impress! Why? It proves you are desirable. It shows demand for your product...and they'll want in on it! Aside from this, you can create some of the best relationships of your life with Independent Retailers. You can do so much growing and testing before taking your brand to the big time. Also when selling to Independent Retailers, the product consideration periods and decision lead times are also much more flexible. For example, it's possible to present your product two weeks before Black Friday and just make the cut! Not that I recommend waiting until the very last second to sell in for prime holiday time but I've seen it happen.

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4.

ONLINE RETAILERS

Online Retailers (aka e-commerce) capitalize on convenience and allow shoppers everywhere to find and buy products from the comfort of their home, laptop, and mobile devices. No need to get in the car. With product sales reaching \$142.5 billion in 2010 worldwide, there's no sign of online retail slowing down. More and more online retailers are popping up in the marketplace and they are looking to stock YOUR products. Unlike larger brick & mortar retailers (Multi-door Mass and Multi-door

Grocery), most of the operations and marketing are done relatively "fast" on the web via an e-commerce website. Therefore their product consideration periods and decision lead times are not set so far ahead of the upcoming season. For example, an Online Retailer can purchase their final summer collections in late May. By the first week of June, they can have it on their website and actively promote it. Just in time for meeting the needs of their customer!

How to use the Retail Pitch Calendar

Ready to increase your odds of retailers saying YES to your product line? The Retail Pitch Calendar living on page 20 of this resource guide is going to be a big help to you and anyone in your company charged with the task of reaching out to retailers. You'll have a better idea of WHEN (down to the exact months) Retail Buyers are eagerly reviewing products for a specific season and WHAT product types they are actively looking for. Now, it's absolutely essential to your bottom line that you are always

pitching your products to potential retailers year round. However, you'll have a more positive response if you contact them when the timing is right.

I've made the Retail Pitch Calendar simple and easy to read. On the far left-hand side, you'll see the 4 Major Retailer Types listed in their own columns. The months of the year are written chronologically across the very top. Shown on the Retail Pitch Calendar are the 4 seasonal consideration periods for each Retailer Type. These are

placed under the typical months of the year that they become active. Not only is each seasonal block color coded; each block contains a detailed listing of the kinds of products that are commonly reviewed (*and desired*) for that season.

Now to illustrate how it works let's use an example. Let's say that you want to introduce your range of women's shave products to Multi-door Mass Market Retailers. According to the Retail Pitch Calendar, you would do so starting October & November to potentially earn a spot on their shelves by spring. This is logically an ideal season to

launch since spring is naturally when the weather begins to warm and the population is inclined to steadily show more skin. Plus, Buyers want to capitalize on being able to actively sell your product from spring to beginning of fall rather than just within the summer months.

Here's another example. Let's say you plan to add a sunscreen to your skin care line. To get it in stores by prime sunscreen season (summer) you would actively have to start reaching out to Multi-door Mass Market Retail Buyers as early as January! Yep. Remember, this type of retailer works several months

ahead. This is why larger, successful brands develop products and collections way ahead of the season - to approach retailers at the RIGHT time. Now for the same sunscreen product, you would go after Independent Retailers as early as April. Because Independent Retailers are a significantly smaller operation than Multi-door Mass Market Retailers and Grocery Stores, they can make buying decisions much closer to the actual season they are needed.

Keep a printed copy of the Retail Pitch Calendar visibly on your desk or workspace wall. It will give you key

information that only market insiders, sales reps, distributors and super successful brands know. WHEN and WHAT to pitch. Now, you do too!

Holiday/Winter Product Considerations

The most significant types of products that retailers tend to review for the upcoming Holiday/Winter season are giftables and impulse buys (small & low cost items). This, of course, coincides with the biggest shopping time of the year. Giftables and impulse buys are things like stocking stuffers, travel sizes, mini sizes, trial sizes, his & her sets,

boxed sets, gift sets, fragrance collections, products with holiday-inspired scents, holiday limited-editions, holiday-inspired color palettes and collections.

New Year/Spring Product Considerations

This is by far the best time to introduce your full product line to retailers and potentially earn a spot on their shelves starting in the New Year or spring. This tends to matter more to brands that fall within the skin care, body care, baby, shave, cosmetics, hair care, supplement, cleaning/home and personal care/hygiene categories. Going into this specific

consideration period, most retailers have reviewed the performance of their existing product lines. They've already decided which ones they'll remove and how much space they have for completely new brands. That new brand could be yours! This is also a good time to launch & present new products in your line that address age prevention, renewal, and strengthening.

Summer Product Considerations

Skin is in and so is enhancing it as well as protecting it. This is the perfect time to pitch new products or collections that address things like sun and environment protection, glow-boosting, toning, freshening & oil absorbing, color correction and detoxing. Sunscreen, first aid, skin soothers, tanning, bug repellents, bright color palettes, tropical-inspired collections and summer limited-editions are also on a Buyer's scout list.

Fall Product Considerations

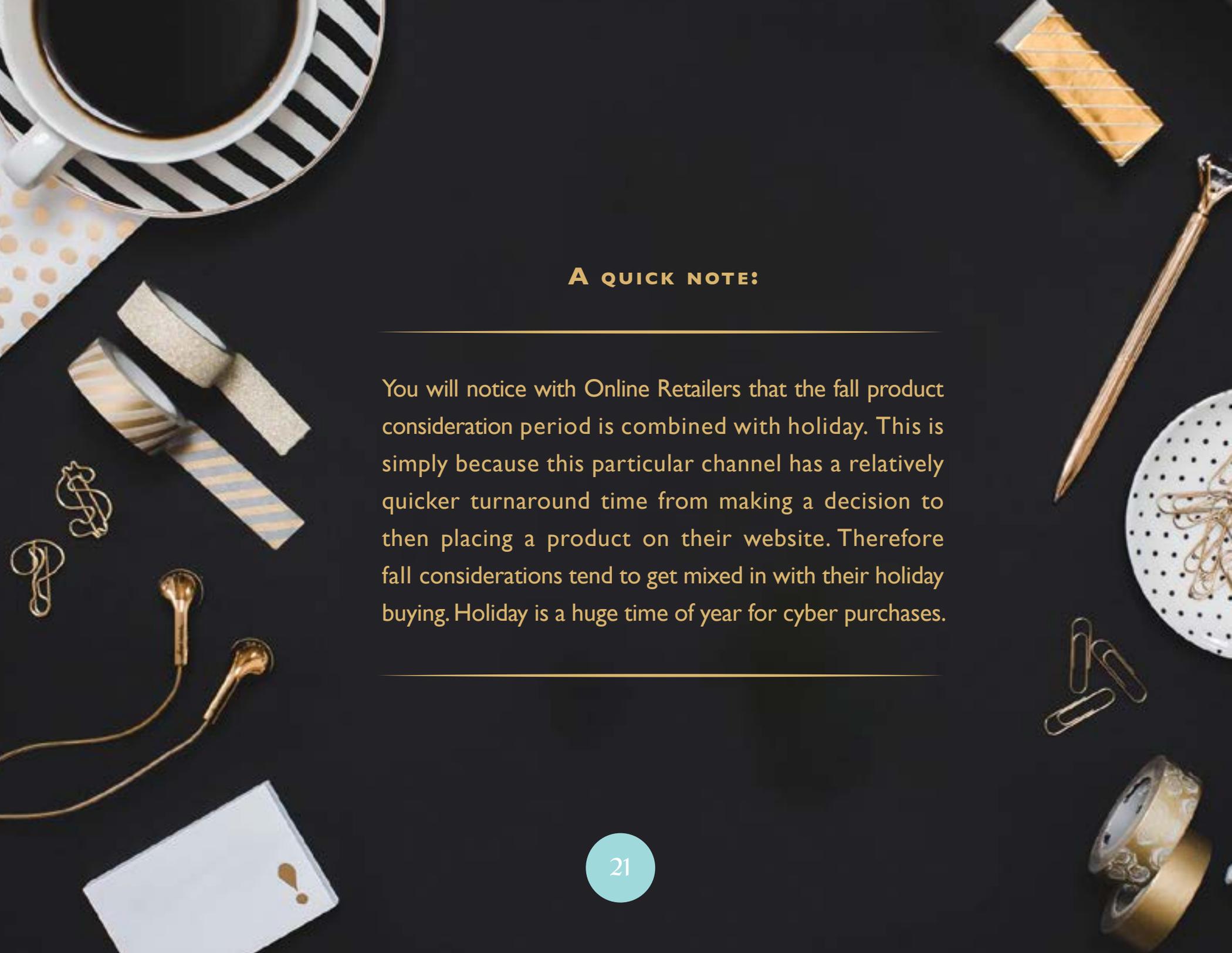
Fall is by far the shortest product consideration window. This is simply because Buyers tend to reserve most of their end of year budgets for heavy Holiday purchasing. When pitching for fall, you are more likely to grab the attention of a buyer if you present products that have restorative or moisture enhancing benefits. The coziness of fall naturally leads shoppers to desire comforting seasonal scents, aromatherapy, candles, and darker color collections. Planning on creating a product that benefits Breast Cancer Awareness? This is also the time to pitch it to Retail Buyers.

RETAIL PITCH CALENDAR

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
Multi-door Mass Market Retailers - includes Luxury Multi-door	SUMMER				FALL		HOLIDAY			NEW YEAR/ SPRING		
Retailers on the scale of Target, Walmart, Walgreen's, Nordstrom, Saks Fifth Avenue, Sephora etc	Sunscreens, first aid, detox collections, tanning, skin soothers, toning/ enhancing body care, color correction, glow boosting, bug repellent, freshening, oil absorbing, bright color collections, Tropical inspired collections, hair care*.				Restorative/ moisture rich launches, aromatherapy, seasonal scent, dark color palettes or collections		Travel sizes, gift sets, sampler packs, his & her sets, stocking stuffers, impulse (lower ticket cost)			Body care FULL LINE, baby FULL LINE, skin care FULL LINE, anti-aging collections, personal care/hygiene FULL LINE, cosmetics FULL LINE, hair care * FULL LINE, Cleaning/Home FULL LINE, Supplements FULL LINE.		
Multi-door Natural Grocery		SUMMER			FALL		HOLIDAY			NEW YEAR/ SPRING		
Retailers on the scale of Whole Foods, Sprouts, Lucky's Market, Vitamin Cottage NG, etc		Sunscreens, first aid, detox collections, tanning, skin soothers, toning/ enhancing body care, color correction, glow boosting, bug repellent, freshening, oil absorbing, bright color collections, Tropical inspired collections, hair care*.			Restorative/ moisture rich launches, aromatherapy, seasonal scent, dark color palettes or collections		Travel sizes, gift sets, sampler packs, his & her sets, stocking stuffers, impulse (lower ticket cost)			Body care FULL LINE, baby FULL LINE, skin care FULL LINE, anti-aging collections, personal care/hygiene FULL LINE, cosmetics FULL LINE, hair care * FULL LINE, Cleaning/Home FULL LINE, Supplements FULL LINE.		
Independent Retailers				SUMMER			FALL		HOLIDAY			NEW YEAR/ SPRING
Brick & Mortar "Mom & Pop" (can also include single location food co-ops)				Sunscreens, first aid, detox collections, tanning, skin soothers, toning/ enhancing body care, color correction, glow boosting, bug repellent, freshening, oil absorbing, bright color collections, Tropical inspired collections, hair care*.			Restorative/ moisture rich launches, aromatherapy, seasonal scent, dark color palettes or collections		Travel sizes, gift sets, sampler packs, his & her sets, stocking stuffers, impulse (lower ticket cost)			Body care FULL LINE, baby FULL LINE, skin care FULL LINE, anti-aging collections, personal care/hygiene FULL LINE, cosmetics FULL LINE, hair care * FULL LINE, Cleaning/Home FULL LINE, Supplements FULL LINE.
Online Retailers				SUMMER			FALL/HOLIDAY					NEW YEAR/ SPRING
Retailers on the scale of Dermstore.com, Skincare.com, Beautybar.com (Quidsi), etc				Sunscreens, first aid, detox collections, tanning, skin soothers, toning/ enhancing body care, color correction, glow boosting, bug repellent, freshening, oil absorbing, bright color collections, Tropical inspired collections, hair care*.			Restorative/moisture rich launches, aromatherapy, seasonal scents, dark color palettes or collections. Travel sizes, boxed gift sets, sampler packs, his & her sets, stocking stuffers, impulse buys (lower ticket cost), Holiday themed collections & scents					Body care FULL LINE, baby FULL LINE, skin care FULL LINE, anti-aging collections, personal care/hygiene FULL LINE, cosmetics FULL LINE, hair care * FULL LINE, Cleaning/Home FULL LINE, Supplements FULL LINE.

*Hair care can be a spring or summer consideration. When depends on the individual retailer and their own category review schedule.

Please note: This is generally the consideration schedule that retail tends to follow, however some specific retailers may operate on their own individualized schedules.



A QUICK NOTE:

You will notice with Online Retailers that the fall product consideration period is combined with holiday. This is simply because this particular channel has a relatively quicker turnaround time from making a decision to then placing a product on their website. Therefore fall considerations tend to get mixed in with their holiday buying. Holiday is a huge time of year for cyber purchases.

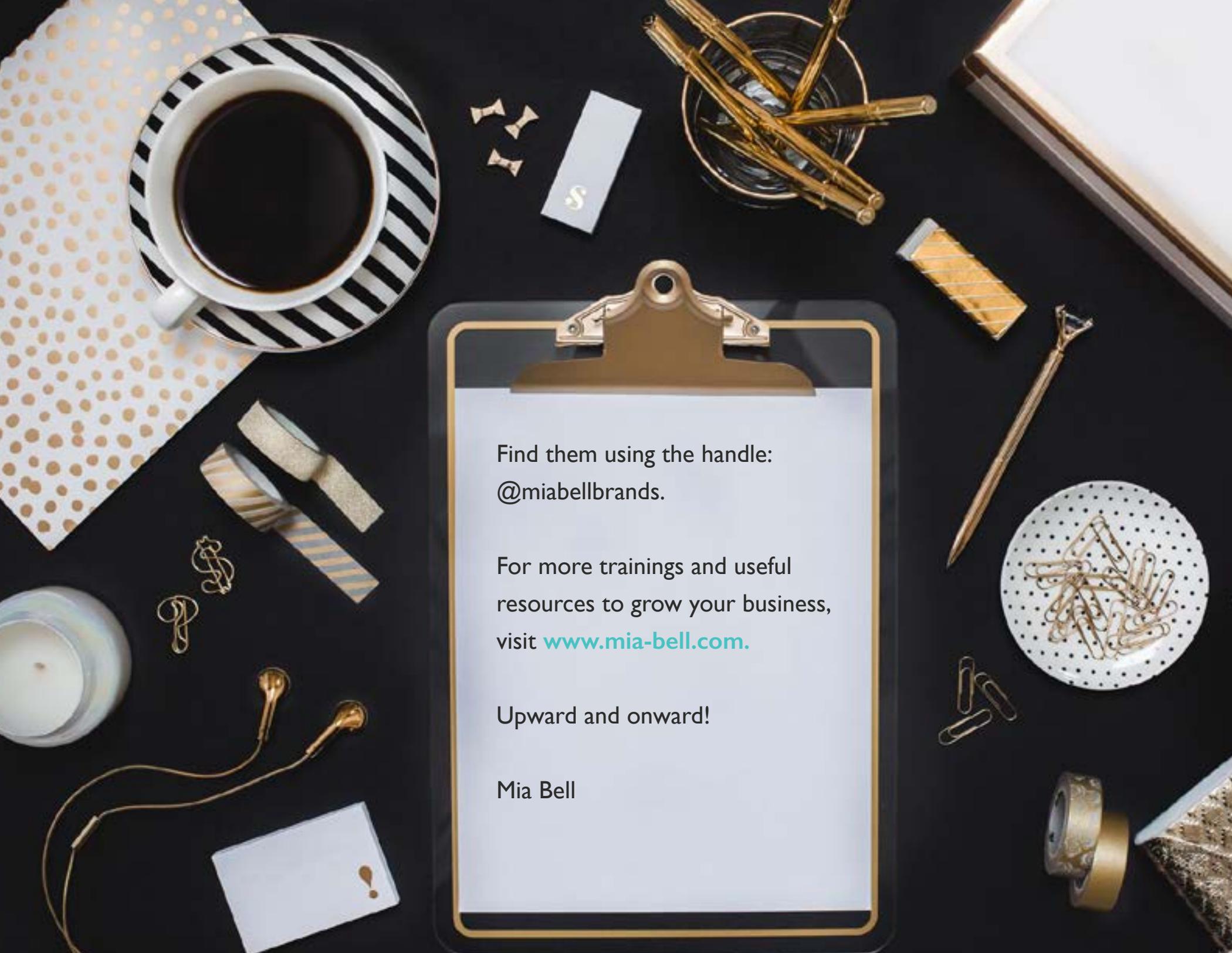
In Summary

Pitching your product to your dream retailers doesn't have to be scary.

What many resilient brand founders, top salespeople, and successful companies have discovered is that behind rejection there are several manageable factors. One of the most significant is timing. It's never personal. Improve your timing and it can surely increase your odds of catching the interest of a Retail Buyer. Imagine contacting your dream retailers at the *exact* moment that they are actively looking for the type of products that YOU offer. Imagine their delight over

the possibility that your line may meet their needs. How amazing would that feel? What could that do for your business? You are 100% dedicated to making your dreams happen. And I am so excited that the Retail Pitch Calendar will be a part of your winning strategy!

I hope that this resource serves you in many ways. As you work with it and take action, please let me know how it's going! Share your wins, comments and feedback on our [Facebook page](#) or [Instagram profile](#).



Find them using the handle:
@miabellbrands.

For more trainings and useful
resources to grow your business,
visit www.mia-bell.com.

Upward and onward!

Mia Bell

About

Mia Bell is the CEO & Founder of MIA BELL BRANDS, a leading national sales representation and business development firm for brilliant natural beauty & eco lifestyle brands. A beauty product lover since grade school, Mia was shocked to learn about the use of questionable, toxic ingredients by some of her favorite brands. She also saw first-hand, how difficult it was for budding, independent entrepreneurs to find the right distribution and retail opportunities to grow their business. Armed with her 10+ year background

in sales and experiential marketing, she joined the growing indie maker movement. Today, Mia and her team help get more healthy brands onto store shelves and teach conscious companies how to thrive in the marketplace.

Learn more at www.mia-bell.com
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