



## USA DIRECT

# Shop the World, Ship to Home

When local mum TERRIE FUNG wanted a Thomas Bed for her son, she discovered a whole new world of online retail. The Founder & CEO of USA DIRECT shares a discovery that could change the future of on-line shopping for the better.

“As a mother of three, my whole life is devoted to my kids. Three years back, (when my eldest son was 2), I wanted to get him a nice new bed. I saw a Thomas Bed (exactly a Thomas Train cartoon style) from Little Tikes, that was priced at over \$10,000, but I soon found that it was actually selling for US\$299 in America.

“I began to look for ways to have it sent to Hong Kong, and finally spent a total of \$6,000 to get it to my home. After that, I began shopping overseas online mostly for kids’ clothing and shoes, but shipping fees are quite high, usually because most shipments use Fedex, UPS or DHL taking the costs up to nearly double the purchase price.”

### Following the Dream

“So I began buying extra items and selling them in order to share the shipping cost, but it was quite hard to make the right guess for colours and sizes, as customers keep asking if other sizes or colours were available.

I then tried to set up a Facebook page featuring a US mailing address and was able to collect packages booked online. In under 2 hours, the first customer called, and in one week I had more than 300 packages. That’s how I started my package-forwarding businesses.

“Today, we provide overseas warehouse addresses as service points accepting online shopping packages, then send them back to Hong Kong, Macau and China in pallets, once or twice a week. By using pallets all packages share the delivery cost, making the solution even cheaper than that offered by the post office. And because of this business, consumers can easily purchase overseas products from Hong Kong, with low



**Terrie Fung: “The wind beneath my wings is the happiness I bring to my customers and I think that is what a good business should be all about.”**

local shopping price, enjoy local discounts and local free shipping.”

### Market Response

“Many local customers start to shop online through Taobao.com (China), but quality is an issue. Over the past 3 years we have advertised through Facebook, educated the market to shop overseas for quality and cheaper items, so they’ve begun using our forwarding service to avail of the convenience and lower delivery costs. We started from service from USA to Hong Kong, and now, we are servicing packages from seven countries with more than 10 warehouses service points, including UK, Australia, Germany, Taiwan, Japan, Korea. We have developed our own logistics system, APP, showroom, etc. having roughly 70,000 members, with packages going through our warehouse roughly cost \$30,000,000 per month. And our HK warehouse size has grown from 1000ft to 6000ft.

“We are in the midst of obtaining recognition from global certification bodies to prove our best-business-practices. China import Tax policy is an important factor as we begin to enter the China market. As the import tax slowly becomes clearer, we are making inroads into China slowly but surely. We will set up a few more service points, begin to enter the Taiwan and Singapore market and develop our O2O platform.”

“In this business, you have to love people. You must be willing to spend time to search for cheaper, valuable, special and new products overseas. I enjoy seeing the happy smiles my service creates and its fun to talk about the deals we managed to get. My ultimate goal is to educate the market for ‘Smart Shopping’ and saving money, better living. That’s why our company slogan is ‘Shop the World, Ship to Home’.”

### My Joy in Life

“Before having any system or staff, for almost a year I worked all by myself, pulling pallets through the streets to my warehouse, picking and packing each package one by one, and e-mailing my clients one by one, which often took me overnight more than once or twice per week. These moments have become part of my success stories, that some of my fans on Facebook would love to follow and know more about.”

“Trust is another important factor that has to be built up between consumers and myself because my customers send iPhones, diamonds, and luxury handbags through my warehouses. I also enjoy finding products made in their country of origin because they are cheaper than retail and authentic. This works well for my customers and gains referral business for me. The wind beneath my wings is the happiness I bring to my customers and I think that is what a good business should be all about,” concludes Fung. ■



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