Ukrainian brands align with evolving priorities of U.S. buyers


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By Anastasiia Burzi

TradewithUA Alliance, a nonprofit supporting Ukrainian design exports, presented eight export-ready Ukrainian home and lifestyle brands at Shoppe Object in New York last month, aligning with a decisive shift in U.S. retail sourcing. Buyers are prioritizing margin predictability, tariff efficiency and replenishable product systems over short-term trend cycles.

According to TradewithUA's on-site buyer engagement and founder interviews, U.S. retailers are increasingly evaluating suppliers based on landed cost stability, tariff exposure and repeat-purchase potential, reflecting mounting pressure from import duties, freight volatility and inventory risk.

Tariff differential is reshaping supplier decisions

Ukrainian-manufactured home and gift products currently enter the U.S. market with approximately 10% import duty, compared to 10-25% or higher tariffs applied to finished goods from major Asian and European manufacturing hubs, depending on classification. This tariff differential enables retailers to achieve greater landed cost predictability, stronger gross margin protection and reduced pricing volatility across seasons. For U.S. retailers operating on increasingly narrow margins, tariff exposure has become a primary supplier selection criterion, alongside design and brand positioning.

Replenishable product systems support higher lifetime value

Buyers demonstrated particularly strong interest in products designed around refill and repeat-purchase models, which increase customer lifetime value and reduce reliance on constant new product development.Wood Mood's refillable candle system exemplifies this shift. A permanent handcrafted wooden vessel is paired with replaceable scent inserts, transforming a one-time décor purchase into a replenishable category with recurring revenue potential. This modular product architecture aligns with core retail priorities – higher inventory efficiency, predictable replenishment cycles, lower markdown risk and sustainability alignment.



Wood Mood's refillable candle system transforms a one-time décor purchase into a replenishable category with recurring revenue potential. Photo courtesy of TradeWithUA

Retail buyers prioritize commercial reliability over short-term trends

Retailers at Shoppe Object increasingly emphasized long-term commercial viability over trend-driven novelty. TradewithUA brands drew attention for combining scalable production, stable wholesale logistics, authentic material sourcing and repeat-purchase product architecture. This approach supports retailers navigating volatile sourcing environments, where operational predictability has become as important as aesthetic differentiation. Here is a recent example that underscores this shift. A buyer from the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA) Museum Store placed an order with Woolberry after initially discovering the brand two years earlier at Shoppe Object, illustrating how sustained presence and reliability translate into long-term commercial partnerships.

Export-ready Ukrainian brands

The TradewithUA collective presented eight brands across home, gift, lifestyle and children's categories: Anzy Home (hand-knitted home décor made from natural and recycled cotton), Babai (modern wooden toys and children's furniture), :dodomoom (modern wooden and leather décor and accessories), Edere Editions (cotton throws inspired by the look of chunky hand knitting), Fire Rabbit (bold and colorful handmade candles), Wood Mood (refillable candles in handcrafted wooden vessels), Woolberry (accessories made from merino wool felt) and YaKUSH (hand-blown glass with a contemporary edge). These brands demonstrated strong alignment with the evolving priorities of U.S. buyers seeking commercially reliable, tariff-efficient and replenishment-friendly suppliers.

Strategic shift in global home sourcing

TradewithUA's fourth consecutive participation at Shoppe Object reflects a broader structural shift in global sourcing strategy: retailers are moving toward suppliers that offer not only distinctive design, but also operational resilience, margin protection and long-term supply consistency.

As retailers navigate continued tariff pressure, freight instability and cost sensitivity, sourcing decisions are increasingly shaped by predictability, repeatability and financial sustainability.

Anastasiia Burzi is chairman of the board of the TradewithUA Alliance, a curated alliance supporting export-ready Ukrainian design brands entering international retail markets.