E B O O K

FROM SELLING TO OPERATING.

The integral operating model to scale with control and profitability on Amazon, Mercado Libre and Walmart.

STRATEGY · SOLUTION · DATA · AI · COMMERCE

INTRODUCTION

SELLING IS NOT THE SAME AS OPERATING.

Opening an account, publishing a catalog and activating advertising campaigns does not mean a company has a true marketplace operation. **Selling can be relatively simple. Operating profitably, consistently and at scale is far more complex.**

As a channel grows, it starts to demand the coordination of multiple capabilities:

COMMERCIAL
Defines assortment, pricing and promotions.

MARKETING
Content, campaigns, positioning and traffic.

SUPPLY CHAIN
Guarantees inventory and fulfillment.

FINANCE
Understands costs, commissions and profitability.

CUSTOMER SERVICE
Resolves incidents.

TECHNOLOGY + LEADERSHIP
Connects information and provides visibility to decide.

When these areas work in isolation, friction points appear: the catalog updates late, prices don't match, promotions launch without enough inventory, campaigns drive traffic to unavailable products, and reports arrive after the opportunity has passed. Teams spend hours consolidating information, but little time interpreting what they should do.

> **THE RESULT IS A REACTIVE OPERATION. AND A REACTIVE OPERATION CAN HARDLY SCALE.**

The goal of this ebook is to help you move from a *channel administration* mindset to an **integral operating model**. It is not only about selling more: it is about building the capabilities needed to sell better, with greater control and profitability.

That model rests on four elements. **Processes** that are defined, with explicit steps and criteria. **Responsibilities** that are assigned, so every decision has an owner. **Data** that is connected, so the discussion is about what to do — not about which number is correct. And **routines**, which turn monitoring into a habit instead of a reaction.

The following chapters walk that path: first the marketplace understood as an ecosystem, then the most common friction points, the design of the operating foundation and daily operations, the differences between Amazon, Mercado Libre and Walmart, and finally content, retail media, reporting and the maturity model that enables scale.

CHAPTER 01

THE MARKETPLACE AS A CONNECTED ECOSYSTEM.

One of the most frequent mistakes is treating each marketplace as if it were only a sales channel. In reality, it is an ecosystem where multiple variables interact:

1.1 CATALOG	1.2 INVENTORY	1.3 PRICING	1.4 CONTENT	1.5 RETAIL MEDIA

1.1 CATALOG

The catalog is the foundation on which the entire operation is built: identifiers, variants, categories, attributes, titles, descriptions, images, videos, enriched content, logistics information, dimensions, weight, restrictions, documentation, claims and regulatory information.

- An error in one attribute can block publication.
- An inconsistency in a variant can fragment the product page.
- An incorrect category can reduce visibility.
- An unauthorized image can trigger a suspension.

That is why the catalog should not be managed as a one-off task: it needs processes of **maintenance, validation and continuous improvement**.

In mature operations, the catalog has a written standard: which fields are mandatory, what format each one takes, who approves them and how often they are audited. That standard is what allows scaling from one hundred to ten thousand listings without multiplying the team.

1.2 INVENTORY

Availability directly influences sales, ranking, campaigns and customer experience. An out-of-stock product doesn't just stop selling: it can also lose ranking, relevance and advertising efficiency.

THE OPERATION NEEDS TO ANSWER

- What inventory is available per channel?
- Which products are overstocked?
- What inventory is committed or in transit?
- Which products are at risk of stockout?
- Which promotions could cause a stockout?
- Which products receive ad spend without stock?

1.3 PRICING

Marketplace pricing is dynamic: it varies with competition, promotions, logistics costs, commissions, margin targets, seasonality, availability, commercial rules, positioning, events and buy box strategies.

A brand needs to define **who decides the price, who loads it, who validates it and who monitors its results**. When ownership is unclear, errors multiply.

Price is also not an isolated decision: it affects buy box position, advertising efficiency, inventory rotation and brand perception in the direct channel. Changing it without weighing those consequences usually improves one indicator while damaging three others.

1.4 CONTENT

Content serves two functions: it helps the algorithm understand the product and it helps the consumer decide. Effective content balances relevance, clarity, differentiation, persuasion, brand consistency, channel requirements, keywords, functional information and objection handling.

1.5 RETAIL MEDIA

Advertising does not work in isolation. Its performance depends on content quality, price, reviews, availability, delivery speed, conversion, product competitiveness, catalog quality and profitability.

> **Increasing budget without fixing these elements can grow sales and, at the same time, erode margin.**

CHAPTER 02

THE MAIN FRICTION POINTS.

2.1 FRAGMENTED INFORMATION

ERP	MARKETPLACE	SPREADSHEETS	ADS PLATFORM	LOGISTICS REPORTS

= EVERY TEAM BUILDS ITS OWN VERSION OF REALITY

When data is not connected, meetings are used to argue about *which number is correct* instead of deciding *what to do*.

2.2 MANUAL PROCESSES

Manual processes are useful at the start. The problem appears when volume grows and the structure keeps operating the same way: copying orders, updating prices product by product, checking inventory manually, downloading reports, consolidating files, updating dashboards, answering the same questions over and over. These tasks **consume capacity and increase the chance of error**.

A useful exercise: measure how many hours per week the team spends on tasks that require no judgment. That number is usually higher than expected — and it is the best automation priority list an operation can have.

2.3 LACK OF OWNERSHIP

A problem without an owner becomes a recurring problem. Every critical process needs a responsible person: product onboarding, content, inventory, pricing, promotions, advertising, incidents, returns, reporting, profitability and the marketplace relationship.

The owner does not need to execute everything, but must **guarantee the process works**.

2.4 REACTIVE MANAGEMENT

REACTIVE OPERATION	MATURE OPERATION
Detects the stockout when the product is already unavailable. Discovers a pricing error through a complaint. Notices a conversion drop at month close.	Monitors coverage and sales velocity. Validates changes and flags pricing anomalies. Analyzes conversion variations daily.

2.5 NO VIEW OF PROFITABILITY

Sales is not the same as profitability. The calculation must consider: selling price, discounts, commissions, fulfillment, storage, advertising, returns, penalties, preparation, integration, operating costs and applicable taxes.

> **A PRODUCT CAN GROW REVENUE AND DESTROY MARGIN.**

CHAPTER 03

DESIGN THE OPERATING FOUNDATION.

3.1 DEFINE THE ROLE OF EACH CHANNEL

Amazon, Mercado Libre and Walmart do not necessarily have to serve the same function. A channel can be used to drive volume, capture new consumers, expand geographic coverage, introduce products, liquidate inventory, develop categories, protect brand presence or complement the direct channel.

Defining the role prevents isolated decisions.

3.2 BUILD A RESPONSIBILITY MATRIX

FOR EVERY PROCESS	EXAMPLE
Who decides	Commercial defines the pricing rule
Who executes	Operations loads the change
Who validates	Finance verifies the margin
Who must be informed	Marketing adjusts campaigns
What SLA must be met	Changes reflected in < 24 h
Which system holds the information	ERP / PIM / platform
Which indicator measures the result	% of correct published prices

3.3 STANDARDIZE PRODUCT ONBOARDING

- 01 Assortment selection
- 02 Commercial validation
- 03 Information gathering
- 04 Content preparation
- 05 Channel adaptation
- 06 Upload & validation
- 07 Publication
- 08 Indexing review
- 09 Performance tracking

3.4 DEFINE EXCEPTION RULES

Not every product requires the same level of attention. Segment the catalog by sales, margin, traffic, potential, seasonality, strategic priority, inventory risk and advertising investment.

Priority products need a higher monitoring frequency.

CHAPTER 04

OPERATING WITHOUT FRICTION.

4.1 INTEGRATE INVENTORY AND ORDERS

Integration reduces out-of-stock sales, cancellations, capture errors, duplicated tasks, delays, loss of traceability and missed commitments. Not every operation needs the same architecture: the solution may involve ERP, OMS, WMS, PIM, middleware, APIs, integrators, specialized platforms or custom development.

> **TECHNOLOGY MUST ANSWER TO THE OPERATING MODEL, NOT THE OTHER WAY AROUND.**

4.2 IMPLEMENT ALERTS

Alerts should flag situations that require action:

- Out-of-stock products
- Coverage below target
- Sales drop
- Conversion drop
- Rising cancellations
- Buy box loss
- Price variations
- Unprofitable campaigns
- Rejected products
- Incomplete content
- Delayed orders
- Rising returns

4.3 DESIGN AN OPERATING ROUTINE

DAILY

- Review availability
- Critical incidents
- Delayed orders
- Price changes
- Campaigns off-track
- Handle alerts

WEEKLY

- Sales and margin
- Inventory analysis
- Campaign optimization
- Content improvements
- Recurring incidents
- Promo plan update
- Define actions

MONTHLY

- Overall performance
- Profitability
- Category review
- Assortment adjustments
- Service levels
- Competition
- Prioritize automation

CHAPTER 05

AMAZON · MERCADO LIBRE · WALMART.

Each marketplace has its own rules of the game. The mistake would be to copy the exact model used in another channel without considering its particularities.

AMAZON

Demands rigorous operations across content, availability, reputation, fulfillment, pricing, buy box, retail media, policy compliance and reviews.

KEY: EXECUTION SPEED AND CATALOG QUALITY

MERCADO LIBRE

Combines marketplace, logistics ecosystem, advertising, reputation, payments, promotions and delivery experience. Coordinate catalog, stock, Mercado Envíos, service and Mercado Ads.

KEY: SELLER REPUTATION AND LOGISTICS SPEED

WALMART

Particularities vary by country and commercial model: onboarding requirements, integrations, catalog, inventory, fulfillment, commercial terms, promotions, advertising and service indicators.

KEY: UNDERSTAND EACH COUNTRY'S MODEL

CHAPTER 06

CONTENT THAT CONVERTS.

Good content must answer five questions:

01 What is the product?

02 Who is it for?

03 What problem does it solve?

04 Why should they choose it?

05 What do they need to know before buying?

TITLE

Clear, relevant, consistent, descriptive and adapted to the channel's rules.

BULLET POINTS

Communicate concrete benefits — not just a list of specifications.

IMAGES

An effective sequence: main image → key benefit → differentiator → product in use → dimensions → comparison → extra information → brand content.

ENHANCED CONTENT

Explains, differentiates, resolves objections, builds trust, presents the portfolio and enables cross-selling.

CHAPTER 07

RETAIL MEDIA CONNECTED TO THE BUSINESS.

Advertising needs to work alongside commercial and operational variables. **Before increasing spend**, review: availability, price, content quality, conversion, reviews, margin, competition, inventory coverage and promotions.

CAMPAIGN STRUCTURE

The structure should distinguish brand, category, product, objective, audience, campaign type, funnel stage and profitability.

RELEVANT METRICS

Don't use a single metric for every decision:

IMPRESSIONS	CLICKS	CTR	CPC
CONVERSION	ATTRIBUTED SALES	ROAS	ACOS
TACOS	NEW-TO-BRAND BUYERS	AD SHARE	MARGIN AFTER ADS

CHAPTER 08

ACTIONABLE REPORTING.

A useful dashboard doesn't contain all the available data: it contains the information needed to decide. **Every indicator should connect to a possible action.**

EXECUTIVE LEVEL

Sales · growth · margin · share by channel · investment · profitability · main risks and opportunities.

COMMERCIAL LEVEL

Sales by product · price · promotions · conversion · category share · competition.

OPERATIONAL LEVEL

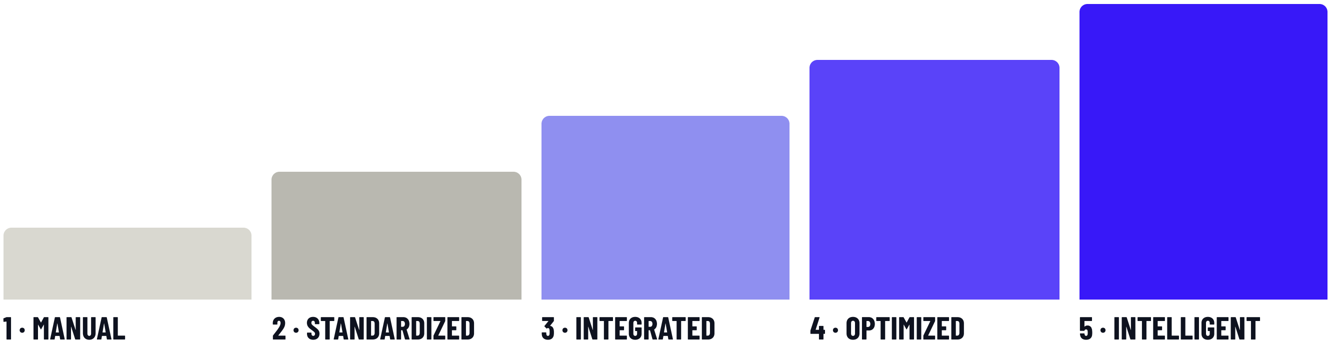
Inventory · coverage · cancellations · fill rate · returns · SLA · incidents.

ADVERTISING LEVEL

Investment · ROAS · ACOS · TACOS · attributed sales · campaigns · keywords · promoted products.

CHAPTER 09

OPERATIONAL MATURITY.



01 MANUAL OPERATION

Isolated processes · manual reports · dependence on people · low visibility · late reaction.

02 STANDARDIZED OPERATION

Documented processes · defined responsibilities · recurring routines · basic KPIs.

03 INTEGRATED OPERATION

Connected systems · automated reports · alerts · management by exception · fewer repetitive tasks.

04 OPTIMIZED OPERATION

Forecasts · advanced automation · granular profitability · fast decisions · continuous improvement.

05 INTELLIGENT OPERATION

Agents and copilots · automated recommendations · predictive actions · connected data · multichannel orchestration.

FINAL CHECKLIST

IS YOUR OPERATION READY TO SCALE?

- ✓ Every critical process has an owner.
- ✓ Inventory updates correctly.
- ✓ Prices have rules and validations.
- ✓ Advertising considers margin and availability.
- ✓ Alerts exist for the main risks.
- ✓ Commercial and operational data are connected.
- ✓ The catalog has defined standards.
- ✓ Orders are processed with traceability.
- ✓ Promotions are planned with inventory.
- ✓ Reporting is automated.
- ✓ Meetings end with actions and owners.
- ✓ The team spends more time optimizing than consolidating.

CONCLUSION

Friction doesn't appear only from a lack of technology. It appears when processes are unclear, data is fragmented and responsibilities are undefined.

THE BEST MARKETPLACE OPERATION IS NOT THE ONE THAT ADDS MORE TOOLS: IT IS THE ONE THAT BEST CONNECTS STRATEGY, PEOPLE, PROCESSES, TECHNOLOGY AND DATA.

When that happens, growth stops depending on extraordinary efforts and becomes **a repeatable capability**.

WWW.BALLOON-GROUP.COM · INFO@BALLOON-GROUP.COM