Online marketplaces have driven the development of e-commerce since its earliest days: offering platforms that create opportunities for sellers of all sizes to come together online, overcome barriers of trust and successfully complete business transactions. Today, they are among the most important actors in e-commerce and their economic impact and market strength have led to concerns that they may have become too powerful with implications for competing businesses, workers and the environment.

But, how can the benefits of marketplaces be more fairly shared?

Join the International Trade Centre this October for a two-day interactive event and immerse yourself in inspiring conversations about the growing role of marketplaces as hubs that drive global connection and growth. We will be leading conversations on how marketplaces can become more inclusive by fostering global connections, particularly in developing and least developed countries, through workshops, panel discussions and live interviews.

The event is organized by the ecomConnect Programme, which is the e-commerce initiative at the International Trade Centre - the joint agency of the United Nations and the World Trade Organisation.

Register here!

Visit our e-commerce community ecomConnect.org
Learn more about the ITC ecomConnect Programme
@ecomconnectnews
ecomconnect@intracen.org
Opening remarks

Pamela Coke-Hamilton, Executive Director, International Trade Centre

The hard talk debate: Are marketplaces a force for good?

Online marketplaces play a substantial role in including small and medium-sized enterprises in trade because they aggregate demand, provide safe payment solutions and facilitate logistics services. In 2020, the biggest online marketplaces have seen a sharp increase in searches, volume of transactions and sales revenues. But has this benefited SMEs or rather favoured larger firms and reduced competition? Should more effort and resources be invested to make marketplaces more accessible to small merchants?

This session will explore to what extent concerns about competition from e-commerce platforms are founded in reality – and how the platforms see their role in contributing to the success and resilience of small firms.

Lisa Ivers, Managing Director & Senior Partner, Morocco Boston Consulting Group
Diego Chacón, Director for Central America, Novica
Raúl Bustamante, Latin America Communications Manager, eBay
Speaker to be confirmed

Moderator: James Howe, Senior Adviser Marketing, Branding and E-commerce, ITC

The great reshuffle debate: global versus local marketplaces after COVID-19

Powerful marketplaces you might think of might not be the dominant shopping sites in many countries around the world. Local marketplace operators often win because they have a deeper understanding of local consumer habits and sustain close relationships with sellers. This session will discuss the current and future relevance of local and regional marketplaces in a globalised world, the barriers for the development of local marketplaces and their social and environmental impact in local economies.

François Martins, Government Relations Director, Mercado Libre
Kumar Rajneesh, Group Chief Corporate Affairs Officer, Flipkart
Speakers to be confirmed

Moderator: Judith Ueberschaer, Associate E-commerce Expert, ITC

Coffee & inspirational talk: How to use brand storytelling to boost awareness and drive more sales in marketplaces

by Monica Sharma-Patnekar, E-commerce business & brand strategist
ecomConnect Days
Thursday, October 7 2021

15:45  **E-commerce Lab: What to expect on social media marketplaces**  
by Barbara Rozgonyi, Founder of CoryWest Media

This interactive workshop will present the latest trends on social media, the "4DPR" framework to merge social media with marketplaces, best practices on Facebook Marketplace and Instagram Shopping and tips to drive traffic to Amazon, eBay and Etsy.

16:15  **Marketplaces within borders: An entrepreneur's take in local marketplaces**

Finding your own path can be often inspired by the online entrepreneurs who came before you. Do you want to learn how others got started, the lessons they learned or the strategies that drove them to success? Join our chat with an entrepreneur selling successfully on Jumia.

16:45  **Live erhu concert**  
by Vivian Yang Li

Join us in this live erhu concert, the Chinese two-string violin.

ecomConnect Days
Friday, October 8 2021

CET

13:00  **How ITC is helping e-commerce entrepreneurs succeed**

13:15  **The tech debate: How will technology shape the future of marketplaces?**

Technology has significantly reduced the cost of entry into international markets for small and medium-sized firms, which can now reach faraway consumers and create a global reputation as a seller at very low costs. Technologies, such as digital payment solutions, artificial intelligence, or multi-marketplace software integration provider are evolving pretty fast... but are they evolving towards a more inclusive future?

_Artem Sokol_, Head of Partnerships & Affiliates CEE Region, Payoneer  
_Michael Gramlich_, Freenlace data scientist  
Speakers to be confirmed

Moderator: Annabel Sykes, International E-commerce Expert, ITC

14:15  **Network & Connect**
14:30  E-commerce Lab: How to find business opportunities with the Africa Marketplace Explorer  
with Jesse Weltevreden, Professor of Digital Commerce, Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences  
This session will guide us through the new updates of ITC’s tool “Africa Marketplace Explorer”. The tool explores 630+ B2C marketplaces in 58 countries and territories in Africa, helping businesses find and connect to marketplaces in Africa, providing data to the research community and contributing substantially to related policy debates on e-commerce.

15:00  Coffee & inspirational talk: topic TBC

15:15  E-commerce Lab: How to set up your own marketplace  
with Sabrine Hamdenne, ITC National Coordinator for e-commerce projects in Tunisia  
and Mehtdi Nakouri, CEO and Co-Founder of FoundPad  
The purpose of this session is to help you get started with your journey and move forward to build an online marketplace. We will guide you through a structured process and provide you with some technical implementation solutions.

16:00  Marketplaces beyond borders: An entrepreneur’s take in global marketplaces  
Finding your own path can be often inspired by the online entrepreneurs who came before you. Do you want to learn how others got started, the lessons they learned or the strategies that drove them to success? Join our chat with an entrepreneur successfully selling on Alibaba.

16:30  Intuitive leadership talk & meditation  
with Jennifer Jane Young, Intuitive Business Advisor & Coach  
The best leaders in the world are those who trust their intuition. Entrepreneurship is far from being a straight path forward and being able to trust our gut instinct and follow our creative flow is a key factor in navigating the business journey to experience success and make an impact! In this session, we will explore what Intuitive Leadership is to guide you towards your next best step.