# Companies encourage early buying ahead of US tariff hikes



As the US braces for an escalation in trade tariffs under the Trump administration, a rising number of companies are encouraging consumers to make purchases before anticipated price hikes take effect. Tesla, Nissan, and a diverse range of product manufacturers, from children’s lunch boxes to luxury mattress sellers, are deploying marketing strategies that emphasise urgency driven by tariff concerns.

On Tesla’s Canadian website, a prominent yellow banner urges buyers to “Explore pre-tariff priced inventory while supplies last,” signalling a push to clear stocks ahead of price increases. Similarly, Parisian clothing brand Sézane has communicated to its US customers that some items may soon be unavailable due to tariffs, advising shoppers through an email message: “If any of these are still on your mind, we recommend placing your order soon to avoid missing out.”

This surge in tariff-driven marketing comes amid wider economic anxieties, as Trump’s trade war has unsettled global stock markets and sparked fears of inflation and potential recession within the US economy. However, some companies have turned these conditions into commercial opportunities, leveraging consumer worries to boost sales.

Adam Alter, a marketing professor at New York University’s Stern School of Business, describes these tactics as “a simple scarcity play, and it is the oldest trick in the book.” Speaking to the Financial Times, he explained, “The difference here, I think, is that scarcity often plays on softer human traits, the desire not to miss out on something other people might have. Whereas in this case the appeal rests on a very real, rational, and borderline certain concern: that prices will rise dramatically and very soon.”

Examples of promotional strategies include Omie, a California brand offering bento-style children’s lunch boxes. The company alerted customers that import cost increases from China would soon push prices higher but offered a temporary discount code, ‘BeforeTariffs,’ valid for one week. Nissan’s luxury brand Infiniti also used tariff-related messaging in its US promotions: “Invest in an Infiniti without new tariffs during the Once in a Springtime Event,” reads its website.

Luxury automaker Mercedes-Benz, specifically its Calabasas dealership in Los Angeles, displayed a banner proclaiming “No Added Tariffs. 100% Tariff Free,” with the company committing to absorb tariff costs on its 2025 model cars. Likewise, Saatva, a high-end mattress retailer, encouraged visitors not to delay purchases with the message: “Don’t wait: Beat tariff increases.”

Retail data suggests these tariff concerns have influenced consumer behaviour, possibly contributing to an uptick in US retail sales in March. Industry analyst Brian Wieser, former WPP executive, noted, “It’s probably very effective messaging. It’s probably behind some of the reported growth in retail sales that we saw in March. Those numbers were higher than you would have otherwise expected.”

Not all retailers have adopted the strategy of urging early buying; some, such as the Chinese e-commerce giant Temu, have opted instead to pass tariff costs directly to customers by adding charges at checkout.

The issue of tariff-related pricing transparency became a political flashpoint when a report claimed that Amazon planned to show the impact of tariffs on product prices on its website. White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt criticised this as a “hostile and political act.” Following a discussion between former President Trump and Amazon founder Jeff Bezos, Amazon retracted the proposal. Trump commented on the resolution: “Jeff Bezos was very nice. He solved the problem very quickly.”

These developments highlight the intersection of government trade policy, corporate marketing strategies, and consumer purchasing patterns as the US navigates the ongoing trade tensions. The Financial Times is reporting on these evolving dynamics.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.ft.com/content/fdaafc6d-1709-4483-aafe-f5c6fb99926d> - This article discusses how companies like Tesla, Nissan, and others are urging consumers to make purchases before anticipated price hikes due to tariffs, including Tesla's Canadian website banner promoting pre-tariff priced inventory.
* <https://www.ft.com/content/fdaafc6d-1709-4483-aafe-f5c6fb99926d> - The article mentions Parisian clothing brand Sézane advising US customers to place orders soon to avoid missing out due to potential tariff impacts.
* <https://www.ft.com/content/fdaafc6d-1709-4483-aafe-f5c6fb99926d> - Adam Alter, a marketing professor at NYU's Stern School of Business, describes these tactics as a 'simple scarcity play,' highlighting the rational appeal of avoiding price increases.
* <https://www.ft.com/content/fdaafc6d-1709-4483-aafe-f5c6fb99926d> - Omie, a California brand selling bento-style children's lunch boxes, informed customers of impending price increases due to higher import costs from China and offered a temporary discount code 'BeforeTariffs.'
* <https://www.ft.com/content/fdaafc6d-1709-4483-aafe-f5c6fb99926d> - Nissan's luxury brand Infiniti used tariff-related messaging in its US promotions, stating, 'Invest in an Infiniti without new tariffs during the Once in a Springtime Event.'
* <https://www.ft.com/content/fdaafc6d-1709-4483-aafe-f5c6fb99926d> - Mercedes-Benz's Calabasas dealership in Los Angeles displayed a banner proclaiming 'No Added Tariffs. 100% Tariff Free,' committing to absorb tariff costs on its 2025 model cars.
* <https://www.ft.com/content/fdaafc6d-1709-4483-aafe-f5c6fb99926d> - Please view link - unable to able to access data