

# Progress\_Meeting\_1\_Executive\_Summary

## Progress Meeting 1 - Executive Summary

### Best Way Amazon Launch Project

**Date:** January 7, 2026 **Duration:** ~2 hours **Attendees:** Greg Kowalczyk, Todd McDaniel, Douae Lahlou

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### Meeting Purpose

First working session to demonstrate Data Dive platform capabilities, establish product research methodology, and begin hands-on training for competitive analysis.

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### Key Outcomes

#### 1. Data Dive Platform Training Completed

- **Niche Pipeline:** Project organization system demonstrated
- **Rank Radar:** Keyword position tracking explained
- **Master Keyword List:** Creation process taught
- **Competitor Analysis:** “Dive” methodology demonstrated with examples
- **Credit Management:** 1,000 monthly dive limit explained (105 used so far)

#### 2. Keyword Strategy Foundation Established

**Critical Understanding:** Keywords are fundamental to entire Amazon ecosystem - Not just for PPC or listings - they are EVERYTHING - Search volume varies dramatically (Canada ~10% of US) - Position 1-3 on page one captures majority of sales - Strategic distribution: Title > Bullets > Description

### 3. Work Assignments Distributed

- **Douae:** Complete first independent dive this week, access Data Dive platform
- **Greg:** Continue diving on 15 priority items, provide recommendations
- **Todd:** Review shipping costs with Douae urgently

### 4. Project Dashboard Structure Introduced

- GitHub repository being set up for public access
  - Training materials, meeting notes, deliverables all organized
  - Easy URL access for all team members
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## Critical Issue Identified

### Shipping Cost and Profit Margin Problem

**Current Situation:** - 24-piece order: High landed cost per unit - Selling price: \$99 -  
**Profit margin: Only 10% - UNACCEPTABLE**

**Root Cause:** - Small batch size (24 units) inflates per-unit shipping cost - Calculation based on unrealistic order volume

**Solution:** - Full container load (~700 units): Cost drops to ~\$7.85/unit - **Almost 50% cost reduction with volume** - Product viability depends on larger orders

**Urgent Action Required:** - Douae and Todd must immediately review shipping costs - Recalculate margins based on full container scenarios - Validate which products achieve acceptable profitability at scale

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## Shipping and Freight Updates

### Canadian Import Requirements (KARM)

- **Best Way Limitation:** Cannot ship DDP (not KARM registered)
- **Alternative:** Quoting DAP - requires separate duty/customs payment
- **Team Status:** Todd and Douae properly set up with KARM

### Container Cost Increases

- **3 weeks ago:** \$5,000-\$5,500 for 40-foot container
  - **Current:** \$5,800 for 40-foot high cube
  - **Action:** Requested quotes for 20-foot and standard 40-foot containers
  - **Analysis needed:** Compare FCL vs. LCL costs
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# Wholesale Strategy Context

## Advantages Over Private Label

- **Lower MOQ:** Few hundred units vs. thousands
- **Easier Numbers:** Lower initial investment
- **Faster Entry:** No custom product development

## Critical Success Factor

- **Supply Chain Consistency:** Must maintain reliable replenishment
- Investment goes into listing optimization
- Cannot afford stockouts after building momentum
- Local sourcing vs. China imports affects speed

## Profitability Timeline Goals

- **Break-even:** Halfway through the year
  - **Profitable:** By year-end
  - **Risk:** Small orders (24 units) before profitability = failure
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## Data Dive Training Highlights

### Platform Capabilities Demonstrated

**1. Niche Pipeline** - Organize all products by stage (Research → Development → Design → Sourcing → Launch) - Todd (admin) can progress items through stages - Clear visibility of entire portfolio

**2. Rank Radar** - Daily keyword position tracking - Heat map visualization - Identifies which keywords need work - Shows organic ranking performance - Example: Best Way spa filter ranks #1 for brand terms, #74 for “hot tub filter”

**3. Master Keyword List Creation** Process demonstrated: 1. Start with hero product 2. Data Dive generates competitor list with fit scores 3. Manually select most relevant competitors 4. Execute dive (uses credits from monthly pool) 5. Analyze results for opportunities

**4. Competitor Analysis (“Dives”)** - Shows competitor strength (Very Strong → Weak) - Identifies keyword coverage gaps - Reveals ranking opportunities - Example: Trampoline niche has only 1 “Very Strong” competitor = opportunity

**5. The “Tray” Feature** - Temporary holding area for products - Build custom competitor sets - Useful when automatic detection limited - Compile from multiple keyword searches

## Understanding Dive Credits

- **Monthly Allocation:** 1,000 dives
- **Current Usage:** 105 of 1,000 used
- **Strategy:** Use thoughtfully - select 7-15 relevant competitors per dive
- **Don't waste:** On irrelevant or weak competitors

## Identifying Opportunities

**Blank Keyword Fields = Opportunities** - Product not indexing for that keyword - Means keyword missing or misplaced in listing - Opening for better-optimized new listings

**Competitor Weaknesses to Exploit:** - Poor images (inflatable chair example) - Inadequate descriptions - Wrong target audience - Limited keyword coverage - Blank indexing fields

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## Product Analysis Examples

### 1. Trampoline

- 18 competitors identified
- Only 1 “Very Strong” competitor
- **Assessment:** Room to enter market
- Multiple sellers competing for buy box

### 2. Best Way Spa Filter (Existing Listing)

- Strong ranking for branded keywords
- Weak ranking for main search terms (#74 for “hot tub filter”)
- Search volume: 529/month for “spa filter”
- Currently selling ~250 units/month in Canada
- Same item: ~1,200 units/month in US

### 3. Inflatable Chair (Opportunity Example)

- Currently unavailable on Amazon
  - Pre-existing listing with some reviews
  - **Major Issues:**
    - Poor images
    - Weak description
    - Limited keywords
    - Wrong audience (adult vs. kids)
  - **Opportunity:** Rebrand and create new niche
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# Amazon Canada vs. US Context

**Critical Differences:** - **Population:** 10x smaller - **Search Volume:** ~10% of US equivalent - **Sales Velocity:** Proportionally smaller - **Competition:** Generally less (not all US sellers in Canada) - **Example:** 250 units/month (CA) vs. 1,200 units/month (US) for same item

**Implication:** Lower absolute numbers but potentially better margins with less competition

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## Next Steps - Work Assignments

### Immediate Priority (This Week)

**Douae:** 1. **URGENT:** Discuss shipping costs with Todd - recalculate margins at volume  
2. Check email for Data Dive invitation and access platform  
3. Complete first independent product dive  
4. Document any blockers or questions  
5. Schedule time to review dive results with Greg

**Greg:** 1. Continue diving on 15 priority items  
2. Develop recommendations and proposals for each  
3. Send meeting recording and GitHub repository URL  
4. Add progress documents to shared drive  
5. Be available for Douae's questions

**Todd:** 1. **URGENT:** Review shipping costs with Douae  
2. Confirm container pricing options (20ft, 40ft, FCL, LCL)  
3. Validate margin calculations at full volume  
4. Monitor Data Dive pipeline as admin

### Near-Term (Next 1-2 Weeks)

**Team:** - Complete all 15 product dives - Hold team call to review findings collectively - Make go/no-go decisions based on data - Establish ongoing workflow and meeting cadence

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## Key Learnings and Insights

### 1. Keywords Are Everything

- Not separate from listings or PPC - they ARE the Amazon ecosystem
- Every search term is a keyword
- Distribution strategy critical (Title most important)
- Position 1-3 on page one captures most sales

### 2. Volume Dramatically Affects Viability

- Small batch costs (24 units) are misleading
- Full container (~700 units) cuts costs nearly 50%

- Cannot evaluate products based on small-batch costing
- Must calculate using realistic order volumes

### 3. Amazon Canada Different Beast

- 10x smaller market than US
- Less competition but also less traffic
- Same strategies apply but scale expectations
- Still viable market with right approach

### 4. Data Dive Dive Strategy

- Only 1,000 credits per month - use wisely
- 7-15 competitors ideal per dive
- Look for blank fields (opportunities)
- Competitor strength varies significantly
- Manual building sometimes necessary (Tray feature)

### 5. Opportunity Indicators

- Weak competitor listings
  - Poor images and descriptions
  - Blank keyword indexing
  - Limited review counts
  - Wrong audience targeting
  - Only 1-2 “Very Strong” competitors in niche
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## Questions Requiring Follow-Up

1. **Shipping:** Final container costs for 20ft, 40ft standard, 40ft high cube?
  2. **Costing:** Which products achieve acceptable margins (25%+) at full container volume?
  3. **Strategy:** Priority order for conducting remaining dives?
  4. **Workflow:** Frequency of progress review meetings?
  5. **Criteria:** Threshold for go/no-go product decisions?
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## Resources Provided

### Training Materials

- Data Dive essential articles
- Data Dive advanced articles
- Data Dive YouTube channel (task-driven 3-4 min videos)
- Project dashboard structure (GitHub repository coming)

## Tools Demonstrated

- Data Dive Niche Pipeline
  - Data Dive Rank Radar
  - Data Dive Master Keyword List builder
  - Data Dive Chrome extension
  - Keepa integration
  - Ref Seller integration
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## Critical Action - Don't Miss This

### URGENT: Shipping Cost Analysis

Douae and Todd must immediately: 1. Review current shipping cost assumptions 2. Calculate costs for full container loads (not 24-unit batches) 3. Recalculate profit margins based on realistic volumes 4. Identify which products achieve 25%+ margins at scale 5. Use accurate costing for all go/no-go decisions

**Why This Matters:** - Current 10% margin on small batch = business failure - ~50% cost reduction at volume = potential viability - Cannot make product decisions without accurate volume-based costing - Factory ordering decisions depend on correct financial analysis

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## Meeting Assessment

### What Went Well

- Comprehensive Data Dive training delivered
- Clear methodology established
- Work assignments distributed
- Support structure in place (Greg available for questions)
- Project organization framework introduced

### Challenges Identified

- Critical costing issue discovered (requires immediate attention)
- Learning curve for Data Dive platform
- Container costs rising (impacting margins)
- Time required to complete 15 product dives
- Todd departed early (missed some financial discussion)

### Process Improvements Needed

- Standardize volume assumptions for all costing (use full container)
- Establish clear criteria for go/no-go decisions
- Create checklist for dive process
- Define success metrics for product validation

- Formalize communication for blockers/questions
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## Next Meeting

**Timing:** TBD - After initial product dives completed

**Agenda:** - Review findings from all 15 product dives - Assess opportunities and recommendations - Make go/no-go decisions collectively - Prioritize products for listing optimization - Establish next phase timeline

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**Document Prepared By:** Greg Kowalczyk **Date:** January 7, 2026 **Distribution:** Todd McDaniel, Douae Lahlou

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## Quick Reference: Todd's Early Departure Context

Todd needed to prepare for another call and departed approximately 1 hour 18 minutes into the meeting (after Buy Box ownership discussion). Greg and Douae continued with:  
- Detailed keyword indexing explanation - Landed cost and margin analysis - Manual dive creation process - Next steps and assignments

**Follow-up Required:** Todd and Douae shipping cost discussion is critical priority.