QUICKSTART GUIDE

Promo Marketplace

Buyer Quickstart: Shopping, Quoting & Messaging | *Updated October 30, 2026*.

Key Concepts

The Promo Marketplace is a punchout site: you shop or request quotes here, then your selection returns to PantherExpress (PEX) as a requisition. Nothing is purchased until it goes through PEX. Choose one of two paths:

Path	Use it when	How it ends
Shop the catalog	You want a standard item (polos, mugs, buttons) at a listed price.	Return the cart to PEX.
Request a quote	You need custom products or apparel, or want competitive pricing.	Accept one supplier's quote; its line items return to PEX.

Four ideas drive everything else:

- **One supplier per cart.** PEX accepts products from only one supplier at a time.
- **MOQ (Minimum Order Quantity)** appears in product names and descriptions and is enforced when you add to cart.
- **Logos are pre-approved.** Pick standard logos (Pitt Script or Institutional Marks, including those with an RC or department name) from the built-in library. Custom artwork is reviewed by University Licensing and Brand Management before production.
- **Home page navigation.** The header links and four buttons (Shop by Categories, Shop by Suppliers, Shop all Products, Create a Quote Request) reach everything. My Bookmarks, My Quotes, Dashboard and FAQ/Info are also in the header.

Workflow 1: Shop the Catalog

1. **Choose how to browse.** *Shop by Categories* (use the alphabetical scroll on the left; categories with subcategories show a count and an arrow), *Shop by Suppliers* (one supplier's catalog only), or *Shop by Product* (all suppliers and categories in the left sidebar).
2. **Narrow the list.** Toggle thumbnail or list view (top right), search the page, sort by name or price, and filter by supplier.
3. **Open a product** by clicking its image. Check the description, supplier name and MOQ.
4. **Configure it.** Apparel: enter a quantity per size, then choose item color and logo. Non-apparel: choose the logo option. Logo color options (1 or 2 color) match the product color.
5. **Meet the MOQ.** For non-apparel items the MOQ is pre-filled in the quantity box; raise it as needed. For apparel, the MOQ is enforced after you enter size quantities, and a popup warns you if the total is too low.
   a) Want this item but with a lower quantity than the MOQ, custom artwork, or a department or RC logo that isn't in the dropdown yet? Click **Request a Quote** under the product instead of Add to Cart. The request goes to that supplier only, with the product details filled in. Quote pricing may differ from the storefront price due to lower quantity than MOQ and/or custom artwork. To compare several suppliers, see Workflow 2: Request a Quote.

6. **Click Add to Cart.** The shopping cart opens automatically.
7. **Return Cart -** Returns your cart to PEX where it is added to a requisition associated to the appropriate supplier.

Cart Rules: One Supplier at a Time

If you try to add an item from a second supplier than the one whose product(s) are currently in your cart, a popup will warn "Unable To Add Item To Cart. Only items from the same vendor may be added."

You then have three options:

1. **Return the current cart to PEX.** Click *Go to Cart* in the popup, then *Return Cart*.
2. **Save the cart for later.** In the cart, click *Save this Shopping Cart for Later*, give it a descriptive name (for example, "Homecoming 2026 - 4Imprint") and click *Save For Later*. Saved carts live under Dashboard > Shopping Carts, where you can reopen them, reuse them for repeat orders, or return them to PEX one at a time.
3. **Stay with the supplier already in your cart.** Open *Shop by Suppliers*, choose that supplier and keep shopping its catalog.

If you need items from several suppliers, build one cart per supplier, save each, then return them one after another.

Workflow 2: Request a Quote

Start from *Create a Quote Request* on the home page, *New Quote Request* on Dashboard > Quoting or Request a Quote on a product page (see Workflow 1, Step 5). You create one request and the system notifies every supplier you select. A request started from a product page goes to that supplier only.

Step A: Basics

1. **Shipping address.** Add one the first time; use *Change Address* later. Check *Save as Default* to reuse it.
2. **Quote Request Name.** Make it descriptive (for example, "T-Shirt with Pitt Script Logo for Recruiting Event"); this is the name you will see in your dashboard.
3. **Quote-By Date.** The cutoff for supplier responses. Required; a cutoff time is optional but suggested. If the order is not a rush, allow at least one week.
4. **In-Hands Date.** When you need delivery. Suppliers typically need 1–4 weeks, which includes approval time for custom artwork.
5. **Department/Organization.** Enter your department, school or office, then click **Save Draft**.

Step B: Suppliers

All nine approved suppliers are checked by default. Keep them all: more suppliers means more variety and more competitive pricing. To narrow the list, for example when reordering from a specific supplier, uncheck *Select All* and check only the supplier(s) you want. Click Save Draft.

Step C: Describe the Item

Field	Guidance
Type of Item	Be descriptive, such as “Polo with Pitt Script Logo.” Suppliers see this text.
Desired Brand	Optional. Leave blank for more quoting flexibility.
Style/SKU	Leave blank.
Allow comparable alternatives	Leave at **No** unless you named a brand and will accept substitutes.
Additional details	Color, logo style, placement, anything that helps the supplier respond well.
Share an idea	Optional reference image. Do not feel obligated to provide one.

Step D: Pricing and Quality

- **Budget.** Leaving it blank, or choosing No, usually brings a wider range of more competitive bids.
- **Quality: Good, Better or Best.** None of these means low quality; they describe intended use. *Good* suits giveaways (recruiting-booth T-shirts). *Better* and *Best* suit employee gifts or business attire (name-brand polos).

Step E: Quantities

Toggle between *Apparel Sizes* (Men’s/Unisex, Women’s, Youth) and *Non-Apparel Sizes* (hardgoods such as a Yeti Rambler, with quantity). Choose **Exact Quantities** (recommended) rather than Estimates.

Step F: Decoration (Adding a University Logo or Mark)

1. Choose **No** and click *Save Item* if the item is plain. Otherwise choose **Yes**.
2. **Method.** Screen printing is the default. If unsure, say so in the special requests field and let suppliers recommend one, or message them first (see Messaging).
3. **Location.** For example Left Chest, Full Front or Hat Front.
4. **Logo.** Click the plus sign, then *Subcategories*. **Pitt Spirit** holds the Pitt Script logo by campus, school or office. **Pitt Institutional Marks** holds the standalone Pitt Script and institutional marks. Each choice drills down; the breadcrumbs show your path and *All Categories* restarts the category search process. Highlight a logo and click **Add Selected Logo to select your logo**.
5. **Colors.** Colors are predefined based on the selected logo and are sent as part of your request. You do not need to update or adjust them.
6. Use *Add another decoration location* for more placements (for example, the back). Otherwise, if decoration is complete, Click **Save Item**, then *Add an Item* for more line items (if needed).

Step G: Submit

Add any notes to suppliers and click **Submit Quote Request**. It is distributed automatically to your chosen suppliers. Until the first response arrives you can edit it with the pencil icon in your Quoting dashboard (status: *Request Submitted*).

Workflow 3: Review and Accept Quotes

When suppliers respond you receive a notification. Open the site through punchout and go to Dashboard > Quoting.

1. **Open the quote.** Click the Quote ID or the *Review* button.
2. **Compare.** Quotes sort from lowest to highest price (lowest in green); use *Sort By* to change that. Wait until your Quote-By Date has passed before choosing.
3. **Check dates.** Note *Quote Valid Until* and *Estimated Delivery*; both can decide the winner.
4. **Expand the details.** Use the arrow beside the price for basics, then the arrow beside the product name for line-item pricing, fees and supplier notes.
5. **Verify the mockup.** Click *Download Attachment* under Supplier Attachment and confirm it matches what you requested.
6. **Accept.** Click the green *Accept* button and confirm in the popup. The quote contents return to PEX and join a requisition for that supplier. After accepting, you cannot modify the quote.

Need a change once responses exist? You can no longer edit the request, but *Request Change* notifies all suppliers so those who already responded can update their quotes.

Quote Statuses

Status	Meaning
Draft	Saved but not yet submitted.
Request Submitted	Sent to suppliers; still editable (pencil icon).
Pending Buyer Review	At least one response is in. Review it, but wait for the Quote-By Date.
Change Requested	You asked suppliers to update their responses.
Ordered	You accepted a quote and returned it to PEX. This does **not** mean a purchase order has gone to the supplier; the requisition process has only begun.
Declined	You declined a supplier's quote.
Retracted	The supplier pulled back its quote (for example, to fix a mistake).

Messaging Suppliers

Ask suppliers questions at any time, ideally before you submit a request. Replies and past threads live in Dashboard > Messages. Suppliers can only start messages that relate to a quote.

- **General message.** Messages tab > *New Message*. Choose "Promotional Contract" in *Filter by Contract*, check the supplier(s), click *Add Supplier*, enter a subject and message, attach files if needed, and click *Send*.
- **Quote-related message.** Open the quote's review page and click *Message Suppliers*. The thread carries the quote context and Quote ID. A message to several suppliers creates a separate thread for each reply.

Suppliers are notified by email, and so are you when they reply, but you must log in to the site to read the thread and respond. Messaging is not instant, so do not use it like Teams or other chat tools.

Success Checklist

- ☐ Check the MOQ on the product page before you configure it.
- ☐ Keep each cart to one supplier; save extra carts with clear names.
- ☐ Name quote requests descriptively and save a draft as you go.
- ☐ Send quote requests to all suppliers unless you have a reason not to, such as reordering from a specific supplier.
- ☐ Leave Brand and Style/SKU blank unless you need them; keep alternatives set to No.
- ☐ Use Exact Quantities and give a realistic in-hands date.
- ☐ Ask suppliers questions *before* submitting if you are unsure about decoration.
- ☐ Wait for the Quote-By Date, then compare price, validity, delivery date and the mockup.
- ☐ Remember that *Ordered* means the cart is back in PEX, not that a purchase order exists.

Note on Freight. Shipping is not shown at quote or purchase. It is billed separately through the University's Inbound Freight Management Program, and AFS Logistics, the University inbound freight contracted supplier, allocates the charge to the matching PO, so no action is needed on your part. For more information and exceptions, review the FAQ tab in the Promo Marketplace, visit the University Inbound Freight page on the PPT Website or email freight@pitt.edu.

Questions? Contact PantherExpress Support at PPTcustomerservice@cfo.pitt.edu or 412-624-3578 (4-3578 or HELPU).