



INDUSTRY BRIEF FOR HEAD OFFICES AND FOUNDERS

State of Party Plan 2026

Where the channel stands, why U.S. numbers feel softer than the global headline, and what party plan head offices are redesigning: host rewards, starter kits, and virtual-party policy.

Party Plan Solutions

partyplansolutions.com

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Figures are as published by the sources listed at the end of this brief, with data years noted. Sources accessed September 30, 2026. This brief is informational only and is not legal or financial advice.

Report page: <https://partyplansolutions.com/newsletter/>

A flat channel, a softer U.S., and a busy year for policy

This is for people who set policy for hosts, consultants, and shows: the latest channel numbers, what companies and regulators did this year, and questions to ask before your next planning cycle.

- 1. **The global channel has stopped shrinking, but it is not growing.** WFDSA puts 2024 global direct selling retail sales at \$163.9 billion, down about 0.05% from 2023, with 45% of reporting markets growing.^{[1][2]}
- 2. **The U.S. is softer than the global headline.** DSEF estimates 2025 U.S. retail sales at \$34.2 billion, down from \$34.7 billion in 2024, with 5.2 million direct sellers, 4% fewer than in 2024.^{[3][4]}
- 3. **The product categories that fill most party plan catalogs declined in 2025.** In DSEF's U.S. category data, home and family care and home durables fell 14% and personal care fell 7%, while services grew 10%.^[3]
- 4. **Hybrid is the normal operating model.** Company materials and trade coverage describe in-home, open-house, and online formats running side by side. The question for a head office is how each format gets credited and rewarded.^{[7][8][10]}
- 5. **Head offices are redesigning host rewards and starter kits while regulators watch earnings claims closely.** 2026 brought new host reward programs, low-cost entry kits, a \$225 million proposed FTC order against a large MLM, and continued self-regulatory action on field social posts.^{[10][11][15][16]}

AT A GLANCE

Measure	Figure	Source and data year
Global direct selling retail sales	\$163.9B	WFDSA STATS, 2024 data (published Dec 2025)
Change vs. prior year, global	about -0.05%	WFDSA STATS, 2024 data
Independent representatives worldwide	104.3M	WFDSA STATS, 2024 data
U.S. retail sales	\$34.2B	DSEF 2026 Growth and Outlook, 2025 data
U.S. retail sales, prior year	\$34.7B	DSEF 2025 Growth and Outlook, 2024 data
U.S. direct sellers (part-time)	5.2M (4.8M)	DSEF 2026 Growth and Outlook, 2025 data

How to read this brief

Figures are quoted as published, with data year and date. Where there's no reliable number (party plan's share of U.S. sales, or the virtual vs in-person split), we say so and label the point as our view. Tables and boxes marked "Our view" are our own suggestions and don't come from a published dataset. Bracketed numbers point to the Sources page.

SECTION 1

Global channel: flat

The most recent global dataset as of this brief is WFDSA's third annual STATS report, covering 2024. The report is dated November 2025 and was announced on December 4, 2025.^{[1][2]} No WFDSA report covering 2025 had been published as of September 30, 2026.

WFDSA reports 2024 global retail sales of \$163,863 million, essentially unchanged from \$163,937 million in 2023 and slightly above the 2019 pre-pandemic level of \$163,188 million. Sales had fallen from \$170,023 million in 2021, a compound annual decline of 1.2% over three years.^[1]

Year	Global retail sales (USD millions)
2021	170,023
2022	168,147
2023	163,937
2024	163,863

Source: WFDSA STATS, 2024 Global Annual Direct Selling Statistical Data Report (published November 2025).^[1]

Signs WFDSA reads as bottoming out

- The share of markets with annual sales growth rose from 23% in 2022 to 42% in 2023 and 45% in 2024.
- The average market growth rate improved from -5.4% in 2022 to 0.7% in 2023 and 4.6% in 2024.
- 21 markets had sales of \$1 billion or more, unchanged from 2023. Together they account for 92% of global sales. The top ten markets account for 78%.
- Independent representatives numbered 104.3 million, up 0.1%, after declines in the two prior years.^[1]

Where the sales are

Region (2024)	Share
Asia/Pacific	40.3%
Americas, incl. North America	37.3%
Europe	21.6%

Largest categories (2024)	Share
Wellness	29.0%
Cosmetics and personal care	22.8%
Household goods and durables	15.3%

Source: WFDSA STATS, 2024 data.^[1] The top three categories fell from 76.5% of sales in 2020 to 67.1% in 2024.

Who is selling

Women make up 72.1% of the global sales force, below the 74.3% of 2020. The share of representatives under 35 fell to 23% in 2024, the lowest in WFDSA's six-year series, while the share aged 55 and older rose from 21% in 2021 to 28% in 2024.^[1]

A note on Germany

Germany is the second-largest market in WFDSA's ranking, with 2024 sales down 3.7%.^[1] Germany's association (BDD) later reported 2025 sales of about \$24 billion, up 1.7%, with about 906,000 active sales partners, according to Direct Selling News (September 17, 2026).^[6] The two figures are not directly comparable: WFDSA counts DSA member companies only in most markets.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR A PARTY PLAN HEAD OFFICE

- Plan as if the channel is flat. Growth in 2026 is more likely to come from share and productivity than from a rising tide.
- An older sales force changes what good training and host coaching look like. In the U.S., most sellers also work part-time (Section 2). Design for limited hours, not for full-time recruiters.

Our view.

The U.S.: softer numbers

The U.S. remains the largest direct selling market in the world, but it is also where the post-pandemic slide has lasted longest. WFDSA put 2024 U.S. sales at \$34,740 million, down 5.2% for the year, with a three-year compound annual decline of 6.6% from 2021 to 2024. WFDSA places the U.S. among its "struggling markets" alongside Korea and Japan.^[1]

The Direct Selling Education Foundation (DSEF) 2026 Growth and Outlook Study, published in 2026 with 2025 data and covered by Direct Selling News on August 19, 2026, shows the decline slowing but not reversing.^{[3][5]}

U.S. measure	2024	2025	Note
Retail sales	\$34.7B	\$34.2B	About -1.4% (our calculation)
Direct sellers building a business	5.4M	5.2M	DSEF reports a 4% decrease
Of which part-time (under 30 hrs/week)	-	4.8M	Full-time: 0.4M
Preferred customers and discount buyers	-	34.8M	1% decrease; 28.4M preferred customers, 6.4M discount buyers
Average retail sales per direct seller	-	\$6,577	Sales divided by sellers; not income

Sources: DSEF, Direct Selling in the United States: 2025 Industry Overview (DSEF 2026 Growth and Outlook Study)^[3]; DSEF, The Economic Impact of Direct Selling Activity in the United States (2024 data from the DSEF 2025 Growth and Outlook Report).^[4]

Category detail: services up, most product lines down

U.S. category (DSEF)	2024 (\$B)	2025 (\$B)	Change as published
Services (financial, telecom, energy, travel, and similar)	13.3	14.7	+10%
Wellness	10.7	9.9	-7%
Home and family care, home durables	4.9	4.2	-14%
Personal care	3.3	3.1	-7%
Clothing and accessories	1.6	1.5	-6%
Leisure and educational	0.9	0.8	-9%

Source: DSEF 2025 Industry Overview fact sheet, category chart.^[3] DSEF defines home durables to include cookware, cutlery, and kitchenware; personal care to include cosmetics, skin care, and fragrances; clothing and accessories to include jewelry; and leisure and educational to include crafts.^[4]

WHERE PARTY PLAN SITS IN THESE NUMBERS

Neither DSEF nor WFDSA publishes a party-plan-only sales figure in the sources above, so we do not estimate one. What the data does show is that the U.S. categories most associated with hosted shows (cookware and home goods, fragrance and personal care, jewelry, crafts) all declined in 2025, and that the typical seller works part-time.

Our view: for most U.S. party plan companies, 2026 planning is a retention and show-productivity problem more than a recruiting-volume problem.

Earnings-claim reminder: the \$6,577 figure is average retail sales per seller, not earnings. It should not appear in field materials as an income figure. See Section 5.

Experience-led categories

There's no published data on party plan sales by product type, so this section is our view, without market-share figures.

Party plan tends to work where the product benefits from being demonstrated, sampled, tried on, or shared: cooking, fragrance, tasting, jewelry try-on, and crafts. A hosted show turns the product into an event. The same show format struggles when the product is easy to price-compare online and there is little to see, smell, taste, or try.

Recent sources point the same way:

- DSEF's 2026 study, as reported by Direct Selling News, describes consumer expectations that include personalized service, trusted recommendations, community connections, and convenient purchasing that blends digital and social engagement.^[5]
- The 2026 DSA Awards recognized a multi-function cookware product (Product Innovation) and a two-day in-person brand event that drew about 500 attendees and 73 creators and produced about 800 pieces of organic social content (Marketing and Sales Campaigns), according to the companies.^[9]
- At Direct Selling University's Spring 2025 event, one company described growth driven by in-person "sip and socials" and digital coffee chats, and another speaker focused on balancing the trust of in-person shopping with online convenience, per Direct Selling News.^[7]

A quick experience test for a product line

Question	If yes, leans toward
Does the benefit show up in a live demo (taste, scent, texture, fit, a result)?	A hosted show, in person or with a sample kit shipped to the host
Is price the main thing a guest would compare online?	Cart and reorder links; keep shows for launches and bundles
Will guests retell what happened at the show?	In-person or live formats; this is where bookings come from
Is there a natural replenishment cycle?	Hybrid: demo once, reorder online, host a reorder party later
Does the product need explanation, setup, or care instructions?	Live demo plus short follow-up video

Our view.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUR NEXT LINE REVIEW

- Which of your top 20 items actually get demonstrated at a typical show, and what share of show sales do they drive?
- Which items are mostly bought through links by guests who never attend? Those may belong in an open cart rather than in host credit.
- Is there one product per season that gives consultants a reason to hold an event rather than send a link?

For the definitions behind this section, see our guide [What is a party plan company in 2026?](#)

Hybrid in-person and virtual parties

Hybrid is no longer an experiment. The industry's own definition of direct selling, printed on the DSEF 2025 fact sheet, names three routes side by side: "one-to-one selling, in-home product demonstrations or online."^[3] Company materials describe the same mix. Scentsy's consultant FAQ describes it as a party plan company built around a social event "typically in a home, in person or online," and lists in-home parties, basket parties, open houses, and online parties alongside orders through a consultant's personal website.^[10]

What trade coverage says

- A Direct Selling University Spring 2025 panel of party plan company leaders discussed "a shift to workshops, training challenges, party resurgence," per Direct Selling News.^[7]
- A Direct Selling News podcast roundtable of party plan executives from Jordan Essentials, Norwex, L'BRI, and Scentsy (June 5, 2025) covered self-hosting, subscription models, and TikTok live selling, and why host programs are shifting back toward customer acquisition.^[8]
- Technology is being aimed at the host calendar. Pampered Chef's Lead Lists, a 2026 DSA Technology Innovation award winner, uses AI and machine learning to help consultants identify customers most likely to host a party or become a consultant. The company reports about 25,000 bookings and estimates more than \$13 million in incremental revenue from the program.^[9]

Where hybrid goes wrong

Our view.

Most hybrid problems come from policy. When a remote cart order counts toward host rewards exactly like an order placed at the show, guests learn they can support the host without attending, and attendance stops mattering. When virtual and in-person shows have different reward ladders by accident, consultants steer hosts toward whichever format pays better rather than whichever fits the product.

Hybrid policy item	What to decide and write down
Show definition	One definition of a show across in-home, virtual, and open-house formats.
Order crediting	Which orders count toward host credit: attended in person, attended live online, or outside orders within a dated window. State it plainly.
Close windows	How long an online event or replay stays open for orders.
Reward parity	The same host ladder for every format, unless there is a deliberate, stated reason to differ.
Measurement	Track attended versus remote order share per show, and bookings per show by format.

Our view.

Our guide [In-person orders and the party-plan resurgence](#) argues that only attended orders should count toward host and show credit. That's our position. It isn't standard practice in the industry yet. Our guide [Virtual vs in-home parties](#) covers when each format tends to fit.

What head offices are redesigning

Three areas keep coming up in company announcements and trade discussion: host rewards, starter kits, and the rules for virtual parties and field social posts.

5.1 Host rewards

Pampered Chef introduced a new host rewards program beginning September 1, 2026, which it describes as designed to help consultants "book more parties" and "create even better host experiences."^[11] Its 2026 host referral reward is a useful example of a bounded booking incentive: a \$10 product credit for each booking from a party, up to three per party (\$30 total), paid only when the booked party has guest sales and is held within six months, with each credit expiring six months after it is earned.^[12] Trade discussion in 2025 also pointed to host programs "shifting back toward customer acquisition."^[8]

Lever	Design pattern	Watch-out
Booking credit	Small fixed credit per qualified booking, capped per party, with expiry	Booking gifts that outweigh sales-based rewards invite empty "booking parties"
Sales tiers	Three to five clear steps a consultant can explain in a minute	Tiny steps that feel like a game; unclear treatment of outside orders
Half-price and exclusives	Capped quantity, excluded SKUs listed	Uncapped discounts on high-cost items erode margin
Format parity	Same ladder for virtual and in-person shows	Accidental differences that steer format choice

Our view. Model yours with the [Hostess Rewards Calculator](#).

5.2 Starter kits

Some companies are cutting entry costs and offering tiered kits. Scentsy currently lists four starter kits: a \$9 Smart Start (digital customer coupons and a three-month personal website, no product), a \$49 Essential kit, a \$59 Host-Exclusive kit, and a \$99 Signature kit. It also offers an "Earn a Kit" path where a host applies earned host rewards toward the Host-Exclusive kit.^[10]

This matters beyond conversion. FTC staff guidance on multi-level marketing lists encouraging a "large initial purchase" among the practices it scrutinizes, and says earnings claims must account for what participants spend, naming product purchases, website fees, party costs, and training as examples.^[13]

KIT CHECKLIST

- Offer at least one low-cost, product-light entry point, and a host-to-consultant path.
- Make the kit contents useful for a first show, not a stockpile.
- Publish the typical first-90-day costs (kit, website, samples, shipping) next to any discussion of earnings.

5.3 Virtual-party and field social policy

Virtual parties happen on the same live-stream and social platforms that regulators and self-regulators monitor. Recent actions:

- **FTC business guidance (June 16, 2026).** The FTC reminded companies to back up earnings and lifestyle claims, that claims should reflect what a typical participant is likely to earn, and that companies can be held liable for their distributors' deceptive marketing.^[14]
- **FTC and Washington State proposed order with Amway (announced September 17, 2026).** The proposed order requires Amway and two affiliates to pay \$225 million, which the FTC calls the largest monetary recovery in an FTC action against a multilevel marketing company. It would require distributors to sell to others at least 70% of the products they buy each month, customer receipts, regular independent audits of sales records, and no charges by approved training providers during a new distributor's first year. Stipulated orders take effect when approved by the court.^[15] Amway is not a party plan company, but the themes (proof of retail sales, receipts, training costs) map directly onto party plan policy.
- **DSSRC and field social (September 9, 2026).** The Direct Selling Self-Regulatory Council reviewed 12 social media earnings claims by one company's salesforce. The company removed or modified seven; five posts by former salesforce members stayed up. DSSRC recommended asking the platforms to remove them and, if that failed, commenting that the claims were unauthorized and not representative of typical earnings.^[16]

Virtual-party policy item	What to cover
Income talk on live streams	No earnings or lifestyle claims during shows; opportunity talk points to the income disclosure
Host reward messaging	Keep it about products and host benefits, not income
Event pages and replays	Who may create a party page, how long replays stay up, and who can edit or remove them
Former consultants	A documented outreach and removal-request process for posts that stay live
Monitoring	Regular spot checks of public posts, with a simple log and escalation path

Our view. Have counsel review before adopting.

For a ready-to-run version, see our [Field social earnings claims checklist](#).

SECTION 6

A 90-day agenda

Weeks	Focus
1 to 4: Baseline	Measure attended versus remote order share per show, host reward cost as a share of show sales, bookings per show by format, and a new consultant's real cost to hold a first show.
5 to 8: Draft	Write one show definition and crediting rule. Draft host reward and kit changes and model margin. Draft virtual-party and field social rules with counsel.
9 to 12: Pilot	Pilot with a small group of field leaders, train on the new rules, monitor results and social posts, then decide what to roll out.

Our view.

Guides and tools on partyplansolutions.com

Cornerstone guides

- What is a party plan company in 2026?
partyplansolutions.com/guides/what-is-party-plan/
- Party plan vs MLM vs affiliate vs social selling
partyplansolutions.com/guides/party-plan-vs-models/
- Hostess rewards 101: structures that still work
partyplansolutions.com/guides/hostess-rewards-101/
- Anatomy of a party-plan compensation plan
partyplansolutions.com/guides/anatomy-comp-plan/
- Virtual vs in-home parties: when each wins
partyplansolutions.com/guides/virtual-vs-inhome/
- In-person orders and the party-plan resurgence
partyplansolutions.com/guides/in-person-orders-and-party-plan-resurgence/
- Party plan glossary
partyplansolutions.com/glossary/
- All guides
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Tools

- Hostess Rewards Calculator
partyplansolutions.com/tools/hostess-rewards-calculator/
- Comp Plan Margin Stress-Test
partyplansolutions.com/tools/margin-after-commissions/
- Price from Cost Calculator
partyplansolutions.com/tools/price-from-cost/
- Party Revenue Projector
partyplansolutions.com/tools/party-revenue-projector/

Industry pulse and directory

- Industry pulse
partyplansolutions.com/industry/
- Field social earnings claims: a home-office checklist
partyplansolutions.com/industry/field-social-earnings-claims-checklist/
- Tools and vendor directory
partyplansolutions.com/directory/
- How to evaluate a commission or back-office platform
partyplansolutions.com/directory/evaluating-commission-platforms/

ABOUT PARTY PLAN SOLUTIONS

Party Plan Solutions is an industry information hub for party plan and direct selling operators: practical guides, tools, a vendor directory, and a regular industry pulse. Questions or corrections: info@partyplansolutions.com.

SOURCES

Sources

All sources accessed September 30, 2026. Company-reported figures are attributed to the company.

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