

2026 EDITION • FREE REPORT

The Importer Exposure Report

What anyone can learn about a U.S. importer from public shipping records, who reads them, and how protection lapses.

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Your supply chain is public by default.

Every ocean shipment into the United States creates a manifest record. Unless the importer has put a federal confidentiality protection in place, that record is public, and free platforms republish it.

None of this is a leak. It is how ocean shipping works in the United States. The record exists so that U.S. Customs, regulators and the courts can see what arrives. The same record also lets anyone with a browser see who your suppliers are, what they make for you, and how often your containers land.

Most importers have never looked. The search takes about thirty seconds, the basics need no account, and the platforms never tell a company that someone has looked it up.

Try it yourself. Search your company name on ImportYeti. What loads is what your competitors see. The rest of this report explains what is on that page, who reads it, and what keeps it from growing.

One thing to know before you start

Records that are already published stay published. Nobody can take them down, and anyone who promises to is selling something else.

We don't remove old data. We stop future exposure.

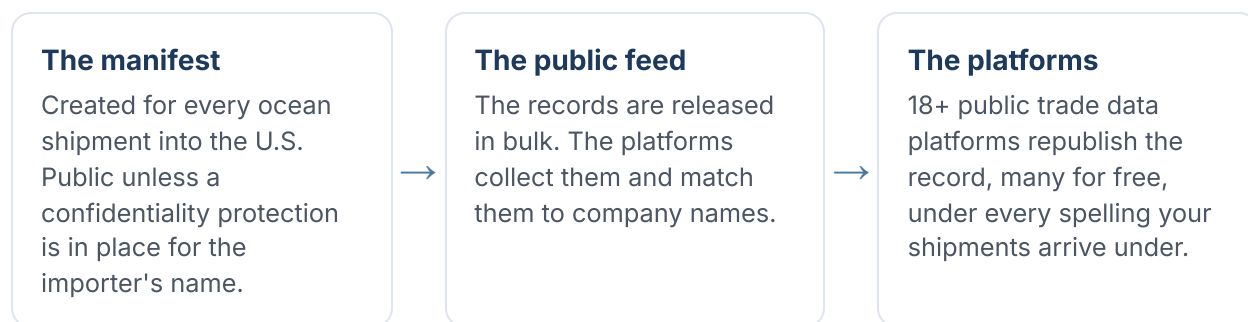
That distinction runs through every page that follows. The useful question is not how to erase what is already out there. It is how to make sure the next shipment, and every one after it, never joins it.

Who this is for

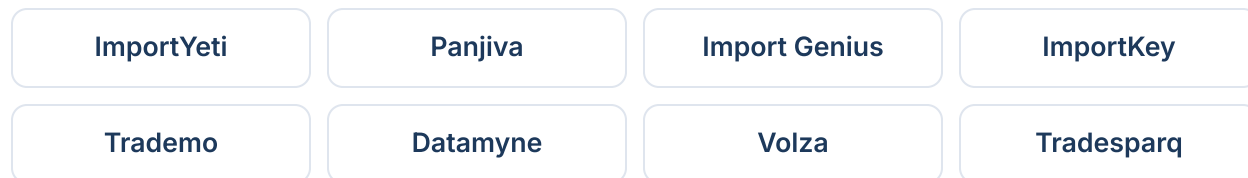
Legitimate importers who want their suppliers, volumes and launches treated as the commercial information they are. Protection changes who can read your record, not what the government knows. U.S. Customs still sees every shipment.

The platform map

Your record does not live on one website. It moves from the manifest into a public data feed, and from there onto every platform that resells or republishes it.



A few of the platforms that publish U.S. import records



and ten more, plus resellers of the same data under other names

What they have in common

- **The basics are free.** A company page loads before you finish typing, with no account needed.
- **Nobody is notified.** None of the platforms tells a company when someone looks it up.
- **They match every spelling.** A forwarder's misspelling or an old DBA is still your record, and it is published under that name.
- **They keep history.** Past shipments stay searchable, which is why stopping the next record matters more than chasing the last one.

Why one platform is never enough to check. The same record appears in many places at once. Protection works at the source, before the record is released, so it holds across all of them.

Anatomy of a company page

This is the kind of page a free platform shows for a mid-sized importer. The company is illustrative; the fields are real.

Example Kitchenware Imports LLC		US importer · 214 shipments	
1 SUPPLIERS		2 PRODUCT DESCRIPTION	
Ningbo cookware factory	118	TRI-PLY STAINLESS STEEL COOKWARE SET	
Guangdong aluminum works	61	HS 7323.93	
Jiangsu ceramics mill	35		
3 CONTAINERS BY MONTH		4 PORT, CARRIER, ARRIVAL	
		Port of entry	Long Beach
		Carrier	Major ocean line
		Last arrival	12 days ago

1 Supplier names, with cities. Who makes your product, and how much of it each one makes.

3 A restock calendar. Container counts by month show your seasons and your launches.

2 The factory's own words. The description on the bill of lading, often down to the material and the tariff code.

4 The route. Port, carrier, vessel and arrival dates tell anyone when the next shipment lands.

What else the record can carry

Shipment quantities and weights, vessel names and container numbers. In short, everything a competitor would want to read, filed under every name you ship under.

The four readers

The same page is read by four kinds of people. Each one wants something different from it.

The competitor

wants your terms

Has your mill, your port and your volume, which is everything needed to ask that mill for the same terms. The tools are sold for exactly this: search a competitor, sort by volume, contact the factory.

Some competitors go further. In March 2025 a flooring importer paid **\$8.1 million** to settle duty-evasion claims brought by a competitor, whose share was about **\$1.2 million**. Counsel has said the case began with public trade data.

[U.S. Department of Justice, Evolutions Flooring settlement, Mar 25, 2025](#)

The copycat

wants your factory

Has the exact factory and the product description, and can have samples within weeks. U.S. Customs seized **78.4 million** counterfeit items in fiscal 2025, worth **\$7.4 billion** at genuine retail prices, up from \$1.3 billion five years earlier.

[U.S. Customs and Border Protection, IPR seizure statistics, FY2025](#)

The fraudster

wants your payments

Knows which supplier you pay and roughly when the next invoice is due, so a fake one can arrive on schedule. Reported business email compromise losses in the U.S. reached **\$3.05 billion** in 2025. The largest known case, more than **\$120 million** taken from Facebook and Google, worked because the impersonated supplier was real.

[FBI Internet Crime Report 2025; CyberScoop, Dec 20, 2019](#)

The buyer across the table

wants your margin

Can see your sourcing, your volumes and your timing before the negotiation starts. A retailer or distributor that knows what you pay and when you restock does not need to ask.

How protection lapses

A confidentiality protection is not a one-time fix. Importers who filed once can still end up exposed, because protection can quietly stop covering them.

01 The renewal is missed

The protection runs for a fixed term and has to be renewed before it ends (two years, under 19 CFR 103.31). Miss the date and new shipments start publishing again, usually within weeks. Forget once and you start over.

02 A new entity ships unprotected

A new LLC, brand or DBA is a new name on the manifest. If it is not added before its first shipment, it ships exposed from day one, even while the parent company is protected.

03 A spelling slips through

Forwarders misspell names. Abbreviations and old names linger. Each variation is a separate record, so protection that covers only the exact legal name leaves those records public.

04 The one person who knew leaves

The filing often lives with one person in logistics or finance. When they move on, the renewal date goes with them. Your protection should not depend on one person remembering.

05 Nobody is watching

Without someone checking the platforms under every name, a lapse is only noticed when a competitor, a customer or a journalist mentions it.

Ongoing protection, not a one-time fix. The work is not the first filing. It is keeping every name covered, renewing on time, and checking that it holds.

What you can do

Start with your own record. Then make sure the next one is never published.

On your own, this week

- Search your company on ImportYeti and one other platform. Note every spelling your shipments appear under.
- List every legal entity, brand and DBA that appears on your customs filings.
- Ask who owns your confidentiality protection, if you have one, and when it renews.

With Customs Data Lock

Customs Data Lock (CDL) puts a federal confidentiality protection in place under every name you ship under, keeps watching the platforms to make sure it holds, and renews it before it can lapse. Nothing about how you ship changes.

File

Protection for every entity and every name variation, including misspellings, at no extra cost.

Monitor

We check 18+ public trade data platforms under all of your names. If something appears, we handle it and tell you.

Renew

Automatic Renewal keeps coverage continuous, and new entities are added before they ship.

Run your Free Exposure Check

We look up your company across 18+ platforms and send you the result, with no obligation.

customsdatalock.com/exposure-check

Sources

1. Evolutions Flooring and its owners pay \$8.1 million to settle False Claims Act allegations. U.S. Department of Justice, Mar 25, 2025.
2. Intellectual property rights seizure statistics, fiscal year 2025. U.S. Customs and Border Protection.
3. FBI Internet Crime Report 2025. FBI IC3, Apr 2026.
4. Man who scammed Facebook and Google out of \$120 million sentenced. CyberScoop, Dec 20, 2019.
5. 19 CFR 103.31, Information on vessel manifests and summary statistical reports. Code of Federal Regulations.
6. Further reading on each topic, with full sources, is on the Customs Data Lock blog at customsdatalock.com/blog.