

Why Did One Enquiry on an Indian B2B Platform Bring Dozens of Calls?



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Indian B2B listing platforms that run on a lead model make their money by selling buyer enquiries to sellers. One buy request can go to many sellers at once, sellers on forums say paying members see it first, and they race to call because the first reply often wins. Most callers are ordinary traders working their leads, not factories and not crooks. Enquire from a separate number and email, and treat anyone who reaches you first as unvetted.

The Short Version

- On a lead-selling directory, your enquiry is the product. It is sold to many sellers, not sent to one.
- Sellers report that paying members get the lead first, so the fastest caller shows a subscription tier, not a factory.
- Buyers report that even a search with a phone number entered can be passed on as a lead.
- Use a separate number and email for directory enquiries, and send your own spec rather than waiting for calls.
- Most callers are traders. That is a normal model, but find out who makes the goods before you pay.

Because on a lead-selling Indian B2B directory your enquiry isn't a message to one supplier. It's a lead, and the platform sells it to many sellers at once, and sellers on forums say paying members see it first. They all race to reach you, since the first reply often wins the deal, so one buy request can turn into a day of calls and WhatsApps from businesses you never chose.

In 2019 a buyer described the moment she worked this out. "I send an enquiry to one manufacturer and they just send that same enquiry to 10

manufacturers without my knowledge" ([r/Entrepreneur, 2019](#)). Seven years on, the threads in our review of importer and seller forums tell the same story. This page explains how the lead model works across directories, who is actually ringing you, and how to enquire without the flood. The caveat – each directory sets its own rules and changes them, so read the terms of the one you use.

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01 A buy request on a lead-selling directory goes to many sellers, and even a search with your number entered can count as a lead. At least one large Indian directory describes its own model as selling buyer enquiries to sellers, and a sales employee said pop-up form fills are counted as buyer leads. (*Our review of forum threads, 6+ independent mentions, 2019 to 2025*)

02 Paying sellers usually see your lead before free listers. A seller wrote in 2026 that free members get leads "after 24 hr of premium users". ([r/IndianEntrepreneur, 2026](#) · *Reported, supplier-side*)

What we don't know yet

- How many sellers one enquiry reaches on each directory. None of them publishes it, and it varies by category and plan.

1. Who Gets My Enquiry, and Why So Fast?

Think of the directory as a lead shop. Sellers pay for a plan, and the plan buys them access to buyer enquiries in their category. When you post "need 2,000 cotton tote bags", that line is matched to every seller who pays for totes, or bags, or textiles, depending on how the platform sorts it.

Speed is the business model on the seller side too. A paid seller complained in 2025, "Why is my buy lead already sold out before I can even click it?"

([r/IndiaBusiness, 2025](#)). Another seller's advice to his peers, translated from Hinglish, was that the seller who replies first on WhatsApp wins 60% of deals ([r/IndiaBusiness, 2026](#), one voice). So within minutes you have a queue of people who paid to reach you and were told to be first.

It doesn't stop at buy requests. An Indian buyer wrote in 2025 that "they share your number as lead even if you search for something with no intention of actually purchasing" ([r/IndiaBusiness, 2025](#)), and a directory sales employee said in a 2026 forum AMA that pop-up form fills are counted as buyer leads (one voice, supplier-side). If you typed a phone number into a pop-up to see a price, that may have been enough.

2. Who Are These People Calling Me?

Mostly traders and resellers working their leads. Our review found forum voices treat a trader as the default seller on Indian directories, with one US buyer warning of sellers "who don't really have any manufacturing capabilities, but list products as their own" ([r/manufacturing, 2023](#)). A trader is a normal way to buy, and for a small first order often the right one. You just want to know who makes the goods before money moves (our [manufacturer vs trading company](#) comparison covers the trade-off).

The one thing the speed tells you nothing about is the factory. The quickest caller has the best plan and the sharpest sales habit. It hasn't shown you machines, capacity or export history. And a small share of the people who reach you this way are not legitimate at all. One Middle East buyer who posted a requirement in 2019 was contacted on WhatsApp and lost his payment ([r/Scams, 2021](#)). So treat anyone who contacts you first as unvetted, the same as a cold email, which is the subject of [why "Indian manufacturers" email you](#).

3. How Do I Enquire Without the Flood?

Set up before you post, not after.

1. **Use a separate phone number and email** for directory enquiries from day one. You can't take a lead back once it's sold.
2. **Search, then contact named sellers yourself** rather than posting an open buy request. You choose who hears from you.
3. **Send your spec in writing** (product, material, quantity, packing, destination, Incoterm) and ask for a written quote. Callers who won't put a quote in writing sort themselves out.
4. **Ask for the GST number in the first reply**, then run the five-minute GST check. A business that won't share it isn't one to pay.
5. **Ask who makes the goods** and where. A trader can answer that without naming the factory.

It's also worth knowing what directories are good for. They're decent for finding names and poor for checking them. Many capable Indian makers barely list online at all, and India's export councils and trade fairs often find better factories, as where to find Indian suppliers explains. If you'd rather not field the calls at all, SourcingSync shortlists and checks Indian suppliers for you.

4. Can I Make the Calls Stop?

Partly. Most directories let you close or delete a requirement and change your contact settings, so do that first. Sellers who already bought your lead still have your number, though, and some will keep trying for weeks. Block and move on. A polite "we've placed the order, thank you" ends most of it, because a trader working leads has the next one waiting.

Questions Buyers Ask

Does a fast reply mean a serious manufacturer? ^

No. On a lead-selling directory it mostly means a paid plan and a quick sales team.

Is everyone who calls a scammer? v

Should I avoid Indian B2B directories? v