

GUILIN TOURISM UNIVERSITY · 桂林旅游学院

LESSON 15

The shelf said no, the catalogue said yes

长尾营销 · 分布形状与单位经济

Textbook §3.4.2 and Fig 3-3, read against §3.2 and §3.3 · a 90-minute bilingual lesson

90 minutes
一课时

English first, Chinese support
英文在前 · 中文在后

Lessons 11, 13
前置知识

2026 – 2027 Semester 1
2026—2027 学年第一学期

Course · 跨境电商概论 Cross-border Ecommerce

Instructor 授课教师 宋友开

“The long tail is a shape, not a promise. Whether a niche pays is unit arithmetic.”

一句话先记住：长尾是一种形状，不是承诺；细分赚不赚钱是单位算术。

12^{min}**Warm-up: the scissors with a bill**

案例开场：有账单的剪刀

Same product, two shelves, two outcomes.

34^{min}**Shape, enablers and unit economics**

形状、使能条件与单位经济

What makes the tail reachable and payable.

26^{min}**Case: the ledger of one listing**

案例：一条链接的账本

Contribution, break-even, margin shock.

18^{min}**Task and close**

课堂任务与收束

Keep it or cut it, with one condition.

Every part of this lesson answers one question: is this niche reachable, payable, and still profitable after fulfilment and returns?

本课每个环节都在回答一个问题：这个细分搜得到吗、付得起吗、扣掉履约与退货后还赚吗？

01

Say who named the long tail and in which year, and state how the textbook describes its statistical shape.

说明长尾由谁、在哪一年提出，并陈述教材如何描述其统计形状。

02

Explain why search, social networks and recommendation engines make tail goods findable, and why being found is not the same as being bought.

解释搜索、社交网络与推荐引擎为何让尾部商品可被发现，以及为什么被发现不等于成交。

03

Quote the Amazon and Google examples with the textbook wording and its limits, without turning business into audited revenue share.

按教材原话与限定条件引用亚马逊与谷歌的例子，不把"业务"改写成审计过的收入占比。

04

Test a niche with contribution margin and break-even volume instead of assuming that small means profitable.

用贡献毛利与打平销量检验细分需求，而不是假定"小"就等于赚钱。

Each objective maps to §3.4.2, Fig 3-3, §3.2 or §3.3.

BEFORE THIS LESSON · 前置知识 (第 11、13 课)

- How consumers discover goods: search, social, marketplaces (Lesson 11).
消费者如何发现商品：搜索、社交、平台（第 11 课）。
- From seeing to buying: the sales funnel and its counts (Lesson 13).
从看见到购买：销售漏斗与计数（第 13 课）。
- You can describe discovery and count a funnel; this lesson asks what is worth listing at all.
你已能描述发现渠道并会数漏斗；本课问的是到底什么值得上架。
Discovery explains how a buyer arrives. It does not tell you the listing can pay for itself.

WHAT THIS LESSON DOES · 本课作用

- Explain why an online catalogue can hold what a physical shelf refuses.
解释线上目录为何能容纳实体货架拒绝的商品。
- Give a unit-economics test for deciding whether a niche demand is worth serving.
给出判断细分需求是否值得做的单位经济方法。
- Keep the shape of the argument separate from the romance of the niche.
把论证的形状与对小众商品的热情分开。
The product did not change between the two shelves. The channel did.

Lesson 11 asked how a buyer finds a product; Lesson 15 asks whether the product that is found can carry its own costs.

第 11 课问买家如何找到商品；第 15 课问被找到的商品能否养活自己。

A shop selling only left-handed scissors may not reach 200 pairs a year in one town, so the owner stops stocking them. The same scissors, listed online, sell about 12,000 pairs a year across 14 countries.

一家只卖左手剪刀的店，在一个城镇一年可能卖不到 200 把，于是店主不再进货。同一把剪刀挂到线上，一年在 14 个国家卖出约 12,000 把。

THE TOWN SHELF · 本地货架

< 200

pairs a year in one town

一个城镇一年不到 200 把

Rent and shelf space need enough local buyers to carry them.

THE ONLINE LISTING · 线上链接

≈ 12,000

pairs a year across 14 countries

一年在 14 个国家约 12,000 把

One more listing costs almost nothing to hold.

WHAT THIS PAGE IS FOR · 这一页的用途

A one-page ledger for one tail listing: price, margin, fulfilment, returns, advertising and final contribution — opened before the theory is given.

Element 要素 要素	What it shows 说明什么 说明什么	Consequence 结论 结论
Same product 商品没变	Nothing changed about the scissors 剪刀本身没有任何变化	The channel changed 变的是渠道

If the shelf explains the difference, the next question is the one this lesson answers: what decides whether the niche actually pays?

如果货架解释了差别，那么接下来要回答的就是本课的问题：决定这个细分是否真的赚钱的是什么？

Global sufficiency

Fourteen countries add up to a demand a town never had

This gap is the door

这个落差就是入口

KEY POINTS · 学习重点

- The long tail is a distribution — a few high-amplitude items plus many low-amplitude ones — not a claim that niche beats hit.
长尾是一种分布形状——少数高幅度商品加大量低幅度商品——而不是 “小众胜过爆款” 的主张。
- Search, social and recommendation make the tail findable; cheap inventory, fulfilment and payment make it deliverable.
搜索、社交与推荐让尾部可被找到；低成本库存、履约与支付让它可被交付。
- A tail item lives or dies on unit contribution margin and break-even volume, not on being different.
尾部商品的生死取决于单位贡献毛利与打平销量，而不是 “与众不同” 的浪漫。

COMMON DIFFICULTIES · 可能的难点

- Reading the long tail as advice to go sell obscure things, and skipping the volume arithmetic.
把长尾读成 “去卖冷门货” 的建议，跳过销量算术。
- Treating listing as discovery: a tail item with no searchable title and no reviews is invisible.
把 “上架” 当成 “被发现”；没有可搜标题、没有评价的尾部商品其实不可见。
- Turning the Google example into a revenue share when the textbook says business.
把谷歌的例子说成收入占比，而教材说的是 “业务”。

THE ONE-LINE RULE

Write the ledger before having an opinion. If the class ends believing niche goods are naturally more profitable than hits, the lesson has failed

Named in 2004 by Chris Anderson, then a writer at Wired: rank a category by popularity and usefulness, and a few

extremely popular items form the head while unpopular and niche items form the long tail. 2004年，时任《连线》杂志作家的克里斯·安德森为这一现象命名：按受欢迎程度与有用性排序，少数极受欢迎的商品构成头部，不热门商品与细分商品构成长尾。

Element 要素 要素	Definition 定义 定义	What it implies 意味着 意味着
Head 头部	A small number of extremely popular items 少数极受欢迎的商品	Fights for a large share of few goods 争夺少数商品的大份额
Tail 尾部	A long string of unpopular and niche items 一长串不热门与细分商品	Assembles many small goods into a catalogue 把大量小商品组成一个目录
Statistical shape 统计形状	Few high-amplitude events plus a great many low-amplitude ones 少数高幅度事件加大量低幅度事件	Hollywood: a few blockbusters beside thousands of unseen films 好莱坞：少数大片旁是成千上万部没人听过的影片

HOW IT RUNS · 如何运作

- Plot sales against rank: the curve drops steeply, then flattens into a long thin right-hand side.
把销量对排名作图：曲线先陡降，然后拉平成又长又薄的右侧。
- Sort by sales, compute cumulative share, and count how many more listings ten extra percentage points require.
按销量排序，计算累计份额，数一数再增加十个百分点需要多少条商品。

CONDITIONS AND LIMITS · 条件与限制

- The cut between head and tail is artificial and differs by category; no universal percentage defines it.
头部与尾部的分界是人为的，且因品类而异；没有通用的百分比可以定义它。
- In theory the curve is smooth; in practice it is ragged, and an occasional hit inside the tail distorts the impression.
理论上曲线光滑，实践中参差不齐；尾部里偶尔出现的爆款会扭曲整体印象。

The long tail is a position in a popularity distribution, not a style or a taste. A niche item that sells badly is still just an item that sells badly.

长尾是受欢迎程度分布上的一个位置，不是风格或品味；卖得很差的冷门商品，仍然只是一个卖得差的商品。

A few high, a great many low

少数高幅度，大量低幅度

HOW THE TEXTBOOK DESCRIBES IT · 教材的描述

A statistical distribution of a few high-amplitude events plus a great many low-amplitude ones.

少数高幅度事件 + 大量低幅度事件的统计分布。

The example is the film industry: a few blockbusters beside thousands of films almost nobody has heard of.

WHY THE SHAPE MATTERS · 形状为何重要

- Only the shape explains the logic: each tail item sells little, but there are so many that the total can matter.
只有形状能解释经营逻辑：每个尾部商品卖得少，但数量极多，合计可能可观。
- One tail item cannot carry fixed cost alone; many thin items together can.
单个尾部商品无法独自承担固定成本，众多薄商品合起来可以。

Reading 读法 读法	Action 动作 动作	What it reveals 揭示什么 揭示什么
Step 1 第一步	Sort items by sales and plot the curve 按销量排序并作图	Steep drop, then a long flat right side 先陡降，再拉出长而平的右侧
Step 2 第二步	Compute the cumulative share of the head 计算头部的累计份额	The head keeps most of the volume 头部仍占大部分销量
Step 3 第三步	Count how many listings ten more percentage points need 数一数再加十个百分点要多少条商品	This is the price of breadth 这就是广度的价钱

This shape lives beside the 80/20 rule rather than against it. The head still dominates; the tail is newly reachable demand, not a replacement.

If the take-away is that niche goods are naturally more profitable than hits, the reading has gone wrong.

01

Online search

在线搜索

Turns a need a buyer cannot name into a query.

02

Social networks

社交网络

Carry a recommendation across borders.

03

Recommendation engines

推荐引擎

Put a cold item in front of the small audience that needs it.

TWO OPERATING CONDITIONS THE TEXTBOOK DOES NOT LIST · 教材未列出、本课程补充的两个经营条件

Low-cost inventory and fulfilment

低成本的库存与履约

Without cheap holding and shipping, a visitor cannot become a customer.

Cross-border payment

跨境支付

Without a payment the foreign buyer can actually use, the order never completes.

Check 审查项 审查项	Test 检验方式 检验方式	Why 为什么 为什么
Can it be searched? 搜得到吗	A searchable title, attributes and reviews exist 有可搜的标题、属性与评价	Discovery is a capability 被发现是一种能力
Can it be surfaced? 推得到吗	Social sharing or recommendation can reach the small audience 社交分享或推荐能触达小众人群	Not guaranteed by listing 上架不保证被推到
Can one unit be shipped? 单件发得起吗	Fulfilment cost fits inside the gross margin 履约成本装得进毛利	Decides contribution 决定贡献毛利

The textbook claim is about possibility, not probability. Being found is not being chosen, and it does not cover what being found costs.

教材的主张是关于“可能”，不是“概率”。被找到不等于被选中，也不覆盖“被找到”的成本。

THE TWO FORMULAS · 两个公式

Contribution margin = price – all variable costs

贡献毛利 = 售价 - 全部变动成本

Break-even volume = fixed cost of the item ÷

contribution margin
打平销量 = 该商品的固定成本 ÷ 贡献毛利

WHY IT DECIDES THE CASE · 为何决定成败

- A tail item cannot carry fixed cost alone; profit depends on low marginal cost, catalogue breadth and cheap enough acquisition per unit.
尾部商品无法独自承担固定成本；盈利依赖低边际成本、组合广度与足够低的单件获客成本。

Scenario 情形	Input 输入	Arithmetic 算式	Reading 读法
Base case 基准情形	18.00 price, 35% margin, 5.20 fulfilment 售价 18、毛利 35%、履约 5.20	$6.30 - 5.20 = 1.10$ 每把贡献 1.10	Positive, but thin 为正但很薄
Margin down 5 points 毛利降 5 个百分点	30% margin gives 5.40 gross profit 毛利 30%，每把毛利 5.40	$5.40 - 5.20 = 0.20$ 每把贡献 0.20	Almost nothing left 几乎不剩
Fulfilment up to 6.30 履约升到 6.30	Gross profit equals fulfilment cost 毛利与履约成本相等	$5.40 - 6.30 < 0$ 贡献为负	Every order loses money 每单都亏

HOW TO RUN IT · 如何操作

- Compute contribution per unit, then break-even against the item own fixed cost — advertising, photography, listing management — and sum the portfolio against total fixed cost.
先算单位贡献毛利，再对商品自身的固定成本求打平：广告、拍摄、链接管理；然后把组合与总固定成本比较。

CONDITIONS AND LIMITS · 条件与限制

- Digital goods have marginal cost near zero; physical goods add stock, handling and returns. Aggregation is not selling everything; it is a catalogue gathering many small demands.
数字商品边际成本接近于零；实物商品还有库存、操作与退货。聚合不等于什么都卖，而是目录把大量小需求汇到一起。

A five-point margin move is unremarkable in sourcing, and enough to turn a workable niche into a hobby.

采购中 5 个百分点的毛利变化再普通不过，却足以把一个可行细分变成一个爱好。

AMAZON: USED AND OUT-OF-PRINT BOOKS · 亚马逊旧书

"We now sell more books that would not have sold before than books that would have sold before."

“我们现在卖出的、过去卖不出去的书，比过去卖得出去的书还多。”

- The sentence is about breadth: the online catalogue removes a cost that physical retail carried — holding unsold stock.
这句话讲的是品类广度：线上目录解除了实体零售持有滞销品的成本。

GOOGLE: ADSENSE AND SMALL SITES · 谷歌与小网站

Millions of small firms never advertised; thousands of small sites had no practical way to sell space. AdSense made advertising self-serve and cheap.

数百万小企业从未投过广告；数千个小网站也没有实际办法卖广告位。

- The textbook then says half of Google business comes from these small sites — business, not audited revenue share.
教材随后说谷歌一半的“业务”来自这些小网站，是“业务”，不是审计过的收入占比。

Item 条目 条目	What it states 原文口径 口径	Rule 引用规则 规则
Amazon sentence 亚马逊那句话	Breadth of catalogue, not profitability 讲的是品类广度，不是利润率	Do not read it as every slow book earning money 不要读成每一本长销书都赚钱
Google half 谷歌的一半	The textbook says business, not revenue 教材说的是业务，不是收入	Keep the original word when quoting 引用时保留原词
Storage cost	A slow book is cheap to hang online, costly to rent	The same item can be viable or not
A cautious student keeps the textbook wording. Rewriting "business" as an exact revenue percentage invents a figure the source does not give. 谨慎的学生会保留教材原词；把“业务”改写成精确收入百分比，是杜撰来源没有给出的数字。		

DIGITAL GOODS · 数字商品

- Marginal cost is close to zero, so one more copy costs almost nothing to serve.
边际成本接近于零，多服务一份几乎不花钱。
- A large content library can be indexed, recombined and resold indefinitely.
庞大的内容库可被反复检索、组合与销售。
- This is why the textbook addresses digital sellers first.
这是教材把建议主要指向数字商品卖家的原因。

PHYSICAL GOODS · 实物商品

- Every added item brings stock, photography, copywriting, service and return handling.
每多一个商品就多一份库存、拍摄、文案、客服与退货处理。
- Breadth without discipline produces complexity, dead stock and a catalogue nobody can search.
没有纪律的广度会带来复杂度、呆滞库存和一个谁也搜不到的目录。

Dimension 维度	Digital 数字商品	Physical 实物商品
Marginal cost	Near zero for digital	Stock, handling, returns for physical
Cost of breadth	Almost none per extra item	Fixed cost per listing: ad, photo, copy
Failure mode	A library nobody finds	Dead stock and unsearchable catalogue

The long tail is not free. It is cheap per item and expensive in total: breadth only works as a portfolio in which each listing feeds itself.

长尾不是免费：它单件便宜，总额昂贵。广度只有作为“每名链接养活自己”的组合才成立。

Each listing carries its own fixed cost, so each listing needs its own break-even volume.

01

How many people worldwide search for it?

全球有多少人在搜它？

Search volume decides whether the tail item can be found at all; a listing without queries is invisible.

搜索量决定尾部商品能否被找到；没有查询的链接是不可见的。

02

Will they pay this price once found?

找到之后愿不愿付这个价？

Price acceptance decides whether the gross margin exists before any cost is subtracted.

价格接受度决定毛利是否成立，此时还没扣任何成本。

03

Do fulfilment and returns fit inside the margin?

履约与退货能不能装进毛利？

Contribution margin and the return rate decide what is left; this is where most niches fail.

贡献毛利与退货率决定最后剩下什么；多数细分是在这里失败的。

The three questions are asked in this order on purpose. Reachability first, then price, then the arithmetic that decides survival.

三个问题按这个顺序问是有意的：先可达性，再价格，最后是决定生死的算术。

WHY AGGREGATION WORKS · 聚合为何成立

- Because each tail item is thin, the model works only as a portfolio: many listings, each feeding itself, together covering fixed cost.

因为每个尾部商品都很薄，这个模式只能作为组合成立：多条链接，每条养活自己，合起来覆盖固定成本。

WHAT IT COSTS · 代价是什么

- Breadth without discipline brings complexity, dead stock and a catalogue that nobody can search.
没有纪律的广度会带来复杂度、呆滞库存和一个谁也搜不到的目录。

Requirement 要求	What it means 含义	Rule 规则
Breadth 广度	Many listings, each with its own fixed cost 多条链接，每条都有自己的固定成本	Each needs its break-even volume 每条都要自己的打平销量
Searchability 可搜索性	Titles, attributes and reviews must exist 标题、属性与评价必须存在	Listing is not discovery 上架不等于被发现

THE ASYMMETRY · 本课的不对称

The long tail rewards breadth, searchability and cost discipline, not enthusiasm for unusual goods. A seller who cannot answer the pricing question keeps finding demand and keeps losing money on it.

The next lesson asks the pricing question: who pays, how much, and through which mechanism.

下一课接着问定价问题：谁付钱、付多少、用哪种机制。

Left-handed scissors at 18 dollars, 35% gross margin, 5.20 dollars of first-leg and last-leg fulfilment.

左手剪刀售价 18 美元、毛利率 35%，头程加尾程 5.20 美元。

Price
售价

18.00 USD

每把售价

Gross profit per pair
每把毛利

6.30 USD

18×0.35

Contribution per pair
每把贡献毛利

1.10 USD

$6.30 - 5.20$

Year at 12,000 pairs
一年 12,000 把

13,200 USD

未扣广告与退货

Arithmetic 算式

算式

$$18 \times 0.35 = 6.30$$

$$18 \times 0.35 = 6.30$$

$$6.30 - 5.20 = 1.10$$

$$6.30 - 5.20 = 1.10$$

What it measures 它算什么

算什么

Gross profit per pair before fulfilment

扣履约前的每把毛利

Contribution per pair after variable costs

扣变动成本后的每把贡献

Warning 提醒

提醒

Margin is not profit

毛利不是利润

This is what pays fixed cost

这才是用来付固定成本的钱

CONCEPT USED · 用到的概念

- Long tail operation and unit economics: contribution margin first, break-even volume second.
长尾经营与单位经济：先算贡献毛利，再算打平销量。

THE TRAP · 陷阱

- Stopping at 6.30 and calling it profit. Fulfilment, advertising and returns still come out of it.
算到 6.30 就停，并把它叫利润；履约、广告与退货还要从里面出。

Concept used: long tail operation and unit economics. Twelve thousand pairs is a demand result, not a profit result.

用到的概念：长尾经营与单位经济。一万两千把是需求结果，不是利润结果。

THE BREAK-EVEN QUESTION · 打平问题

 $40 \div 1.10 \approx 37$ pairs a month

Forty dollars of monthly advertising divided by 1.10 dollars of contribution
每月 40 美元广告除以每把 1.10 美元贡献，约 37 把。

About 437 pairs a year before returns are counted.

WHAT A THIN LISTING MEANS · 薄链接意味着什么

- A tail listing selling fifteen pairs a month is not a business; it is being subsidised by the rest of the catalogue.
一个月卖 15 把的尾部商品不是生意，而是靠目录里其他商品在补贴。
- The listing in this case sells about a thousand pairs a month and covers its advertising easily.
本案例这条链接每月卖约 1,000 把，广告轻松覆盖。

Item 项目 项目	Figure 数字 数字	Consequence 结论 结论
Monthly advertising 每月广告	40 dollars, fixed for this listing 这条链接每月 40 美元，固定	Independent of volume sold 与卖多少无关
Break-even per month 每月打平	$40 \div 1.10 \approx 37$ pairs $40 \div 1.10 \approx 37$ 把	Every listing needs its own 每条链接都要自己算
Fifty new listings 新增五十条链接	Each must clear its own 37 pairs a month 每条都要各自达到每月 37 把	This is the price of breadth 这就是广度的价钱

Concept used: break-even volume for one item. Advertising is fixed per listing, which is exactly what makes breadth expensive.

用到的概念：单个商品的打平销量。广告是每条链接的固定成本，这正是广度昂贵的原因。

BACKGROUND · 背景与时间

A seller lists only left-handed scissors on a cross-border platform: about 12,000 pairs a year across 14 countries at 18 dollars, 35% margin after platform commission 当 20 dollars 扣佣后, 售价 18 美元, 35% return rate, about 9 dollars to handle each return 退货 3%, 退货处理与不可再售包装成本约 9 美元, 链接每月广告 40 美元。

THE INPUTS · 输入项

- Price 18.00; margin 35%; gross profit 6.30; fulfilment 5.20; contribution 1.10.
售价 18.00; 毛利 35%; 每把毛利 6.30; 履约 5.20; 贡献 1.10。
- Returns 3% of 12,000 is 360 returns; handling cost about 9 dollars each.
退货 3%，即 360 次；每次处理成本约 9 美元。
- Advertising 40 dollars a month, 480 dollars a year.

THE QUESTION · 面临的问题

- The niche looks exactly like what the textbook promises: demand a local shop cannot serve.
这个细分看起来正是教材承诺的样子：本地店铺服务不了的需求。
- Before adding fifty more niche items: can this listing cover its own cost, and how much margin movement can it take?
在再加五十个细分商品之前：这一条链接能否覆盖自己的成本，以及它能承受多大的毛利波动？

Step 步骤 步骤	Arithmetic 算式 算式	Note 说明 说明
Step 1 第一步	$18 \times 0.35 = 6.30$ gross profit per pair $18 \times 0.35 =$ 每把毛利 6.30	Margin is not yet contribution 此时还不是贡献
Step 2 第二步	$6.30 - 5.20 = 1.10$ contribution per pair $6.30 - 5.20 =$ 每把贡献 1.10	What pays the fixed cost 用来付固定成本的部分
Step 3 第三步	$12,000 \times 1.10 = 13,200$ annual contribution $12,000 \times 1.10 =$ 年度贡献 13,200	Before advertising and returns 未扣广告与退货

The case is fictional and does not correspond to any real shop, brand or transaction. All figures are teaching simulations.

本案例为教学虚构，不对应任何真实店铺、品牌或交易；所有数字为教学模拟。

Three scenarios for the same listing

同一条链接的三种情形

Scenario 情形 情形	Arithmetic 算式 算式	Result 结果 结果	Reading 读法 读法
Base case 基准情形	$12,000 \times 1.10 - 3,240 - 480$ $12,000 \times 1.10 - 3,240 - 480$	$\approx +9,480$ dollars a year 年约 +9,480 美元	About 790 a month, before staff and software 约每月 790, 未计人员与软件
Margin 30% 毛利 30%	$12,000 \times 0.20 - 3,240 - 480$ $12,000 \times 0.20 - 3,240 - 480$	$\approx -1,320$ dollars a year 年约 -1,320 美元	Five points turn profit into loss 五个百分点把盈利变成亏损
Fulfilment 6.30 履约 6.30	$5.40 - 6.30$ $5.40 - 6.30$	Contribution of zero 贡献为零	Every order only returns the cash 每单只是把货款收回来
Returns 6%	$13,200 - 720 \times 9 - 480$	$\approx +6,240$ dollars a year	The return rate moves the result too

CONCEPTS USED · 对应概念

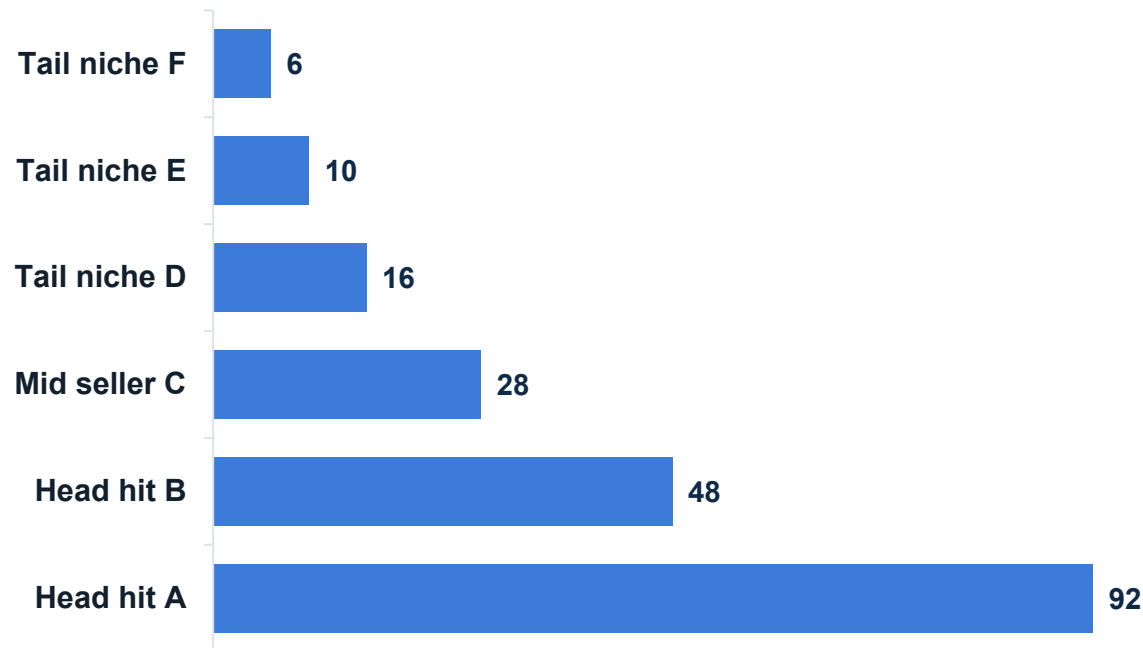
- Long tail and distribution shape; enabling conditions; unit economics; contribution margin and break-even volume.
长尾与分布形状; 使能条件; 长尾经营与单位经济; 贡献毛利与打平销量。

TEACHER NOTE · 教师提示

- Demand the ledger before the opinion. The two traps are calling 6.30 profit and forgetting that advertising is fixed per listing.
要求先写账本再判断。两个陷阱: 把 6.30 当利润, 忘记广告是每条链接的固定成本。

WHICH LEVER DOES THE SELLER CONTROL · 卖家最能直接控制哪一个

Among price, fulfilment and return rate, ask which one the seller can move directly — and what moving it does to the other two.



Teaching illustration · 教学示意, 非真实统计数据 Course illustration, not real statistics

Bar 柱 柱	Share of sales 销量占比 占比
Head hit A 头部爆款 A	92 · 46% 46%
Head hit B 头部爆款 B	48 · 24% 24%
Mid seller C 腰部常销 C	28 · 14% 14%
Tail niche D 长尾细分 D	16 · 8% 8%
Tail niche E 长尾细分 E	10 · 5% 5%
Tail niche F 长尾细分 F	6 · 3% 3%

READ THE BARS AS AN INDEX · 柱读成相对指数

Relative sales index; the bracket gives the share of category sales in this illustration

相对销量指数, 括号内是示意中的品类销量占比。

The first three bars hold 84% of sales; the last three hold 16%, yet they stand for a mass of items the figure cannot draw.

前三根柱占 84% 的销量; 后三根只占 16%, 但它们代表的是图中画不下的大量商品。

01

Read each bar as a relative sales index

每根柱读成相对销量指数

READ AS · 读法

The bracket is its share of category sales in this illustration, not a measured market share.

括号内是它在示意中的品类销量占比，不是实测的市场份额。

02

The head holds most of the volume

头部占大部分销量

READ AS · 读法

Three bars carry 84%; the last three carry 16% while standing for many more items than are drawn.

前三根柱占 84%；后三根占 16%，却代表远多于画出来的商品数量。

03

It shows the shape of the argument

它展示的是论证的形状

READ AS · 读法

The figure is a teaching illustration and contains no real statistics for any category.

本图仅为教学示意，不含任何真实品类的统计数据。

Real distributions differ by category and are ragged rather than smooth; an occasional hit inside the tail distorts the picture.

真实分布因品类而异且参差不齐；尾部里偶尔出现的爆款会扭曲整体印象。

01 COMMON SAYING 常见说法

The long tail means niche goods are more profitable than hits.

长尾意味着细分商品比爆款更赚钱。

WHAT TO SAY INSTEAD 修正说法

It describes a distribution. Each tail item is thin; profit depends on contribution margin, break-even volume and cheap acquisition. 它描述的是分布。每个尾部商品都很薄，盈利取决于贡献毛利、打平销量与低廉的获客成本。

03 COMMON SAYING 常见说法

The long tail contradicts the 80/20 rule.

长尾与二八定律互相矛盾。

WHAT TO SAY INSTEAD 修正说法

They coexist: the head still takes most of the volume, and the tail is newly reachable demand beside it. 两者并存：头部仍占大部分销量，尾部是新增的可触达需求。

05 COMMON SAYING 常见说法

Listing is cheap, so tail items have no marketing cost.

上架便宜，所以尾部商品没有营销成本。

WHAT TO SAY INSTEAD 修正说法

Advertising, photography and listing management are fixed costs per item, so each item needs its own break-even volume. 广告、拍摄与链接管理都是单品的固定成本，所以每个商品都需要自己的打平销量。

02 COMMON SAYING 常见说法

List a tail item and it will be found.

把尾部商品上架，它自然会被发现。

WHAT TO SAY INSTEAD 修正说法

Being found needs a searchable title, reviews and recommendation; enabling conditions are capabilities, not consequences of listing. 被发现需要可搜的标题、评价与推荐，使能条件是能力，不是上架的自然后果。

04 COMMON SAYING 常见说法

The textbook says half of Google revenue comes from small sites.

教材说谷歌一半的收入来自小网站。

WHAT TO SAY INSTEAD 修正说法

It says half of the business comes from those sites. Keep the original word rather than rewriting it as an audited share. 教材说的是“一半的业务”来自这些小网站，应保留原词，不要改写成精确的收入占比。

06 COMMON SAYING 常见说法

A niche selling 12,000 pairs a year must be profitable.

一年卖 12,000 把的细分一定赚钱。

WHAT TO SAY INSTEAD 修正说法

Volume is not margin. The same volume at five margin points lower turns 9,480 dollars of contribution into a loss. 销量不等于毛利。同样销量，毛利率下降 5 个百分点就会让 9,480 美元的贡献变成亏损。

Long tail

长尾

The right-hand part of many low-frequency niche items after ranking by popularity.
按受欢迎程度排序后，由大量低频、细分商品构成的右侧部分。

Head

头部

The small number of high-volume, high-attention items.
少数高销量、高关注度的商品。

Niche market

细分市场

A small, clearly defined market with concentrated demand.
需求集中、规模较小且人群明确的特定市场。

Recommendation engine

推荐引擎

A system matching goods to buyers by behaviour and preference.
依据行为与偏好把商品匹配给潜在买家的系统。

Search engine optimisation

(SEO) 引擎优化

Improving natural search ranking through content and structure.
通过内容与结构改进提高自然搜索排名的做法。

Content library

内容库

A collection of goods or content that can be searched, recombined and sold.
可被反复检索、组合与销售的商品或内容集合。

Marginal cost

边际成本

The cost added by producing or delivering one more unit.
每多生产或交付一件所增加的成本。

Aggregation

聚合

Bringing many scattered small demands together into scale.
把大量分散的小需求集中起来形成规模。

Contribution margin

贡献毛利

What remains of price after all variable costs.
售价减去全部变动成本后的余额。

Stock-keeping unit (SKU)

库存单位

The smallest unit whose stock and sales are managed separately.
可独立管理库存与销售的最小商品单元。

Contribution margin and marginal cost are the pair that decides a tail listing: one says what is left, the other says what the next unit costs.

贡献毛利与边际成本是决定尾部链接的一对：前者说还剩什么，后者说下一件要花多少。

- 01** Name a product hard to buy at home and easy to find online. Which enabling condition is at work, and which one is still missing?
- 举一个在你母国本地难买、网上易找的商品。起作用的使能条件是哪一个？还缺哪一个？

Answer with a formula and a number, not with enthusiasm for the niche.

- 02** A tail listing sells 20 units a month with 40 dollars of advertising. Do you change price, advertising or fulfilment first, and what do you expect?
- 一条尾部链接每月卖 20 件、广告 40 美元。你会先改价格、广告还是履约？预期会发生什么？

Answer with a formula and a number, not with enthusiasm for the niche.

- 03** Why does the textbook say Google business rather than revenue, and why does that distinction matter when you cite it in a report?
- 教材为什么说谷歌的“业务”而不是“收入”？在报告里引用时，这个区别为什么重要？

Answer with a formula and a number, not with enthusiasm for the niche.

- 04** Would you advise a factory to build 500 tail listings or 20 head products? Argue with contribution margin and break-even volume, not preference.
- 你会建议工厂做 500 条尾部链接，还是 20 个头部产品？请用贡献毛利与打平销量论证，不要用偏好。

Answer with a formula and a number, not with enthusiasm for the niche.

Refuse answers built only on how unusual the product is. Ask for contribution margin, break-even volume and the cost of being found.

拒绝只建立在“商品多特别”之上的答案：要问贡献毛利、打平销量与被发现的成本。

3

min

Write the unit economics: price 18, margin 35%, fulfilment 5.20; compute contribution per unit.
写出单位经济：售价 18、毛利 35%、履约 5.20，算出每把贡献。

OUTPUT · 产出

Contribution per unit.

3

min

Compute break-even against 40 dollars of monthly advertising, then add 3% returns at 9 dollars each.
算出覆盖每月 40 美元广告的打平销量，再加 3% 退货、每次 9 美元的影响。

OUTPUT · 产出

Break-even plus return cost.

2

min

Recompute with margin at 30% and write the new annual result.
把毛利率改为 30% 重算，写出新的年度结果。

OUTPUT · 产出

A signed annual figure.

2

min

Write a keep-or-cut recommendation with one stated condition.
写出保留或砍掉的建议，并附一个前提条件。

OUTPUT · 产出

One decision, one condition.

STUDENT OUTPUT · 学生产出

A one-page contribution table plus a keep-or-cut recommendation carrying one explicit condition.

Q1

Who named the long tail, in which year, and how does the textbook describe its statistical shape?

长尾由谁、在哪一年命名？教材如何描述其统计形状？

Q2

Price 18, margin 35%, fulfilment 5.20: what is contribution per unit, and what is the break-even volume against 40 dollars of monthly advertising?

售价 18、毛利 35%、履约 5.20：每把贡献是多少？覆盖每月 40 美元广告的打平销量是多少？

Q3

Why does a five-point margin drop turn 9,480 dollars of contribution into about 1,320 dollars of loss? Write the arithmetic.

为什么毛利率下降 5 个百分点，会把 9,480 美元的贡献变成约 1,320 美元亏损？写出算式。

Q4

Each new listing spends 40 dollars a month on advertising. How much must it sell, and what does that mean for a catalogue of fifty listings?

每条新链接每月广告 40 美元，它每月要卖多少才够覆盖？这对五十条链接的目录意味着什么？

Q5

Why must the Google example be quoted as business rather than revenue, and what error does the rewrite cause?

为什么谷歌的例子必须引用为“业务”而不是“收入”？改写会造成什么错误？

A correct answer separates volume from margin and states which costs are fixed per listing. Without that, the same sales figure supports opposite decisions.

正确的答案会把销量与毛利分开，并说明哪些成本是每条链接的固定成本；否则同样的销量可以支持相反的决定。

THE ARGUMENT · 本课的结论

- The long tail is a distribution: a few high-amplitude items plus a great many low-amplitude ones.
长尾是一种分布：少数高幅度商品加大量低幅度商品。
- Search, social and recommendation make the tail findable; cheap inventory, fulfilment and payment make it deliverable.
搜索、社交与推荐让尾部可被找到；低成本库存、履约与支付让它可被交付。
- Being found is not being chosen, and volume is not margin.
被发现不等于被选中，销量也不等于毛利。

WHAT TO DO WITH IT · 怎么用

- Write the ledger first: contribution per unit, then break-even against the listing own fixed cost.
先写账本：单位贡献毛利，再对链接自身的固定成本求打平。
- Test sensitivity: five margin points, one dollar of fulfilment, three points of returns.
做敏感性检验：5 个百分点毛利、1 美元履约、3 个百分点退货。
- Quote the textbook wording; do not upgrade business into audited revenue.
引用教材原话，不要把“业务”升级成审计过的收入。

Element 要素 要素	Character 特征 特征	Rule 规则 规则
Head 头部	Few items, most of the volume 少数商品占大部分销量	Still dominates after the long tail 长尾出现后仍占主导
Tail 尾部	Many items, each thin 大量商品，每个都很薄	Works only as a portfolio 只有作为组合才成立

A long tail seller who cannot answer the pricing question keeps finding demand and keeps losing money on it. Lesson 16 asks that question: who pays, how much, and through which mechanism.

回答不了定价问题的长尾卖家，会不断找到需求，也不断在需求上亏钱。第 16 课接着问：谁付钱、付多少、用哪种机制。

Source 来源 来源	Section 位置 位置	What it states 原文内容 内容	Used for 用途 用途
SRC-003 §3.4.2	Long tail named by Chris Anderson in 2004; head and tail defined by popularity and usefulness 长尾由克里斯·安德森 2004 年命名；按受欢迎程度与有用性定义头部与尾部	Definition, year and author 定义、年份与作者	
SRC-003 §3.4.2	Statistical shape: few high-amplitude events plus many low-amplitude ones, Hollywood as the example 统计形状：少数高幅度事件加大量低幅度事件，以好莱坞为例	Shape and its reading 形状与读法	

Number 数字 数字	Status 性质 性质	Warning 提醒 提醒
12,000 pairs, 14 countries 12,000 把、14 国	Teaching illustration for the case 本案的教学示意	Not market data 不是市场数据
Net contribution 9,480 净贡献 9,480 美元	13,200 – 3,240 – 480, staff and software excluded 13,200 – 3,240 – 480，未计人员与软件	Write the exclusion when quoting 引用时写明未计什么
Distribution figure 分布图	Teaching illustration with relative sales index 教学示意，柱为相对销量指数	Not real statistics for any category 不是任何品类的真实统计

Teaching simulations and illustration figures must be labelled as such every time they are quoted.

LESSON 15 · THE LONG TAIL

Write the ledger before the opinion.

先写账本，再下判断。

NEXT: LESSON 16 · 下一课

Pricing: who pays, how much, and through which mechanism.

定价：谁付钱、付多少、用哪种机制。

跨境电商概论 · Cross-border Ecommerce · Guilin Tourism University

授课教师 宋友开 · 2026—2027 学年第一学期

“The tail rewards breadth, searchability and cost discipline — not enthusiasm for unusual goods.”

收束一句话：长尾奖励广度、可搜索性与成本纪律，不奖励对冷门商品的热情。