



Evergreen Trading

Frequently Asked Questions 2026



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Corporate Trade Explained

Companies often have capital inside their business that is no longer working as hard as it could, from excess inventory and underused assets to real estate, contractual obligations and existing media investment.

Evergreen brings a different financial perspective to those situations. We identify where value can be activated, put our own capital behind the opportunity, and use our independent principal media model to make that capital work harder for a company's future growth.

These are the questions Finance, Procurement, and Marketing leaders ask us most.



Corporate Trade

What is corporate trade and how does it work?

Corporate trade is a financial strategy for recovering more value from underperforming assets and redirect that value into planned media. Rather than accept conventional recovery on excess inventory, equipment, real estate or other assets, a corporate trade firm purchases the asset at an agreed value, and the company fulfills an associated media commitment over time.

What is the difference between corporate trade and corporate barter?

The terms are often used interchangeably, but “barter” can imply a simple exchange of goods for advertising. Modern “corporate trade” is a structured financial transaction involving asset valuation, capital investment, media economics and measurable financial outcomes.

The more important distinction is how the provider creates the value. Ask whether the firm puts its own capital at risk, whether each opportunity is independently underwritten, how media is sourced and priced, and whether both the asset and media economics can be independently verified.

What does a corporate trade engagement look like end to end?

Evergreen relationships are designed to move from discovery to proof to continuous value creation without forcing a transaction before we know the opportunity is right.

Stage 1

ValueScan™

A focused diagnostic to identify underutilized or trapped value across the business. We examine areas such as surplus or distressed inventory, unused media credits, sponsorship and partnership assets, aging or slow-moving assets, and other areas where capital may not be working as hard as it could.

Stage 2

Opportunity Modeling™

We evaluate the most promising opportunities against the realities of the business including financial impact, operational feasibility, timing, scalability and media implications. Because Evergreen’s own capital will ultimately be at risk, we don’t force an opportunity simply to create a transaction.

Stage 3

Pilot Activation™

When the economics are right, we prove the model through a focused first engagement, perhaps one product category, business unit, sponsorship, media pocket or region. Evergreen commits its own capital, and the results are measured against agreed financial and media benchmarks.

Stage 4

Enterprise Partnership

The greatest value is typically created beyond the first transaction. As Evergreen develops a deeper understanding of the business, we continually identify additional opportunities across Operations, Procurement, Finance and Marketing.

What types of assets can be used in a corporate trade program?

More than excess inventory and much more than we can even list here. Opportunities can include obsolete or discontinued inventory, returned goods, ingredients and raw materials, equipment, real estate and leases, displays and point-of-sale materials, gift cards and loyalty obligations, sponsorships, advertising inventory and other underutilized assets or commitments. Each opportunity is evaluated individually for value, restrictions, and feasibility.

If it sits on the balance sheet and is not working, it is worth evaluating. Not sure what may qualify?

What kind of company is a fit for corporate trade?

Companies with meaningful media investment and underperforming assets or obligations are typically the strongest candidates. The strongest programs occur when Finance, Procurement and Marketing can align around the same value equation: one function may own the asset, another the financial outcome, and another the growth investment. That cross-functional alignment is what allows an initial transaction to become an ongoing source of value.

How large is a corporate trade opportunity?

The opportunity extends well beyond excess inventory. Capital can become underproductive across inventory, real estate, equipment, capital expenditures, contractual obligations, sponsorships and other areas of the enterprise. Most organizations understandably manage these situations individually. Evergreen provides a different financial perspective, looking across them to determine where capital can be activated and redirected toward more productive uses.



About Evergreen Trading

What does Evergreen Trading do?

Evergreen Trading is an independent, 100% employee-owned corporate trade and media investment firm. We help organizations unlock trapped enterprise value and convert it into funded growth. Operating at the intersection of finance, procurement, and marketing, we activate capital that is already inside the business without new cash, debt, or dilution.

How is Evergreen different from a traditional media agency?

A traditional media agency acts as your agent: it plans and buys media using your capital and earns a fee for doing it. Evergreen is a financial solutions partner that operates as a principal. We invest our own capital in the media market and carry the risk ourselves, which lets us create value for clients that their budget alone wouldn't fund.

We bring the same media expertise, but we look at your business more broadly, working across finance, procurement, and marketing to find value that sits outside the marketing budget, then converting it into working media through our principal buying platform.

That makes us additive rather than competitive. Your agency of record (AOR) continues to own media strategy and planning. Evergreen operates inside that plan, bringing capital, principal buying power, and execution to it.

Different lenses. Complementary roles. One objective: growth.



Does Evergreen replace our agency of record?

No. Evergreen complements your existing agency relationships rather than replace them. Your team sets strategy, your agency builds the plan, and Evergreen applies the value gained through media investing to improve returns on that plan. Swim lanes are defined at the outset, and your agency stays in control of planning and buying decisions.

What does 100% employee ownership mean for clients?

It means we answer to one stakeholder: You. Evergreen has no holding-company agenda, no proprietary inventory to move, and no incentive to recommend anything that does not create measurable value. Employee owners evaluate every opportunity as owners rather than vendors which is why we decline opportunities where we cannot create incremental value.

Who are the leading corporate trade companies in the United States?

Corporate trade is a highly specialized industry, with only a small number of established U.S. firms offering the full financial model. Evergreen is one of the leading independent firms in the category.

We are 100% employee-owned and combine financial solutions, asset expertise, and a true principal media investment platform to help companies activate capital and put it back to work for growth.

Traditional corporate trade combines asset-based financial solutions with media investment: purchasing underperforming assets or addressing other financial challenges, putting their own capital at risk, and using real principal-based buying to create incremental value for clients.

What is Evergreen's background?

Evergreen Trading was founded in 2009 by Gordon Zellner after years of working in corporate trade and across the finance, marketing, and agency worlds. That experience gave him a close-up view of both the potential of the business and where he believed it could be better.

His conviction was simple: corporate trade is a specialized business and should be treated that way. Every company, every challenge and every opportunity is different. As the industry grew, Zellner saw too much emphasis on scale and standardized solutions and not enough on understanding the individual client and building around what they actually needed.

Evergreen was created to take a different approach: stay close to the client, remain highly specialized, solve problems creatively, and build every solution around the realities of the business rather than a formula.

More than 15 years later, that philosophy still shapes Evergreen: we never set out to be the biggest; we set out to be the best partner for the clients we choose to serve.

Excess Inventory and Asset Recovery

How can I avoid writing off excess or obsolete inventory?

A write-off is the last option, not the only one. Start by determining whether the inventory has more financial potential than its liquidation value suggests. Evergreen evaluates the conventional recovery available, the costs and restrictions associated with remarketing the asset, and the additional value we may be able to create through our financial and media model. The result is recovery above what conventional channels return, plus offsetting media value rather than a charge against the P&L.

Corporate trade versus liquidation, which recovers more?

Corporate trade typically recovers meaningfully more. Conventional secondary-market recovery returns a fraction of cost. In a corporate trade program, assets are purchased at above-market value, and the incremental value is delivered as media the company would otherwise fund with cash. The combined recovery frequently reaches book value or better.

How do I monetize excess inventory beyond discounting or liquidation?

Corporate trade can provide another path: eligible inventory is purchased at an agreed above-market value, moved through approved channels and connected to planned media investment. This may preserve more value without relying on consumer discounting.

How do companies move surplus inventory without hurting the brand or channel?

Channel protection is a condition of the program, not an afterthought. Channel protection is designed into the transaction before an asset moves. We establish approved and prohibited geographies, retailers, marketplaces, buyers, and channels with the client. Assets are then remarketed within those agreed parameters, with documentation and verification built into the process.





How do I recover value from discontinued, returned, or seasonal goods?

The opportunity depends on more than the asset's resale value. We look at the full situation: what the company has invested in the asset, what it could recover through conventional channels, timing and shelf-life considerations, brand and distribution restrictions, and the cost of holding or disposing of it.

From there, we can determine whether corporate trade offers a better financial path and how the recovered value could be put to more productive use elsewhere in the business. The earlier these assets are evaluated, the more options a company typically has to preserve and recover value.

What can I do with idle real estate or capital equipment?

Idle facilities, surplus equipment, and non-core real estate carry ongoing cost and consume capital. They can be converted into media value through the same structure used for inventory. For asset-heavy organizations, these are often the largest single sources of trapped capital on the balance sheet.

How do I turn surplus gift cards or advertising time into value?

Unredeemed gift cards, expiring loyalty points, unused sponsorship assets, and unsold advertising inventory are all tradeable. These are obligations and commitments rather than physical goods, which is precisely why they are overlooked. Each carries value that can be activated and redirected toward funding growth.

Media Quality, Transparency, and Governance

What is principal-based media buying, and is it transparent?

Principal-based buying means Evergreen invests its own capital in media inventory. Unlike brokered buying, where an agency uses client dollars to purchase media on the client's behalf, Evergreen takes ownership of the media and assumes the financial risk. The economics are created through forward media investments. By committing our capital to media partners in advance, we can create a positive spread between our investment and the value of the media. That spread enables us to create and return incremental value to clients through our corporate trade financial solutions. In simple terms, you can think of it as media arbitrage with Evergreen's capital at risk.

We believe true principal-based buying requires three things:

- **Real capital at risk.** The principal invests its own money rather than relying on client dollars to fund the media purchase.
- **Separation between planning and principal buying.** Media strategy and planning should be independent of the economics available to the principal buyer, keeping what is right for the client's media plan separate from what is profitable for the buyer.
- **Independent verification.** Pricing, quality and delivery should be objectively measurable, with third-party transparency and audit rights that allow clients to verify the value they receive.



Is corporate trade media good quality, and where does the advertising run?

Corporate trade should not mean accepting different media standards. Evergreen works within the client's existing plan, channel requirements, KPIs, brand-safety standards and cost benchmarks. Our media capabilities span the full funnel and include linear, digital, programmatic, streaming, audio, OOH and other major channels, allowing us to execute where the client's strategy and audiences require. If the media doesn't belong on the client's plan, it doesn't belong in an Evergreen solution.

How does Evergreen ensure transparency and governance?

Programs are designed to be auditable. Media is benchmarked against your historic rates and verified by independent third-party media auditors, asset valuations are documented, and reporting is built to withstand procurement review and internal governance requirements.

Corporate trade versus traditional agency media buying, which is better?

As an integral part of the marketing team, Evergreen's expertise lies in media value strategy, not media channel strategy. We partner with our clients and their media agencies to extract maximum value while ensuring the same quality media.

How is the value of a program measured and verified?

Compare the asset's documented market value with the cash cost of the approved media plan and the portion funded through trade. Agency post-buy reporting, agreed KPIs, proof of disposition proceeds and an independent media auditor can provide additional verification.

Getting Started

Do I have to commit to a full corporate trade program upfront?

You don't need to commit to a full corporate trade program to get started. Evergreen begins with ValueScan™, a focused diagnostic designed to identify where underutilized or trapped value may exist across the business before determining whether a transaction makes sense.

From there, we evaluate the most promising opportunities through Opportunity Modeling™, looking at the potential financial impact, operational feasibility, timing, scalability and media implications. If there is a strong opportunity, we can move into a focused Pilot Activation™ to prove the model before expanding.

The process is designed to meet the client where they are: identify the opportunity first, prove the economics, then scale when it makes sense.

What happens in the first conversation with Evergreen?

Probably not what you expect. We're not coming in with a standard pitch or looking for an asset to trade.

We're curious about your business:

- What's sitting on the balance sheet longer than you'd like?
- Where are you taking write-downs?
- What commitments aren't delivering what you expected?
- What would you fund if you had another source of capital?

Sometimes we find an opportunity quickly. Sometimes the conversation sends us somewhere neither of us expected. And sometimes we determine there isn't anything worth pursuing right now. That's the point.

The first conversation is simply about looking at the business together from a different financial perspective and seeing what might be possible.

Still have questions?

Every business holds more value than its balance sheet reveals. If you are evaluating what is trapped inside yours, we are happy to take a look.

Contact us at 844-364-0700 or jherrmann@evergreentrading.com.



Evergreen Trading

Evergreen Trading helps organizations unlock trapped enterprise value by looking at their business from a different financial perspective. Where traditional approaches see inventory, equipment, real estate, and other underutilized assets as costs to manage, Evergreen sees sources of capital that can be activated. We combine principal investing, capital optimization, and corporate trade to turn trapped capital into funded growth, without disrupting existing agency relationships or requiring new cash, debt, or dilution.

Our clients include private and publicly traded corporations, market leaders, multinationals, challenger brands, and PE-backed portfolio companies across retail, consumer packaged goods, healthcare, financial services, technology, industrials, and business services.

Founded in 2009 and headquartered in New York, Evergreen is 100% employee-owned through an ESOP, so every team member has a personal stake in our collective success. With our own capital at risk, the client's interest is the only one we serve.

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