



CASE STUDY

How SFA Trade Shows Helped Lady Babka Break Into National Retail

10 NEW RETAIL
ACCOUNTS

\$100K IN
SALES

National RETAIL AND
DISTRIBUTION EXPANSION

***“The investment
in exhibiting is absolutely
worth it. It’s measured
not just by sales, but also
by connections.”***



BACKGROUND

Lady Babka is a specialty food business producing handcrafted babkas in the Austin, Texas area.

After founders and sisters Sariel and Adar won a 2024 pitch contest that landed them a booth at the Specialty Food Association's (SFA) 2025 winter trade show, they saw an opportunity to take their growing business beyond its regional roots.



By November 2025, Lady Babka had exhibited at two SFA shows, generated \$100,000 in sales from new partnerships, and established relationships with 10 new retail accounts. Two of those partnerships led to national distribution of Lady Babka through Williams Sonoma and Misfits Market.

**WILLIAMS
SONOMA**
CALIFORNIA

**Misfits
Market**

THE CHALLENGE

Establishing National Retail Relationships

For an emerging specialty food brand, getting in front of the right retail buyers and building enough credibility to turn those conversations into partnerships can be challenging.

Lady Babka was preparing to expand beyond its Austin roots. In late 2024, the company rebranded from Babka ATX to Lady Babka, positioning the brand for greater national relevance.



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SFA trade shows provided an opportunity to put their refreshed brand, specialty products, and story in front of a diverse audience of retail buyers primed for discovery.



THE STRATEGY:

Show Up, Stand Out, and Keep Showing Up

Lady Babka approached SFA trade shows as more than a one-time sales opportunity. The team combined preparation, strategic visibility, and consistent participation to develop relationships over time.

In January 2025 at the SFA winter show, Lady Babka booked both exhibit space and a \$200 paid spot in a product showcase area, a smart dual investment that paid off big.

The product showcase spot brought the Williams Sonoma buyers to Lady Babka's booth and initiated their eventual retail partnership.

But the win wasn't immediate.

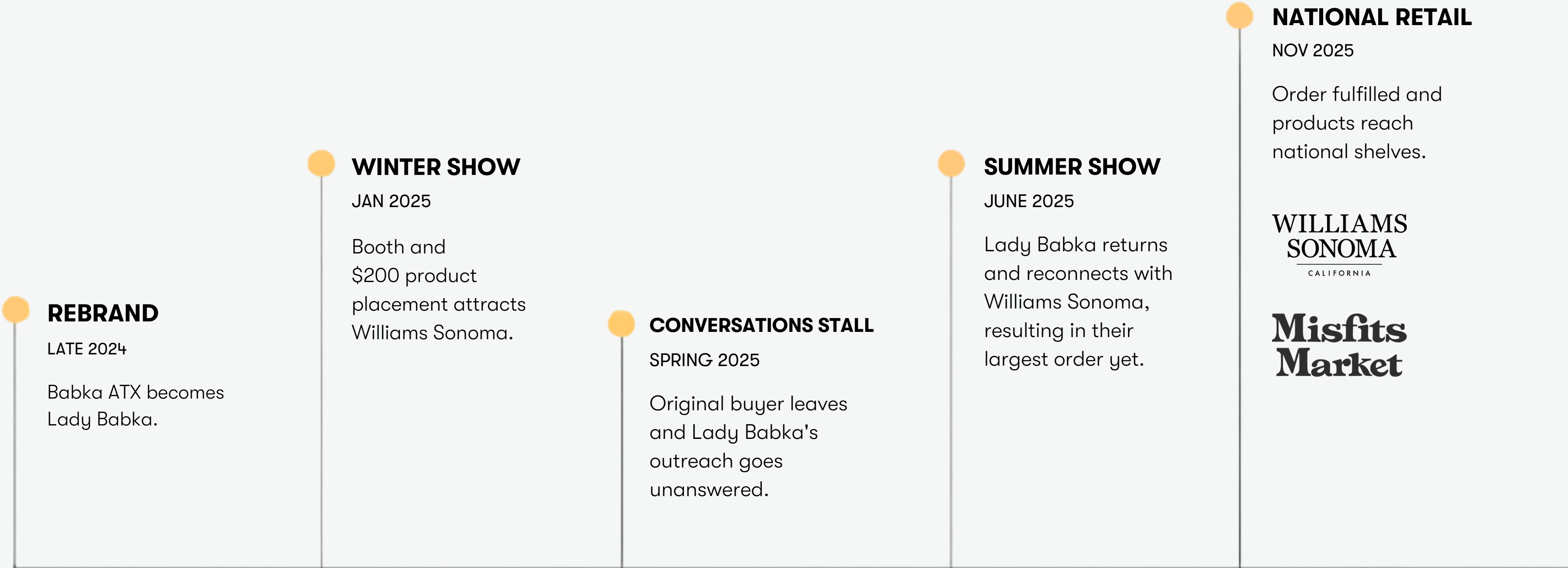
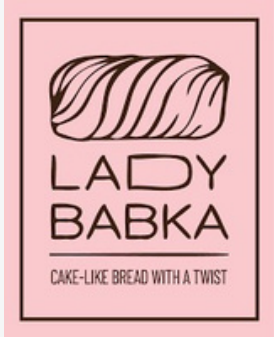
Conversations with Williams Sonoma stalled that spring after the buyer Lady Babka had originally connected with left the company.

Rather than treating the lost contact as a missed opportunity, Lady Babka returned for SFA's 2025 Summer Fancy Food show. There, the team reconnected with Williams Sonoma and restarted sourcing conversations.

By fall, Lady Babka had finalized and fulfilled the Williams Sonoma order. Their products were on shelf in November in time for holiday shopping.

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Lady Babka



WHY LADY BABKA CAME BACK

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There are many food industry trade shows where an emerging brand can potentially meet buyers. **For Lady Babka, however, SFA offered something beyond access.**

Sariel and Adar point to the community, quality of connections, and sense of joy they experienced at SFA events.



“SFA and its shows feel like a safe place for happy people... at the Fancy Food Show, it’s like you just get a big hug.”

SFA shows create opportunities for brands to connect with relevant industry audiences through buyer attendance, networking and promotional tools, paid visibility opportunities, and pre-show educational sessions and live Q&As.

For Lady Babka, those opportunities worked together. Paid placement created an initial point of discovery. Returning to another show allowed the team to revive a promising relationship. Continued participation helped turn connections into measurable business growth.



THE RESULTS

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Lady Babka's strategic, consistent participation in SFA trade shows helped create measurable growth across sales, retail relationships, and geographic reach.

10

NEW RETAIL ACCOUNTS

Conversations at SFA shows initiated and reinforced retail relationships.

\$100K

IN SALES

New partnerships created specifically through the show generated \$100,000 in sales for the business.

National

RETAIL AND DISTRIBUTION EXPANSION

Lady Babka secured partnerships with Williams Sonoma, Misfits Market, and smaller local retailers across multiple regions.

“The volume of the Williams Sonoma order was way more than we had ever done before, but we made it happen.”



TAKEAWAYS FOR EMERGING BRANDS

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TREAT TRADE SHOWS AS A GROWTH CHANNEL, NOT A SINGLE EVENT

Lady Babka's results didn't come from one booth interaction. The company used multiple SFA touchpoints to develop relationships.

CONSISTENCY CAN TURN A STALLED CONVERSATION INTO AN OPPORTUNITY

When Lady Babka's original Williams Sonoma contact left the company, the relationship could have ended. Returning to the next SFA show gave the team another opportunity to reconnect before the lead went cold.



STRATEGIC VISIBILITY DOESN'T ALWAYS REQUIRE A LARGE INVESTMENT

Lady Babka spent just \$200 on a paid product placement that attracted Williams Sonoma buyers to its booth. For an emerging brand, carefully selected visibility opportunities can create an outsized impact.



THE BOTTOM LINE



What began as an opportunity to exhibit at an SFA trade show became a pathway to national growth for Lady Babka.

Through strategic visibility, repeated participation, and smart preparation, Lady Babka turned its first trade show booth into 10 new retail relationships, \$100,000 in sales, and national distribution expansion.

It's not easy to grow a specialty food brand. But exhibiting at SFA's Summer Fancy Food Show or Winter FancyFaire* offers companies an invaluable leg up: three days of connection, feedback, and opportunities.

