

A Dummies' Guide to Hacking U.S. Manufacturing for Small Businesses

How a small publisher keeps game production in the U.S., sidestepping tariffs with a toolkit of tips and tricks.

PAGOSA SPRINGS, CO, UNITED STATES,
September 25, 2025 /

EINPresswire.com/ -- With tariffs reshaping global supply chains, one indie publisher is showing that Made in the USA is not only possible, but competitive. Arrow Dot Press, the company behind the lighthearted card game [Koalas on Broadway™](#), is sharing a transparent “playbook” of how small businesses can tap U.S. manufacturing creatively and avoid relying on China.

“Most people think producing in America is impossible for small companies, but that’s not true if you know where to look,” said David

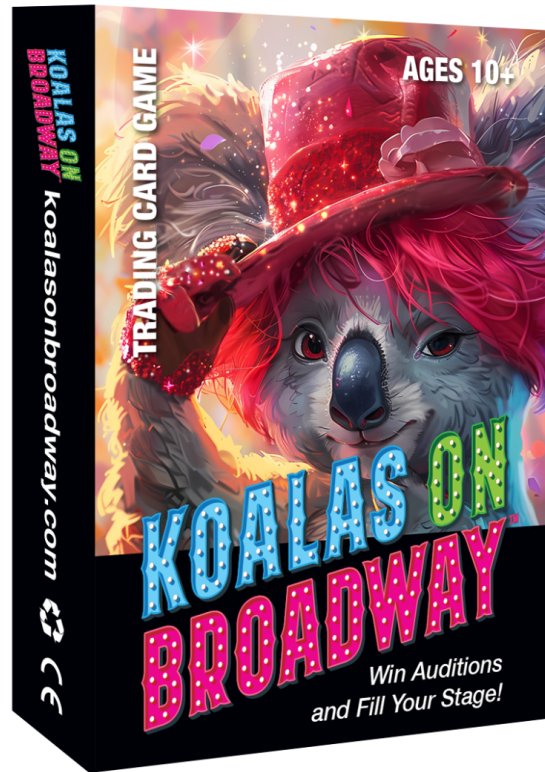
Henson, founder of [Arrow Dot Press Ltd.](#) “By piggybacking on existing high-volume items and using vendors with specialized equipment, we’ve kept Koalas on Broadway™ fully U.S.-made, affordable, and high quality. The same playbook can work for other small publishers, too.”

Build a Production Ladder

Arrow Dot Press outlines a step-by-step approach any small publisher can adapt:

Prototype bridge: SmartSet (Minneapolis) prints professional laser card games not fully automated like Bicycle, but high enough quality for testing consumer demand.

Packaging at test stage: Off-the-shelf boxes save costs; Arrow Dot Press used ClearBags.com to box their Go Bark™ and Cat Trois™ card games, which consumers snapped up at GenCon.



Koalas On Broadway Card Game

Automation volume: USPCC/Bicycle (Cincinnati) mills its own paper, delivers exceptional quality, and operates at massive automation scale. Bicycle prints Koalas on Broadway™, printing a few 1000s but piggybacking on millions of units of production without tariff paperwork.

Creative Vendor Hacks

Boxes: Instead of pricey custom boxes, Arrow Dot Press uses Calumet Carton's (Chicago) sturdy mailer - not a traditional game box, but very close, very high quality, and genuinely competitive with China. We wrap the box with laser printed belly band printed by SmartSet and it creates a sharp-looking deluxe two-player set of Koalas on Broadway™.



Cat Trois Card Game

Paper playmats: Formax (St. Louis), a specialist in paper map printing, provides automated folding equipment perfectly suited to large paper play mats - delivering high quality at reasonable volumes.

“

Most people think producing in America is impossible, but by learning to use U.S. vendors we've kept Koalas on Broadway™ card game fully U.S.-made.”

David Henson | Arrow Dot Press

Cloth playmats: Counter Point (Las Vegas) normally produces bar mats by the thousands, but their cloth mat printing is top-tier. Unlike many overseas vendors, they don't require a container-load minimum, so printing deluxe cloth mats becomes viable for indie publishers.

Lean Fulfillment

To keep logistics simple and costs low, Arrow Dot Press fulfills directly from a mini-warehouse - a shipping container outfitted for storage and packing. This nimble approach avoids the overhead of third-party fulfillment while still scaling efficiently.

Sharing Information Openly

“In China, manufacturers share information freely, that's part of why they scale so quickly,” Henson added. “In the U.S., too often small publishers keep secrets. We think the opposite: by

sharing vendors and methods openly, we strengthen the whole ecosystem, proving that US manufacturing can work for small companies and startups.

About Arrow Dot Press

Arrow Dot Press LLC, based in Pagosa Springs, Colorado, publishes innovative card games and crowdfunded book projects. Their Koalas on Broadway™ card game was a hit at GenCon 2025 and is now available for retailers nationwide. Learn more at [ArrowDotPress.com](https://arrowdotpress.com).

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Go Bark Card Game



Rock Paper Scissors Word Card Game



Koalas On Broadway Card Game - Cards

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