



AMAZON CONSUMER SURVEY 2017

Key Insights Into Shopper Behavior on Amazon



 cpcstrategy

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Introduction



Introduction

There's no question that Amazon's the current queen of online retail.

Just take a look at the facts:

- ✓ 33.8% of retail website visits during Nov & Dec 2016 were on Amazon ([Internet Retailer](#))
- ✓ About 44% of U.S. households have Amazon Prime ([Business Insider](#))
- ✓ 44% of shoppers now start their product search on Amazon ([Bloomreach](#))
- ✓ Amazon is worth more than Sears, Macy's, and Target combined ([CNN Money](#))

Those are some pretty astounding stats.

But beyond these, what do we know about individual Amazon shoppers' driving motivators?

What makes them choose Amazon first, which device they use when they shop, and how often are they willing to try new brands?

Today, we're going to dive into some deeper questions about the way shoppers interact with this retail behemoth.

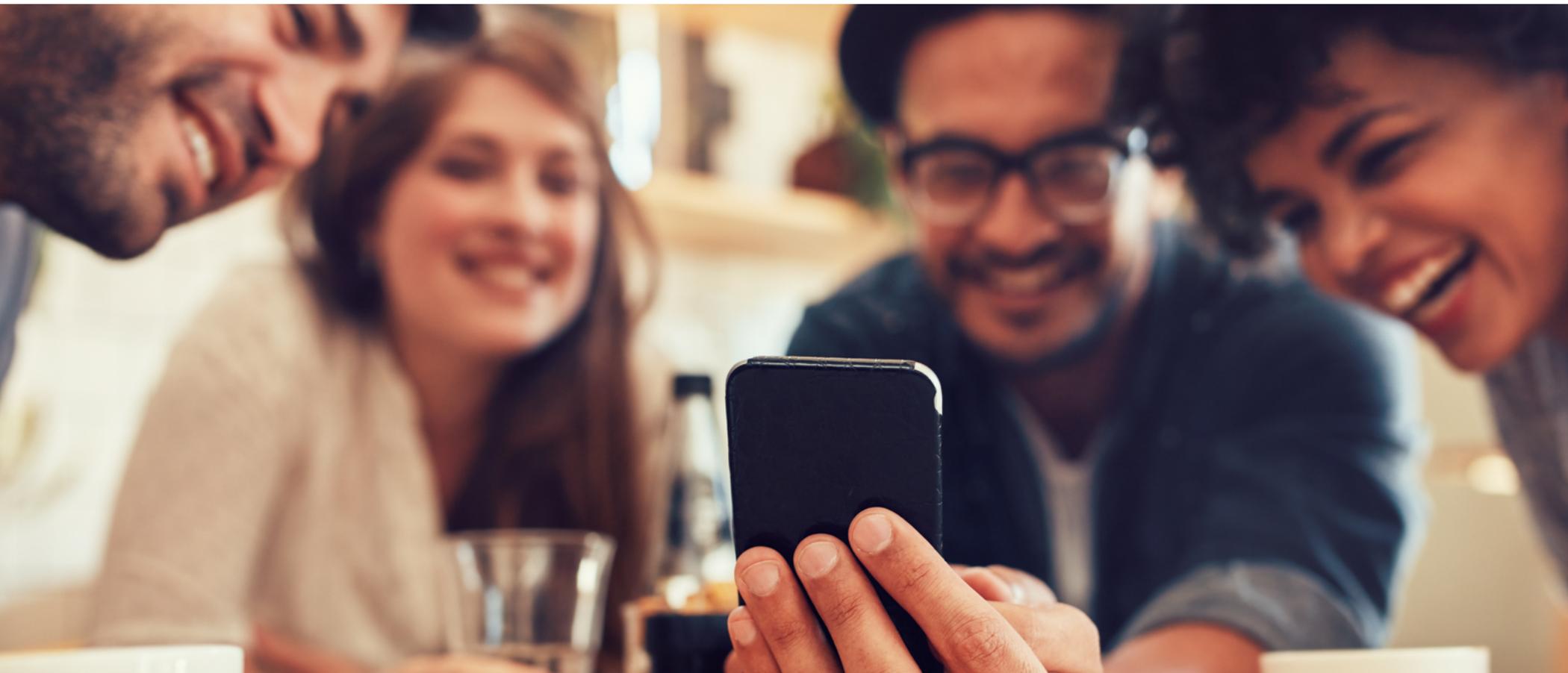




We asked 1500 men and women five key questions about their Amazon shopping habits—from product discovery to checkout.

Some results were expected (Amazon shoppers love free shipping) and others were less predictable (men were more likely than women to run price checks before making purchases).

Most importantly, there's something for every brand or seller to learn from these results, which you'll find in the "Key Takeaways" after each section.



Survey Results



Survey Results

1. Nearly 50% of Amazon Customers are Open to Trying New Brands or Products

A total of 48.5% respondents are open to “occasionally” or “frequently” trying new products or brands on Amazon, while 20.5% prefer to stick with familiar ones.

A surprising 31% of those surveyed claimed they “do not shop on Amazon,” and this trend continues throughout our survey results.

This could be because those survey recipients hoped this was a “gateway” question they could answer negatively to avoid answering further questions, or it could be that they really don’t shop on Amazon (and perhaps use Google Shopping or other shopping channels to discover products instead).

Results are inconclusive, which is why we’ll spend most of this study breaking down the results of those who actually reported to shop on Amazon.

[Back to the study.](#)

How often do you use Amazon to discover new products or brands?





When we get deeper into the actual response data, a more interesting narrative emerges.

How often do you use Amazon to discover new products or brands?			
Answer	Women	Men	Both
Rarely —I purchase products/brands I know	20.64%	20.27%	20.46%
Sometimes —I occasionally try new products	25.57%	25.07%	25.32%
Frequently —I often try new products/brands	24.37%	22.00%	23.19%
N/A —I don't shop on Amazon	29.43%	32.67%	31.05%

Here's how those risk takers who claimed to "frequently" or "sometimes" try out new products and brands on Amazon broke down by age:

- ✓ 76% of 35-44-year-olds
- ✓ 72% of 25-34-year-olds
- ✓ 67% of 45-54-year-olds

Shoppers that preferred to play it safe and purchase familiar brands or products were ages 65+ (35% "rarely" purchase unknown brands/products, 40% "sometimes" purchase unknown brands/products).





It's not surprising that the majority of our respondents are willing to risk purchasing lesser-known brands or products.

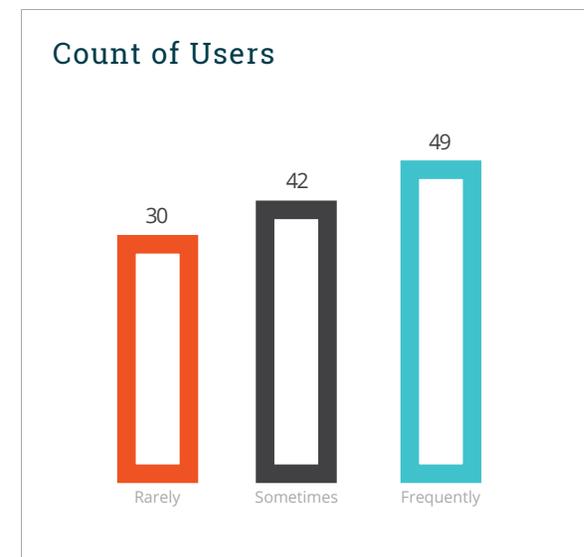
A recent [Nielson report](#) indicated that the success of new products is reliant on four main factors: Affordability, convenience, novelty, and brand recognition.

[Data in Section 5](#) reveals that both women and men who shop on Amazon value affordability. Of course, it's a big part of the reason they shop on Amazon in the first place.

Amazon shoppers may be more likely to take a risk with a new brand or product than they would in a typical brick-and-mortar when it's offset by a great price, and it doesn't hurt that there are reviews to help determine whether an unfamiliar product is legitimate.

Brands may have traditionally held sway in consumers' minds, but now we're in an age when private labelers have a great opportunity to gain market share and compete on Amazon.

Chart: Ages 65+, Preferred Shopping Known Brands



Amazon has clearly cracked the private label code with their popular private label brands, which in some cases are among the top sellers in competitive categories such as [Health and Personal Care](#).

In the near future, competition between private labelers and brands could heat up as more and more customers opt for price over brand name.

Best Sellers in Health & Personal Care

- 

Angel Soft Toilet Paper, 48 Double Rolls, Bath...
★★★★★ 5,079
\$21.99 ✓Prime
- 

Bounty Select-a-Size Paper Towels, White,...
★★★★★ 2,754
\$28.99 ✓Prime
- 

AmazonBasics AA Performance Alkaline...
★★★★★ 10,518
\$12.49 ✓Prime



Key Takeaway:

Amazon shoppers aren't necessarily brand-loyal—but they are price loyal, so ensure you're pricing products competitively if you're a 3P seller. If you're not 3P, [consider a hybrid approach to selling](#) rather than being a full vendor so you can maintain more control over pricing for specific products.

"This isn't surprising—a majority of household names will go the vendor route on Amazon, which means they can't adjust their prices on products as swiftly as a mom-and-pop private labeler can. Amazon is a price-sensitive platform, and it can dramatically affect conversions and make shoppers more open to different lesser known brands."

"This data reflects the importance of social proof and why the integrity of Amazon's reviews plays such a vital role in the marketplace's success. Peer reviews help alleviate concerns and allow for customers to take more calculated risks on items they may not have attempted during a traditional brick-and-mortar store transaction."

"The brand consumers trust the most is Amazon's itself. Shoppers trust that, when they perform a search, Amazon will display the most relevant, most reviewed, best priced products which have the fastest shipping times. They also have the confidence of Amazon's A-to-Z guarantee in the event that they aren't fully satisfied, so the risk of trying a new product or a new brand is greatly reduced on Amazon."



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2. Amazon Shoppers Don't Adhere to Traditional Retail Shopping Days

Black Friday weekend in 2016 wasn't a huge driver for our survey respondents, with 66.6% claiming they didn't make any purchases on Amazon during that time, and 13.6% claiming they only window shopped (a total of 80.2%).

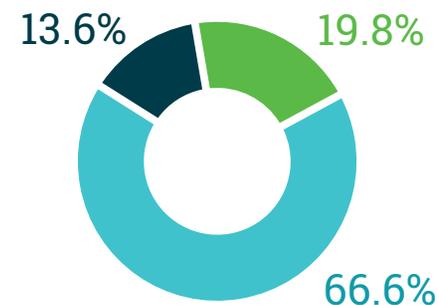
Did you buy something on Amazon over Black Friday weekend?			
Answer	Women	Men	Both
Yes	19.84%	19.71%	19.78%
No	67.78%	65.51%	66.65%
Browsed —I browsed there, but didn't buy anything	12.38%	14.78%	13.58%

As far as gender goes, respondents were almost exactly matched in responses across the board. Income was in the same range as it is for most of the respondents in this survey—between \$25,000-\$49,999.

This survey data is supported by our internal clients' data for [Amazon performance during Black Friday weekend 2016](#)

Amazon customers didn't adhere to traditional shopping days over Black Friday weekend, which includes Cyber Monday. Overall, based on our data, neither Black Friday or Cyber Monday really accelerated sales for our clients.

Did you buy something on Amazon over Black Friday weekend?



- Yes
- No
- Browsed—I browsed there, but didn't buy anything



This makes sense considering Amazon ditched the traditional holiday shopping weekend and expanded to “Black Friday month, with deals every day leading up to December 22.

Interestingly, Amazon’s own made-up holiday, Prime Day, [increased customer orders on the platform by 50% in 2016.](#)

Key Takeaway:

Amazon presents gives brands the opportunity to depend less on a traditional retail calendar, and expand their promotional tactics year round.

"Amazon has conditioned its customer base to expect deals year-round, and has removed the element of urgency around deals—which means it’s far more convenient for customers. It’s important for sellers to have exposure outside of those main holidays, especially because Amazon’s getting more selective about the deals they promote on those peak shopping days. "

"This goes back to the customer expectation when shopping on Amazon. Amazon shoppers trust that they’ll always be able to find the products they want at a good price and with fast shipping, which reduces the importance of needing to purchase over a particular holiday weekend."



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3. 54% of Shoppers Still Occasionally Price Check Amazon Against Other Sites

One study showed that [55% of consumers start their search for a product on Amazon](#), and it's pretty common to see brick-and-mortar shoppers check prices on Amazon before checking out in-store.

So do most consumers just assume Amazon has the best prices?

30% of respondents reported they "Sometimes" consult other sites before checking out on Amazon, and 23.5% claim they "Never" make a purchase on Amazon without comparing prices elsewhere first.

How often do you make purchases on Amazon without comparing prices on other sites?			
Answer	Women	Men	Both
Never —I always compare prices	21.01%	26.00%	23.51%
Sometimes —I occasionally check prices	32.31%	27.73%	30.02%
Frequently —I usually only consult Amazon	19.55%	16.93%	18.24%
N/A —I don't shop on Amazon	27.13%	29.33%	28.23%

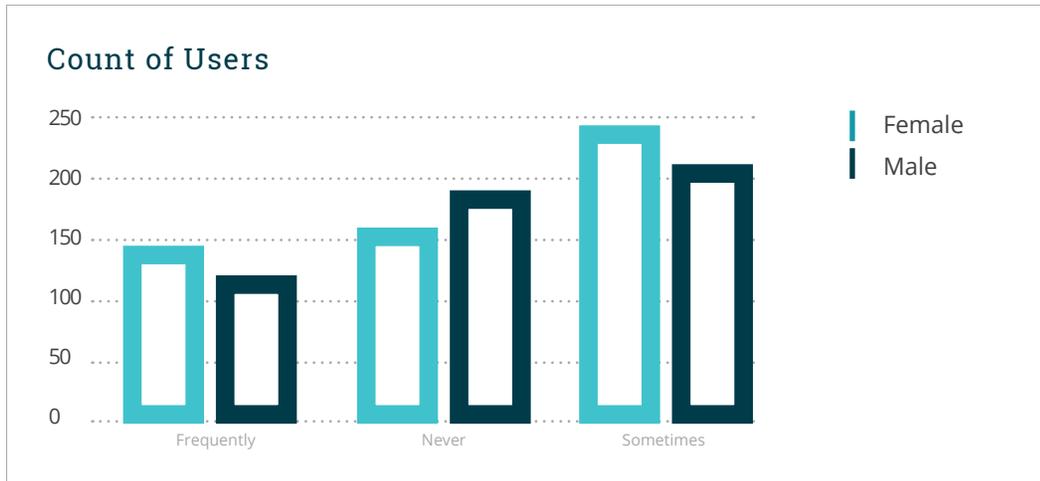
That's a total of 53.5% of Amazon shoppers who sometimes or frequently compare Amazon prices elsewhere.

How often do you make purchases on Amazon without comparing prices on other sites?





Chart: Men vs. Women, Preferred Comparing Prices on Amazon



Now let's talk about risk takers.

Women were more likely than men to “Frequently” or “Sometimes” make purchases on Amazon without checking prices elsewhere.

Men, on the other hand, were much more likely to claim they “Never” make a purchase on Amazon without comparing prices elsewhere.

It could be that shoppers are drawn in by the value that Amazon offers—the convenience of shipping via Prime, ordering with a single click, etc.—and are willing to pay slightly extra for that value, even if the product itself is cheaper elsewhere.

It's possible these shoppers hunt around on the Amazon marketplace comparing prices between sellers, but it's unlikely, considering some estimates indicate that [90% of customers](#) purchase from the featured “Buy Box” seller.





Key Takeaway:

Shoppers will look outside of Amazon to compare prices. Brands should influence that research process as much as possible by aggressively targeting branded searches on Adwords and Google Shopping ([using ISO Campaigns™](#)), and providing retailers with quality product content.

"Amazon is now price matching their products to compete with other brick and mortar deals running at the time. This should help combat the issue of people potentially leaving their site."

"There are two basic kinds of Amazon shoppers: There's the convenience shopper who values things like shipping speed and customer service. Then, there's the value shopper, who gravitates toward Amazon for great deals. And if they don't see a deal they want, they're going to see if it's cheaper elsewhere."



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4. For Now, Amazon Shoppers Still Prefer to Buy on Desktop

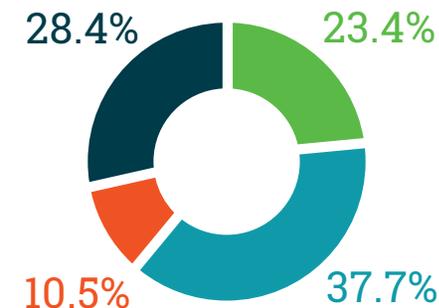
While numerous reports indicate [Amazon's app is king](#) in the U.S., our survey respondents didn't prefer to make purchases on their mobile device.

Desktop won out as the purchase device of choice, with nearly 40% of respondents claiming they shop either on a desktop computer or laptop.

Which device do you usually use when you buy something on Amazon?			
Answer	Women	Men	Both
Mobile phone	25.40%	21.33%	23.37%
Desktop computer or laptop	39.89%	35.47%	37.68%
Tablet	10.37%	10.67%	10.52%
N/A—I don't shop on Amazon	24.34%	32.53%	28.44%

Women were the most likely to make Amazon purchases from a desktop computer or laptop, and ages 55-65+0 most strongly preferred desktop computers above mobile and even tablet.

Which device do you usually use when you buy something on Amazon?

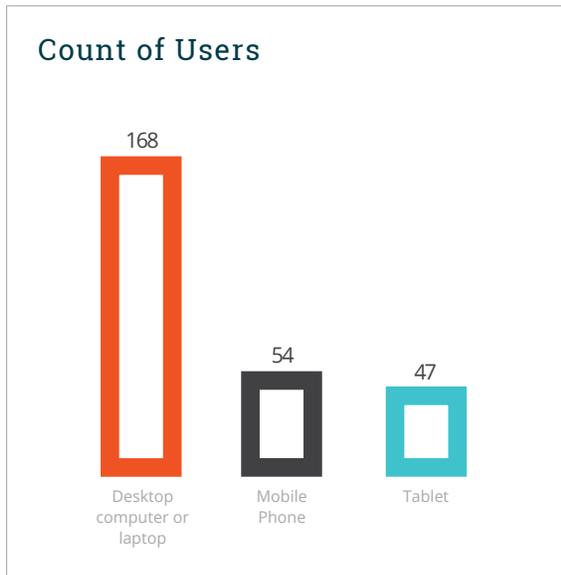


- Mobile phone
- Desktop computer or laptop
- Tablet
- N/A—I don't shop on Amazon





Chart: Ages 55-65+, Preferred Device to Shop on Amazon



"It's possible that these numbers could be impacted by work hours. The Amazon desktop site could see more action during the day when people are at work than the mobile app or site. "

Ages 25-34 were most likely out of all age groups to pull out their mobile phone to make a purchase, although their desktop preference is still slightly higher than their preference for mobile.

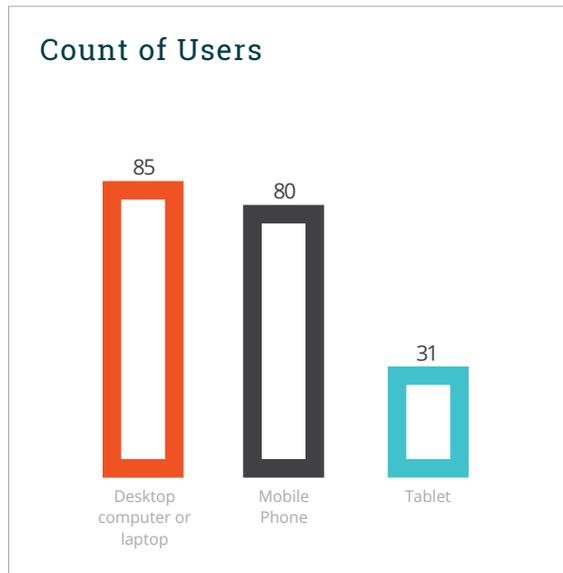


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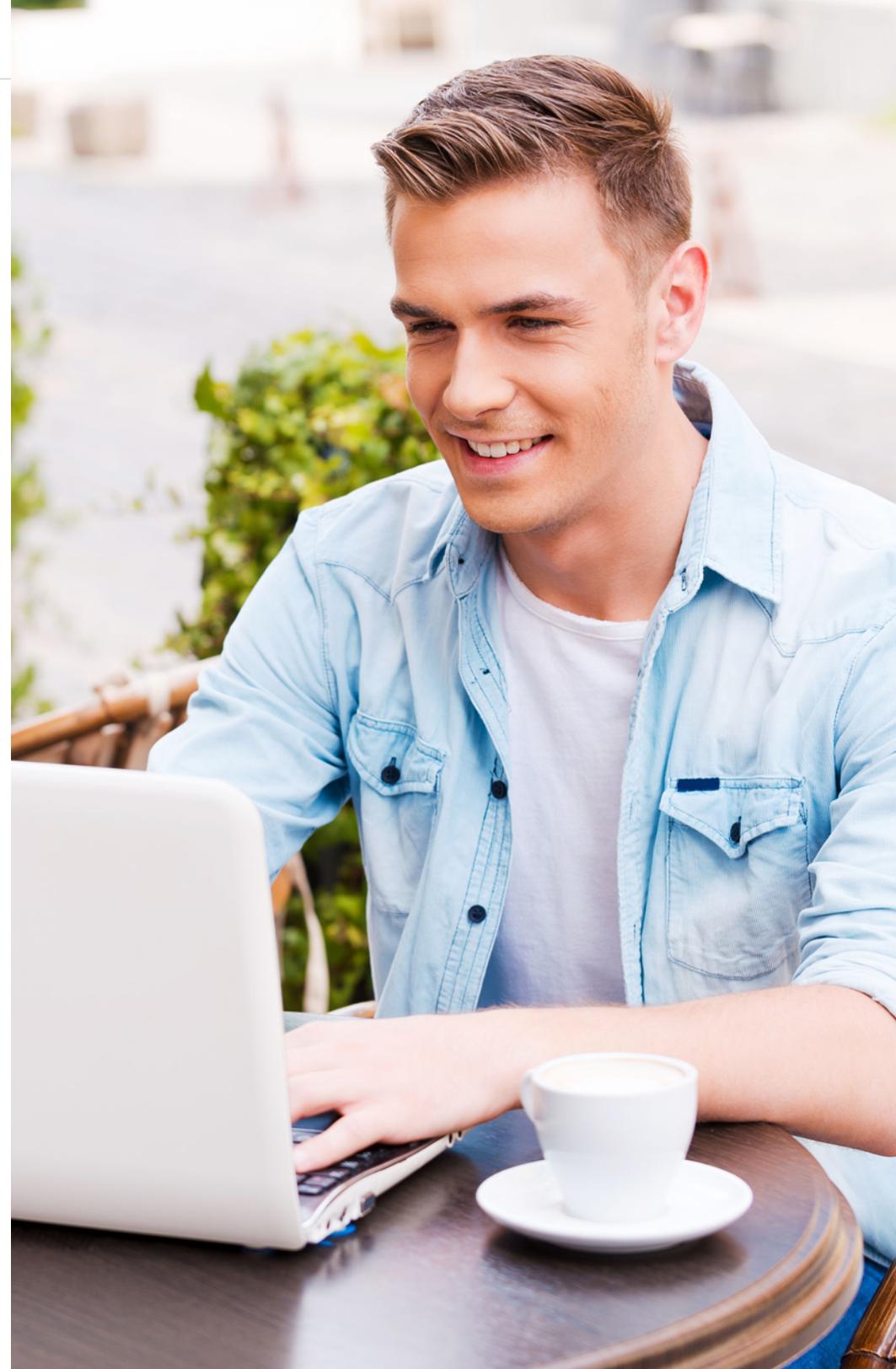


Chart: Ages 25-34, Preferred Device to Shop on Amazon



Although these numbers indicate desktop is still preferred, we firmly believe these numbers will even out as more people become comfortable with both researching *and* [completing purchases on smartphones and tablets](#).

Amazon has blurred the lines between devices with Prime membership and stored data across devices—and as we pointed out before, the Amazon app has become widely adopted in the US.



Key Takeaway:

Numbers of mobile shoppers will only go up—so ensure your [content is optimized across both mobile](#) and desktop.

"Trends have proven that mobile is the future of online shopping, but desktop is far from dead and still has value. Aim to optimize your content and creative around both mobile and desktop users. Find a way to appease both audiences. "



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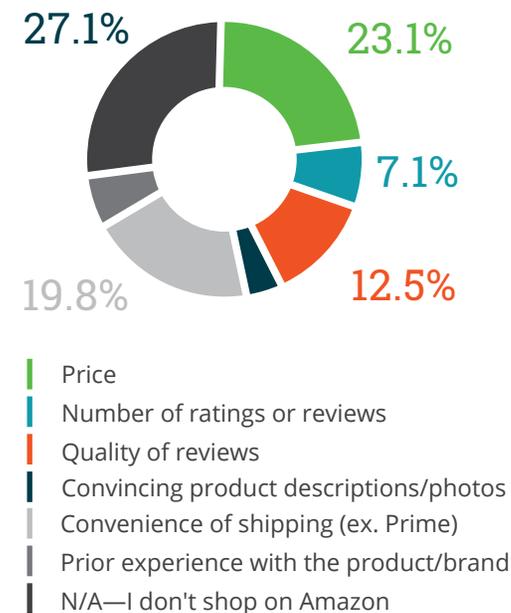
5. Price & Shipping the Most Important to Amazon Shoppers

Price won out as the determining factor in both male and female respondents' decisions to make a purchase on Amazon, followed by **convenience of shipping** and **quality of reviews**.

Number of ratings or reviews mattered more to men than to women (8.27% vs. 5.95%), as did convincing product descriptions and photos.

The last time you made a purchase on Amazon, what was the biggest factor in your decision?			
Answer	Women	Men	Both
Price	23.81%	22.44%	23.13%
Number of ratings or reviews	5.95%	8.27%	7.11%
Quality of reviews	14.42%	10.50%	12.46%
Convincing product descriptions and photos	3.57%	4.46%	4.02%
Convenience of shipping (ex. Prime)	20.24%	19.42%	19.83%
Prior experience with the product/brand	6.61%	6.17%	6.39%
N/A— I don't shop on Amazon	25.40%	28.74%	27.07%

The last time you made a purchase on Amazon, what was the biggest factor in your decision?



However, while quantity of reviews may not matter quite as much to women, the quality of those reviews does matter to 14.42% of women, compared to 10.50% of men.

Ages 55-65+ were least impressed by “Convincing product descriptions and photos,” “Price,” and “Quality of reviews” than any other age group.

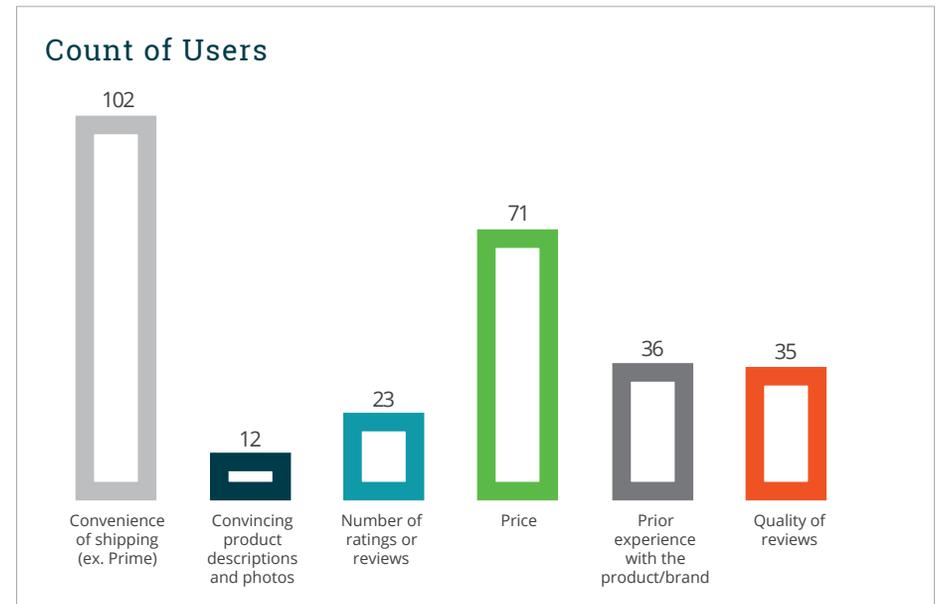
Instead, this group strongly values the “Convenience” of Amazon (ex. Prime’s free two-day shipping).

18-24-year-olds care far less about shipping and weigh price as the single most important factor in their choice to go with Amazon.

"18-24-year-olds are conditioned to expect free shipping when shopping online—it’s not the biggest reason why they would choose Amazon."

"This group probably also has less disposable income, which explains why price is so important."

Chart: Ages 55-65+, Preferred Convenience of Amazon



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Key Takeaway:

Price is king, but fast free shipping and customer reviews can make or break even the cheapest sale.

Use FBA (or Seller-Fulfilled FBA), check reviews frequently, and make sure your customers feel heard when there are issues with an order.



Conclusion



Conclusion

There are a few common themes that emerged in this survey:

- ✓ **Amazon customers seek value, not cheapness**
To say Amazon customers are “cheap” would be inaccurate. “Value seekers” is a more fitting term. This means they’re more willing to take risks, test out new or unknown products and brands, and invest in Amazon Prime for a better overall deal on year-long shipping as long as the benefits—think *fast* shipping or *more* paper towels—outweigh the costs.
- ✓ **More Amazon customers will shop via mobile in the future**
Although our data indicates more customers prefer to shop on desktop, we firmly believe that the number of Amazon app downloads indicates mobile will either balance out or eclipse desktop numbers.
- ✓ **Established brands will face increased competition from agile private labels**
Well known brands can’t rely on brand loyalty and must focus on adding more value, updating or evolving their products in order to compete with growing private label brands—especially Amazon’s own.
- ✓ **Prime will likely only grow in membership**
Customers still highly value the convenience Amazon offers with fast and free shipping. This membership base will only grow larger every year, particularly with the addition of “Prime Only” purchases and even other offerings such as Prime Video.

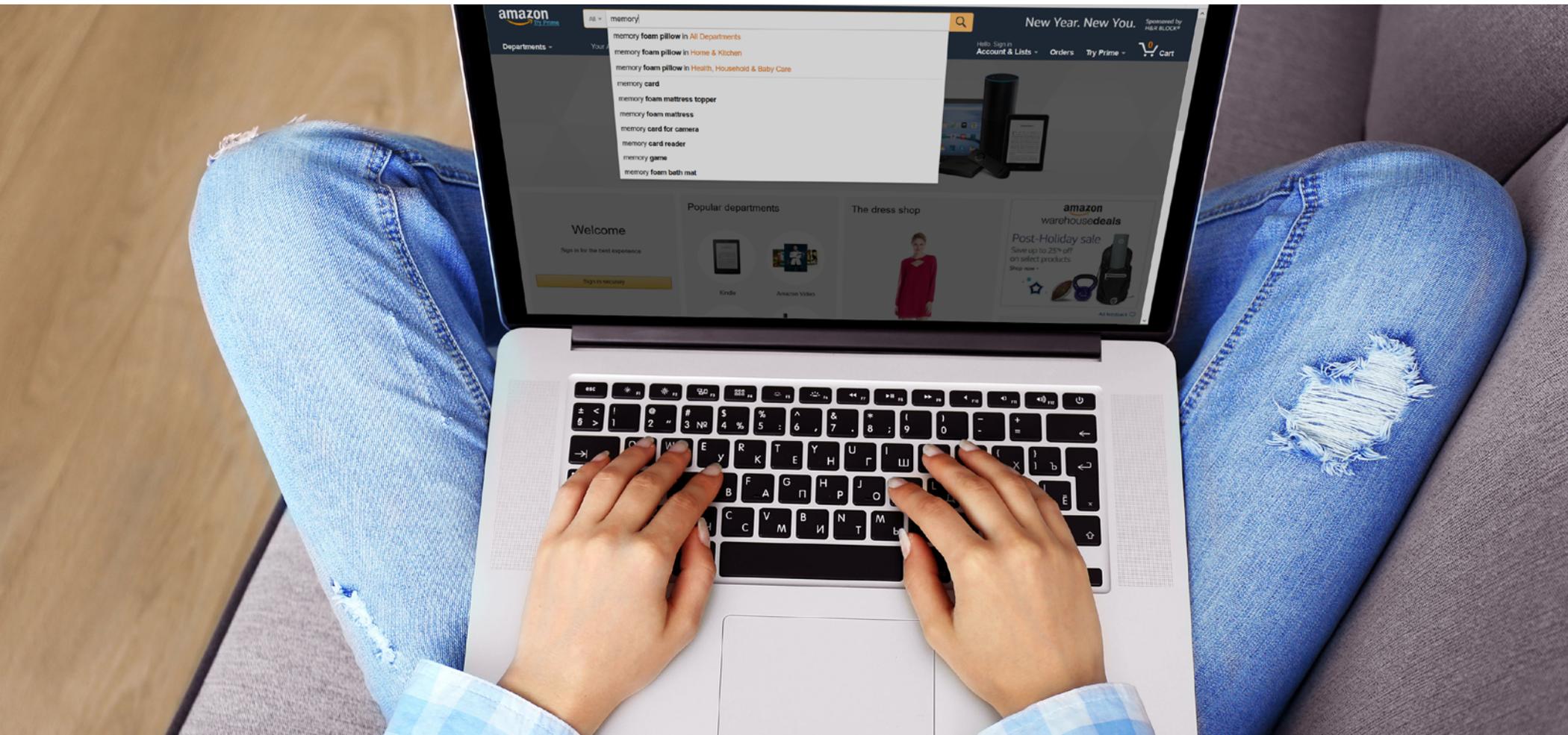




These findings shouldn't surprise Amazon sellers—but there is one key to success that isn't shown in the survey:

Even if you have the best price on a product, if your products are not optimized to show up in the Buy Box, on the SERP, or in ads, you will lose out.

Make sure all of these boxes are checked, and you have a much better chance of succeeding while your slow-to-adapt competitors drop off.



What Now?

Schedule Your Free Amazon Seller Evaluation

CPC Strategy's Amazon Seller Evaluation is a complimentary 60-minute analysis and assessment of your Amazon Seller Central account, advertising programs, product order volume, and profitability metrics.

[SCHEDULE MY EVALUATION](#)



We Turn Browsers Into Buyers