

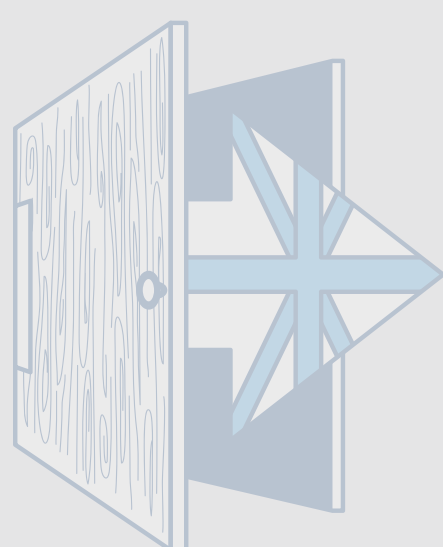
21 E-COMMERCE TRENDS IN 2021

1 SHARING PRIME PERKS

Statista's [latest forecast](#) estimates that, in 2020, US Prime membership grew by 15% to about 142.5 million. So, the global figure of 150 million from [2020 Q3 results](#) could very well be edging towards 200 million by now.

When it comes to US households, [Statista](#) expects the growth to be halved. But wait, [Amazon Household](#) is only just taking off abroad! People [in the UK](#) have just started to [share the benefits of Prime membership](#) (e.g. free shipping), as well as the cost.

If Amazon extends the service to the other 18 countries offering Prime, more and more households will be able to afford the subscription this year. This could spell a new wave of exponential growth for Amazon Prime on European venues, for instance.



2 BEATING THE BREXIT BLUES

UK businesses are facing a double-whammy of border trouble. They can't raise their prices enough to cover cross-border shipping costs. And they can't export if there are border delays. So, as one EU logistics company [explains](#), trucks are returning from the UK without cargo.

What does this mean for Amazon sellers? As [eMarketer](#) predicted, UK/EU orders are dwindling. So, most buyers are looking for local alternatives. But some are scouting for cheaper and faster deliveries from other continents, including North America!



3 INNOVATIVE INCENTIVES

Remember the days when everyone was raving about incentives for product reviews? Well, there are new ways to motivate your customer base: cryptocurrency. Last year, [social tokens](#) became all the rage as musicians started rewarding loyal followers with crypto tokens.

This year, brands are taking a page from that book. So, don't be too surprised if you stumble across Amazon sellers and vendors who reward their loyal customers with brand tokens in 2021, whether it's allowed or not.



4 ENHANCED ENGAGEMENT

Online retailers are expected to accommodate every customer who has something to say, on whatever platform. But the most sellers can do is reply via Buyer-Seller messaging. They can't call or live chat. So, it's easy for a plug, suggestion or complaint to go unnoticed.

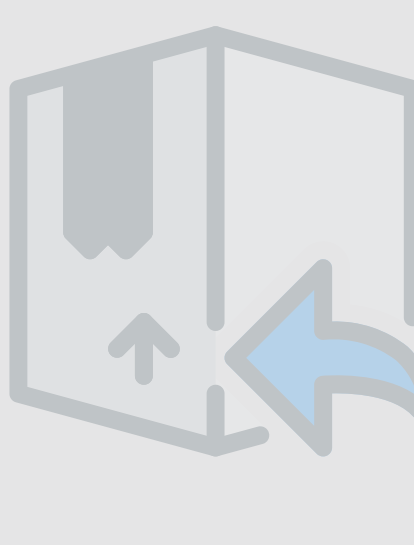
This year, we expect Amazon sellers to build brand awareness with a stronger online presence. For starters, they might try to stay in the loop and direct buyers to Amazon by working on a [consistent social media handle](#) that matches their Amazon moniker.



5 CAUTIOUS BUYING

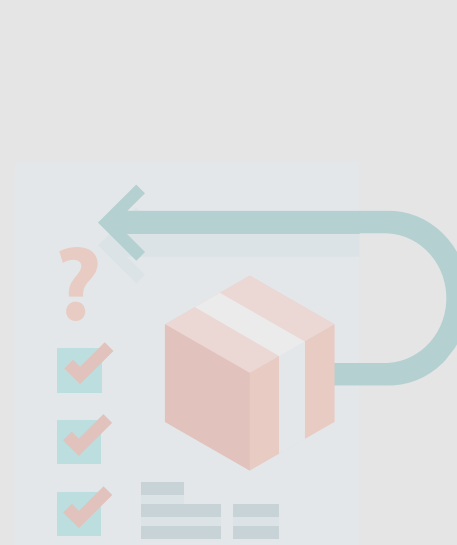
In the wake of the pandemic, buyers are wising up to the negative effects of impulse buying. Mindful of their buying habits, online shoppers expect their favourite brands to acknowledge the impact of hyperconsumerism.

And there's only one place buyers can check to see where a seller stands on this issue: the storefront. For sellers who list essential, hand-made, or natural items, that's all the more reason to mention why they think less is more and how the concept applies to their products.



6 FREE & FAST RETURNS

[Marketing Alternatives](#) will tell you that buyers want their returns free, and they want them fast. This year, perks like pre-authorized return labels, self-service return kiosks, on-the-spot label printing with QR code scanners, and returns using gift receipts are options all sellers should consider offering, even if they fulfil their own orders.



7 POLISHED RETURNS POLICIES

As online sales soar, so too do return rates. This year, we expect most Amazon sellers to standardize and perfect their [return policies](#), to prevent return fraud. Remember: gift-wrapping isn't refundable, deductions are allowed for personalised return labels, and expensive returns must be tracked and insured.



8 SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES

Services like Subscribe & Save, where buyers receive the same quantity of an item at pre-set times, will only grow in 2021. Amazon's [Subscribe & Save Store](#) is especially promising because it brings together the buyer's coupons, favorite items, and Amazon Family perks.



9 DELIVERY DIVERSITY

People across the world are choosing to order online and collect in person. It's something the [eMarketer](#) refers to as the click-and-collect phenomenon. For some, it may be a way to prevent doorstep theft. For others, it's more convenient than waiting for a delivery.

Amazon Key enables buyers to book deliveries to their home, [garage](#), [car trunk](#), etc. live-streaming and watching the delivery on the Key by Amazon app. But the [Amazon Hub Locker](#) service is just as popular, especially since it doesn't involve any human contact.

Sellers who anticipate more months of lockdowns and quarantines will probably turn to Prime fulfillment this year. This may lead to a rethink of their packaging practices, so that their products are locker-friendly and accessible to people of all abilities.



10 EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Employees are the lifeblood of the company. Amazon knows this, and that's why it developed perks like [Amazon Incentives](#). But the [Amazon A to Z app](#) also enables employees to engage more. They can punch in at work, get time off, book extra hours, and generally bypass the HR department with a few taps of the phone.

Not every Amazon seller can afford to develop or buy an app like that. But with so many people working from home, isolating, quarantining, etc., a self-service HR and rapid deployment app is something to think about.

Another way to boost engagement is employee equity. Instead of pay cuts, furlough, or even bonuses, some employees might readily accept shares, stocks options, or warrants. And why not bring up your strategy on your storefront to build brand awareness too?



11 STREAMLINED SALES

Online retailers across the world are using tech to forecast sales peaks and troughs. As sales forecasting and analytics tools improve, sellers will be able to plan inventory and staffing levels better. So, streamlined sales may determine which sellers gain and keep their competitive edge in 2021.



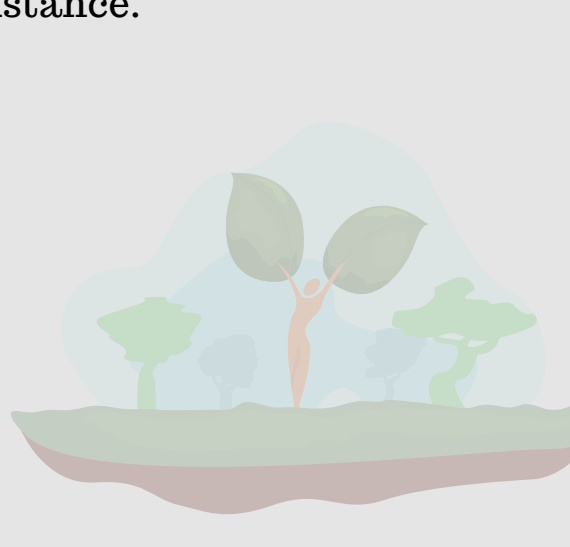
12 ECO-FRIENDLY TO ECO-POSITIVE

Some businesses are moving beyond a net-zero goal and toward the idea of eco-positivity. Through regenerative farming, companies like [Walmart](#) are trying to use waste to enrich the soil and help regenerate nature. It's something to watch for if you're catering to eco-progressive consumers this year.



13 TRANSCYCLING VS. RECYCLING

Speaking of regenerative, Transcycling is a movement that's building up momentum. It involves recycling a company's waste and [maximizing the lifespan](#) of recycled products. And thanks to these technologies, companies can repurpose basic items and turn them into treasure. [Swedish Stockings](#) creates designer tables out of hosiery, for instance.



14 NATURAL AMBIENTS

With people working and studying at close quarters, family homes are starting to feel like lunar habitats. And if they can't go out in nature, people will try to bring nature to them. Animal themed, floral, and nature-inspired furnishings and decorative products are already taking over the market.



15 DIGITAL DINING

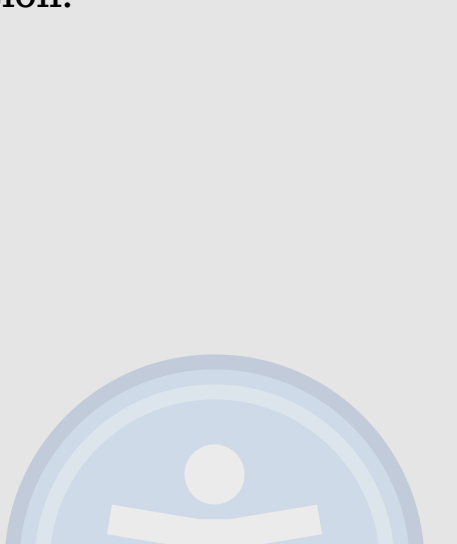
The pandemic is driving most restaurateurs out of business. But some have managed to forge a way for themselves online. So, digital restaurant marketplaces like Uber Eats and Grubhub will continue to grow this year. [eMarketer](#) forecasts.

But large family meals and office dinner parties will be out of the question. As people's dining habits and companies' catering budgets change for good, it's out with the lunch box and in with restaurant coupons. This may affect Amazon sellers with Food & Beverage products.



16 LAB-GROWN GOURMET

2021 is the year that lab-grown meat becomes accessible. And as soon as cultured meat hits the menus, the livestock industry is in for an overhaul. Merchants selling 'farm-fresh' meat products on Amazon may see their customer base shrink, especially if Amazon gets in on the action.



17 UNIVERSAL ACCESSIBILITY

The [WHO](#) reports that over a billion people worldwide live with some form of disability. Underestimating the need for accessible products is something online retailers and brand owners can no longer afford. So, 2021 may be a year of creative solutions for everyone.

Take, for instance, pregnancy tests. The [RNIB](#) recently prototyped one, so that visually impaired women can be the first to know if they're pregnant. And it's ridiculous that it still takes organizations like these to design basic products with everyone in mind.



18 MORE SELF-PUBLISHING

As more and more authors take matters into their own hands with [Amazon Self-Publishing](#), [IzzardInk](#) warns of a rise in cross-promotion, AI translation, and plagiarism. Major issues affecting eBooks, such as copyright infringement and poor digital rights management, will only get worse.



19 INQUISITIVE BOOKS

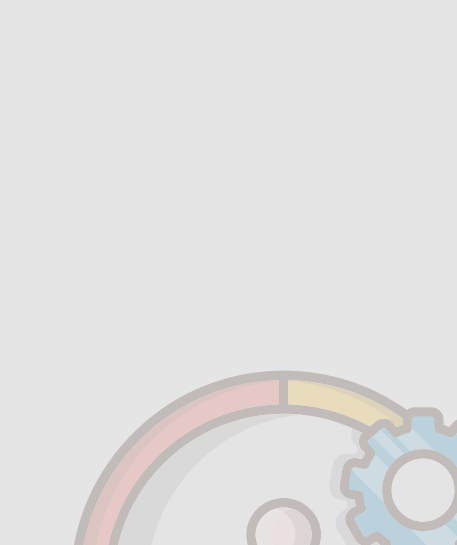
[The Bookseller](#) reckons amateur sleuth novels, AI fiction, and titles about the natural world will dominate the best-seller lists in 2021. Optimistic novels and escapist fiction are also heralded as this year's pandemic palate cleansers.



20 WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Mental well-being is the theme of the year 2021. As vaccinated people emerge from their 'lunar habitats', personal growth will take on a new meaning. Buyers will be looking for products and services that boost mental health and enable them to have more 'me time'.

Concepts like '[virtual commute](#)' and 'emotional check-in' are gaining traction. So, remote workers will be looking for products to help them unwind daily, quickly, and without even thinking about it.



21 CUSTOMIZING CREATIVITY

Without the thrill of in-store shopping, buyers look to online sellers for a memorable shopping experience. So, the unboxing event is something all brand owners and sellers must master in 2021, because buyers will expect to be impressed.

Design eye-catching [branded packaging](#) that engages all the senses. Slip in some discreet QR codes for instruction videos and online feedback sharing. Add a few small personalized touches, such as brief messages, loyalty perks, or notes welcoming feedback and suggestions.

This shows concludes our list of 21 e-Commerce Trends in 2021. What it does is that the experience of selling on Amazon may never be the same again for some sellers. But the customer is king. So, instead of fighting the change, all growth-oriented Amazon sellers should embrace and adapt to these inescapable 2021 e-commerce trends.