

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Amazon expands try-before-you-buy service across US

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Amazon Prime Wardrobe offers a try-before-you-buy payment method. Image credit: Amazon

By STAFF REPORTS

Ecommerce giant Amazon is putting pressure on fashion retail with the nationwide rollout of its Prime Wardrobe service.

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Available to those who are signed up for Amazon's Prime membership, Prime Wardrobe allows consumers to pick fashion items out and try them on at home before paying. While many shoppers have stuck with in-store shopping as a means to test out styles before making a purchase, this service may be a disruptor to the apparel buying experience.

Apparel push

Originally debuted last year, Prime Wardrobe was in BETA testing until now, with the service only available to customers selected for the trial period.

Now Amazon is opening up Prime Wardrobe to all U.S. Prime customers.

Similar to a trunk service, Amazon's Prime Wardrobe sends Prime subscribers a box filled with clothes, shoes and accessories. The service is free for Prime members and does not include a styling fee, a common add-on for similar services.

Anything within the box that does not fit the consumer's personal style or body type can be returned to Amazon free of charge by using a prepaid shipping label. The consumer is only charged for the pieces she keeps after seven days ([see story](#)).

Introducing Prime Wardrobe

Three-quarters of consumers are interested in being able to see and try on merchandise before making a payment, according to a new report from Klarna.

One of the biggest hurdles in getting consumers to buy via ecommerce is the inability to test out items before making a financial commitment. Try-before-you-buy has the potential to remove this concern, giving consumers the ability to receive and evaluate orders before deciding to pay and keep them ([see story](#)).

"With Amazon now extending its try-before-you-buy service to all Prime Members and other ecommerce players continuing to establish consumers' expectations for the try-before-you-buy phenomenon, consumers will now be more likely to make multiple purchases with the inherent expectation that some items will be returned at no cost to them," said Luke Starbuck, vice president of marketing at [Linc](#).

"As this trend increasingly becomes the norm, brands and retailers will quickly have to adapt to the sudden rise in returns, while figuring out how to scale their current customer service infrastructure to effectively manage the volume," he said. "To prepare, retailers must create a customer care environment that delivers automated customer service to consumers to quickly and efficiently handle the increased volume of return requests, while helping retailers internally handle complex business logic.

"If done right, the opportunity lies in converting what traditionally is seen as a costly service moment, into a new path to drive additional purchases and loyalty, both of which will more than offset the costs of try-before-you-buy behavior."

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