

RETAIL

Amazon puts further pressure on retailers with BOPIS

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Amazon Counter. Image courtesy of Amazon

By STAFF REPORTS

Ecommerce giant Amazon is adding a new pickup fulfillment option for shoppers through a partnership with Rite Aid, which leverages the drug store's bricks-and-mortar footprint.

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Dubbed Counter, the service features a staffed pickup area inside of Rite Aid, enabling consumers to go retrieve their package instead of having it left for them at an address. As Amazon has ramped up delivery speed, buy-online pick-up in-store has been one of bricks-and-mortar retailers' focuses for remaining competitive.

Pickup points

As of June 27, Amazon Counter is rolling out to more than 100 Rite Aid stores across the United States. Amazon plans to expand Counter to 1,500 locations by the end of 2019.

Consumers will be able to select Counter as a delivery option for their packages at no extra cost. Counter is primarily eligible for items fulfilled by Amazon, rather than by third parties.

When the package arrives at the store, consumers get a notification with a barcode and the store's hours, and they have 14 days to pick up their parcel. Store staff will then scan the barcode and retrieve the package for the customer.

Counter has been designed not to take up much of the store associates' time.

Before bringing Counter to the U.S., Amazon tested it in the United Kingdom with fashion retailer Next and in Italy with UK Giunti Al Punto Librerie, Fermopoint and SisalPay.

In its trials, Amazon has found that its partners have seen foot traffic bumps from Counter.

While the service is premiering with Rite Aid, Amazon is looking for other retailer partners for Counter.



Amazon Counter is designed to offer shoppers flexibility. Image courtesy of Amazon

"Amazon is always looking for innovative and convenient ways for customers to ship and receive their orders," explains Patrick Supanc, Worldwide Director of Amazon Hub. "With Counter, we've leveraged our growing logistics network and invested in new, easy to use technology to give customers yet another delivery option rooted in flexibility and control. We are excited to partner with national businesses like Rite Aid, and local businesses in the future, to create an outstanding experience for our shared customers."

Counter joins the Amazon Hub, which includes the retailer's physical pick-up Lockers. For those who do not want packages left at their doorstep, the Hub creates more secure delivery options.

Recently, the company has also expanded its shipping options to offer more expedited fulfillment or planned delivery dates.

New research shows that click-and-collect services are more popular among female consumers with higher annual incomes, exhibiting the importance of luxury retailers including these services.

According to Order Dynamics Research, the "click and collect superconsumer" is 24 to 49 years old and has been well versed in omnichannel retail for the last two years. This consumer is also interested in the experience of shopping, needing to touch and feel the products she is purchasing ([see story](#)).

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