

Amazon App Users Don't Shop Like Web Users

Here's What That Means for the 2024 Holiday Season





With a staggering **\$490 billion in sales in 2024**, Amazon is a titan of ecommerce. But Amazon on a web browser and Amazon in the mobile app are two distinct worlds, with sometimes contrasting user activity.

Understanding these distinctions is crucial for advertisers, Amazon sellers, and retail competitors that want to optimize their strategies. But until now, insights into the nuanced behaviors of Amazon app versus web users have been elusive. Thanks to groundbreaking data from Datos, A Semrush Company, and MFour Mobile Research, we can finally illuminate these differences.

Here are four themes that emerged from our analysis:

- 1 Engagement Levels**
Amazon app users show higher engagement than web users, frequently visiting the app and accumulating more sessions monthly. This behavior is heightened during major promotional events like Prime Day.
- 2 Purchase Likelihood**
App users outpace web users in purchasing activity, with close to 45% making purchases over the study period, compared to 42% of web users. However, web users are more likely to make purchases during Prime Day.
- 3 Category Preferences**
While both groups explore categories like Home & Kitchen, Health & Household, and Electronics, app users lean towards Toys & Games and Grocery & Gourmet Food. Web users, on the other hand, focus more on Books and Tools & Home Improvement.
- 4 Loyalty Dynamics**
Amazon web users exhibit more brand loyalty, showing less inclination to explore competitors like Walmart and Target compared to app users.

Strategic Takeaways:

For Advertisers: Use this data to optimize ad budget allocations between retail apps and websites. Analyze the impact of major shopping events like Prime Day on user behavior.

For Sellers: Identify high-interest product categories among app and web users. Understand purchasing trends and the influence of promotional events like Prime Day.

For Retailers: Benchmark user engagement and purchase patterns against Amazon's metrics. Craft marketing strategies to attract Amazon users, especially during significant promotional periods.

Dive deeper to discover how you can effectively engage Amazon's diverse shopper base and maximize your impact during the shopping surges that take place during the holidays and major promotional events.

Methodology

Sonata Insights and Datos analyzed samples of US web browser users and Android app users during March 1–September 30, 2024. We then performed a second analysis focusing on web and app behaviors during the July 2024 Amazon Prime Day event. This analysis included both the July 16–17 event as well as July 18, to capture activity that occurred in other time zones until the event ended at 11:59pm PT on July 17.

The web dataset included active desktop and mobile web browser users who used the web at least once a month in each month of the analysis period. The app dataset included active Android users from MFour's panel who used any app at least once a month in each month of the analysis period.

Apps Analyzed:

- Amazon Shopping
- Walmart: Shopping & Savings
- Target

Domains Analyzed:

- amazon.com
- walmart.com
- target.com



Mobile shopping will make enormous strides in the 2024 holiday season and beyond. Adobe predicts that more than half (53%) of US holiday shopping sales will take place on mobile devices this year, up from 51% last year. The vast majority of that spending will happen in-app. And if 2023 trends continue, two-thirds of US adults—or even more—will shop on mobile apps during the November 2024 Cyber Weekend alone. Last year, 63% did, according to [Glassbox](#).

App shoppers behave differently than website shoppers, and major promotional events have a significant impact on their activity. To understand these two groups in more depth, Sonata Insights analyzed web traffic data from Datos and Android app data from MFour Mobile Research for the biggest ecommerce site of them all: Amazon. Here's what we learned:

1. Amazon app users are more engaged than web users

Amazon is incredibly popular among US active app users. An average of 72.3% used the Amazon app at least once a month between March and September 2024. That was significantly higher than the average 51.4% of active web users who visited Amazon at least once a month.

Convenience and simplicity are the likely drivers behind this difference. Amazon excels at making the app easy to use; users can quickly search for things to buy, reorder what they need, and explore current deals.

App users are even more engaged with Amazon during major promotional events. During the July 2024 Prime Day, more than half (56.2%) of active app users used the Amazon app at least once, compared to 30.5% of active web users who visited the Amazon website at least once.

The percentage of app users who used Amazon reached a high of 43.9% on July 17 (day 2 of the event), up 9.5 points from 34.4% on July 15 (the day before the Prime Day event started). The percentage of web users visiting Amazon grew less dramatically, increasing just under 5 points to 22.5% on July 17 from 17.7% on July 15.

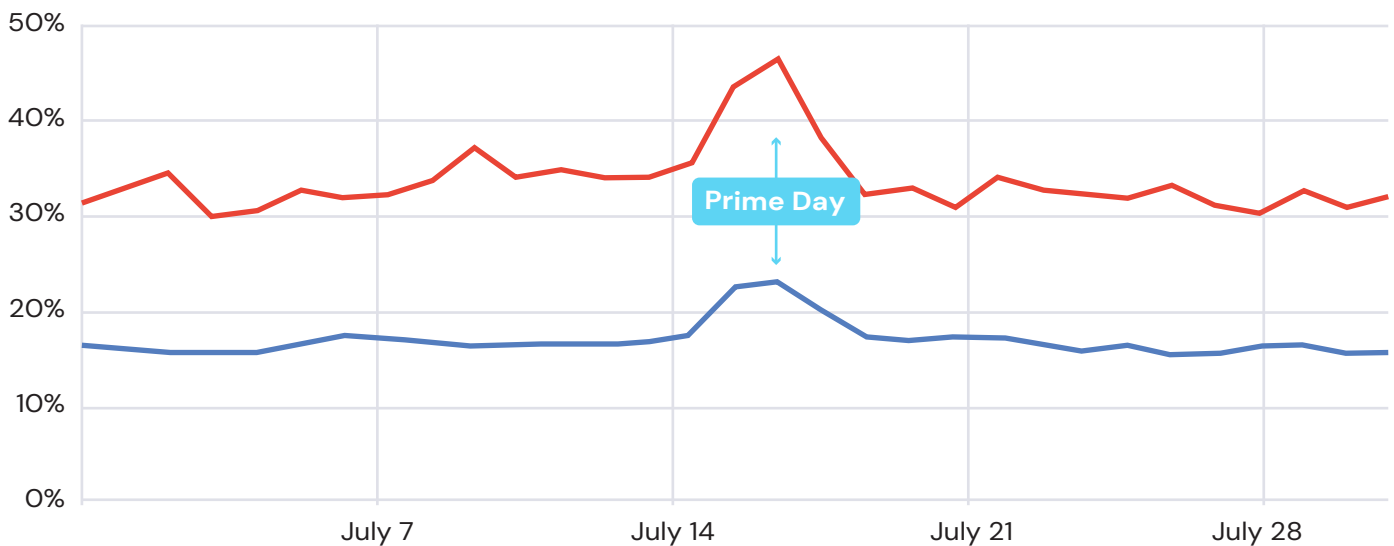
Active User Rate

The number of users who accessed Amazon at least one time in a given time period divided by the number of all users in the panel who used the web/used any app in a given time period.

Percentage of US active app and web users who visited Amazon

July 2024

● Web ● App



Note: Active user rate is defined as the number of users who accessed Amazon at least one time in a given time period divided by the number of all users in the panel who used the web/used any app in a given time period.

Source: Datos, A Semrush Company, and MFour Mobile Research



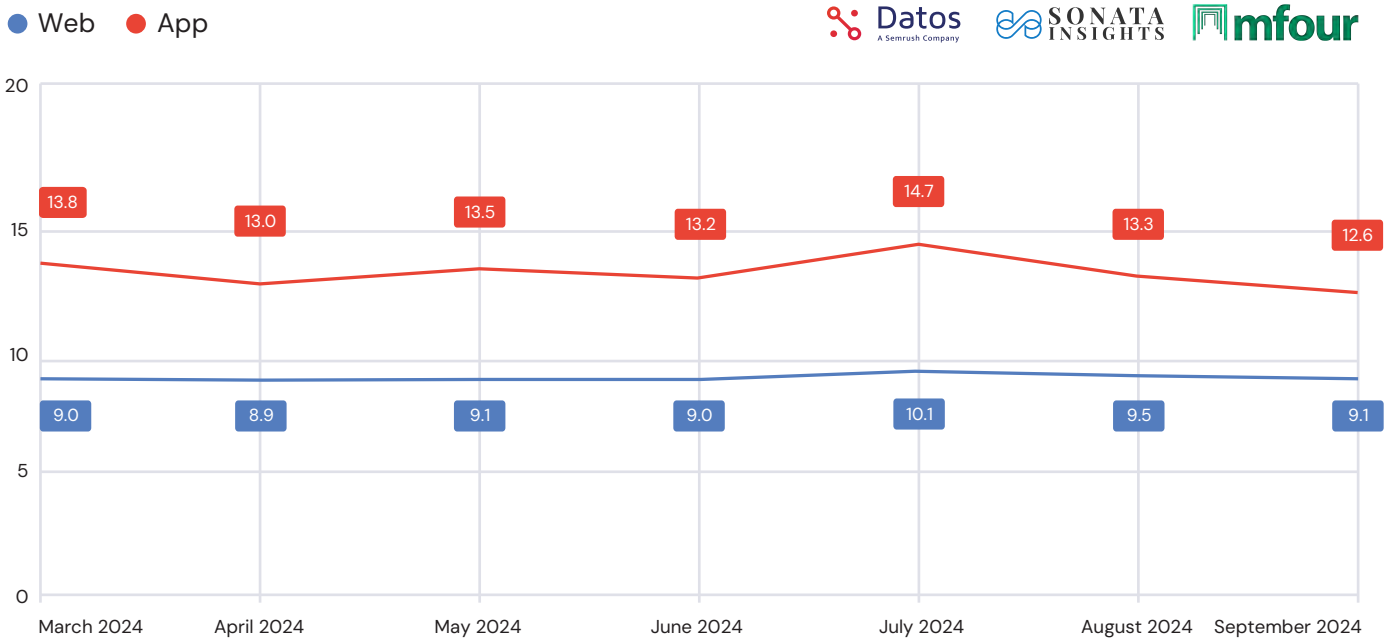
Amazon app users also demonstrate their engagement by completing a higher average number of sessions than web users, both during Prime Day and over the March–September period. App users had an average of 4.1 sessions during the three days of Prime Day, compared to an average of 3.1 sessions for web users. On a monthly basis, app users had 13.4 sessions on average, compared to 9.3 for web users.

Session

Includes all consecutive events on the Amazon website or app, even if the user visits another site/app, as long as they return to Amazon within 30 minutes. If more than 30 minutes pass after the last event, the session is considered over.

Average number of Amazon sessions per month among US app and web users

March–September 2024



Note: A session includes all consecutive events on the Amazon website or app, even if the user visits another site/app, as long as they return to Amazon within 30 minutes. If more than 30 minutes pass after the last event, the session is considered over.

Source: Datos, A Semrush Company, and MFour Mobile Research

Takeaways:

Advertisers

- ✔ **Focus on mobile ads.** With higher engagement among app users, advertisers should prioritize this more active audience.
- ✔ **Leverage major sales events.** Use Prime Day events to maximize ad impact, since app user engagement spikes significantly.

Amazon Sellers

- ✔ **Optimize for app users.** Tailor product listings and promotions for mobile users to take advantage of higher app engagement rates.
- ✔ **Plan promotions for peak times.** Capitalize on events like Prime Day to boost visibility and sales, as app activity sees significant increases.

Competing Retailers

- ✔ **Enhance app experience.** Improve app usability to match Amazon's seamless experience, which drives higher user engagement.
- ✔ **Plan counter-promotions during major sales events.** Focus on reaching web users who might be less engaged with Amazon during this period.



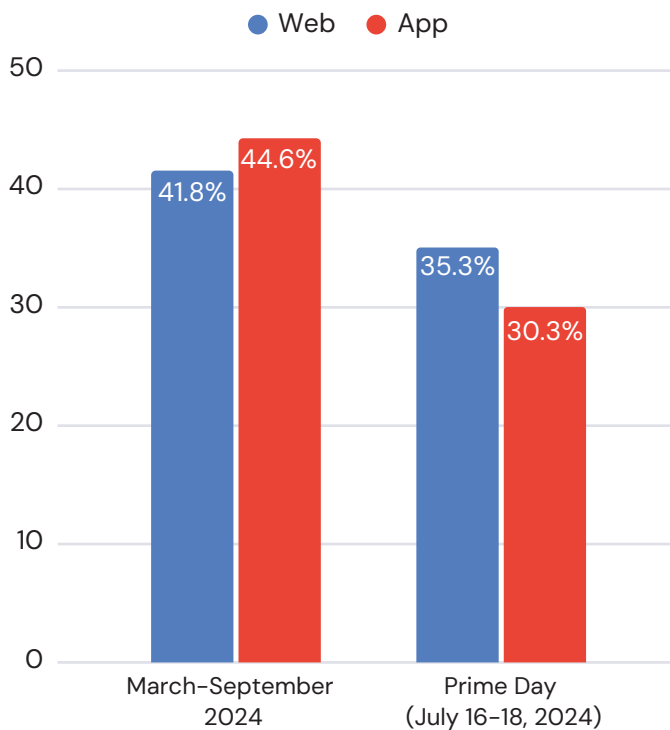
2. Amazon app users are more likely than web users to make a purchase—except during Prime Day

Amazon app users aren't just more likely to visit, they're also more likely to make purchases than web users. Over the course of the study, the average monthly purchase rate for Amazon app users was 44.6%, compared to 41.8% for web users.

However, during Prime Day, web users were more likely to make purchases than app users. More than one-third (35.3%) made at least one purchase during the three-day period, compared to 30.3% of app users. One reason may be that web users are more inclined to visit specifically to make purchases during sales events, whereas app users might engage in more casual browsing triggered by notifications. Additionally, since Prime Day took place on a Tuesday and Wednesday, more users may have opted to purchase while using their laptops or desktops at work rather than on their mobile devices.

Percentage of US Amazon users who purchased at least once via web or app

March–September 2024 monthly average vs. Prime Day 2024



Source: Datas, A Semrush Company, and MFour Mobile Research



Purchase rate

The number of users that made at least one purchase in a given time period divided by the number of users that visited Amazon at least one time in the same time period.

Takeaways:

Advertisers

- ✓ **Focus on app engagement.** Given that Amazon app users demonstrate higher purchase rates over time, prioritize mobile ad campaigns to capture consistent app user spending.
- ✓ **Emphasize web ads during major promotions.** During events like Prime Day, consider ramping up web advertising, as web users are more purchase-focused during these times.

Amazon Sellers

- ✓ **Optimize app experience.** Ensure listings and descriptions are app-friendly in order to capitalize on higher overall purchase rates among app users.
- ✓ **Target web users during sales events.** Use promotions to convert web users who are more likely to purchase during events like Prime Day.

Competing Retailers

- ✓ **Develop mobile shopping incentives.** Identify strategies to attract app users, who are generally more likely to purchase over time, by offering exclusive app deals and features.
- ✓ **Create exclusive online offers or bundles.** Focus on capturing the attention of web users during sales events with event-specific special offers.



3. App users are more interested in games and food; web users gravitate toward practical needs

App and web users show strong interest in categories like Home & Kitchen; Health & Household; Electronics; Clothing, Shoes & Jewelry; and Beauty & Personal Care. All of these were consistently in the top 10 for both groups over the course of our study.

Interest in categories

The number of unique users who visited category-related pages during a given time period divided by the number of unique users who visited any Amazon page during the same period.

But app users were more inclined than web users to visit pages in categories such as Toys & Games and Grocery & Gourmet Food. These appear frequently in the Top 10 app categories but not in web rankings. This may be because app users tend to use their devices

for convenience or impulse buying, since reordering food products is easy and the decision to buy toys or games can sometimes be made on a whim.

On the web, users were more likely to visit pages in practical categories like Books or Tools & Home Improvement. Each was in the Top 10 web categories but not in the top app rankings. For these types of products, there may be a greater need to do research or browse options, which can be easier on a computer than on a mobile phone.

Trends during Prime Day were fairly similar to the broader trends. Eight of the same product categories appeared in the top 10 rankings for both web and app users. However, Grocery and Gourmet Food didn't make the top 10 for either group, likely because these products have lower price points and less appeal than Prime Day discounts on higher-value items like AirPods and kitchen appliances.

And Cell Phones & Accessories made the Prime Day top 10 among app users, but not web users, perhaps because of Prime Day's [25% discounts on certain Samsung phones](#).

Top 10 Amazon category pages visited by US web and app users during Prime Day 2024

	Category	% of web users
1	Electronics	44.1%
2	Home & Kitchen	41.1%
3	Clothing, Shoes & Jewelry	29.6%
4	Health & Household	28.6%
5	Tools & Home Improvement	25.7%
6	Sports & Outdoors	21.3%
7	Beauty & Personal Care	19.0%
8	Patio, Lawn & Garden	18.9%
9	Books	18.8%
10	Office Products	14.7%

	Category	% of app users
1	Home & Kitchen	39.4%
2	Electronics	29.4%
3	Health & Household	27.4%
4	Clothing, Shoes & Jewelry	24.8%
5	Beauty & Personal Care	24.6%
6	Sports & Outdoors	19.5%
7	Toys & Games	16.8%
8	Patio, Lawn & Garden	16.7%
9	Cell Phones & Accessories	13.9%
10	Office Products	11.7%

Note: Percentage of unique users who visited category-related pages during July 16–18, 2024, divided by the number of unique users who visited any Amazon page during the same period.

Source: Datos, A Semrush Company, and MFour Mobile Research





Takeaways:

Advertisers

- Focus on convenience and impulse buying for categories like Toys & Games and Grocery. This will reach app users looking for quick purchases.
- Emphasize web ads for categories like Books and Tools & Home Improvement. These are categories where users may conduct more detailed research.

Amazon Sellers

- Consider app-specific promotions for items like toys or grocery products. This will help capitalize on impulse buys and convenience.
- Answer research-oriented questions at the top of listing descriptions. For practical items like Books and Tools & Home Improvement, focus on providing needed information to capture web users who are engaging in research-intensive shopping.

Competing Retailers

- Deploy discounts and easy-reorder features. This will help capture impulse buyers.
- Enhance web experiences for research-heavy products. Provide detailed information and comparisons for categories like Tools.

4. Amazon web users are more loyal than app users

Amazon app users are more than twice as likely to also use the Walmart or Target apps compared to Amazon web users who visit the Walmart or Target websites.

In our study, 56.1% of Amazon app users also used the Walmart app, while only 24.9% of Amazon web users visited Walmart.com. Cross-visitation rates to Target were lower overall, but app users still demonstrated a

higher rate: 28.0% of Amazon app users used the Target app, compared to 12.5% of Amazon web users visiting Target.com.

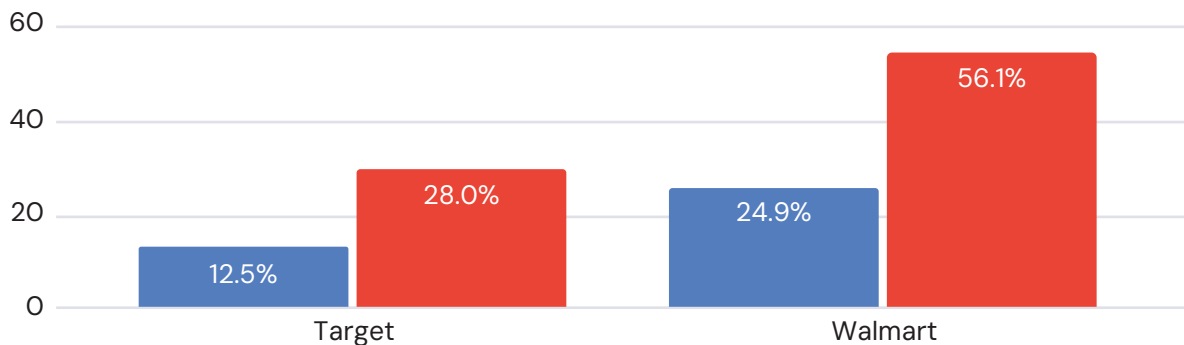
Cross-visitation rate

The number of Amazon users who also visited a different company's website/app at least once in a given time period divided by the total number of Amazon users who visited Amazon at least once in the same time period.

Percentage of US Amazon users who also used the Target or Walmart website or app

March-September 2024 monthly average

● Web ● App



Source: Datos, A Semrush Company, and MFour Mobile Research





Takeaways:

Advertisers

- ✓ **Leverage cross-app promotions.** These can capture users who are actively comparing prices across multiple apps.
- ✓ **Develop targeted campaigns that emphasize access to deals.** These will be appealing to app users' preference for convenience.

Amazon Sellers

- ✓ **Focus on competitive pricing strategies.** App users may be actively comparing options across retailers.
- ✓ **Elevate retention strategies.** Create a seamless and engaging shopping experience that discourages switching to competitor apps.

Competing Retailers

- ✓ **Capitalize on high app cross-visitation rates.** Offer exclusive deals or bundles to attract Amazon app users.
- ✓ **Improve app usability and speed to match or exceed Amazon's.** Make it easier for users to switch and explore deals on an alternate platform.

Summary

Amazon app shoppers behave differently than website shoppers, and major promotional events like Prime Day have a significant impact on their activity.

Our analysis shows that:

- App users are more engaged with Amazon than web users.
- App users are more likely to make a purchase (but not necessarily during a big event like Prime Day).
- App users lean toward impulse purchases on Amazon, while web users tend toward research-intensive practical needs.
- App users show less loyalty to Amazon than web users and are more likely to use competing retail apps from Walmart or Target.

Advertisers, Amazon sellers, and competing retailers must be aware of the important differences between web and app users and plan their strategies accordingly if they want to effectively reach and convert Amazon shoppers.

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About Sonata Insights

Sonata Insights is a custom research and advisory service focusing on social media and AI. Sonata Insights was founded in 2024 by Debra Aho Williamson, an internationally recognized expert in digital marketing and social media. Previously, Debra served as a principal analyst at EMARKETER, where she led the social media research practice for 17 years.

About Datos, A Semrush Company

Datos is a global clickstream data provider focused on licensing anonymized, at scale, privacy-secured datasets to ensure its clients and partners are safe in an otherwise perilous marketplace. Datos offers access to the desktop and mobile browsing behavior for tens of millions of users across the globe, packaged into clean, easy to understand data products. Datos' mission is to provide clickstream data built on trust, and driven by tangible results. Major firms around the globe trust Datos to provide the data they need to stop operating blindly in an ever-changing digital landscape. Datos was founded in 2019 and has offices in New York City (HQ), Spain, and Germany.

About MFour

MFour solves the issues of data fraud and commoditization in research using validated consumer data and a groundbreaking end-to-end insights platform. Utilizing the 4.5 star rated iOS & Android Surveys On The Go® app, MFour collects validated consumer behaviors + surveys to gain deep insights into consumer journeys. This data is seamlessly integrated into MFour Studio™, the only platform combining validated surveys with real-time app, web, and location data. This comprehensive approach empowers businesses to make informed decisions using validated consumer opinions and behaviors.

Notes on data presentation/methodology

The data displayed in this report has been provided by Datos, A Semrush Company, and MFour Mobile Research. The analysis is based on Datos's and MFour's US panels, representing a diverse and statistically significant sample of users, and covers the months of March 2024 to September 2024. For further information please visit Datos's [website](#) and its [Privacy Policy](#).

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