

# Covid vs e-commerce: How the Covid-19 pandemic impacted online retailers



At the height of Covid, many highstreet retailers were forced to shut their doors and lay off staff in order to protect their business, with several sadly failing to ever open up again. But how did their online counterparts fare? And did the pandemic hinder or boost their sales performance?

We've looked at e-commerce companies' performance since the start of this year to see who, and where, is doing the best as we come out the other side of one of retail's toughest challenges.

## The top performing e-commerce sites of 2021 (so far)

Some of the most successful sites in our list won't surprise you, (we're looking at you, Amazon,) but others have seen big growth so far this year.

### 1. Amazon – 2.67 billion monthly visits

In July 2021, e-commerce giant Amazon attracted over 2.67 billion visitors to its retail platform – an increase from the mere 2.33 billion it saw in February of the same year. Amazon was flying high before anyone had even heard of Covid-19, and unlike many stores it barely had to blink as the pandemic hit. In fact, Covid saw its profits boom, bringing in an 87% increase in shares and a huge \$86 billion more to founder Jeff Bezos' bank balance.



## 2. Etsy – 392 million monthly visits

In second place, and by quite a way, is the arts and crafts retailer Etsy. Home of vintage gifts and handmade items, Etsy saw 392 million visitors browsing its extensive range in July 2021, up from 381 million in February. With Covid limiting the creativity in our lives, Etsy was a great place for people to find a bit more fun.

## 3. Salesforce – 103 million monthly visits

Salesforce offers a bespoke online web building platform that makes it easier for companies to sell online, and in July, it attracted 103 million people to businesses building sites with its services. That was up from 91.4 million in February, despite brick and mortar stores opening up again.

## The US loves ecommerce

Across the country, states can't get enough of online shopping, and it's no surprise that e-commerce giant Amazon is the go to for many Americans. In Delaware, 45.44% of the population searches for Amazon every month, in Maryland it's 45.17%, and in Ohio it's 42.68%.

But one state takes this obsession to a whole new level – Rhode Island. There are more searches for Amazon there than there are people, with its monthly figure hitting 471.03% as residents love to shop online. The same is true for Walmart, with 258.21% of the population searching for it, while 141.31% search for ebay and Target, and 63.4% search for Kohls.

Delivery drivers on Rhode Island are certainly kept busy as they heavily rely on online orders..

## America's ecommerce obsession

State	Population	Ecommerce site	Searches per month	Number of population searching monthly
Rhode Island	1,061,509	amazon	5,000,000	471.03%
Rhode Island	1,061,509	walmart	2,740,000	258.12%
Rhode Island	1,061,509	ebay	1,500,000	141.31%
Rhode Island	1,061,509	target	1,500,000	141.31%



Rhode Island	1,061,509	kohls	673,000	63.40%
Rhode Island	1,061,509	etsy	673,000	63.40%
Delaware	990,334	amazon	450,000	45.44%
Maryland	6,065,436	amazon	2,740,000	45.17%
Ohio	11,714,618	amazon	5,000,000	42.68%
Oregon	4,289,439	amazon	1,830,000	42.66%
Rhode Island	1,061,509	costco	450,000	42.39%
Connecticut	3,552,821	amazon	1,500,000	42.22%
Florida	21,944,577	amazon	9,140,000	41.65%
Michigan	9,992,427	amazon	4,090,000	40.93%
Maine	1,354,522	amazon	550,000	40.60%
New Hampshire	1,372,203	amazon	550,000	40.08%

## The e-commerce platforms that saw success as Covid eased

Site	Feb '21 visits	July '21 visits
Amazon	2,337,000,000	2,671,000,000
Etsy	381,000,000	392,000,000
Salesforce	91,400,000	103,000,000
Shopify	53,700,000	58,800,000
Wix	58,200,000	55,400,000
Weebly	85,500,000	54,700,000
Squarespace	33,100,000	33,000,000
Big Cartel	9,350,000	9,400,000
Big Commerce	6,450,000	6,650,000
Ecwid	4,100,000	5,050,000
WooCommerce	3,450,000	3,600,000



## Not all e-commerce sites benefited from Covid-19

While some e-commerce sites profited during the pandemic, others saw customers slip away and return to brick and mortar stores, or switch to other providers.

### 1. OsCommerce – 50,000 monthly visitors

OsCommerce is a website building site that helps people create and manage online stores. While this service proved invaluable during lockdown, its users have gradually declined ever since. In February 90,000 people visited the site, but by July that figure was down to 50,000, with new online retailers decreasing.

### 2. X-Cart – 150,000 monthly visitors

X-Cart claims to be ‘the last e-commerce platform you will ever need,’ a statement that seems to be backed up by its frozen visitor figures. In July, 150,000 headed to the site, the exact same figure that went in February, showing that while its customer base isn’t dwindling, it isn’t attracting any new users either.

### 3. Shift4Shop – 450,000 monthly visitors

Another website builder platform that has seen figures fall is Shift4Shop. The site creates software that makes selling online easier for businesses, and in February this appealed to 670,000 customers. However in the months that followed, business trailed off, with a drastic dip to 450,000 visitors by July.

## The online sites that saw visitor numbers drop

Site	Feb '21 visits	July '21 visits
OsCommerce	80,000	50,000
X-Cart	150,000	150,000
Shift4Shop	670,000	450,000
Volusion	540,000	520,000
Opencart	830,000	650,000
3dcartstores	1,450,000	1,350,000
Magento	1,700,000	1,600,000
PrestaShop	1,950,000	1,700,000



## The e-commerce websites experiencing the most outages



With the world relying on the internet more for their online shopping needs, what does this mean if the top e-commerce sites suffer from outages?

Using data from DownDetector, we've analyzed the top e-commerce sites in our study to find out which sites have suffered the most outages over the last year and what this could mean for their financial revenue.

Company	Total Issues	Annual Revenue 2020	Revenue for 1 min (thousands)	Value of outages if 1 min each	Problem 1	Common %	Problem 2	Common %	Problem 3	Common %
Amazon	98	\$386,060,000,000	\$734,513	\$71,982,268	Website	54%	App	36%	Check-out	11%
Shopify	48	\$2,930,000,000	\$5,575	\$267,580	Website	55%	Login	27%	Server	18%
Etsy	37	\$1,730,000,000	\$3,291	\$121,785	Website	88%	App	6%	Login	6%

## Amazon would lose \$734,513 if down for just one minute

Such is Amazon's earning potential, the site could lose out on \$734,513 if it went offline for only a minute. During the past 12 months the shopping giant had a total of 98 outages, and while that doesn't sound like much over the course of a year, if each of these lasted only a minute this could have cost the firm a whopping \$71,982,268.

Shopify is the second highest grossing ecommerce site in the world, earning \$5,575 a minute. While somewhat off Amazon's lead, it's no small sum, and having suffered 48 outages in the last year, these minutes of darkness could cost the company \$267,580.

Etsy follows suit by bringing in \$3,291 every minute. The site was only offline 37 times over the last 12 months, but that half an hour could have cost them \$121,785 in sales.

There's money to be made in ensuring your site stays online.

## The states where e-commerce is booming

Across the country people were flocking to e-commerce platforms throughout Covid, as typical retail outlets remained under lock and key. However, now that restrictions are lifting, we wanted to see which states were still riding that upward trend, and which ones were seeing shoppers head back to the high street.

### 1. Arkansas – 7% increase

Arkansas has seen a 7% increase in the number of people looking for e-commerce brands, showing the appetite in the southern state is still there for shopping online. The state, known for its vast park lands and wild terrain, has actually seen a slight dip of 0.83% in overall retail activity, but its online presence is still thriving.

### 2. Alaska – 3% increase

The snow-covered state of Alaska is going strong, as a 3% increase in e-commerce popularity shows its online stores still have a role to play. Alaska is also witnessing a 38.08% increase in retail activity, with locals more keen than ever to get out and get shopping.



### **3. Hawaii – 1.88% increase**

In sunnier climates, Hawaii is the final state still seeing an increase in e-commerce activity. On the island, there are 1.88% more people looking to set up shop online, despite a 27.77% decrease in overall retail.

## **The places seeing the biggest drop in retail activity**

Everywhere in the world saw shoppers stay at home throughout 2020, but now things are gradually back to normal, how are stores fairing with people allowed back inside?

In some places, not at all well.

### **1. Washington D.C – 48.27% decrease in retail**

It's our capital where we've seen the biggest drop in retail activity over the past 12 months.

Formerly a hive of buying and socializing, the home of the White House has seen people reluctant to head back to their former habits, instead preferring to keep their shopping online for the time being.

### **2. Hawaii – 27.77% decrease in retail**

Despite being one of e-commerce's success stories, Hawaii has seen the overall number of shopping decline drastically over the past year. The popular tourist attraction has suffered as a result of travel restrictions, meaning the island has been lacking the visitors that normally fill its stores.

### **3. Florida – 16.74% decrease in retail**

Another tourist hotspot, Florida, has also seen visitor numbers fall. With popular attractions like Walt Disney World and Universal Studios both forced to shut, the state lost out on millions of holidaymakers last year, suffering a 16.74% decrease in retail activity as a result.

## **Covid's Impact on physical retail**



# IMPACT OF COVID ON ECOMMERCE

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IMPACT OVER 12 MONTHS ON RETAIL

STATE	% DECREASE OF PEOPLE VISITING PHYSICAL STORES	PHYSICAL OR ONLINE
	DECREASE	INCREASED
District of Columbia	-48.27%	ONLINE
New Mexico	-13.05%	ONLINE
Hawaii	-27.77%	ONLINE
Texas	-11.08%	ONLINE
Florida	-16.74%	ONLINE
Arkansas	-00.83%	ONLINE

\*\*\* THANKS \*\*\*





This uses Google Mobility data to see increases in footfall at retail locations across all states comparing July 2020 and August 2021. These % changes were then compared to changes in search volume for the largest e-commerce companies in the same time period to identify which area has increased the most in the last 12 months.

### **Hosting Summary**

Uses three index points to identify which website host is best, the index points are scored from 1-20 and are then added together to give an overall score. High scores represent a good hosting or building site.

### **Website outages**

Data was collected from downdetector.com looking at the number of outages each month for the last 12 months across the 3 top performing e-commerce sites. To find out how each outage could have impacted the company, we worked out how much revenue they make per minute and forecast the outages lasted for a minimum of this time to calculate a loss figure. The three most common problems were also collected.

\*Data correct as of 13th October

### **Number of searches per state**

To find which online retailer was the favorite in each state, we used data from keywordtool.io to analyze Google searches for each retailer over the past year to find a monthly average. We then compared this with the state's population to find out the % of residents regularly searching for each outlet.