

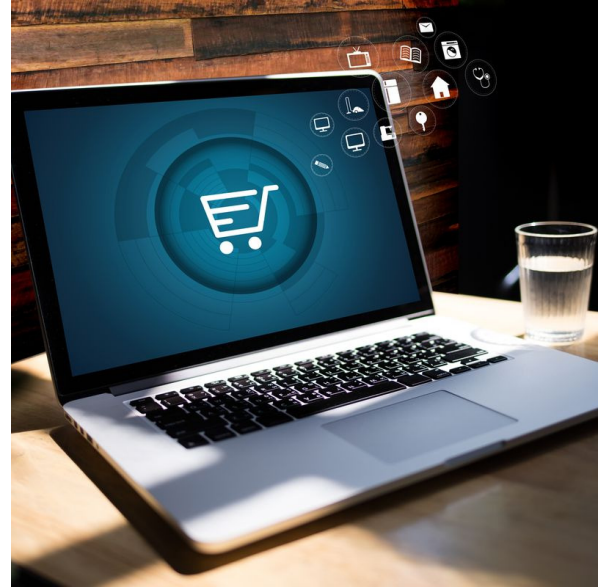


THE E-COMMERCE REVOLUTION



Scan to review worksheet

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1

Warm up

In pairs, discuss the following questions.

1. When was the last time you purchased something online? Why did you buy it online and not in a real shop?
2. Do you prefer to shop online or on the high street? Why?
3. What do you know about *Amazon*? Do you know any companies that are similar to *Amazon*?
4. Do you think there will be more or fewer online customers in the future?





2

Focus on vocabulary

Match the following vocabulary to the definitions.

I

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 1. <u>retail</u> (n) | a. somebody or something that has been attacked or hurt by something |
| 2. <u>effortlessly</u> (adv.) | b. makes someone reconsider, usually due to negative reasoning |
| 3. <u>roughly</u> (adv.) | c. approximately |
| 4. <u>deters</u> (v) | d. something that seems to be really easy or takes no effort |
| 5. <u>victim</u> (n) | e. selling goods or products, usually in a shop or online |

II

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| 1. <u>outlets</u> (n) | a. develop something in a way that is more suitable to its environment |
| 2. <u>evolve</u> (v) | b. provide something that a specific person(s) wants or needs |
| 3. <u>facilities</u> (n) | c. places that host organised events e.g., concerts, plays, poetry readings |
| 4. <u>venues</u> (n) | d. shops that sell goods or products |
| 5. <u>cater for</u> (phr. v) | e. places that offer a service or are built for a specific purpose |

Part B: Put the vocabulary from Part A into the correct gaps in the following sentences. You may need to change the form of the word.

1. The best _____ for seeing plays or shows are probably in the West End.
2. There are _____ 65 million people living in the UK these days.
3. When the company started cutting costs the main _____ were the temporary workers.
4. It is important for traditional companies to _____ so that they can stay relevant in the modern business world.
5. It is hoped that adverts about the dangers of cigarettes will _____ more people from starting smoking.
6. The VIP bars in the city centre have been created to _____ the rich and famous.
7. After 20 years of practice, my friend can play the guitar _____.
8. The _____ provided by the hotel were amazing, but the free sauna was the best one for me.

**3****Predict the answers**

What do you know about the e-commerce industry? Choose the correct answer to each question and read the article about *e-commerce* on page four to see if you are right.

1. What percentage of retail transactions in China take place online?
a. almost 30% b. almost 40% c. almost 50%
2. How many visitors does Amazon's website have each month?
a. around 3.7 billion b. around 3.7 million c. around 370,000 million
3. What percentage of department stores in the UK have gone bankrupt in the last 5 years?
a. 83% b. 53% c. 33%
4. What do you think the "m" in "m-commerce" stands for?
a. money b. mobile c. market

4**Skimming for general understanding**

Read the following paragraph titles and match them with the paragraphs in the article. One title is extra, and will not be needed.

1. China online _____
2. The biggest and the best? _____
3. Shopping in the palm of your hand _____
4. Huge places to shop from home _____
5. Shopping from the past _____
6. Save our shops _____
7. eBay or no way _____



The e-commerce revolution

Online or offline, that is the question

- A. In many countries, online shopping has become just as popular as regular, in-person, everyday shopping. Take China for instance, at present nearly 50% of retail transactions, in the world's second-biggest economy, take place online. With this figure only likely to increase, what does the future hold for retail on the Internet, is the sky the limit? And on the other side of the fence, what about the so-called "traditional" shops, is it all sadness and fear, is failure now a real possibility for the once packed high street?
- B. Over the last decade e-commerce giants like *Amazon*, *eBay*, *ASOS*, and *Alibaba* have become both widely known and widely used by consumers around the world. The way in which people can now effortlessly shop from the comfort of their own homes is making it all the simpler for people to part with their cash.
- C. The chances are that if you are reading this, you have probably at some point purchased something from Amazon. The size and wealth of Amazon is simply unbelievable. Each month their website has roughly 3.7 billion visitors, and to cope with this huge demand they employ over 1.6 million employees globally. While receiving bad press, especially in relation to the working conditions of their employees, is not uncommon for Amazon, it doesn't seem to be something that deters their loyal customers. They come flocking back in their droves, attracted not only by Amazon's huge range of products but also added bonuses the company provides, like Black Friday discount events or "free two-day delivery" offers for special members.
- D. The main victim to the growing dominance of online retailers like Amazon has been the high street, and the clearest evidence of that has been in the slow death of the previously loved department store. In the UK, departments stores used to be central to a weekend shopping trip. However, over the last five years 83% of department stores have gone bust.
- E. E-commerce became a viable threat to in-person shopping more than twenty years ago, but the traditional outlets remained slow to adapt or evolve, and investors seemed lost in coming up with creative ways in which these businesses could remain in the black. It is only now that ideas are being put forward in relation to UK high streets varying their offer. It is felt that changing the focus away from goods and moving towards services could be one solution. Providing entertainment studios, wellbeing and health facilities or concert venues and cultural and sports events might be a unique enough offer to bring people back, but only time will tell.
- F. So, where do we go from here? The next stage of the e-commerce revolution seems to be "m-commerce", which relates to mobile shopping and the fact that people are now more likely to use their mobile phones or tablet to fulfil their retail needs. The companies themselves have evolved to cater for this market and the majority of online retailers now offer easy-to-use apps with "click to pay" features. To further attract the digital generation, the e-commerce brands market heavily on social media, an approach which provides a flexible shop front which can make it easier to attract many more potential customers.
- Sources: theguardian.com; reuters.com; independent.com; statista.com; www.ft.com





5 Reading comprehension

Read the following statements and decide if they are True (T), False (F) or Not Given (NG).

1. China is now the world's largest economy. _____
2. Online retailers make it hard for people to spend their money. _____
3. Amazon got some bad coverage from the media. _____
4. Amazon bosses all received big bonuses. _____
5. Department stores were once really popular in the UK. _____
6. Online retail started to threaten traditional shops more than two decades ago. _____
7. Online companies have not adapted to m-commerce. _____
8. M-commerce will be followed by shopping that we do virtually. _____

6 Focus on idioms

Look at the definitions below and then find an idiom in the article which has the same or a similar meaning.

1. _____ anything is possible (para. A)
2. _____ in a completely different situation (para. A)
3. _____ negative media coverage (para. C)
4. _____ has gone bankrupt (para. D)
5. _____ make profit, not be in debt (para. E)
6. _____ offer something, usually an idea (para. E)
7. _____ results will only be found out in the future (para. E)

Part B: Put the idioms from Part A into the correct gaps in the following sentences, you may need to change the form of the word. Then discuss with your partner if you agree or disagree.

1. All companies should _____ or face heavy, government fines.
2. CEOs should be protected from receiving _____.
3. Telling new employees that _____ is a good piece of advice.
4. In business, it is always important to try and understand people who are on _____.

**7****Talking point**

In pairs discuss the following questions about the article.

1. What do you think the most interesting thing in the article was?
2. If a company/shop was to receive a lot of bad press, would you stop spending your money there?
3. How would you feel if you were the owner of a high street shop these days?
4. What do you think about "m-commerce"? Do you think it will become popular in your country?

8**Today's debate (optional)**

With your partner, you are going to have a debate about the pros and cons of E-commerce. Before you start, decide who is Role A and who is Role B.

- A: E-commerce has a positive effect on local economies
- B: E-commerce has a negative effect on local economies

For about 5 minutes make some notes about your side of the debate in the box below, try and use some of the vocabulary and expressions from the lesson: