

The Everything Store: Passion and Strategy #1

66 percent of US citizens voted in the 2020 presidential _____, and 73 percent of US _____ subscribed to Amazon Prime in 2022.

In 1994, Amazon was _____ Jeff Bezos, a Wall Street hedge fund analyst with a computer science _____. In late 1993, he researched the _____ of the Internet and concluded that the industry was expanding _____ 2300% a year. _____, he decided to _____ his own business, saying, “things are changing fast. I need to move quickly.”

_____ 28 years, Amazon’s growth is one of the _____ stories of the Internet age, and _____. Traditionally, stock prices in the same sector _____ the same way since companies within the same industry are _____ similar market forces, economic conditions, and _____. However, Amazon’s stock _____ the rest of the retail sector. Over the course of the last two decades, Amazon experienced _____ growth as its market capitalization increased _____ 11 billion to 1.0 trillion, _____ most retailers _____ bankrupt or suffered _____ performance. How has Amazon established its dominance in the retail industry? What will be the _____ of its growth for society?

66 percent of US citizens voted in the 2020 presidential election, and 73 percent of US households subscribed to Amazon Prime in 2022.

In 1994, Amazon was founded by Jeff Bezos, a Wall Street hedge fund analyst with a computer science degree. In late 1993, he researched the growth of the Internet and concluded that the industry was expanding at a rate of 2300% a year. Being astonished, he decided to establish his own business, saying, “things are changing fast. I need to move quickly.”

Fast forward 28 years, Amazon’s growth is one of the iconic stories of the Internet age, and its success is dominant. Traditionally, stock prices in the same sector fluctuate the same way since companies within the same industry are subject to similar market forces, economic conditions, and investor sentiments. However, Amazon’s stock has been inversely correlated to the rest of the retail sector. Over the course of the last two decades, Amazon experienced extraordinary growth as its market capitalization increased from 11 billion to 1.0 trillion, while most retailers either went bankrupt or suffered from poor performance. How has Amazon established its dominance in the retail industry? What will be the potential consequences of its growth for society?

household	世帯	subject	影響を受けやすい
degree	学位	inversely	逆の、反対の
astonish	驚かす	correlated	相関関係がある
fast forward	早送り	retail	小売、小売業
iconic	象徴的な	sector	部門、分野
dominant	優勢な、支配的な	bankrupt	破産した、倒産した
fluctuate	変動する、揺れ動く	consequence	結果

Today, Amazon _____ its mission as the Earth's largest store with the biggest selection, _____ the 'everything store'. It's difficult to find something that cannot be _____ Amazon. But Jeff Bezos knew _____ impossible to build a true 'everything store' overnight. So he started _____ unlimited selection _____ one _____ product category. He realized that books were the best option for _____ reasons. First of all, the same books have the exact same quality, whether you buy them onsite or online. When we buy clothes online, for example, we may have to worry whether they fit or not, or the _____ to be quite _____ our expectation. But we don't have to have such concerns for books. Second, unlike food, books never _____ and shipping and storing _____ would not be expensive. Most _____, there were three million books in print worldwide, far more than the largest bookstore could ever _____. Therefore, Amazon could take _____ of the internet's ability to offer a larger selection of products _____ retail stores. He has been _____ this strategy. In 1998, Bezos _____ into new categories was _____ as he learned a majority of consumers did not use Amazon.com and were unlikely to start simply because they _____ books. He formed a team to research product categories that were not _____ in _____ stores and could be easily _____ and _____ the mail. Amazon executives chose music as the first expansion target, and DVDs as the second.

Today, Amazon lives up to its mission as the Earth's largest store with the biggest selection, known as the 'everything store'. It's difficult to find something that cannot be purchased on Amazon. But Jeff Bezos knew that it was impossible to build a true 'everything store' overnight. So he started providing unlimited selection in at least one important product category. He realized that books were the best option for several reasons. First of all, the same books have the exact same quality, whether you buy them onsite or online. When we buy clothes online, for example, we may have to worry whether they fit or not, or the actual texture turns out to be quite different from our expectation. But we don't have to have such concerns for books. Second, unlike food, books never decay and shipping and storing costs would not be expensive. Most importantly, there were three million books in print worldwide, far more than the largest bookstore could ever stock. Therefore, Amazon could take advantage of the internet's ability to offer a larger selection of products than traditional retail stores. He has been consistent in this strategy. In 1998, Bezos felt expansion into new categories was urgent as he learned a majority of consumers did not use Amazon.com and were unlikely to start simply because they rarely bought and read books. He formed a team to research product categories that were not commonly found in physical stores and could be easily stocked and shipped through the mail. Amazon executives chose music as the first expansion target, and DVDs as the second.

live up to	期待・約束に添う	consistent	首尾一貫した
purchase	購入する	urgent	緊急の
overnight	一晩で、急に	ship	配送する
texture	触感、手触り		

The Everything Store: Passion and Strategy #3

As of 2023, the retail industry could be _____ the _____ success of Amazon and the disaster for the rest of the _____. Since the _____ - _____ boom in 1990s, a number of _____ entered the e-commerce sector. _____ that Amazon became the powerhouse it is today. _____ survived and _____. What factors contributed to Amazon's overwhelming success?

One of the _____ characteristics of Amazon is its long-term, customer-_____ approach. Bezos famously keeps one _____ in meetings, claiming that it is “for the customer.” Amazon _____ - _____ profitability and massively spends on _____ the customer experience. For example, Amazon has continuously invested in automated warehouses and control delivery systems to lower shipping costs, and the money _____ was _____ passed on to customers _____ prices or spent on other service improvements, _____ delivery time.

Bezos also wanted to make it as easy and comfortable as possible for customers to buy things on the site. In 1998, Amazon introduced the 1-Click ordering process, in which the system _____ a customer’s credit card information and _____ shipping address so that a _____ is executed with a single press of a button. The company willingly invest billions to reduce the _____ of online buying even _____.

Amazon _____ our survival _____ to collect more stuff with minimum effort. Now that customers can get _____ a _____ in a comfortable _____ for free shipping cost within a couple of days, how could the local bookstore and supermarket possibly compete?

As of 2023, the retail industry could be described as the dominant success of Amazon and the disaster for the rest of the sector. Since the first dot-com boom in 1990s, a number of startups entered the e-commerce sector. But it turns out that Amazon became the powerhouse it is today. It survived and thrived. What factors contributed to Amazon's overwhelming success?

One of the defining characteristics of Amazon is its long-term, customer-centered approach. Bezos famously keeps one chair empty in meetings, claiming that it is “for the customer.” Amazon ignores short-term profitability and massively spends on enhancing the customer experience. For example, Amazon has continuously invested in automated warehouses and control delivery systems to lower shipping costs, and the money saved was either passed on to customers in the form of lower prices or spent on other service improvements, such as shortening delivery time.

Bezos also wanted to make it as easy and comfortable as possible for customers to buy things on the site. In 1998, Amazon introduced the 1-Click ordering process, in which the system preloaded a customer’s credit card information and preferred shipping address so that a purchase is executed with a single press of a button. The company willingly invest billions to reduce the friction of online buying even marginally.

Amazon appeals to our survival instinct to collect more stuff with minimum effort. Now that customers can get whatever they want with a single click in a comfortable sofa for free shipping cost within a couple of days, how could the local bookstore and supermarket possibly compete?

powerhouse	強力な組織	automate	自動化する
thrive	栄える	warehouse	倉庫
overwhelming	圧倒的な、膨大な	preload	事前に読み込む
profitability	収益性、利益率	marginally	わずかに

From 2018 to 2021, Jeff Bezos _____ of world's _____ person, largely _____ his ownership of Amazon stock. _____ Amazon has been highly _____ the stock market, _____ is _____. The company first turned a profit in Q4 of 2001, seven years after its founding, and has since maintained a relatively low _____ profitability.

In addition to revolutionizing the retail industry, Jeff Bezos also _____ the _____. Before Amazon, shareholders funded companies with the expectation of larger _____ years. However, Amazon doesn't prioritize _____ profits, and instead promises vision and growth to its shareholders. The story is _____: to become the Earth's biggest store by offering lower prices, greater selection, and faster delivery.

_____ a massive _____, Amazon is willing to _____. For example, reducing shipping times _____ two days to one day would require billions of dollars. By _____, it would not make sense due to the huge investment for a _____. However, for Amazon, _____ sense because most competitors cannot _____. Consumers love the faster shipping, and other retailers have no choice but to _____.

Bezos has _____ disregarded the short-term needs of investors _____ long-term goals. But Wall Street _____. He _____ so much faith from his shareholders that investors are waiting for the day when their _____ will finally be _____.

From 2018 to 2021, Jeff Bezos held the title of world's wealthiest person, largely due to his ownership of Amazon stock. Although Amazon has been highly valued in the stock market, its balance sheet is not as impressive. The company first turned a profit in Q4 of 2001, seven years after its founding, and has since maintained a relatively low level of profitability.

In addition to revolutionizing the retail industry, Jeff Bezos also changed the rules of Wall Street. Before Amazon, shareholders funded companies with the expectation of larger returns in the form of profits in a few years. However, Amazon doesn't prioritize short-term profits, and instead promises vision and growth to its shareholders. The story is simple yet compelling: to become the Earth's biggest store by offering lower prices, greater selection, and faster delivery. If this requires a massive investment, Amazon is willing to spare no expense.

For example, reducing shipping times from two days to one day would require billions of dollars. By conventional measures, it would not make sense due to the huge investment for a marginal return. However, for Amazon, it makes perfect sense because most competitors cannot afford it. Consumers love the faster shipping, and other retailers have no choice but to fall behind.

Bezos has consistently disregarded the short-term needs of investors in pursuit of long-term goals. But Wall Street hardly seems to care. He has earned so much faith from his shareholders that investors are waiting for the day when their patience will finally be rewarded.

stock	株式	conventional	従来の、旧来の
fund	資金を出す	competitor	競争相手
compelling	抗し難い、惹き込まれる	disregard	無視する、軽視する
spare	惜しむ	hardly	ほとんど～ない



In the summer of 2011, 15 workers of Amazon’s _____ center in Phoenix _____ heatstroke and were taken to a local hospital, _____ harsh criticism _____ unsafe working environment.

Today, if you look inside one of their warehouses, you will be _____, and _____, not by the _____ employees, but by the _____ of employees.

In 2012, Amazon _____ Kiva Systems, a sophisticated warehouse robotics _____, for \$775 million. Six years later, human workers were mostly _____ 45,000 Kiva robots _____ all of their fulfillment centers, helping process 306 _____ the Christmas season. It’s going to become increasingly difficult for store owners to justify human workers who _____, show up late, and can easily _____. Robots work 24-7. They never take a day off, never need a bathroom break, or _____. Retailers _____ business may have to replace human workers with robots.

It is not only warehouse workers that may lose their jobs. _____ 2016, Amazon _____ Prime Air, their promise of _____ delivery in thirty minutes or less. _____ employment, Prime Air means we would need less delivery workers in the retail industry in the foreseeable future.

Amazon doesn’t _____ about robotics, one of _____, because they realize _____ criticism and anxiety for destroying jobs. _____ traditional retailers, Amazon requires much less human _____ the same amount of revenue. Amazon’s growth now virtually equals job destruction. How will our society address the growing wave of job displacement by disruptive technologies?

In the summer of 2011, 15 workers of Amazon’s fulfillment center in Phoenix suffered heatstroke and were taken to a local hospital, prompting harsh criticism from the public of its unsafe working environment.

Today, if you look inside one of their warehouses, you will be shocked, and even disturbed, not by the mistreated employees, but by the absence of employees.

In 2012, Amazon quietly acquired Kiva Systems, a sophisticated warehouse robotics firm, for \$775 million. Six years later, human workers were mostly replaced with 45,000 Kiva robots deployed at all of their fulfillment centers, helping process 306 items per second during the Christmas season. It’s going to become increasingly difficult for store owners to justify human workers who call in sick, show up late, and can easily get injured. Robots work 24-7. They never take a day off, never need a bathroom break, or health insurance. Retailers interested in staying in business may have to replace human workers with robots.

It is not only warehouse workers that may lose their jobs. Back in 2016, Amazon announced Prime Air, their promise of drone delivery in thirty minutes or less. In terms of employment, Prime Air means we would need less delivery workers in the retail industry in the foreseeable future.

Amazon doesn’t talk publicly about robotics, one of its core competencies, because they realize it would soon cause criticism and anxiety for destroying jobs. Compared to traditional retailers, Amazon requires much less human labor force to earn the same amount of revenue. Amazon’s growth now virtually equals job destruction. How will our society address the growing wave of job displacement by disruptive technologies?

fulfillment	出荷、注文処理	deploy	配備する
heatstroke	熱中症	competency	強み、競争優位性
prompt	刺激する、誘発する	revenue	収入、歳入
disturb	妨害する、不安にさせる	displace	取って代わる
mistreat	虐待する、酷使する	disruptive	混乱をもたらす
acquire	得る、獲得する		