

TEXTE

Does E-Commerce Care About Sustainability?

Blake Morgan, November 5th, 2019, Forbes.com

5 There's nothing like the thrill of getting something you ordered online in the mail. Part of the joy and convenience of ordering items online is when they actually arrive. But that packaging that wraps those perfect items could actually be hurting the environment. Many e-commerce packages are sent in materials that are harmful to the environment, but a new wave of companies is setting out to create more sustainable packaging solutions.

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Dangers Of Packaging

It's no surprise that Americans love to shop online. Every year, 165 billion packages are shipped in the U.S., which uses enough cardboard to equal more than 1 billion trees. That doesn't even consider the waste from the plastic air bags and additional packaging that keep items safe in transit.

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Other common packaging options aren't much better. Many packages contain materials that are difficult to recycle and are harmful to the environment. Many e-commerce companies, including Amazon, have started packaging more items in bubble mailers, which are lighter and allow for more items to be placed on planes and trucks.

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E-Commerce Sustainability Efforts

As e-commerce grows at a staggering rate—online sales are expected to double in the next decade—many retailers are increasing their sustainability efforts to cut back on packaging. Amazon, the largest e-commerce retailer in the world, offers “frustration free” packaging on some items, which sends items in their original packaging without excess boxes. Amazon recently doubled down on its efforts in the program by asking vendors to adopt new packaging standards and threatening to fine small retailers if they don't comply.

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Online shopping will only continue to grow, and unless we take strong steps towards sustainable packaging, the size of our landfills will grow right alongside it. Forward-thinking companies need to deliver a great experience in all areas for their customers, including how they send their packages.

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Innovative Packaging Solutions

As environmental concerns grow, a large number of startups and smaller companies are creating innovative packaging solutions. The aptly named Package Free Shop mails its household items and health and beauty products in completely recyclable and compostable boxes and uses paper tape and wrapping that can also be recycled.

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