

Where Do Former Toys 'R' Us Customers Shop Now?

Amazon aims to capture these shoppers, but it doesn't offer the same experience

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Store closures are the hallmark of the so-called retail apocalypse, but the demise of brick-and-mortar locations might be more apparent to industry watchers. The average consumer doesn't always pay attention — unless a particular store meant something to them.

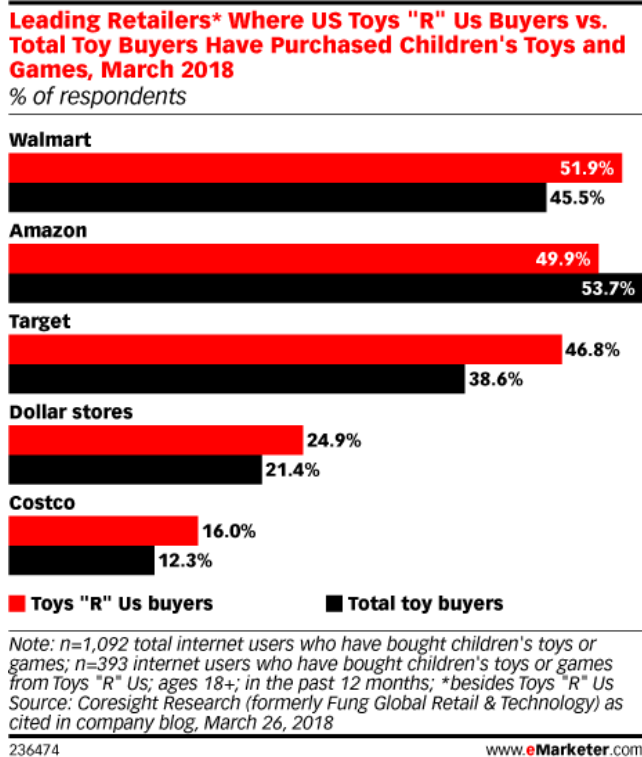
According to a June 2018 survey by [Sailthru](#), many US consumers (38.9%) said they hadn't even noticed the [slew of national chain closures](#) over the past few years. An additional 18.3% did notice and said they didn't care, while 28.3% admitted they missed some stores.

When asked about the retailer they missed the most—beyond the tough crowd (36.0%) who said none—[Sears](#) (24.0%) and [Toys "R" Us](#) (21.3%) were the most beloved. For consumers under age 44, those two stores were reversed. Nostalgia has a strong pull in either case.

So, where do consumers shop when a store they once frequented goes out of business?

Earlier this year, Toys "R" Us buyers were less likely to purchase on Amazon than toy buyers in general, according to [Coresight Research](#). They were more likely to buy on both Walmart and Target (46.8% vs 38.6%). It's plausible that shoppers who would prefer a traditional big

box experience like Toys "R" Us would be more inclined to shop in-store rather than online.



A new [Criteo](#) report focuses on where former Toys "R" Us and Babies "R" Us shoppers are now spending. [Amazon](#) has become the top Toys "R" Us replacement (34%), though [Walmart](#) (31%) has captured nearly as much share, while [Target](#) (18%) is also filling in as a substitute. Convenience was cited as the biggest factor in choosing a new retailer for toys and children's products.

Notably, a majority (59%) used to shop at physical Toys R Us locations, not online. The top three aspects consumers liked about shopping at a Toys "R" Us were selection (71%), the in-store shopping experience (59%) and location (48%). Nearly half (48%) had a Toys "R" Us location 10 to 20 minutes from their home. Two out of those three criteria can't be replicated by an online retailer like Amazon, even though it competes on convenience.

Online retailers attempting to replicate the in-store experience should take note. According to Sailthru, 37.9% of consumers reported more

satisfaction when shopping in-store. Only 16.7% said they get more satisfaction from online shopping.

Consumers would also like to see more physical stores from online-only retailers. The top three picks were Amazon (roughly 40% of respondents), followed by **Wayfair** and Zappos (roughly 30% and 20%, respectively).

Amazon has stepped into the role of multichannel retailer with its bookstores and Amazon Go locations and has made it known that it plans to be Toys "R" Us' successor. The retailer recently mailed out **its first print catalog** featuring toys for the holidays.