

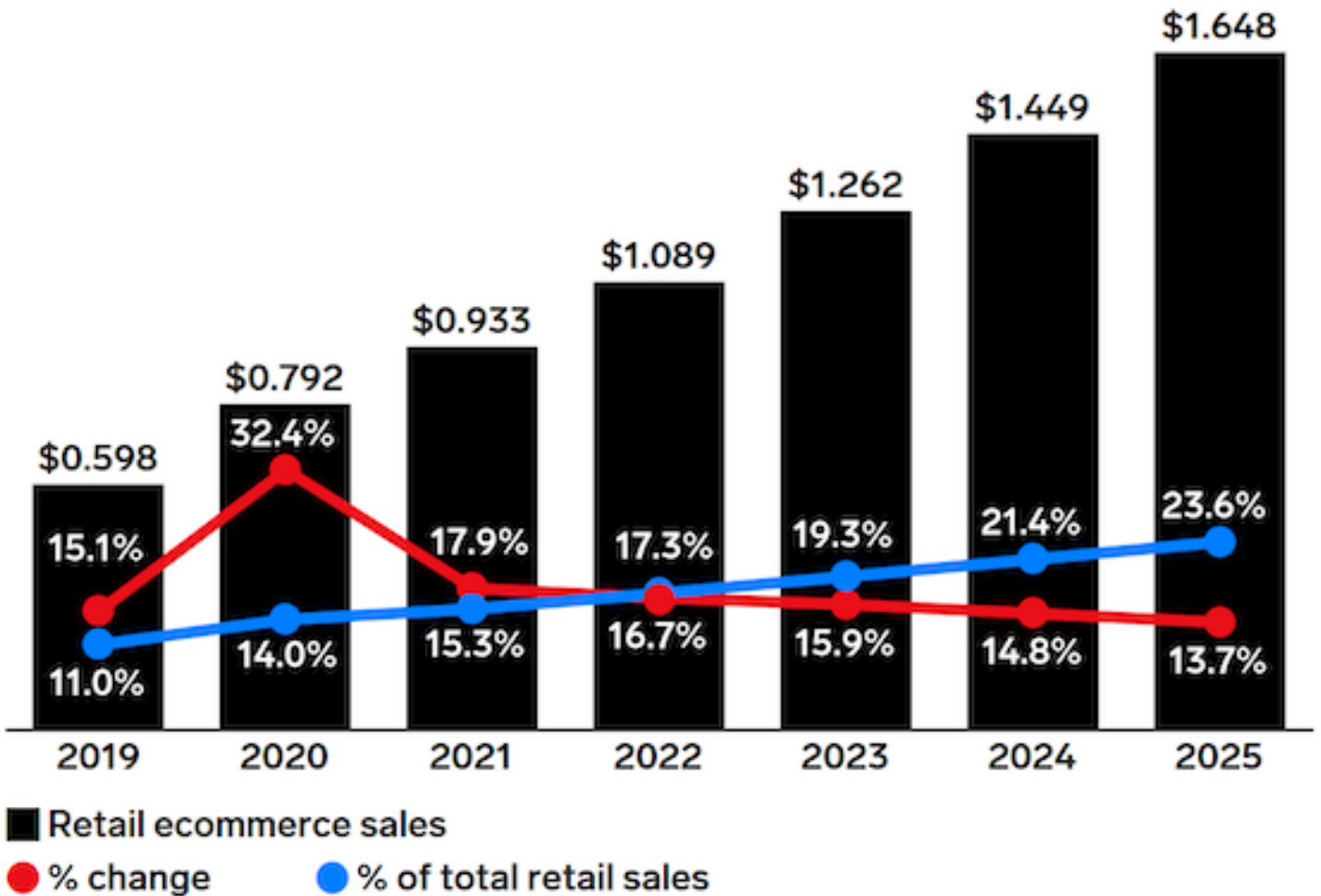
What's driving growth in online fashion resale?

Article

Fashion resale surged during the pandemic under a unique set of circumstances. With people stuck at home during lockdowns, the need for office wear and dressy attire vanished overnight, sparking a wave of closet cleanouts. For some, financial uncertainty made selling unused apparel a necessity, while buyers sought out unique finds and deals by shopping secondhand. Fashion resale also benefited from the unprecedented gains in ecommerce across the board during this period.

Retail Ecommerce Sales in the US, 2019-2025

trillions, % change, and % of total retail sales



Note: 2019-2025 CAGR=18.4%; includes products or services ordered using the internet, regardless of the method of payment or fulfillment; excludes travel and event tickets, payments such as bill pay, taxes, or money transfers, food services and drinking place sales, gambling, and other vice goods sales
 Source: eMarketer, May 2021

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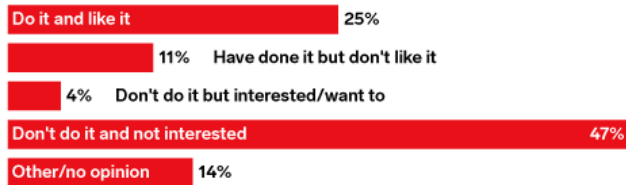
These shifts coincided with younger consumers emerging as a major force in fashion retail. Resale benefits from Gen Z's commitment to sustainable consumption, its love of thrifting,

and throwback fashion trends such as Y2K, which has brought looks from the 1990s and early 2000s back into style.

The potential in fashion resale has barely been tapped. Cowen and Company estimates a total addressable US market in the range of **\$150 billion to \$300 billion** (based on **10% to 15%** of annual purchases of **\$500 billion** on clothing, accessories, and footwear, multiplied by **three to four years** of purchases), although only a fraction of that is being captured. Cowen expects **online sales of secondhand fashion to surpass sales from physical stores** for the first time in 2022.

Experiences with Purchasing Used Clothing and Accessories According to US Adults, June 2021

% of respondents



Note: n=2,916; numbers may not add up to 100% due to rounding
Source: CivicScience as cited in company blog, June 16, 2021

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However, growth in the number of resale buyers will be more modest. Consumption of secondhand apparel is unlikely to fully enter the mainstream given that nearly half of respondents expressed no interest, according to a June 2021 CivicScience survey, and nearly a third of those who had made secondhand purchases did not like the experience.

[Read the full report.](#)