

AI, CTV, and private label propel retailers to the top of our ‘unofficial’ February most interesting retailers ranking

Article

Walmart makes a huge acquisition in hopes of taking on Amazon's retail media dominance, while Amazon keeps churning out generative AI innovations. Plus, Target tries to steal share from Walmart's prowess on attracting deal-seeking shoppers. Find out who else earned a spot in our Unofficial" Most Interesting Retailers List, a monthly ranking revealed on an episode of the ["Behind the Numbers: Reimagining Retail" podcast](#).

BEHIND THE NUMBERS | REIMAGINING RETAIL

INSIDER INTELLIGENCE

Marketer

THE UNOFFICIAL

Most Interesting Retailers List



1.

Walmart

↑ 2



2.

Target

↑ 2



3.

Temu

↓ 1



4.

Apple

↑

	5.	Amazon	↓ 4
	6.	Coca-Cola	↑
CÉCRED™	7.	CÉCRED	↑
GAP	8.	Gap	↑
	9.	Shopify	↑
	10.	Crocs	↑

1. Walmart

Why: Last week, Walmart announced plans to acquire smart TV manufacturer Vizio for \$2.3 billion in a bid to bolster its **connected (CTV)** ad capabilities, hoping to get closer to a real fight with Amazon's retail media business.

What's interesting:

- “[The acquisition] is just going to help **Walmart** accelerate that flywheel of ecommerce, advertising, and content, which is going to be really, really important if it wants to reach anywhere near where Amazon is right now,” our analyst Arielle Feger said.

- With its breadth of shoppers' data, Walmart will be able to offer CTV advertisers powerful targeting abilities.

2. Amazon

Why: Amazon's new generative AI-powered shopping assistant, Rufus, is its latest attempt to help customers make more informed purchases. Rufus answers product questions, offers recommendations, and assists with comparisons through a conversational chatbot.

What's interesting:

- The shopping assistant comes amid Amazon's ambitious plans to release its own generative AI model, Olympus, by the end of the year, which could power Alexa and Rufus.
- **Amazon** will continue to take advantage of the **retail media** opportunities that arose with the rollout of its **new ad-supported tier on Prime Video**. "This is really part of Amazon's big strategic shift to become an advertising powerhouse that can reach customers across the marketing funnel, from the top of the funnel on CTV right down to search on the Amazon-owned properties," our analyst Sky Canaves said.

3. Target

Why: With prices starting as low as \$1, Target's latest private label venture, dealworthy, includes everyday essentials from paper towels to toothbrushes, as well as electronics that can be priced as much as 50% lower than other brands sold at Target.

What's interesting:

- "[Target] is building out a really strong private label portfolio," Feger said, including a newly announced collaboration with Diane von Furstenberg that offers affordable spring fashion.
- Target's moves to capture a larger share of deal-seeking customers may be a response to Walmart's Q4 2023 earnings, which reported a continued streak of higher-than-expected sales.

4. Temu

Why: Temu ads aired five times throughout Super Bowl Sunday, three of which played during the big game, costing nearly \$30 million. The ad featured animated characters using the app over upbeat music, breaking the mold from other **star-studded, high-production placements**.

What's interesting:

- Temu was the second-most mentioned Super Bowl commercial after Verizon, garnering 40,448 mentions and 420,714 engagements, according to Sprout Social, as cited by Fact Company.
- The retailer may be building its consumer base in advance of its expanding marketplace, opening to US sellers on March 15.

5. Apple

Why: The release of Apple Vision Pro this month was met with fanfare, selling out almost immediately after preorders opened. Its limited release, solely in the US, is sparking international resales upward of \$5,000, as reported by Bloomberg—much more than its original \$3,500 price tag.

What's interesting:

- “The consumer electronics market has been really sluggish over the last couple of years, and it really needs a new type of product to jumpstart growth,” our analyst Blake Drosch said. The Vision Pro has the potential to revive the market, he added. US consumer electronics and computer sales are expected to grow just 4.0% this year, per our December 2023 forecast.
- The Vision Pro release also pushed brands such as e.l.f. Cosmetics, Lowe’s, and J.Crew to develop **immersive VR experiences** for the device, signaling a new experimental avenue to reach consumers.

Do you agree with our rankings? Let us know by commenting on our **Instagram post**. Make sure to tune in next month when we unveil our March rankings.

Listen to the full episode.

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