



Illustration: Dominic Bugatto

Amazon's Kill List: 37 Projects That Are No More


Amid slowing sales growth, CEO Andy Jassy is culling projects concocted during the Jeff Bezos era.

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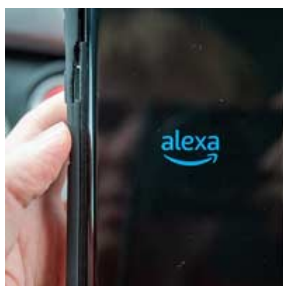
When Jeff Bezos ran the show, [Amazon.com Inc.](#) encouraged employees to pitch product ideas — then take them from concept to reality with minimal bureaucratic second-guessing. The spaghetti-against-the-wall approach didn't always generate strong sellers — the Fire Phone is one famous misfire — but the company was growing sufficiently quickly to risk some failures and move on with few regrets.

Then in 2021 Andy Jassy became chief executive officer, and over the past couple of years Amazon has made more waves for killing products than launching them.

The breadth of the cuts — which range from a kids videoconferencing device to a telehealth service and handful of e-commerce subsidiaries — speaks to both the boundless ambitions of the company during the late Bezos years and the depth of the current retrenchment as Amazon adjusts to a steep slowdown in growth that has precipitated the axing of 27,000 corporate jobs.

Jassy has said Amazon continues to take big swings, including in healthcare, groceries and a satellite internet project called Kuiper. Still, during the past year, Amazon “took a deep look across the company and asked ourselves whether we had conviction about each initiative’s long-term potential to drive enough revenue, operating income, free cash flow and return on invested capital,” Jassy said on an earnings call in April. “In some cases, it led to us shuttering certain businesses.”

Jassy has urged teams to simplify and ruthlessly prioritize as they allocate their newly constrained budgets. He’s preached a renewed focus on price, selection and convenience, the cocktail of timeless retail imperatives favored by Bezos in Amazon’s formative years. Fast delivery and Prime perks are in. Amazon’s “see what sticks” product strategy is out, or at least on pause.

Product**Alexa Built-In****End date****March 2023**

A feature for the Alexa smartphone app that let people summon the digital assistant using only their voice, even from a lockscreen. Few smartphone makers integrated the feature. Amazon’s digital assistant is a heavyweight in the home, but has a much smaller presence on mobile devices, where Apple Inc.’s Siri and Alphabet Inc.’s Google Assistant dominate.

Source

Product**Alexa for Business****End date****May 2023**

An effort to put Alexa in the workplace that would have turned Echo smart speakers into conference room hubs and desktop assistants. Uptake was slow. Even at Amazon’s headquarters, employees often muted the devices before

starting meetings. The company folded some Alexa for Business capabilities into a new program geared toward more narrow uses of Alexa in healthcare, hospitality and senior-living settings. [Source](#)

Product

Alexa HIPAA-compliant health skills

 **End date**

December 2022

A program that let builders of Alexa voice assistant applications achieve HIPAA health-privacy standards, launched in 2019. Amazon has struggled to build an app store-like marketplace for Alexa, and some launch partners abandoned the HIPAA-compliant program. The company says it is “continuing to invest heavily” in Alexa’s health care capabilities. [Source](#)

Product

Alexa.com

 **End date**

May 2022

Alexa Internet, not to be confused with the Alexa voice assistant, was a web-traffic analysis company Amazon acquired in 1999. It was among the main gauges of a website’s reach on the internet. “Thank you for making us your go-to resource for content research, competitive analysis, keyword research, and so much more,” Amazon said after killing it. [Source](#)

Product

Amazon 4-star

 **End date**

March 2022



Amazon launched this store, which sold a potpourri of highly rated items, in 2018. There were 33 locations when the chain’s closing was announced, along with 16 more planned stores. The outlets, which sold a variety of home goods, electronics and toys, were wound down as Amazon reassessed its strategy in physical retail. [Source](#)

Product**Amazon Academy (India)****🕒 End date****October 2022**

A learning platform and online test-preparation service in India, designed to prepare students for college-entrance exams. The company is spending billions to become a major retail player in India and is a big employer there. “We remain committed to India,” Amazon said. [Source](#)

Product**Amazon Assistant****🕒 End date****March 2023**

A browser extension for price comparisons between Amazon.com and other sites. “At Amazon, we’re always experimenting and evaluating the potential of our products,” the company said. [Source](#)

Product**Amazon Books****🕒 End date****March 2022**



The bookstore and gadget chain opened its first location in an upscale Seattle mall in 2015, marking Amazon’s first foray into physical retail. The stores tried to stand out with digital price tags and by shelving books with the covers facing shoppers. There were 24 locations when Amazon announced they were closing. [Source](#)

Product**Amazon Care****🕒 End date****December 2022**

A telehealth and home-visit, medical-care service that Amazon opened to Seattle-area employees in 2020, and to other companies nationwide a year later. Few businesses signed up. Shortly after announcing it was buying the One Medical primary care chain, Amazon said Care would shut down. Executives

said the decision was made before the acquisition, saying Care wasn't "a complete enough offering" for business customers. [Source](#)

Product

Amazon Distribution (India)

 **End date**

November 2022

An initiative for wholesale sellers to distribute items to small neighborhood stores in three cities of Karnataka, India. Amazon has experimented with a wide range of retail and distribution models in India and has at times endured a backlash from small merchants wary of the big outsider. [Source](#)

Product

Amazon Drive

 **End date**

December 2023

An online file-storage service, launched in 2011 and eventually made free for Prime Members. The company said it was "taking the opportunity to more fully focus our efforts on Amazon Photos," another file storage service. [Source](#)

Product

Amazon Explore

 **End date**

October 2022

A virtual-tours portal and product of the company's Grand Challenge moonshot incubator. The program launched in September 2020 – in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic – and offered sightseeing tours, cooking classes and virtual shopping experiences. [Source](#)

Product

Amazon Flex (Germany)

 **End date**

June 2022

A gig-economy service that used independent drivers to deliver packages with their own vehicles. Amazon has relied on Flex less after building out a network of contractors called Delivery Service Partners. "We are actively supporting

former Amazon Flex delivery partners to find other opportunities,” the company said. [Source](#)

Product

Amazon Food (India)

 **End date**

November 2022

A restaurant-delivery service launched in 2020. Amazon had also tried, and subsequently wound down, similar programs in the US and UK. [Source](#)

Product

Amazon Glow

 **End date**

December 2022



A children’s videoconferencing and game device that also emerged from the company’s Grand Challenge moonshot incubator. Reviewers liked the idea of the device, which was pitched as a way to let kids chat and play games with far-flung relatives but deemed it unfinished and buggy. Amazon said it was “humbled by the amazing feedback from our

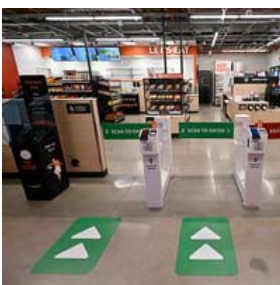
customers.” [Source](#)

Product

Amazon Go

 **End date**

April 2023



The company closed eight of its cashierless Amazon Go locations in Seattle, New York and San Francisco. Amazon said it remains committed to the format and operated 20 additional Go stores when it announced the closings. The company is looking to license Go’s “Just Walk Out” technology to other companies and is testing such formats as suburban

convenience stores and supermarkets. [Source](#)

Product

Amazon Halo devices

 **End date**

July 2023



A line of health and wellness devices introduced in 2020, which came to include the wrist-worn Band and the Rise sleep tracker. Innovative and sometimes creepy features such as voice sentiment analysis and body fat scanning weren't hits. "We are incredibly proud of the invention and hard work that went into building Halo on behalf of our customers, and our priorities are taking care of our customers and supporting our employees," Amazon said. [Source](#)

Product

Amazon Ignite

 **End date**

April 2023

A hub for teachers and creators of education content to "earn money for work you're already doing," such as lesson plans, printouts and classroom games. An earlier Amazon program had let educators share content for free. [Source](#)

Product

Amazon Kids+ games

 **End date**

April 2023

Mobile video games launched in 2022 based on two Amazon original shows for kids: "Super Spy Ryan" and "Do, Re & Mi." The company has struggled to build its own video games despite a decade of effort. [Source](#)

Product

Amazon Personal Shopper

 **End date**

January 2023

A styling service for Prime members from Amazon's fashion team, part of the company's long effort to turn Amazon.com into an apparel shopping destination. [Source](#)

Product

Amazon Pop Up

 **End date**

March 2022

Electronics-focused popup stores. There were nine when the closing was announced, down from dozens. The stores – often located in malls – featured Kindle e-readers, Fire tablets and other Amazon gadgets. The company had waffled on the concept, shutting down the stores in 2019, before reviving it. “We remain committed to building great, long-term physical retail experiences and technologies,” Amazon said. [Source](#)

Product

Amazon Scout

 **End date**

October 2022



An autonomous delivery robot the company had been testing in suburbs around the US since 2019. The slow-moving, cooler-sized bot pulled up at the front door. Shoppers opened a compartment to retrieve their item. “We worked to create a unique delivery experience, but learned through feedback that there were aspects of the program that weren’t meeting

customers’ needs,” Amazon said. [Source](#)

Product

Amazon Smile

 **End date**

February 2023

Amazon’s most widely known philanthropic program gave a portion of sales to a charity of a shopper’s choice. Smile launched in 2013, when Amazon was being criticized for not doing enough giving. They’ve since started programs that give cash to schools and disaster relief, among other causes. “We’ll continue working to make a difference in many ways,” Amazon said. [Source](#)

Product

Amazon Sumerian

 **End date**

February 2023

An Amazon Web Services cloud service that let people create augmented- and virtual-reality applications, launched in 2017 long before the metaverse hype. Few customers used it, and Sumerian became the rare AWS service the company decided to shut down entirely. [Source](#)

Product**Book Depository** **End date****April 2023**

A Gloucester, England-based online bookseller, co-founded by an Amazon alum in 2004 and acquired by the company in 2011. The firm, which shipped worldwide, claimed to be the fastest-growing bookstore in Europe at the time of the acquisition. “From all of us at Book Depository we want to say, ‘thank you,’” the company said. [Source](#)

Product**DPRReview** **End date****April 2023**

Formerly Digital Photography Review, a London-based digital camera site Amazon acquired in 2007. When devoted readers complained about the closing, DPRReview said it would keep the site available as an archive and continue publishing until that work was complete. “We hear your concerns about losing the content that has been carefully curated over the years,” the site’s general manager said. [Source](#)

Product**Fabric.com** **End date****October 2022**

Founded in 1993, the e-commerce site was acquired by Amazon in 2008, at a time the company was rapidly expanding into new categories of online retail. “We continually evaluate the progress and potential of our offerings and have made the decision to close Fabric.com,” Amazon said. [Source](#)

Product**Fire TV Recast** **End date****August 2022**

A DVR that allowed users to record shows captured by a TV antenna. “Many of the features offered by the Recast are now available through other apps on Fire

TV, and we are focusing our efforts and resources on other Fire TV devices and services that provide great value to our customers,” Amazon said. [Source](#)

Product

Free US grocery delivery

 **End date**

February 2023

Amazon previously offered free grocery delivery under its Amazon Fresh brand on orders larger than \$35, one of the biggest perks available to Prime members. But the company, which has struggled for years with the high costs of ferrying food to doorsteps, raised that threshold to \$150. Fees help “keep prices low in our online and physical grocery stores as we better cover grocery delivery costs and continue to enable offering a consistent, fast and high-quality delivery experience,” Amazon said. [Source](#)

Product

GameOn

 **End date**

June 2022

A mobile games video capture and sharing app launched in 2020. Amazon is a giant in video game streaming thanks to its Twitch subsidiary, though GameOn shared none of that branding when it launched for Android and iOS. [Source](#)

Product

Kindle Newsstand

 **End date**

September 2023

A hub for single-copy and subscription sales of newspapers and magazines, read and stored on Kindle devices. Content was tailored to the e-reader, letting users change text size or font type and flip through publications like an ebook. The importance of the Kindle business has declined in recent years as Amazon began focusing elsewhere. [Source](#)

Product

Kindle store (China)

 **End date**

June 2023

Kindle's e-bookstore in China. Amazon had already essentially given up trying to compete in China's retail market. "Amazon China's long-term commitment to customers will not change," Amazon said. "We have established a broad business base in China and will continue to innovate and invest." [Source](#)

Product

Online Learning Program

 **End date**

December 2022

A set of online cloud-computing tutorials. The company's Amazon Web Services unit continues to offer a range of other educational materials, from training programs to a role-playing video game.

Product

Prime grocery delivery hub

 **End date**

January 2023

An experimental drive-thru grocery pickup depot that opened in Seattle's Ballard neighborhood in 2017. Another Seattle site remains open, and the company today offers pickup from hundreds of Whole Foods Market and Amazon Fresh stores. [Source](#)

Product

Textbook rental

 **End date**

April 2023

A textbook rental program and a reminder of the days when most of Amazon's business revolved around books. "Following an assessment of our print textbook rentals and our magazine and newspaper subscriptions and single-issue sales, we have made the difficult decision to discontinue these services," Amazon said. [Source](#)

Product

Treasure Truck

 **End date**

November 2022



Roving pickup points for daily deal items, launched in Seattle in 2015, and around the US in 2017. The service was paused during the pandemic and relaunched later as a ship-to-home program, effectively retiring the trucks. “We’ll continue to offer customers new deals every day on Amazon.com,” the company said. [Source](#)

Product

Wickr Me

End date

December 2023

Encrypted-messaging service purchased by Amazon in 2021. An NBC News investigation later found Wickr did little to proactively address the circulation of images of child sexual abuse on the platform. Before killing Wickr, Amazon committed to removing that content, and said it was cooperating with law enforcement. Amazon Web Services still offers a business version of Wickr.

[Source](#)

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