Survey Instrument

The survey was implemented in Qualtrics. A public preview is available at this link.
This document contains a non-interactive copy of the survey questions.
Note what cannot be shown in the non-interactive copy:

- The user interface changed when participants inserted their Amazon data.
- The survey implemented a 2x5 factorial experimental design where participants were randomly assigned to 1 of the 10 experiment arms upon entering the survey. Differences between experiment arms are further described below.

Note there was a prescreen survey and only participants who passed the prescreen process were invited to participate in the main survey.

Participant requirements:

- Have an active Amazon.com account since 2018.
- Can log in to this account during the survey.
- At least 18 years of age.
- U.S. resident.

Italicized text is used for information about the survey, not shown to participants. Horizontal lines indicate page breaks between questions shown to participants.

Preview of description shown to potential participants on the Prolific platform

Survey about you and your online purchases

By mit.edu

$1.50 • $18.00/hr | 5 mins | 1230 places

This survey asks about your demographics and online purchasing habits and your opinions about how data should be used.

It will also ask you to download data from another platform. It will later ask you to share this data. The data will not be uploaded and saved unless you give consent. You can decline and will still be paid for participating in the survey.

More details are within the first questions of the survey, where you have the option to consent or decline to participate in this study.

Requirements:

- **You have an active Amazon.com account that you have been making purchases with since 2018.**
- **You can log in to this account during the survey.**
- You are at least 18 years of age.
- You are a U.S. resident.

Only continue if you can confirm you meet the requirements and consent to participate in the research.

Estimated completion time

4 - 7 minutes

Consent to participate in research

See link:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1p7JXx0vUmXqlxBm6ldopP-IeWsCTJkOC/preview

Devices you can use to take this study:

Desktop Mobile Tablet

Introduction

This survey is part of a MIT scientific research project studying the use of consumer data from Amazon's e-commerce platform.

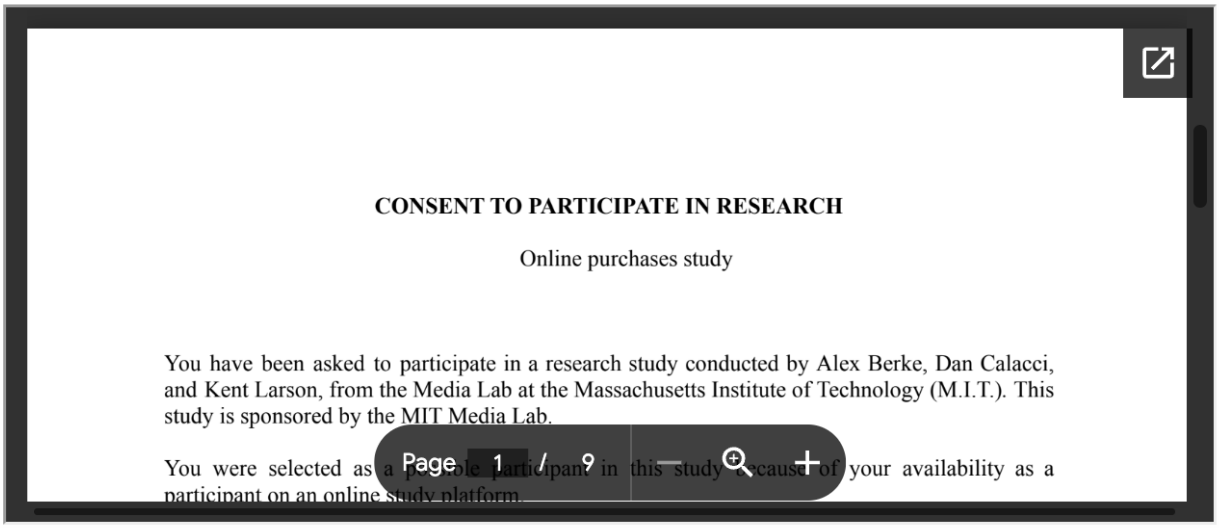
Your decision to complete this survey is voluntary. The only information we will keep, in addition to the data you explicitly share, is the time at which you completed the survey.
The data you share with us may be made publicly available. In addition, the results of research using this data may be presented at scientific meetings or published in scientific journals.
Clicking to continue indicates that you meet the following requirements and agree to complete this survey voluntarily.

Requirements:

- **You have an active Amazon.com account that you have been making purchases with since 2018.**
- **You can log in to this account during the survey.**
- You are at least 18 years of age.
- You are a U.S. resident.

Please see below the document: "Consent to participate in research".

This document was provided to view within the survey in a scrollable container. See screenshot below.
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1p7JXx0vUmXqlxBm6ldopP-IeWsCTJkOC/view



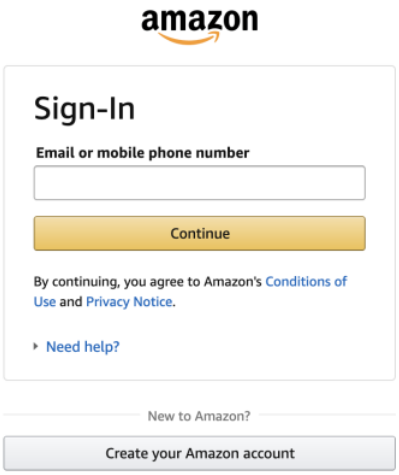
Do you meet the requirements and agree to complete this survey voluntarily?

- ☐ Yes: Continue
- ☐ No: Exit

If "No"*, participant automatically redirected back to Prolific.*

Survey questions and data collection

We will ask you demographic questions and prompt you to share information about your past purchases from Amazon. This will involve you signing into your Amazon account to download data.



- We WILL NOT collect any payment related information
- We WILL NOT collect personally identifying info (PII such as your name or address) -- this data will be stripped out
- We WILL NOT save any Amazon data without your consent

We will show you the purchases data we want to save and ask you for your consent to save it. If you do not consent then the data will not be saved and you will still be compensated.

Here is how this works:

1. Start an Amazon data download.
We'll walk you through this process.

2. Survey questions
While the download is processing we'll ask you some questions.

3. Data upload request (with your consent)
- We'll request the data you downloaded from Amazon.
- We will show you the data we want to save and ask for your consent to save it.
- You can choose not to share your data!
- Whichever choice you make, you can be compensated for completing the survey.

The data you anonymously share may be made public, connected to a random survey ID.
If you choose to share your Amazon purchases data, there is a chance that someone who knows a few of your past purchases may infer your identity.

Study participation
This survey should take you 4 - 7 minutes.
Clicking to Continue indicates that you agree to complete this survey voluntarily.

- ☐ Continue
- ☐ Exit (without payment)

What is your Prolific ID

[text field]

Text field auto fills with Prolific ID from URL parameter.

Do you also complete surveys (or HITs) using Amazon mturk?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes

The following question is only shown if the answer to the previous question was "Yes".

Is the Amazon.com account that you use to complete mturk HITs different from the account you use to make purchases on Amazon.com?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

The following block of text is only shown if the answer to the previous two questions was "Yes"*.*

Start the data download process

In the following step, make sure to log in to Amazon.com with the account you use to make purchases.

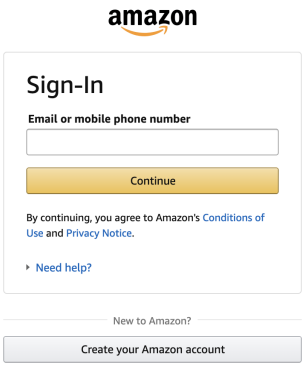
You said this was different from the account you use for mturk HITs. You might be logged into Amazon.com with your mturk account. If that's the case, in the following step, log out of that account and then log back in with the account you use to make purchases. This is important to avoid errors later on!

Note the URL used in the following section no longer works because Amazon discontinued the Order History Reports page.

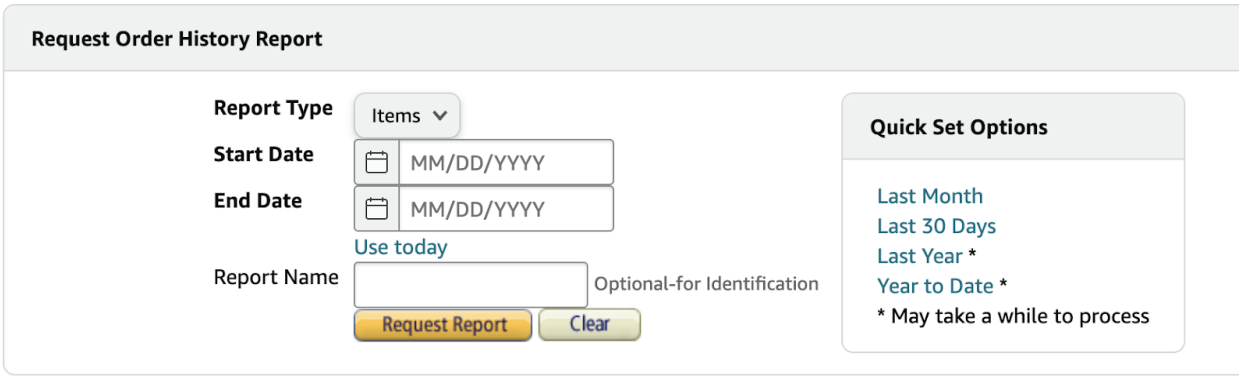
Start the data download process

Go to the following URL:
https://www.amazon.com/gp/b2b/reports/

You might see a prompt to log in to your Amazon account. If so, log in.

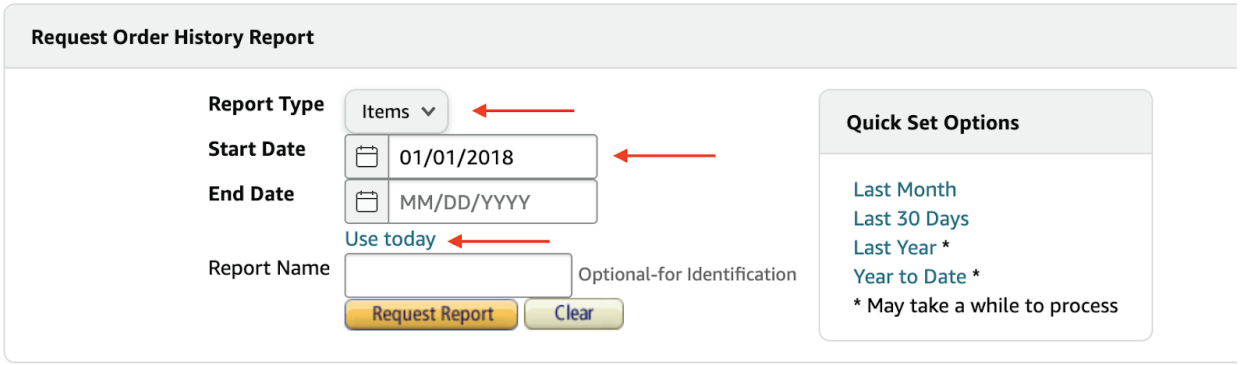


You should see the following page.

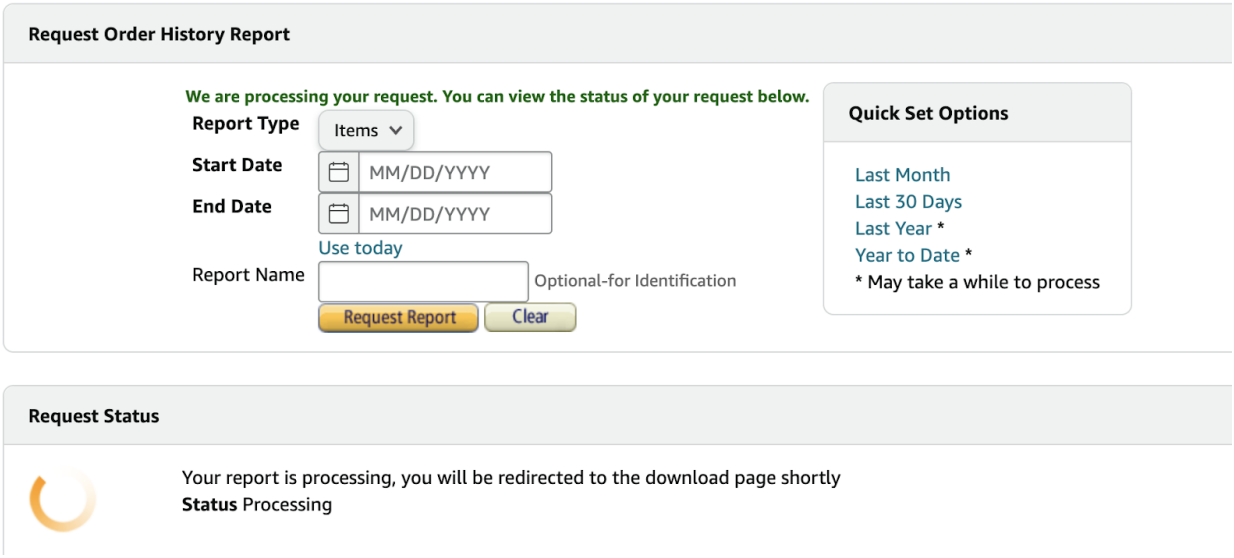


Request a report with

Report Type: Items
Start Date: 01/01/2018
For **End Date** click **Use today**



Click **Request Report** and **continue reading below**.
You should then see confirmation that your request is processing.



Did the download process start successfully?

- ☐ Yes: Continue
- ☐ No: There is a problem

*If "*No: There is a problem", *the participant enters a separate error flow where they are instructed to report the error.*

Demographic questions block. Selecting one answer is required to continue. Multiple options may be selected for the question about race.

Questions about you

What is your age group?

- ☐ 18 - 24 years
- ☐ 25 - 34 years
- ☐ 35 - 44 years
- ☐ 45 - 54 years
- ☐ 55 - 64 years
- ☐ 65 and older

Are you of Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino origin?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Choose one or more races that you consider yourself to be

- ☐ White or Caucasian
- ☐ Black or African American
- ☐ American Indian/Native American or Alaska Native
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- ☐ Other

What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- ☐ Some high school or less
- ☐ High school diploma or GED
- ☐ Bachelor's degree
- ☐ Graduate or professional degree (MA, MS, MBA, PhD, JD, MD, DDS, etc)
- ☐ Prefer not to say

What was your total household income before taxes during the past 12 months?

- ☐ Less than $25,000
- ☐ $25,000 - $49,999
- ☐ $50,000 - $74,999
- ☐ $75,000 - $99,999
- ☐ $100,000 - $149,999
- ☐ $150,000 or more
- ☐ Prefer not to say

How do you describe yourself?

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Other
- ☐ Prefer not to say

Which best describes your sexual orientation?

- ☐ heterosexual (straight)
- ☐ LGBTQ+
- ☐ prefer not to say

In 2021 which U.S. State did you live in?

[drop down select]
Options for all 50 states, "District of Columbia", and "I did not reside in the United States"

Questions about household and Amazon use.

How many people do you share your Amazon account with? i.e. how many people log in and make orders using your account?

- ☐ 1 (just me!)
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4+

How many people are in your "household"?

- ☐ 1 (just me!)
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4+

How often do you (+ anyone you share your account with) order deliveries from Amazon?

- ☐ Less than 5 times per month
- ☐ 5 - 10 times per month
- ☐ More than 10 times per month

Personal questions.

Are any of the following the case for:
You or someone in your household or someone you share your Amazon account with?

	Yes	No	I stopped in the recent past	Prefer not to say
Smoke cigarettes regularly?				
Smoke marijuana regularly?				
Drink alcohol regularly?				

Are any of the following the case for:
You or someone in your household or someone you share your Amazon account with?

	Yes	No	Prefer not to say
Have diabetes?			
Use a wheelchair?			

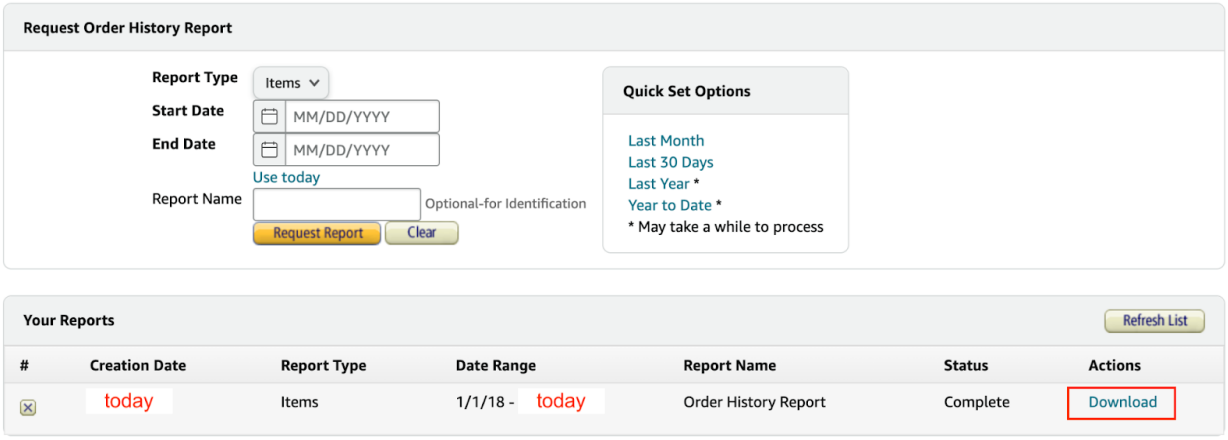
In 2021 did you, or someone you share your Amazon account with, experience any of the following life changes?
Please mark all that apply.

- ☐ Lost a job
- ☐ Divorce
- ☐ Moved place of residence
- ☐ Became pregnant
- ☐ Had a child
- ☐ None of the above

Amazon data

Go back to the Amazon page where you requested a report
https://www.amazon.com/gp/b2b/reports/

You should see that your report is ready for download.



Click to download the report you just created.

In the next question we ask you to share the downloaded data.
You will be paid either way - whether you decline or consent to share.

- ☐ **Continue**
- ☐ Report an issue

If "Report on issue" *is selected, the participant is guided through a separate error flow.*

In the following question, the participant inserts the data they just downloaded into the browser. Custom software was developed so that all data from the downloaded CSV file are stripped out, except for the columns that are explicitly listed below, such that this process happens within the participant's own machine. No data leaves the participant's machine without their explicit consent.

The interface for the question varies based on the experiment arm the participant was randomly assigned to.
The experiment had a 2x5 factorial design, with 2 "transparency" treatments and 5 "incentives", with 10 total experiment arms.

Below shows the interface for the experiment arm where the "incentive" is the "control" and the "transparent" condition is not applied. See further below how the experiment arms differed.

Click to insert the file from Amazon below.

We will ask for your full consent before saving any data.

[Choose file button]
[Note: Error text is shown upon validation failures]

[Additional incentive language specific to experiment arm]

Below is the data we would like to collect and save. No other information from your Amazon account will be collected. Any saved data may be publicly shared. A random survey responseID would be connected to your data. It is not connected to your Amazon account.

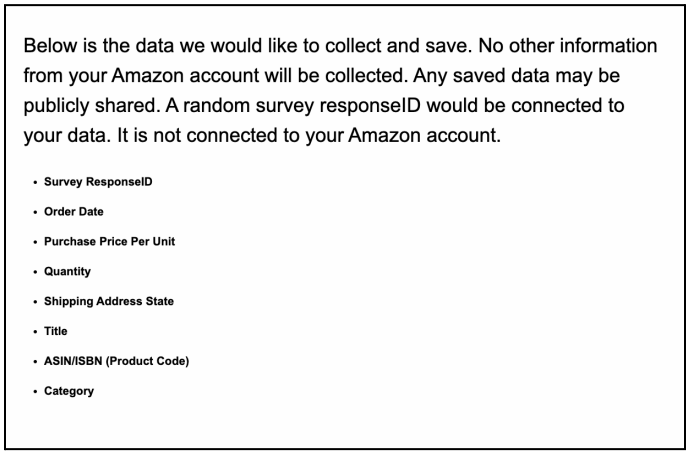
[Note: The below columns are replaced with the table view for the transparent condition]

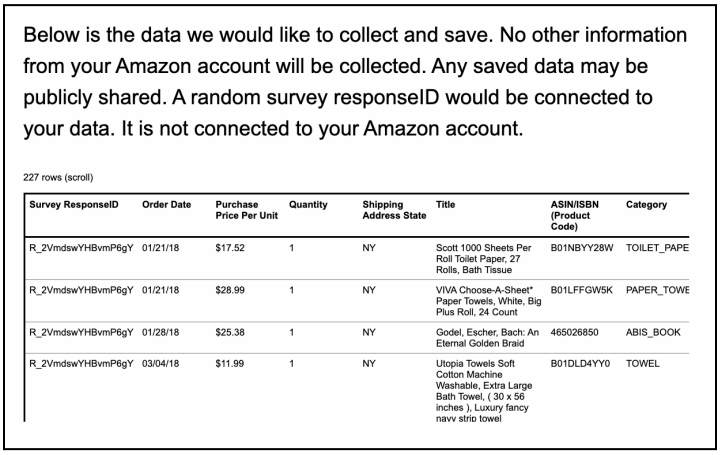
- Survey ResponseID
- Order Date
- Purchase Price Per Unit
- Quantity
- Shipping Address State
- Title
- ASIN/ISBN (Product Code)
- Category

☐ Consent to share
☐ Decline

2 transparency treatments: There are two ways the participant is shown their data upon inserting their downloaded file.

- *"Transparent" condition: upon inserting the data file, the columns are replaced with a table view of all the data rows that are to be collected, shown to the participant in an interface they can scroll through. A screenshot of how this appears in the Qualtrics survey is shown below, right.*
- *Otherwise, the interface does not change and they are still just shown the columns that would be collected, as above. A screenshot of how this appears in the Qualtrics survey is shown below, left.*





Left: Default shown, without "transparent" condition. Right: "Transparent" condition.

5 "incentive treatments": There are 5 "incentives" such that additional language is added to the question in the space indicated above.

The table below provides the additional incentive language specific to experiment arms.

Incentive		**Additional incentive specific language**
1	Control	*No additional language.*
2	Altruism	Why are we asking you to share? We are crowdsourcing data to democratize access to it as a public good and we are asking for your help. Large amounts of data from people like you are valuable! Amazon and the companies they transact with already use and profit from your data. Your data can also benefit researchers, organizations, and communities trying to help people via the knowledge your data can provide.
3	Bonus $0.05	If you consent to share your data we will pay you an additional $0.05 bonus.
4	Bonus $0.20	If you consent to share your data we will pay you an additional $0.20 bonus.
5	Bonus $0.50	If you consent to share your data we will pay you an additional $0.50 bonus.

Participants were paid their bonus within 7 days of completing the survey.

Participants who chose to share their data did not see the following question block.
Participants who declined to share their data were shown the following series of questions.

The survey skipped participants to the amount that was larger than the amount they were offered based on their experiment arm. i.e. Participants in the control "incentive" arm were shown the first question about $0.05, participants in the "bonus $0.05" experiment arm were first shown the question about $0.20.

Would you hypothetically consent to share your data for a bonus payment of $0.05? (Since you already declined to share your data, your Amazon data will not be collected if you say Yes.)

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If "Yes", skips to end of questions block.
If "No", continues to the next amount.

… *Repeat with amounts of $X…* X=$0.05, $X=0.20, $X=0.50.

Would you hypothetically consent to share your data for a bonus payment of $1.00? (Since you already declined to share your data, your Amazon data will not be collected if you say Yes.)

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

How much would you share your data for?

- ☐ More than $1.00 (enter amount) [ ]
- ☐ I would not consent to share my data for any amount.

Data use opinion questions.

This section asks questions about “consumer purchase data” like the data you may have shared, and how you think that data should be used.

Here's a snapshot of consumer purchase data from Amazon that shows 4 orders.

Survey ResponseID	Order Date	Purchase Price Per Unit	Quantity	Shipping Address State	Title	ASIN/ISBN (Product Code)	Category
R_2CJjw5eBM9MrjcF	01/21/18	$17.52	1	NY	Scott 1000 Sheets Per Roll Toilet Paper, 27 Rolls, Bath Tissue	B01NBYY28W	TOILET_PAPER
R_2CJjw5eBM9MrjcF	01/28/18	$25.38	1	NY	Godel, Escher, Bach: An Eternal Golden Braid	0465026850	ABIS_BOOK
R_2CJjw5eBM9MrjcF	03/21/18	$124.95	1	NY	Nike Women's Air Zoom Pegasus 34 Running Shield Shoe	B06WGQ962H	SHOES
R_2CJjw5eBM9MrjcF	05/24/18	$3.59	1	NY	SunWorks Construction Paper, Black, 12" x 18", 50 Sheets	B000F7ASAU	ART_MEDIA_PAPER

The following questions were shown in a random order that varied by participant.
This section contains an attention check. Responses containing an attention check failure were discarded from analysis data.

Do you think Amazon should be able to sell YOUR purchase data to other companies?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes if I get part of the profit
- ☐ I don't know

This is an attention check. Help us find people who are not paying attention. Select all answers to this question.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

Big companies currently collect and sell consumer purchase data. Do you think that small businesses should be able to access this data for free in order to help them compete with the big companies?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

Do you think researchers should be able to use purchase data to understand societal changes (e.g. due to COVID-19)?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

Do you think companies should be able to sell consumer purchase data to other companies?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes if consumers get part of the profit
- ☐ I don't know

Do you think the U.S. Census Bureau should use purchase data to supplement their existing surveys?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

Additional comments for the researchers administering the study, removed from analysis data based on guidance from IRB.

Any comments? (optional)
[text field]

Participants automatically redirected back to Prolific.