

Amazon.com – the world's largest Internet company

Amazon.com is the world's largest Internet company. It started out as an online bookstore in the middle of the 1990s and grew **gradually** over the years. Today Amazon sells almost everything from books and CDs to **sportswear** and electrical **appliances**. The company also produces its own **tablets** and e-readers.

Amazon offers its **services** all over the world. It operates its own websites in the UK, Germany, China, Australia, as well as many South American and Asian countries.

Amazon.com was founded by Jeff Bezos in 1994. It first operated out of a small garage somewhere in the state of Washington. Within a year Amazon offered hundreds of thousands of books. In 1997 Amazon.com started trading **shares** on the NASDAQ **stock exchange**. By 2000 it made over a billion dollars in **sales**.

As time went on Amazon.com grew steadily. It bought many of its **rivals** and today **cooperates** with other companies and lets them sell their products via the Amazon website. Amazon.com **serves** 20 million **customers** every day. Its **annual income** is over 34 billion dollars.

There are a number of reasons for Amazon's success. One of them is the company founder Jeff Bezos himself. *TIME* magazine's "*Man of the Year*" of 1999 is a **visionary**, an **ambitious** businessman who is not afraid of taking risks, even if it means a **downturn** for the company at first. Amazon's website tries to **personalize** the buying **experience** for its customers. It knows what you want and what you are interested in.

Although Amazon.com is the biggest internet **retailer** in the world it is often criticized.

Economic experts say that Amazon is turning Internet business into a **monopoly**.

Others **point out** the bad working **conditions** for Amazon **employees**.

Amazon is a business **empire** that sells almost anything cheaper and faster than anyone else.



Ex. 1 Find in the text the words (in bold) corresponding to these definitions:

1. _____ = hard-working, very motivated
2. _____ = yearly
3. _____ = machine that you use for doing something at home
4. _____ = situation
5. _____ = to work together with
6. _____ = a person who buys a product
7. _____ = when sales go down
8. _____ = a very large company or group of companies
9. _____ = worker
10. _____ = event, something that happens
11. _____ = slowly, step by step
12. _____ = the money you get from selling products
13. _____ = a large company that controls all or most of the business
14. _____ = to organize something so that it fits the habits of a certain person
15. _____ = to want to show
16. _____ = person that sells products to customers
17. _____ = another company that wants to sell the same products
18. _____ = the act of selling products
19. _____ = here: to sell products to
20. _____ = what a company offers to its customers
21. _____ = document proving ownership of a part of a company
22. _____ = clothes you need for doing sports
23. _____ = a place where you can buy and sell shares
24. _____ = small computer-like appliance with a touch screen
25. _____ = someone who has clear ideas and strong feelings about the future

I know English idioms!

Reading about Amazon, one English idiom comes to mind:

- success story = something or someone that achieves great success, often by making a lot of money
- Her company is a rare success story in these times of recession.

What other recent success stories can you think of?

Phrasals, phrasals...

It started out as an online bookstore in the middle of the 1990s (...) *says one of the opening sentences from our text. It also contains a phrasal verb: "start out". What does it mean? Simply, to begin something in a particular way. Like in this example:*

- He started out as a salesperson in a shop and now owns a retail network.

Grammar corner

*In our text about Amazon we read that Its **annual income** is over 34 billion dollars. The word "its" means "of Amazon" – it's an example of the so called possessive pronoun. Let's recall other such pronouns:*

▪ I my	▪ we our
▪ you your	▪ you your
▪ he his	▪ they their
▪ she her	
▪ it its	

Complete these sentences with correct possessive pronouns:

1. Two students didn't do _____ mathematics homework.
2. I have a car. _____ color is black.
3. Nancy is from England. _____ husband is from Australia.
4. Alan has a van. _____ van is very old.
5. We go to a high school. _____ high school is fantastic.

GLOSSARY	
to start out	wystartować
bookstore	księgarnia
in the middle	w połowie
to grow	rosnąć
gradually	stopniowo
sportswear	odzież sportowa
appliance	urządzenie
service	usługa
to operate	prowadzić (działalność)
to trade	handlować
share	udział, akcja
stock exchange	giełda papierów wartościowych
billion	miliard
sales	sprzedaż
steadily	stopniowo, stale
rival	rywal, konkurent
to cooperate	współpracować
to serve	obsługiwać
customer	klient
annual income	roczny dochód
founder	założyciel
visionary	wizjoner
to take risks	podejmować ryzyko
downturn	zła koniunktura
to personalize	spersonalizować
experience	doświadczenie
although	choć
retailer	detalista
to be criticized	być krytykowanym
to turn sth into	zamieniać coś w
monopoly	monopol
to point out	wskazywać (na)
working conditions	warunki pracy
employee	pracownik
empire	imperium

ANSWER KEY

Ex.1

1. **ambitious** = hard-working, very motivated
2. **annual** = yearly
3. **appliance** = machine that you use for doing something at home
4. **condition** = situation
5. **cooperate** = work together with
6. **customer** = a person who buys a product
7. **downturn** = when sales go down
8. **empire** = a very large company or group of companies
9. **employee** = worker
10. **experience** = event, something that happens
11. **gradually** = slowly, step by step
12. **income** = the money you get from selling products
13. **monopoly** = a large company that controls all or most of the business
14. **personalize** = to organize something so that it fits the habits of a certain person
15. **point out** = to want to show
16. **retailer** = person that sells products to customers
17. **rival** = another company that wants to sell the same products
18. **sales** = the act of selling products
19. **serve** = here: to sell products to
20. **services** = what a company offers to its customers
21. **share** = document proving ownership of a part of a company
22. **sportswear** = clothes you need for doing sports
23. **stock exchange** = a place where you can buy and sell shares
24. **tablet** = small computer-like appliance with a touch screen
25. **visionary** = someone who has clear ideas and strong feelings about the future

Ex. Grammar corner

1. their
2. its
3. her
4. his
5. our