teikametrics

2026 Marketplace Benchmark Report

Annual Amazon & Walmart Analysis + Growth Projections



Table of Contents

Welcome: A Note From the Teikametrics Analyst Team

How to Use This Data

Amazon & Walmart: 2025 Performance + 2026 Priorities

- Overview
- Comparisons by Metric: YoY Change (2025 vs. 2024)
- Category Performance
- Strategic Strengths of Each Platform

Amazon Deep Dive: 2025 Benchmark Data

- Overview
- Performance by Metric
- Performance by Ad Type
- Seasonality Trends
- Category Analysis
- Summary + 2026 Focus

Walmart Deep Dive: 2025 Benchmark Data

- Overview
- Performance by Metric
- Performance by Ad Type
- Seasonality Trends
- Category Analysis
- Summary + 2026 Focus

Key Takeaways & Priorities for 2026 Marketplace Selling

Resources & Next Steps

Welcome

A Note From the Teikametrics Analyst Team

Looking back on 2025, we see efficiency on the marketplaces tightened as costs rose and returns became more sensitive to execution, mix, and timing — even when sellers made reasonable investment decisions.

This context frames how we approached this year's analysis.

Each year, the Teikametrics Analyst team studies marketplace performance across billions of dollars in ad spend to understand how platform dynamics are shifting, and what those shifts mean for sellers. This benchmark report is designed to help you evaluate your performance in context, understand how your results compared to broader marketplace patterns, and act with greater confidence in 2026.

Our report goes beyond isolated metrics to examine how spend, sales, CPC, CVR, AOV, ad formats, seasonality, and category performance interacted throughout 2025. Our goal isn't just to recap what happened — you lived it — but also to surface the patterns that explain why results moved the way they did, and where incremental investment paid off most.

Sellers can use this report to pressure-test performance, evaluate budget decisions, and calibrate expectations across Amazon and Walmart as the platforms continue to mature along different paths. Many revisit our benchmark analyses throughout the year, when results shift or tradeoffs become less clear.

We hope this report helps you see your performance more clearly and make better decisions as conditions change.

To favorable returns!
–Teikametrics Analyst team

How to Use This Data

Most sellers reference benchmark data at moments of pressure: when performance shifts, when costs rise, or when it's unclear whether to lean in or pull back. This report is designed to support those decisions throughout the year.

Contextualize Performance Shifts

Use these benchmarks to put your performance shifts in market context. The platform-, ad type-, and category-level patterns in this report show how costs, conversion, order value, and spend moved together in 2025 — helping you assess whether what you're seeing reflects broader marketplace dynamics or something account-specific.

Evaluate Incremental Spend

The most valuable use of benchmark data is pressure-testing additional investment. Across platforms, ad types, and categories, this report shows how incremental spend tended to convert into revenue under different conditions — and where returns were more sensitive to cost, mix, or timing. Use those patterns to decide:

- Where scale is still likely to pay off
- Where higher costs need to be offset elsewhere
- Where restraint is the better option

Use Seasonality to Time Decisions

Monthly and seasonal benchmarks are most useful when results start to feel volatile. Use them to distinguish timing effects from underlying issues, and to calibrate pacing ahead of high-leverage periods rather than reacting after they pass.

Revisit Category Benchmarks When Allocating Budget

Category performance in this report reflects how reliably spend turned into sales in 2025. When reallocating budget, use these benchmarks to understand where incremental investment historically held up, where efficiency required tighter control, and where seasonality materially changed outcomes.

Let's dig into the data!

Amazon & Walmart: 2025 Performance + 2026 Priorities

In 2025, Amazon and Walmart performance diverged significantly. Sellers drove growth on both platforms, but efficiency pressure showed up differently, shaping how investment evolved over the course of the year.

This section compares key benchmarks across Amazon and Walmart and outlines what those differences imply for seller priorities in 2026.



Overview

In 2025, Amazon and Walmart continued to deliver growth, but through increasingly different mechanics. Rising CPCs affected both platforms, yet seller responses and outcomes diverged based on marketplace maturity.

On Amazon, higher costs reinforced the need for precision. Sellers had to rely more on targeting discipline and efficiency levers as CPCs rose and conversion softened. Incremental returns were still available, but they required disciplined execution in an increasingly competitive auction.

On Walmart, advertisers scaled more aggressively, absorbing higher CPCs in exchange for reach and volume. Efficiency compressed as spend growth outpaced sales growth, with ROAS declining **~18% YoY**. Q4 proved critical, with seasonal demand driving higher order volume that partially offset earlier inefficiencies.

Together, these patterns highlight two distinct modes of marketplace selling: optimizing within a mature ecosystem on Amazon, and scaling within a rapidly evolving one on Walmart. In 2026, winning strategies will depend on aligning investment to each platform's maturity — precision on Amazon, calibrated scale on Walmart — while closely monitoring the efficiency metric most likely to constrain growth.

Comparisons by Metric: YoY Change

(2025 vs. 2024)

Metric	Amazon	Walmart	Market Interpretation
ROAS	↓ 3.9%	↓ ~18%	Amazon saw modest ROI compression under rising costs; Walmart traded ROI for scale
ACOS	↑ 3.6%	↑ 20.2%	Efficiency pressure across both platforms
CPC	↑ 4.6%	↑ ~11%	Competitive auctions intensified everywhere
CVR	13.9% (↓ 4.4%)	17% (↑ 1%)	Walmart's incremental traffic still converted
AOV	↑ ~5%	↓ ~9%	Amazon saw higher order values; Walmart skewed lower-priced

Takeaway:

Amazon's efficiency tightened primarily through higher costs and softer conversion, while Walmart's ROAS compressed because spend growth outpaced sales growth, compounded by lower order value.

Category Performance

Despite the platform-level divergence, some categories showed consistent strength across both Amazon and Walmart. The following categories delivered the best combination of high intent, repeat behavior, and strong efficiency:

- **Pet Supplies:** Among the highest CVR categories, with strong ROAS on both platforms.
- **Baby Products:** Reliable, needs-based demand with top-tier efficiency
- **Automotive:** Smaller scale, but among the highest ROAS categories
- **Health & Household:** Rare mix of large scale and consistent efficiency

The signal here is: Top-performing categories in 2025 typically performed well on both Amazon and Walmart. Demand fundamentals appeared to matter more than platform-specific mechanics.

Strategic Strengths of Each Platform

Performance outcomes in 2025 differed meaningfully by platform, reflecting the distinct strengths of Amazon and Walmart. Our analysis showed:

Amazon rewarded precision
Disciplined bidding and conversion optimization mattered more than raw spend growth, while higher order values helped offset rising costs.

Walmart rewarded ambition
Sellers who invested aggressively captured scale and order volume, setting the stage for future efficiency opportunity.

Treating these platforms interchangeably increased risk in 2025 — and will do so even more in 2026.

On that note, let's take a look now at marketplace specifics, starting with Amazon.

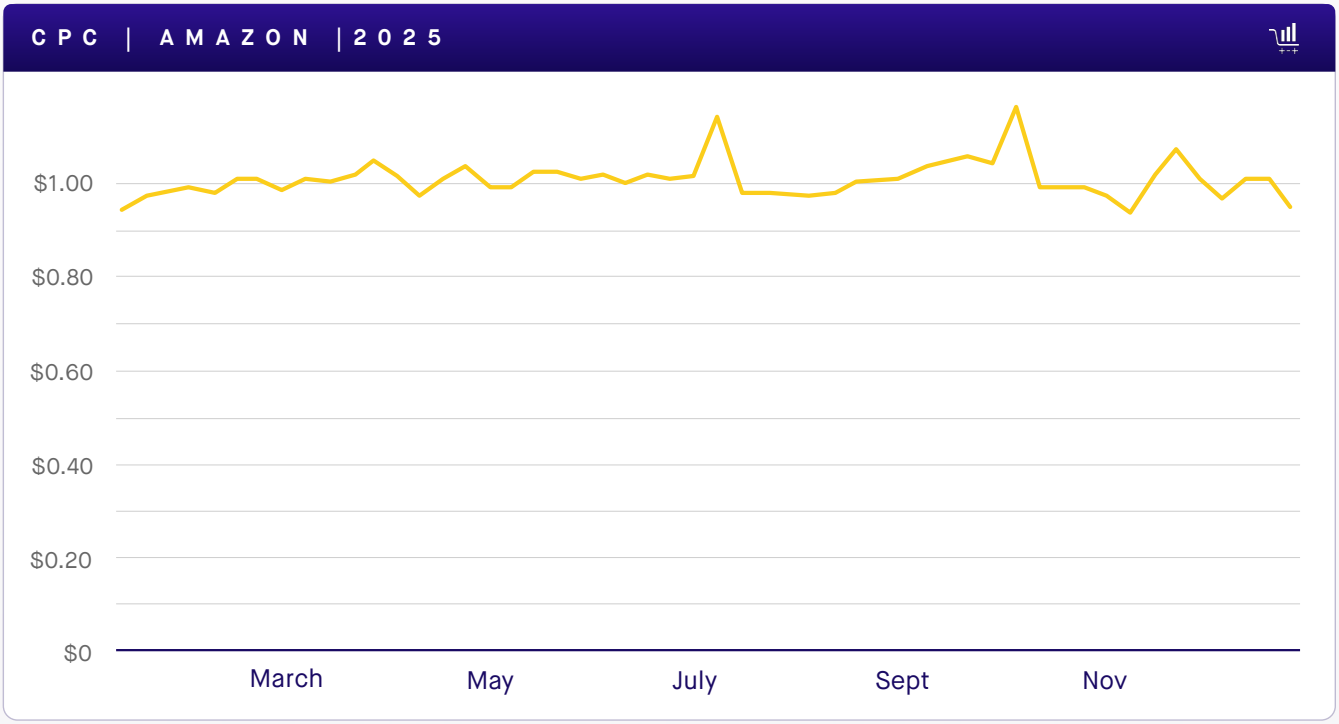
Amazon Deep Dive: 2025 Benchmark Data



Overview

Amazon advertising delivered continued growth in 2025, alongside modest efficiency pressure. Sellers continued to scale spend, driving gains in ad-attributed sales, but returns softened slightly as acquisition costs rose and conversion weakened. Revenue growth became more costly as auction competition intensified, reflected primarily in higher CPCs.

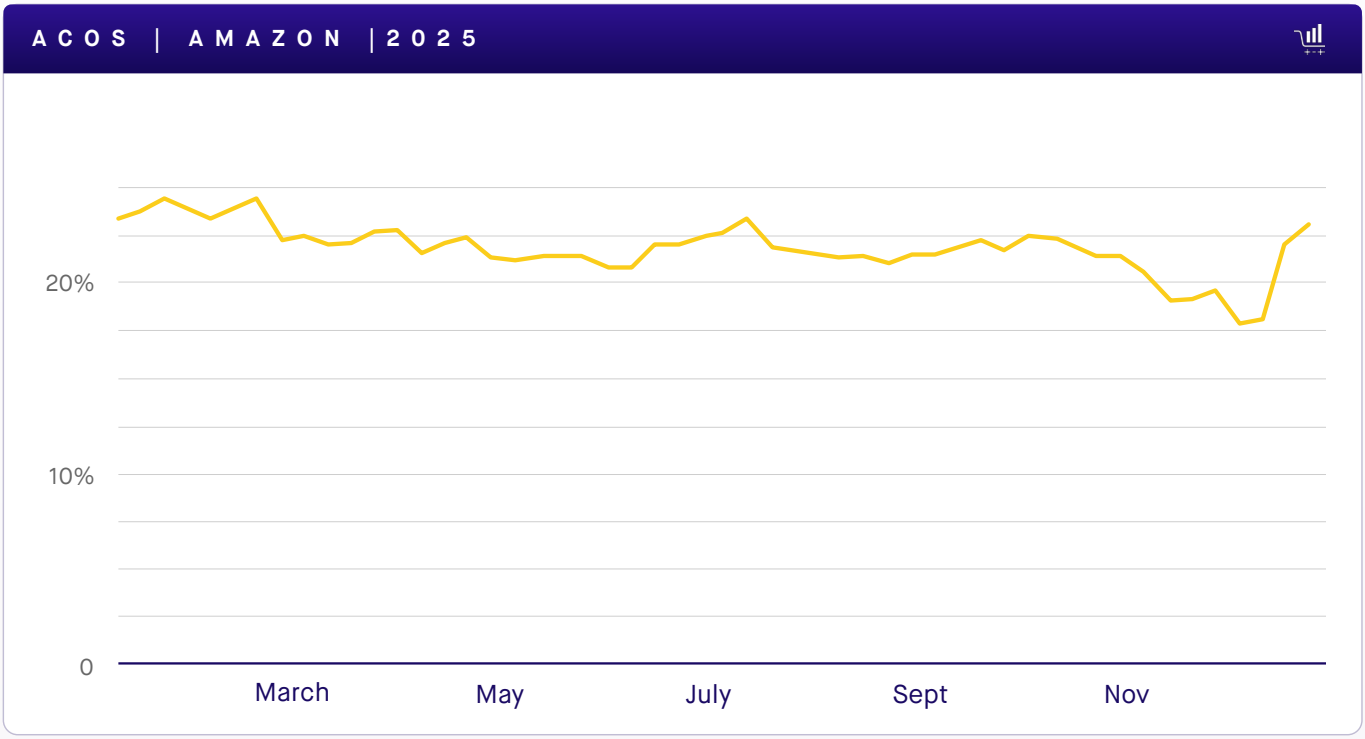
Performance by Metric



CPC

Average CPC rose **+~4.6% YoY**, driven by increasingly competitive auctions and stronger bidding for high-value placements. More brands are bidding aggressively for premium inventory, reflecting a maturing Amazon ad marketplace where visibility increasingly comes at a higher cost.

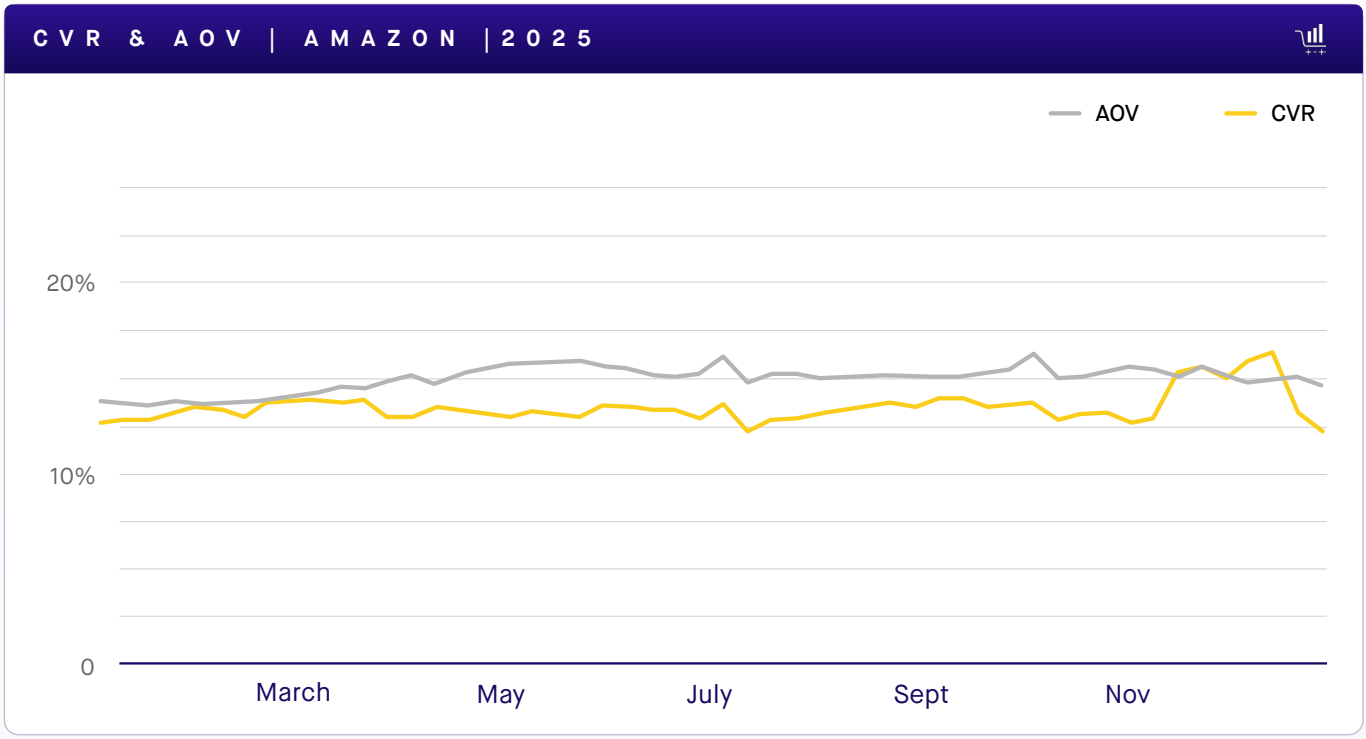
What this says about Amazon: Advertisers are willing to pay more for placements that drive meaningful outcomes, reflecting sustained competition for high-value inventory.



ROAS & ACOS

Efficiency softened, driven primarily by higher costs rather than weak demand. ROAS compression reflects the reality that incremental growth now comes at a higher marginal cost as auction competition intensifies.

What this says about Amazon: The platform continues to perform, but efficiency must now be actively managed rather than assumed.



CVR & AOV

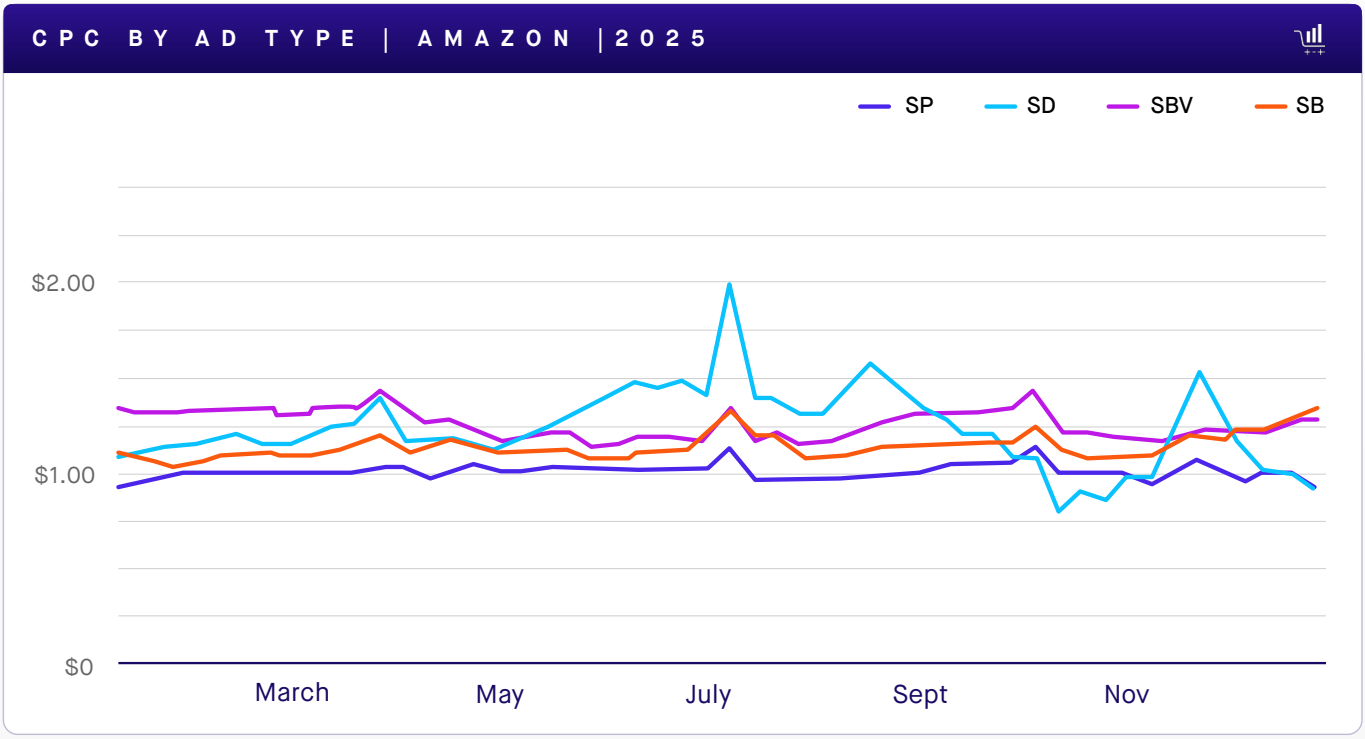
Conversion rates declined slightly as traffic quality shifted over the course of the year. At the same time, higher order values helped offset conversion pressure, supporting overall revenue growth.

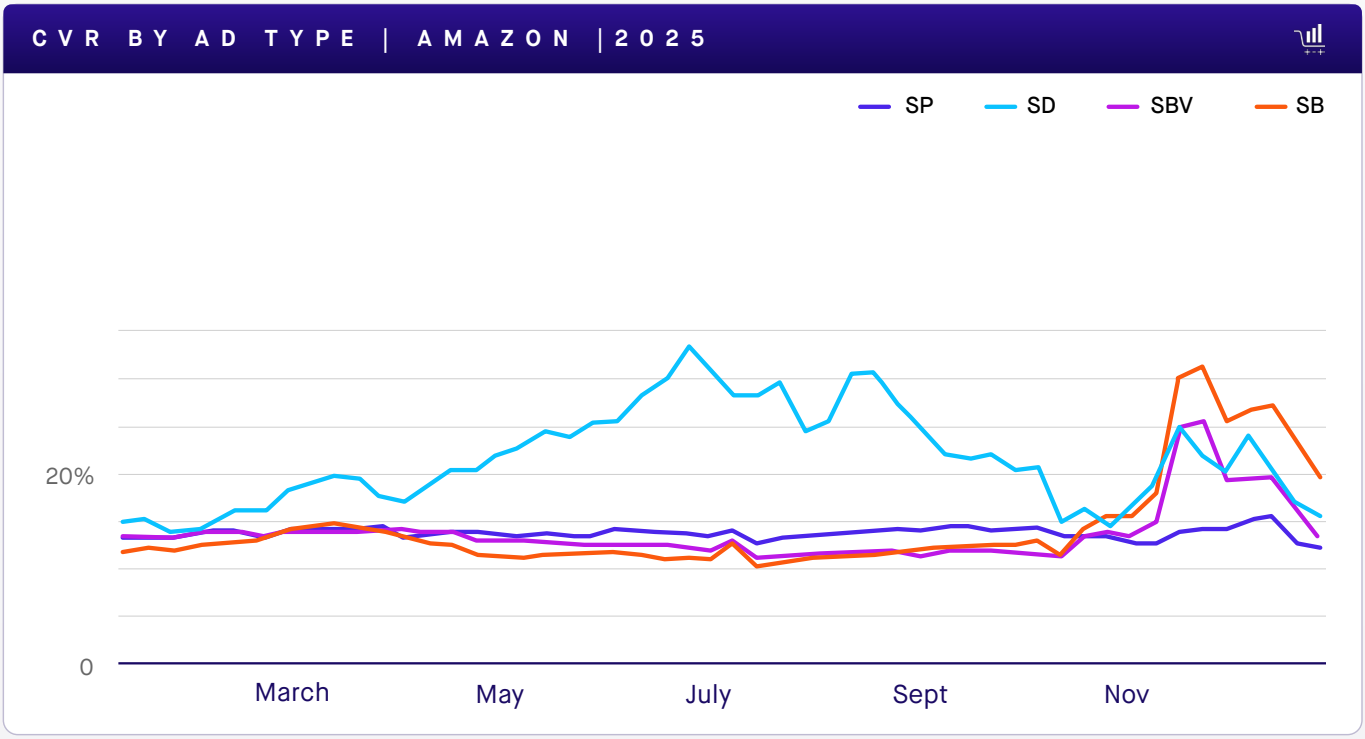
What this says about Amazon: Shopper demand remains healthy, with rising basket values playing a larger role in sustaining performance.

Strategic Takeaways

Performance pressure in 2025 was driven primarily by tighter auctions. As Amazon continues to evolve into a full-funnel platform, success will increasingly depend on precision optimization rather than scale alone.

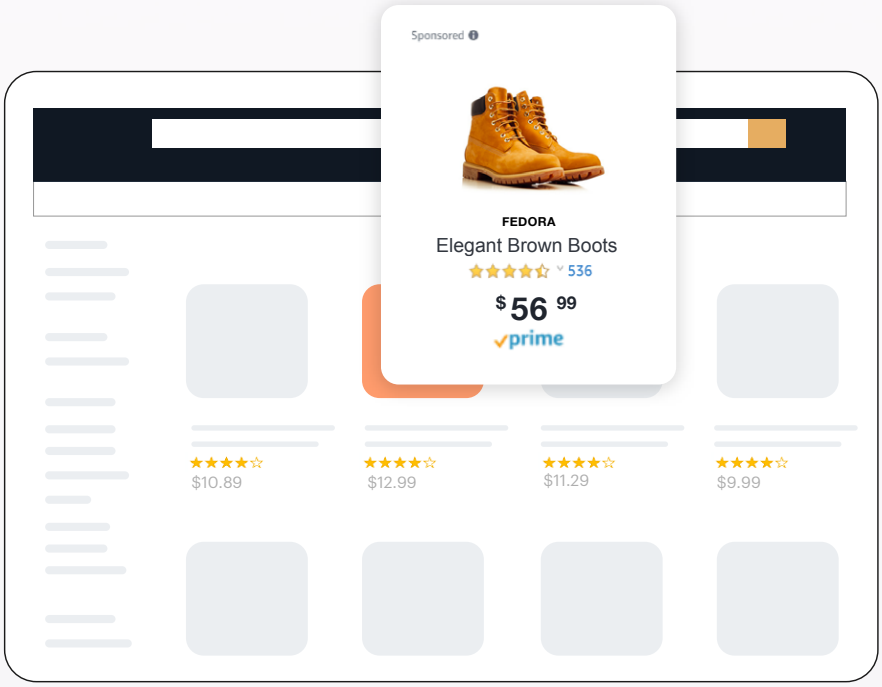
Performance by Ad Type





Sponsored Products (SP)

Sponsored Products remained a core driver of Amazon performance, converting high-intent shoppers at scale. Growth was steady, reinforcing SP's role as a reliable demand-capture channel. At the same time, rising competition showed through in slightly higher costs and softer efficiency, signaling a more mature and crowded marketplace. SP still deserves a strong placement for advertisers — but sustaining returns now depends on disciplined execution as incremental budget becomes more sensitive to cost and conversion.

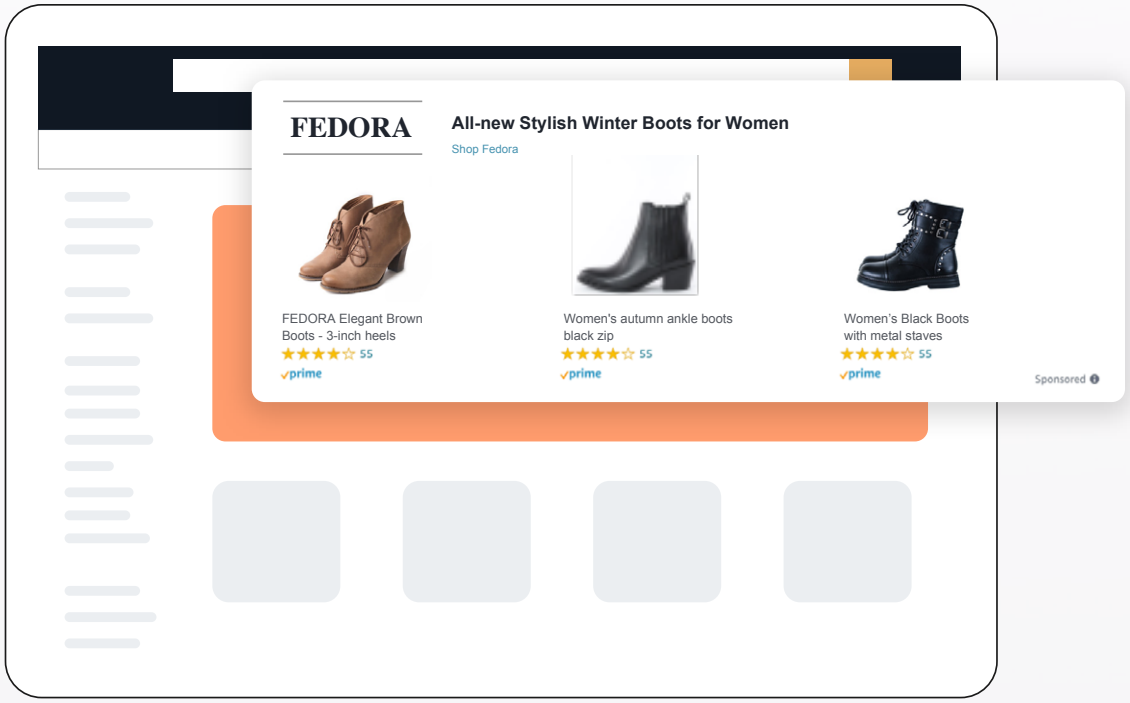


What it means for Amazon:

SP remains the backbone of Amazon advertising, capturing high-intent demand at scale. As competition intensifies, efficiency is under modest pressure and now requires more active management — making disciplined bidding, query control, and SKU prioritization essential to sustain returns in 2026.

Sponsored Brands (SB)

Sponsored Brands delivered a strong balance of growth and efficiency, proving increasingly valuable beyond pure awareness. Brand-led placements supported expansion while generally maintaining efficiency, and higher order values suggest SB may be influencing consideration and basket size. This reflects a broader Amazon trend: brand presence is becoming more critical even in performance-driven environments.

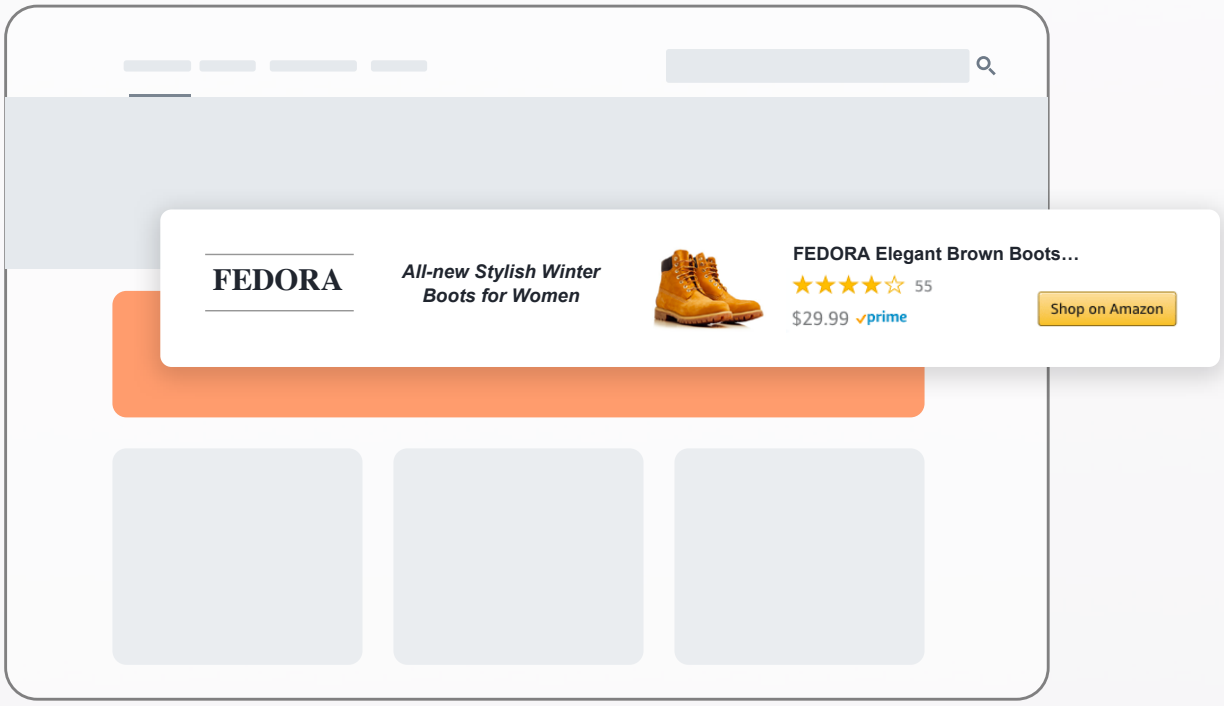


What it means for Amazon:

SB is proving effective beyond awareness, supporting growth while maintaining efficiency. As brand presence becomes more influential in purchase decisions, SB is positioned to play a larger role in driving consideration and higher-value conversions in 2026.

Sponsored Display (SD)

CPCs for SD remained steady throughout the year for Sponsored Display ads. While CVR for SD was close to the lowest compared to the other ad types throughout the year, the biggest highlight comes from the conversion rate spike in Q4. Sponsored Display ads showed the strongest performance through Q4, the highest of any other ad type referenced here. Sponsored Display ads should be heavily considered for seasonal, high-traffic seasons (such as Q4 in 2026).

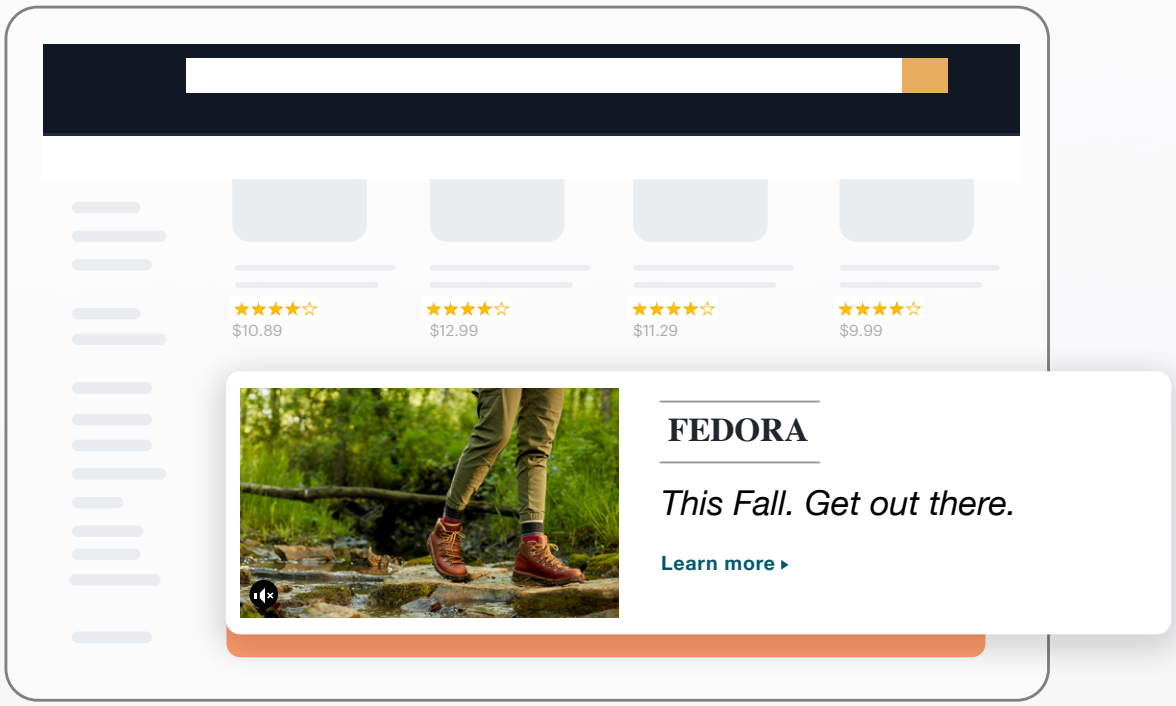


What it means for Amazon:

SD performance confirms its strength as a focused retargeting lever rather than a scaled growth channel. Heading into 2026, disciplined deployment and tighter audience selection will be key to ensuring SD enhances blended efficiency. Consider leveraging SD ads in conjunction with the other ad types especially during peak selling seasons, such as through the holiday season / Q4.

Sponsored Brand Video (SBV)

Sponsored Brand Video's opportunity lies more in discovery and new-customer exposure rather than immediate conversion. While CPCs were highest at consistent points throughout the year (January - April and October - December), we saw conversion rates skyrocket into the second highest point for ad types in Q4 (second only to Sponsored Brand ads).



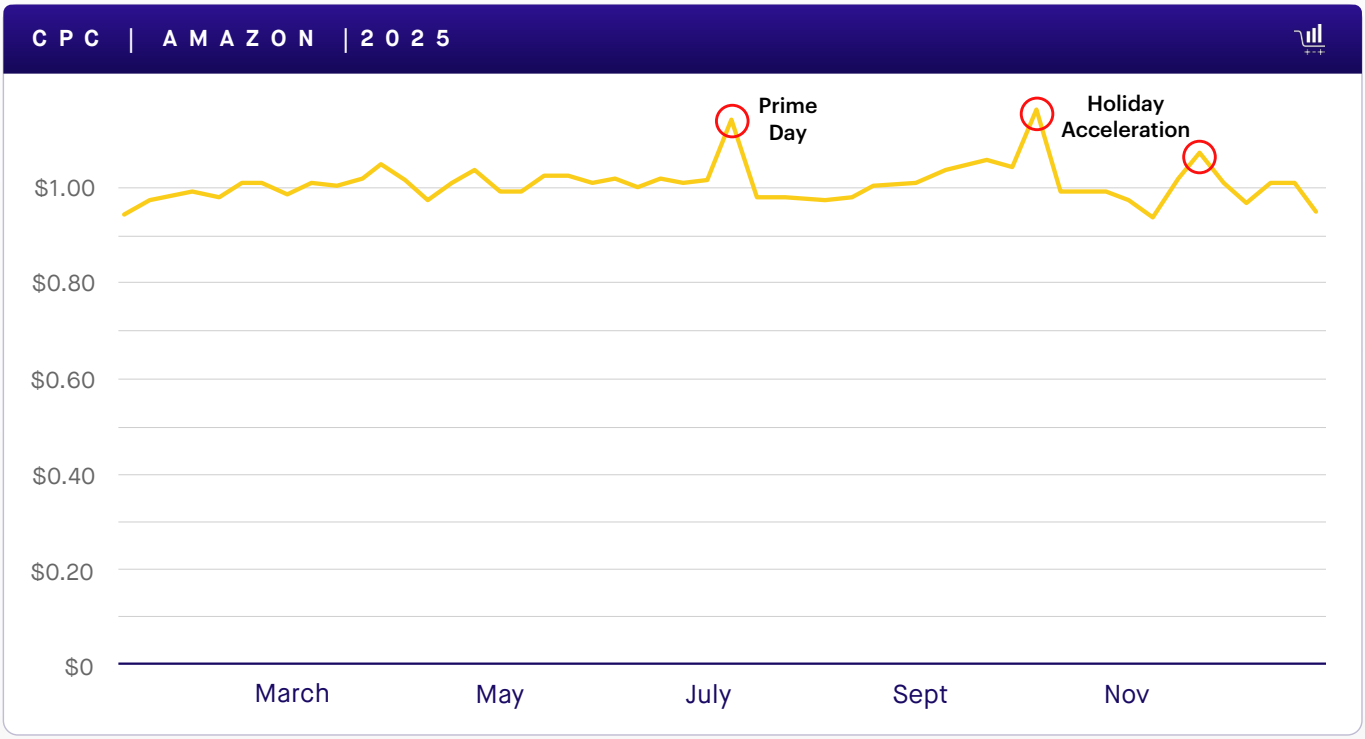
What it means for Amazon:

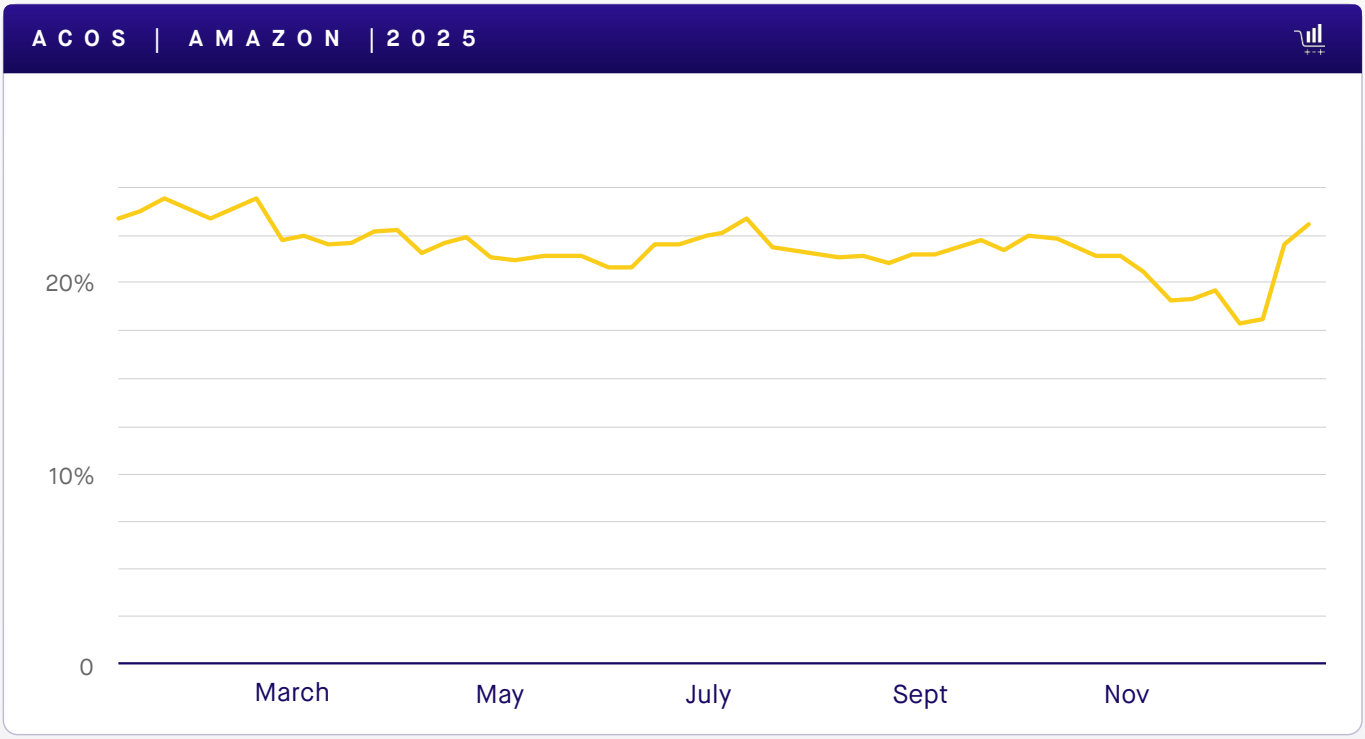
SBV's growth reflects Amazon's shift toward more upper-funnel engagement, trading short-term efficiency for expanded discovery. In 2026, success will hinge on better converting SBV-driven reach into downstream performance through stronger targeting and retargeting integration.

Strategic Takeaways

Amazon advertising is increasingly portfolio-driven. Sustained growth will depend less on scaling individual ad types in isolation and more on orchestrating them deliberately across the funnel—balancing demand capture, brand reinforcement, audience retargeting, and discovery to protect efficiency while expanding share.

Seasonality Trends





Early-Year Momentum (January–March)

The year opened with high post-holiday ACoS, relatively stable CPCs, and increasing overall ad sales. This trend seems to be typical for what is normally reflected after a holiday season.

Takeaway: Early-year periods remain an efficiency window where disciplined investment can deliver stronger ROAS before auction pressure (CPCs) rebuild through the year.

Prime Day Build & July Peak

Mid-year momentum accelerated into July, culminating in a Prime Day-driven performance peak. During this period:

- Ad spend increased **~20–30%** week over week
- Conversion rates lifted relative to surrounding weeks
- Ad sales grew at a double-digit YoY pace here too, outpacing spend growth and temporarily improving ROAS

Higher conversion rates during Prime Day helped offset CPC inflation, reinforcing the value of aggressive but well-timed investment.

Takeaway: Prime Day remains one of the most leverageable efficiency moments of the year when conversion strength can neutralize rising CPCs. Full funding ahead of the event is critical.

Late Q3 Softening (August–September)

Following Prime Day, performance normalized. Late Q3 was characterized by:

- Moderated spend levels
- Modest CVR contraction
- More volatile and generally higher CPCs than early Q2

This period functioned as a stabilization phase before Q4 ramp-up, with efficiency tightening as shopper urgency declined.

Takeaway: Late Q3 is best treated as an optimization window rather than a scaling phase, with focus on bid discipline and conversion refinement.

Holiday Acceleration (November–December)

Q4 delivered the largest volume-driven demand surge of the year, albeit at higher cost. Key dynamics included:

- Sharp YoY ad sales growth in late November, even as CPCs rose due to intense competition
- Peak CVR in early December, reaching the mid-to-high teens for select placements

While topline performance was strong, overall efficiency trailed 2024, reflecting heavier auction pressure and higher CPCs.

Takeaway: Holiday periods continue to drive volume, but efficiency gains increasingly depend on conversion and AOV strength rather than cost control alone.

Strategic Takeaways

Overall, 2025 growth was driven primarily by Prime Day and Q4, with early-year efficiency contributing incremental upside. Compared to 2024, seasonal peaks were sharper, making precise budget pacing and timing more impactful on blended ROAS.

Category Analysis

Amazon advertising performance varied significantly by category in 2025, with a clear divide between scale-driven categories (large revenue contributors with moderate efficiency) and efficiency-driven categories (smaller but highly profitable).

The strongest overall categories balanced meaningful ad sales with either strong ROAS or strong CVR, while weaker categories either struggled with conversion or required disproportionate spend to generate revenue.

Let's take a look at the best performers.

Baby Products

ROAS: ~8×+ consistently across quarters
CVR: ~20–23%

Performance peaked for Baby Products in Q3, likely driven by Prime Day and mid-year promotions, before softening slightly in Q4. The combination of high ROAS and strong CVR suggests a highly qualified, intent-driven audience with repeat purchasing behavior.

This category represents a low-risk scaling opportunity. Incremental spend here is likely to remain profitable with limited downside.

Automotive

ROAS: ~6× in Q1 | ~9× by Q4
CVR: ~13–16%

Automotive showed one of the clearest efficiency improvement curves throughout the year. ROAS steadily increased quarter over quarter, suggesting ongoing optimization, improved targeting, or better product-market fit.

This is a category where optimization investments appear to have paid off, indicating further upside in 2026.

Pet Supplies

ROAS: ~6–7×
CVR: ~34.28% (highest among major categories)

Pet Supplies combined very high conversion with solid ROAS and meaningful scale. Demand was steady throughout the year with minimal seasonality, reflecting replenishment-driven purchasing behavior.

Pet Supplies is a high-intent, high-repeat category. Increasing impression share here translates into incremental sales.

Health & Household

ROAS: ~5–6×

CVR: ~23–25%

Health & Household delivered consistent quarterly performance with minimal volatility. While not the highest ROAS category, its stability and scale make it a cornerstone of overall Amazon performance.

This category has delivered consistent returns and should remain a budget anchor.

Summary + 2026 Focus

In 2025, Amazon advertising remained a reliable growth engine operating under increasing cost pressure. Sellers who succeeded focused on efficiency levers — CPC control, conversion improvement, and higher order values — rather than brute-force spend.

For 2026, the strongest opportunities lie in disciplined bidding, refined targeting (especially in upper-funnel formats), and doubling down on categories where efficiency has proven durable.

Walmart Deep Dive: 2025 Benchmark Data



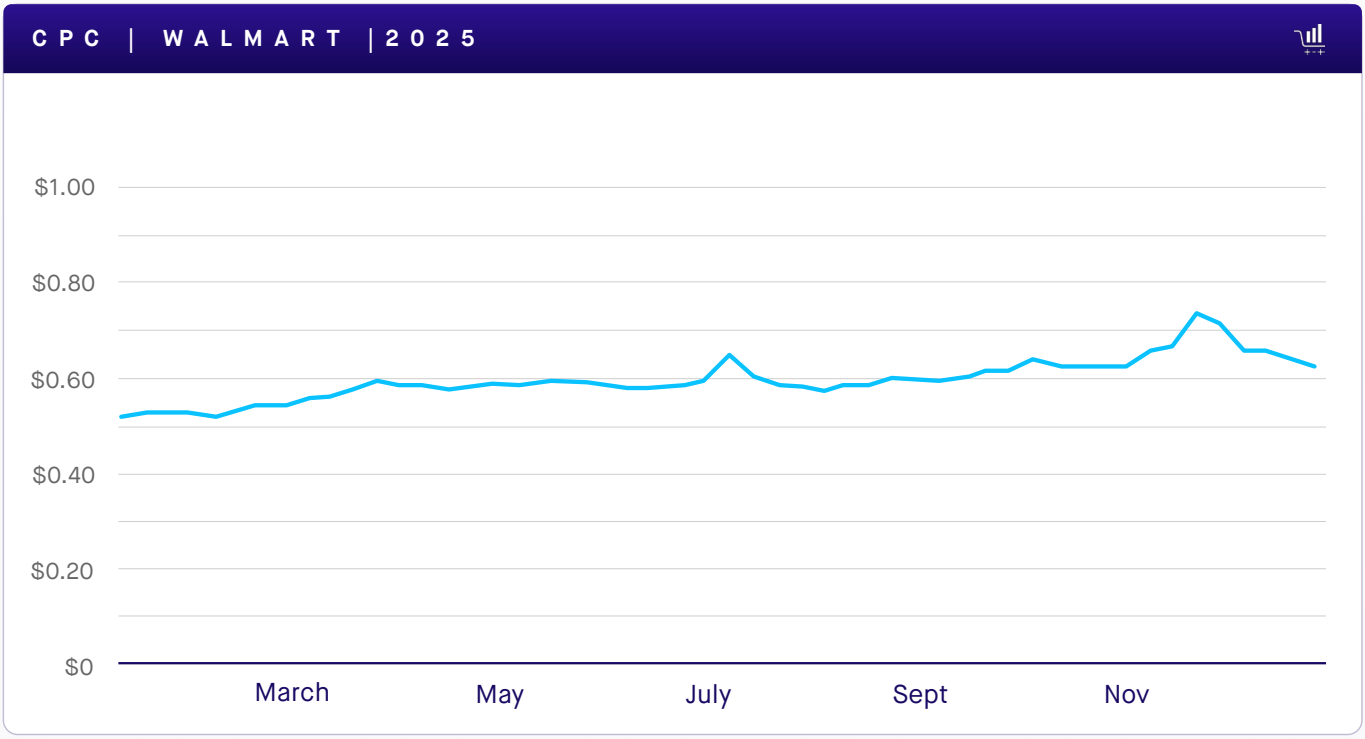
Overview

Walmart's advertising marketplace showed clear signs of maturation throughout the year. CPCs rose steadily, with a pronounced spike in Q4, reflecting intensifying competition and growing advertiser confidence in Walmart as a performance channel. Even as costs rose, within-year efficiency largely held: ACOS was stable for most of the year, with a brief holiday-driven spike that normalized as sales scaled.

On the performance side, CVR softened slightly over the course of the year, consistent with broader traffic expansion and increased upper-funnel activity. However, conversion resilience during peak periods suggests shopper intent remains strong. AOV stayed largely flat but surged meaningfully in Q4, helping offset periods of conversion softness and supporting revenue growth during the most competitive retail moments.

Overall, this points to a Walmart ad ecosystem that is scaling rapidly, becoming more competitive, and increasingly seasonal—where success depends on efficiency discipline year-round and aggressive, well-timed investment during peak demand windows.

Performance by Metric

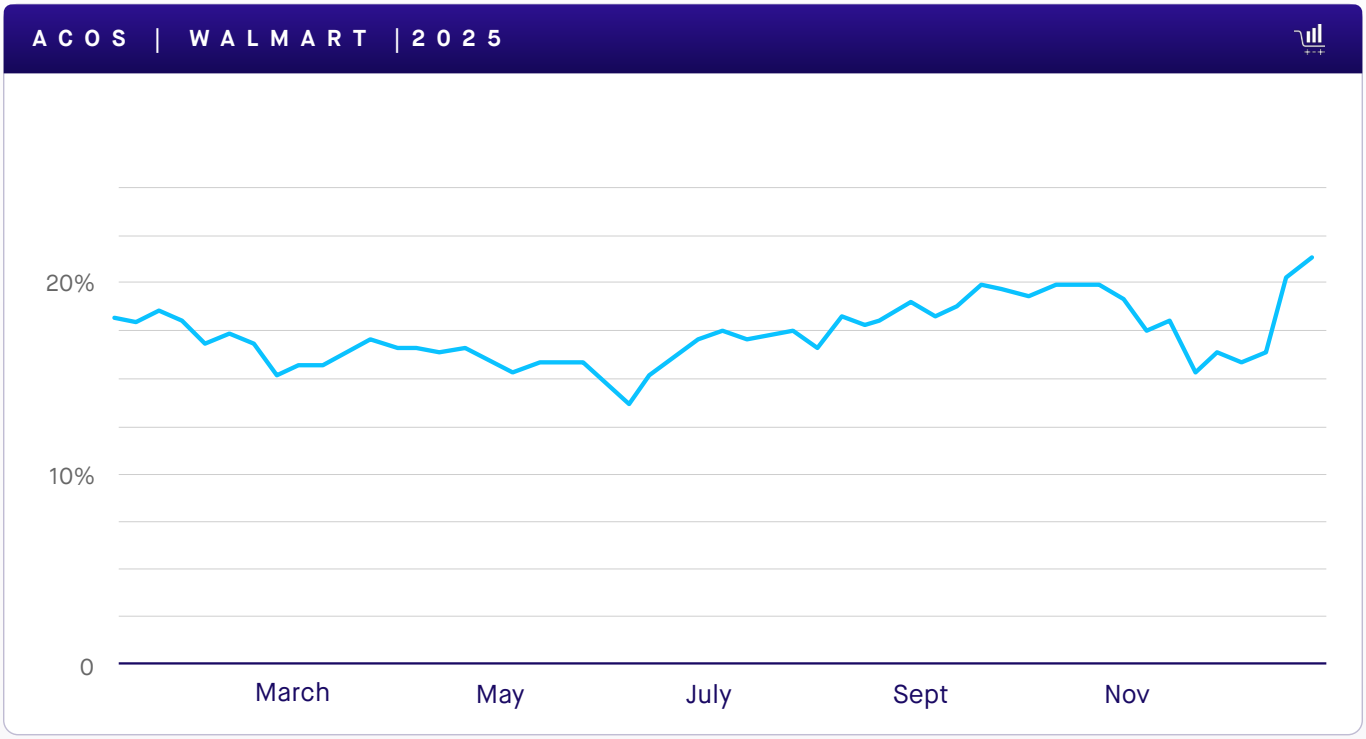


CPC

Average CPC rose steadily throughout the year, accelerating sharply in Q4 and peaking in November before easing slightly at year-end. This reflects intensifying competition during high-intent shopping periods.

What this says about Walmart:

Walmart's ad marketplace is maturing rapidly, with Q4 CPC spikes signaling that brands increasingly view Walmart as a must-win holiday channel. Advertisers should expect more pronounced, seasonal CPC inflation tied to major retail events.

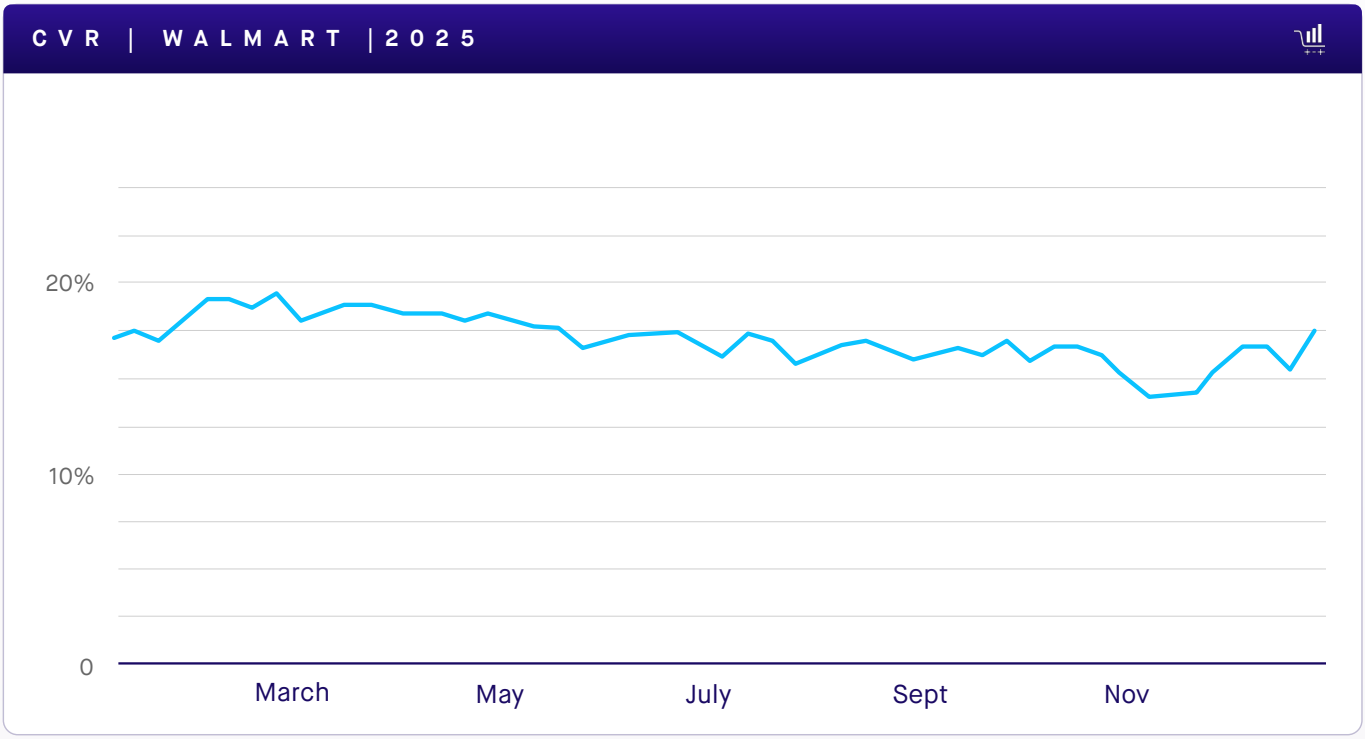


ACOS

ACOS stayed largely stable for most of the year, improved into early fall, then spiked briefly in November before normalizing in December as sales scaled.

What this says about Walmart:

Advertisers largely preserved efficiency despite rising CPCs, suggesting other performance factors (including mix and peak-period demand) helped offset cost pressure for much of the year. The short-lived Q4 spike reflects aggressive holiday investment rather than structural inefficiency, suggesting Walmart ads can scale with manageable efficiency tradeoffs.

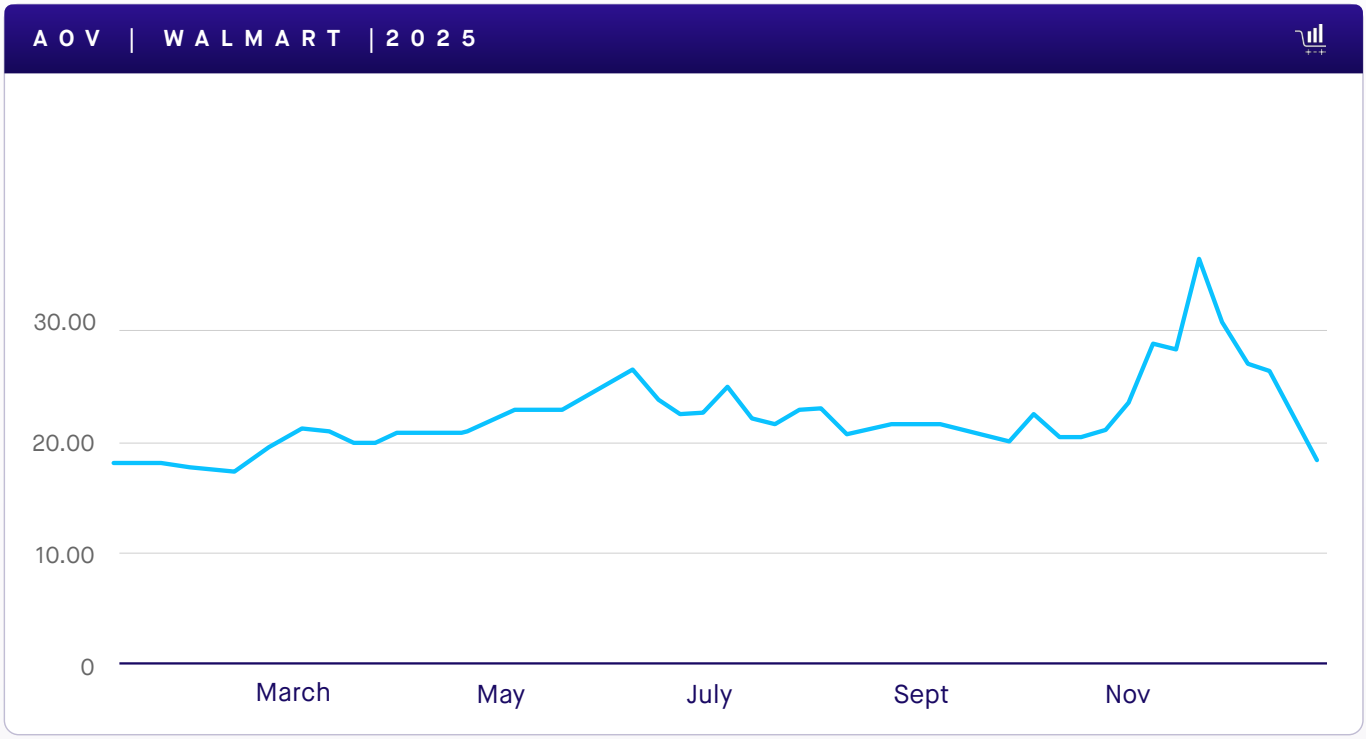


CVR

CVR softened gradually over the year, with increased volatility during peak retail periods. While conversion rebounded during the holidays, it did not fully return to early-year levels.

What this says about Walmart:

The modest CVR decline suggests broader reach and more upper-funnel traffic as the platform scales. Despite this, CVR resilience during peak moments indicates traffic quality remains strong.



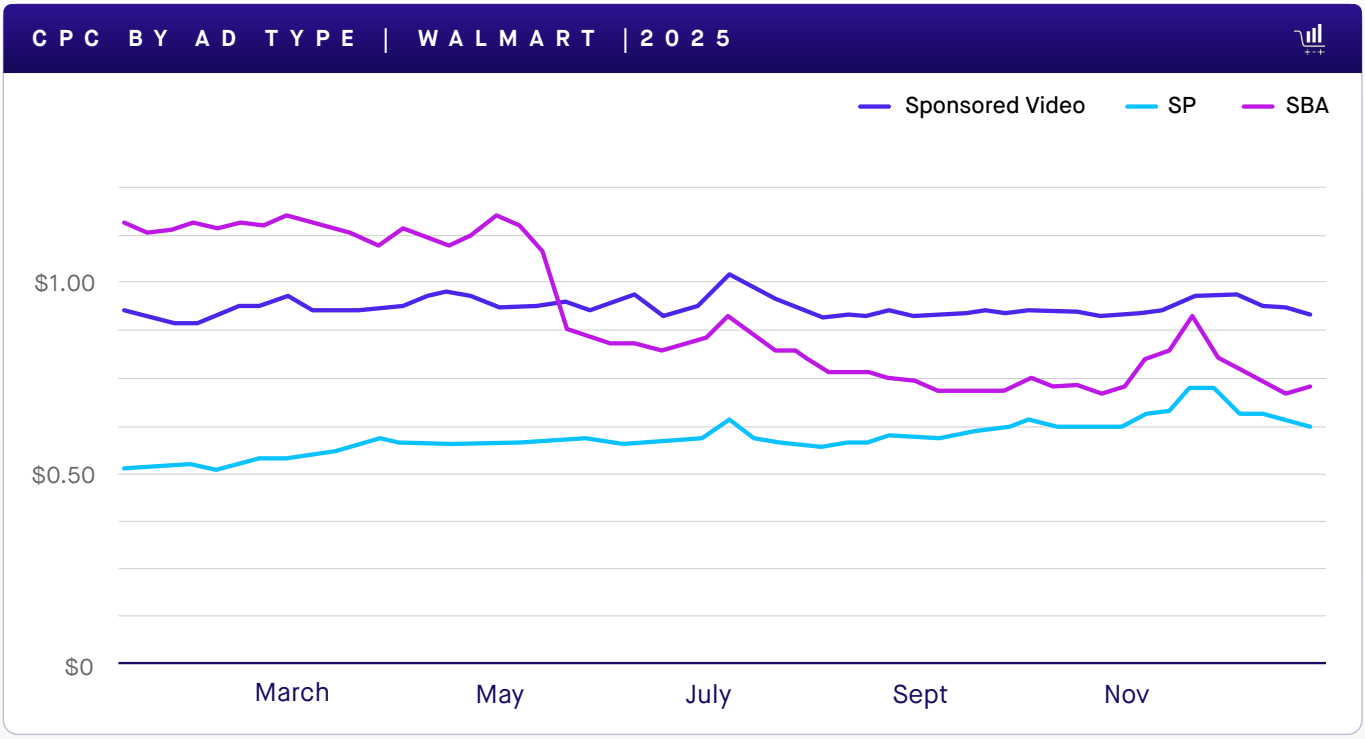
AOV

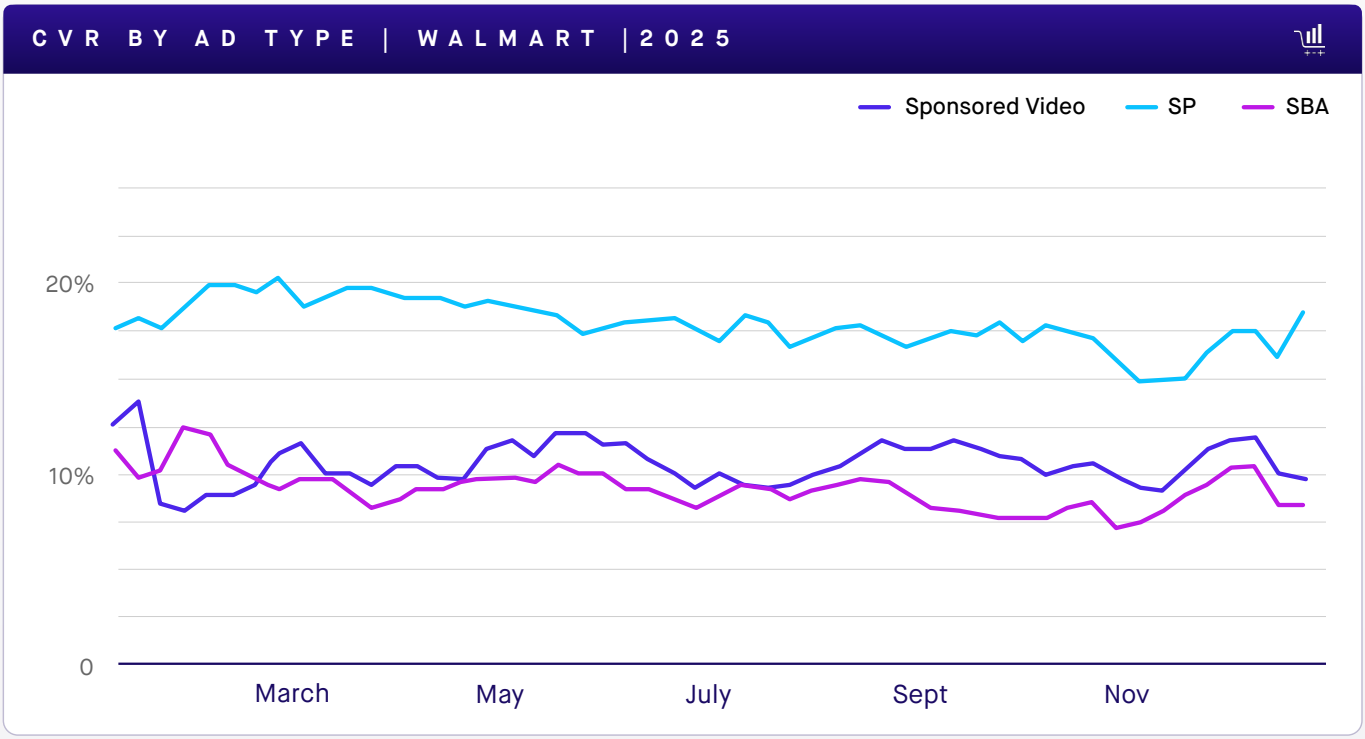
AOV was stable for most of the year, dropping only slightly leading into the holidays, spiking in November before normalizing post-holiday. As a whole, AOV dropped **9%** YoY.

What this says about Walmart:

Walmart ads are effective at driving higher-value orders during key retail windows. While AOV gains are seasonal, they help offset CVR softness and support efficient revenue growth in Q4.

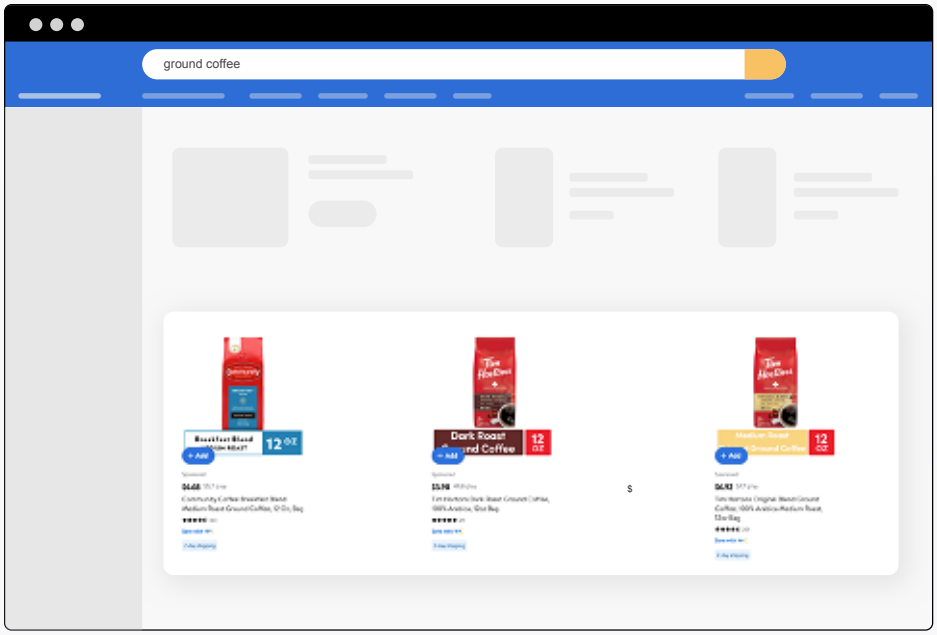
Performance by Ad Type





Sponsored Products (SP)

Sponsored Products remained the most efficient and conversion-driven ad type on Walmart. SP delivered the lowest CPCs across formats while maintaining the strongest CVR, reinforcing its role as the primary demand-capture engine. CPCs rose gradually over the year, reflecting growing competition, but SP's consistently higher conversion rates helped preserve efficiency even as costs increased.



What it means for Walmart:

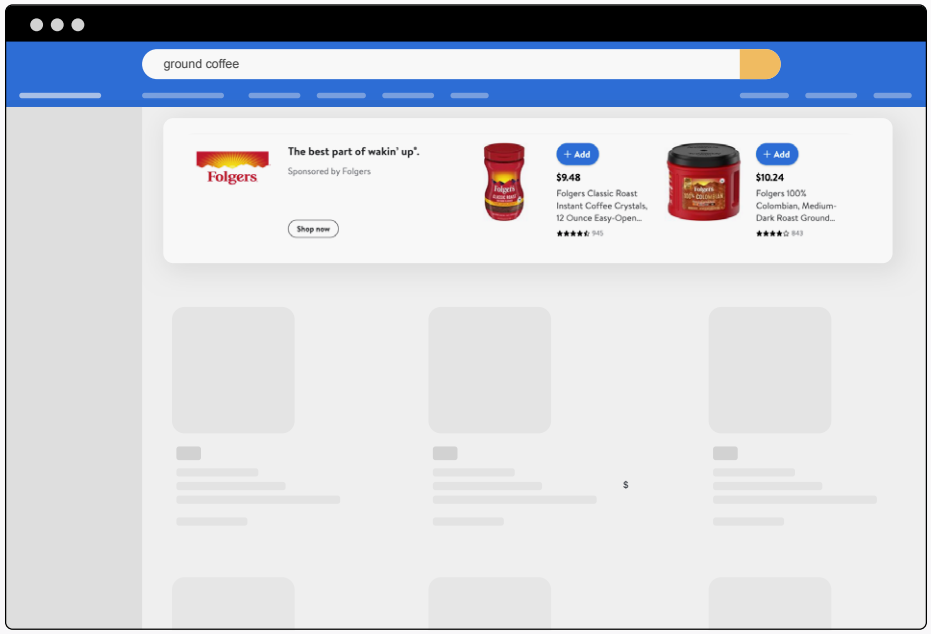
SP continues to be the foundation of Walmart advertising, capturing high-intent shoppers at scale. As Walmart traffic expands, SP efficiency remains relatively resilient — but sustaining returns will increasingly require tighter bidding, query control, and prioritization of top-performing SKUs rather than broad expansion.

2026 focus:

Protect scale while defending efficiency through tighter keyword hygiene, bid discipline, and SKU prioritization.

Sponsored Brand Ads (SBA)

Sponsored Brand Ads showed higher CPC volatility and among the lowest CVR among ad types, particularly mid-year. While CPCs softened later in the year, CVR lagged relative to SP and Sponsored Video, signaling a more upper-funnel, exploratory role. SBA performance improved modestly during peak periods but remained less conversion-efficient overall.



What it means for Walmart:

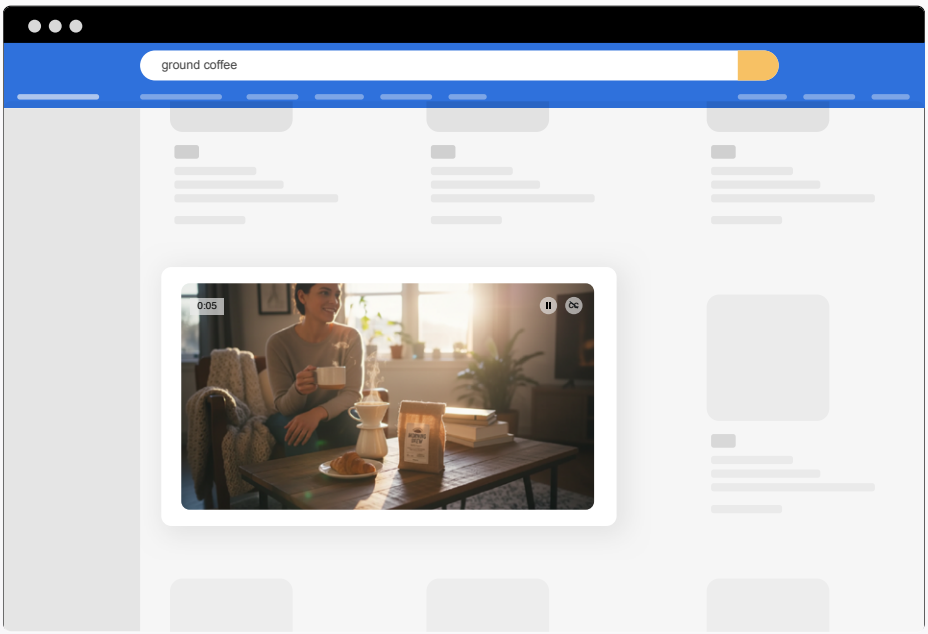
SBA is functioning more as a brand visibility and consideration driver than a pure performance channel. As Walmart's brand inventory grows, SBA's value increasingly lies in supporting discovery and reinforcing brand presence rather than driving immediate conversion efficiency.

2026 focus:

Use SBA selectively for brand coverage and seasonal moments; pair with strong SP and retargeting support to improve blended returns.

Sponsored Video

Sponsored Video commanded the highest CPCs but delivered stronger CVR than SBA, outperforming brand display formats on conversion. CPCs remained elevated and relatively stable, reflecting advertiser willingness to pay for premium, high-attention placements. Conversion rates fluctuated but held steady enough to justify continued investment when used strategically.



What it means for Walmart:

Sponsored Video is emerging as a high-impact, mid-to-upper funnel format that still retains meaningful conversion potential. The higher CPCs signal growing demand and limited supply, positioning video as a differentiated placement rather than a scale driver.

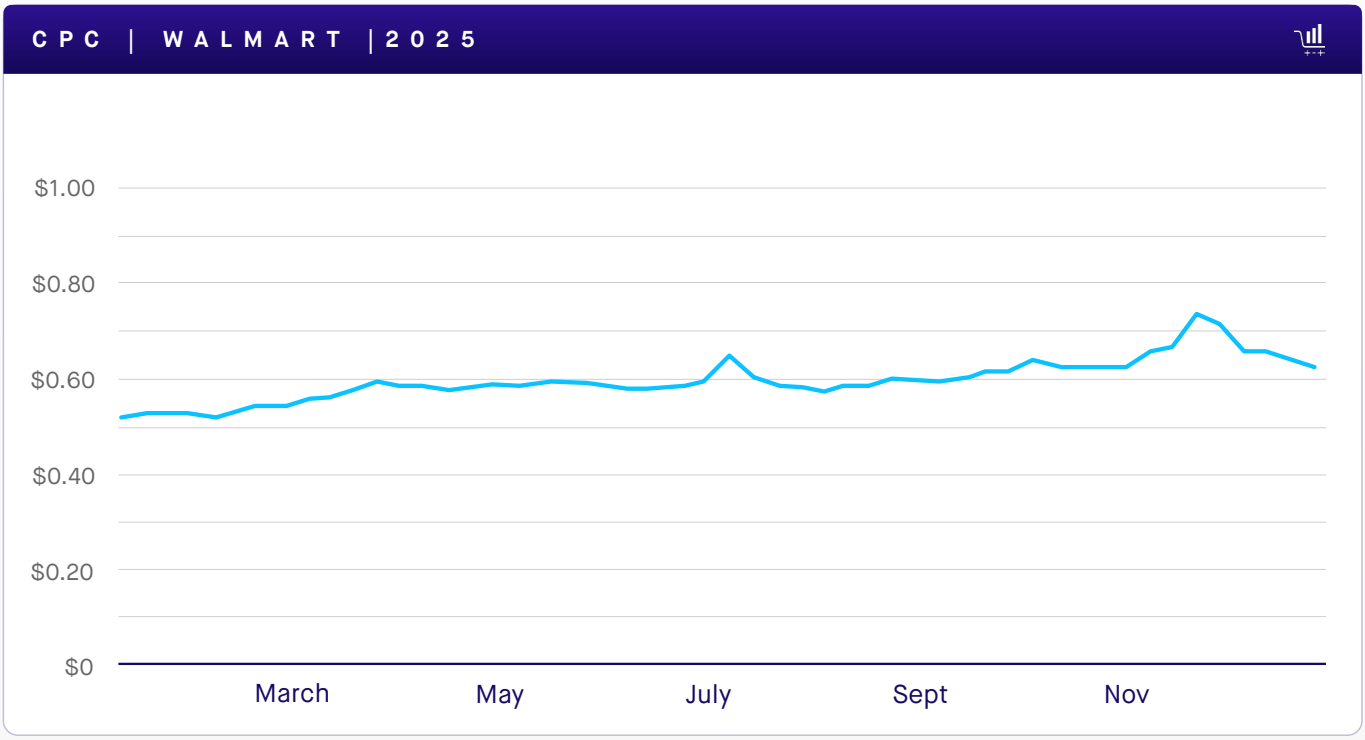
2026 focus:

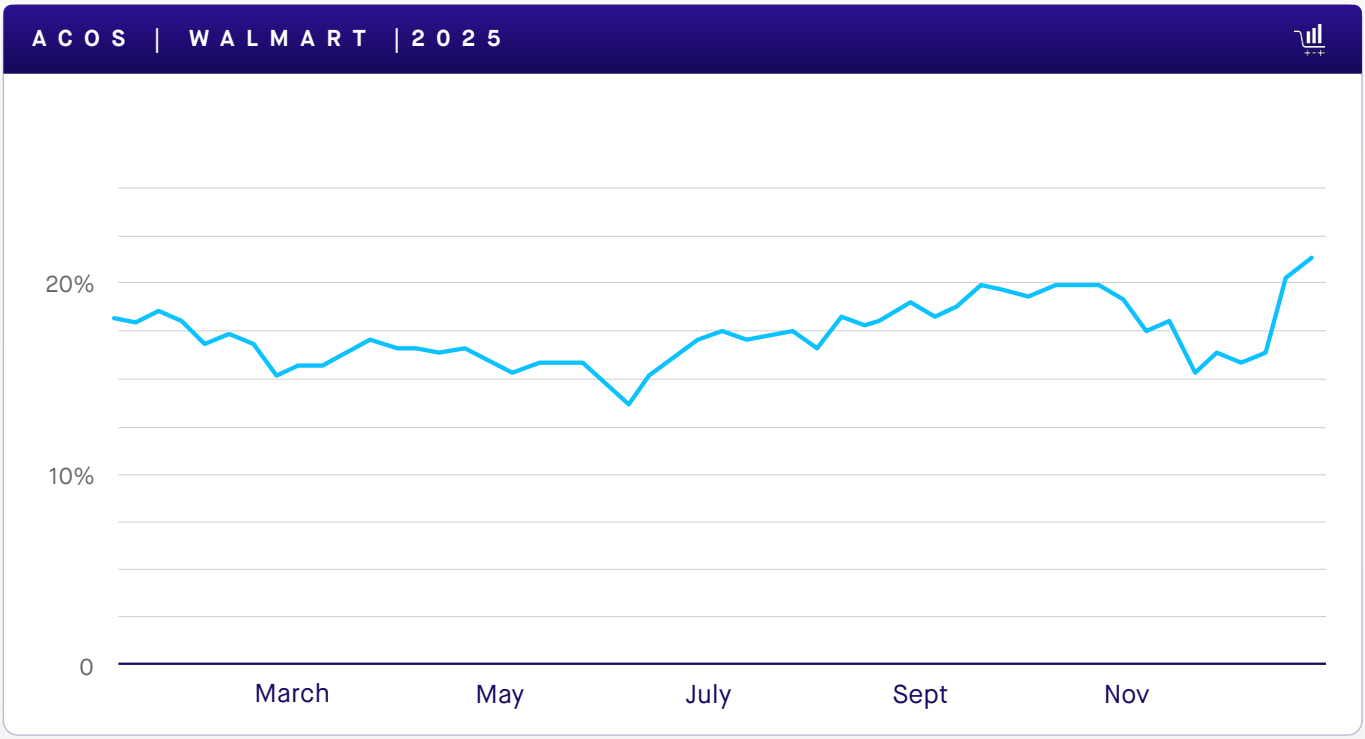
Continue measured investment in Sponsored Video, with emphasis on creative testing, strong product alignment, and downstream conversion support via SP.

Strategic Takeaways

Walmart's ad ecosystem is clearly differentiating by format. Sponsored Products anchor performance with superior efficiency and scale, Sponsored Brand Ads support awareness and consideration at lower conversion efficiency, and Sponsored Video offers premium visibility with a balanced performance profile at higher cost. In 2026, success on Walmart will depend on leaning into SP as the efficiency backbone, using SBA for controlled brand expansion, and treating Sponsored Video as a high-impact lever rather than a volume channel, optimizing not just for growth, but for more sustainable blended efficiency as competition continues to rise.

Seasonality Trends





Early Year (Q1–Q2)

The year opened with post-holiday demand normalization. CPCs started at their lowest point in the year before their steady increase through the end of 2025.

Mid-Year (Q3)

CPCs continue to increase, with a slight spike in July. ACoS reached one of its lowest points in 2025 around June as well, increasing through the second half of the year.

Holiday Peak (Q4)

Q4 delivered spikes in CPCs and ad sales:

- Sharp increase in Ad Sales in December
- The highest CPCs of the year in December
- Temporary efficiency gains despite higher CPC

Holiday weeks delivered strong efficiency gains on Walmart relative to the rest of the year, reinforcing the importance of concentrated investment during peak demand periods.

Strategic Takeaways

Q4 delivered the strongest growth and some of the highest-return weeks of the year, making budget timing and pacing critical to annual performance.

Category Analysis

Category performance on Walmart in 2025 showed pronounced divergence, with meaningful differences between scale-driven categories, efficiency leaders, and persistently weaker underperformers.

Unlike a “rising tide” year, incremental spend disproportionately rewarded certain categories, while others absorbed investment with limited return. This made category-level allocation discipline one of the most important levers of overall performance.

Here’s a look at the top performers.

Pet Supplies

ROAS: ~3.9× across the year
CVR: ~30.2% (highest of any major category)

Pet Supplies was the strongest category on Walmart in 2025 from a conversion standpoint. Exceptionally high CVR drove solid ROAS despite rising CPCs and meaningful scale. Performance was consistent across quarters, reflecting replenishment-driven demand and repeat purchasing behavior.

This category converts volume into revenue unusually well, making it one of the lowest-risk areas to deploy incremental spend. Efficiency is resilient even as competition increases.

Automotive

ROAS: ~7.7×
CVR: ~7.5%

Automotive delivered among the highest ROAS on Walmart, despite lower conversion rates and smaller overall scale than replenishable categories. Efficiency improved over time, suggesting strong intent alignment and effective optimization in relatively lighter auctions.

Performance is driven by highly specific, problem-oriented searches rather than frequency. While scale is naturally constrained, returns remain strong where demand exists.

Baby Products

ROAS: ~8.3×
CVR: ~10–11%

Baby Products combined strong ROAS with above-average CVR, making it one of Walmart's most reliable efficiency performers. Performance was strongest outside of holiday periods, reinforcing that demand is needs-based rather than gift-driven.

This mirrors patterns seen on Amazon, where Baby Products benefit from repeat purchasing and high intent. Volatility was limited, supporting predictable returns across the year.

Health & Household

ROAS: ~4.2×
CVR: ~24%

Health & Household delivered a rare blend of scale and efficiency. CVR remained consistently high across quarters, supporting strong total revenue even at significant spend levels. While ROAS trailed Baby and Automotive, stability and volume made this category a major contributor to blended performance.

Repeat behavior and broad but qualified demand helped limit volatility, making Health & Household a dependable foundation category rather than a tactical growth lever.

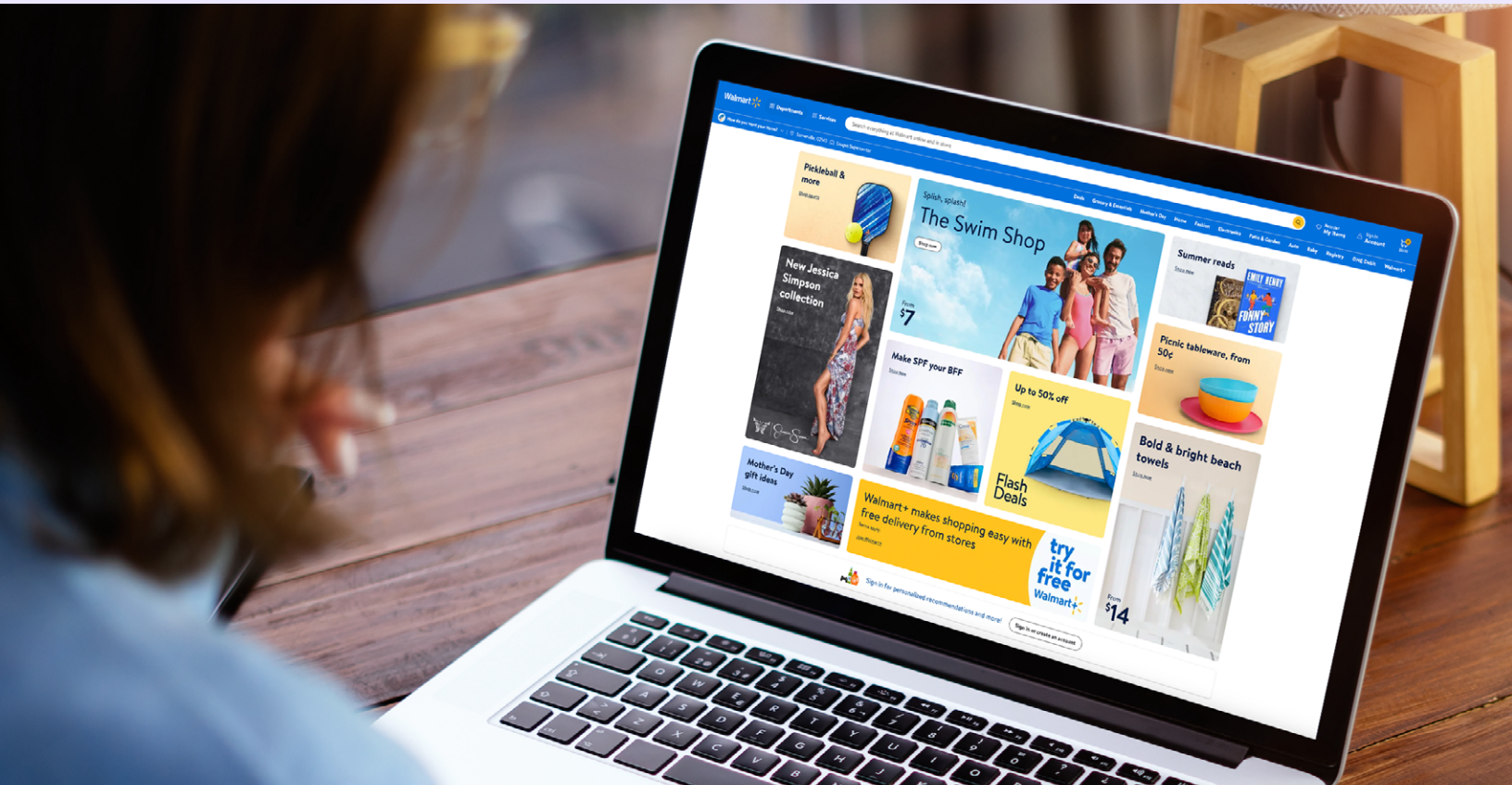
Strategic Takeaways

Walmart category performance in 2025 was defined by structural demand characteristics, not broad-based tailwinds. High-performing categories shared clear traits — repeat purchasing, strong intent, and stable conversion—while weaker categories absorbed spend without proportional return. In 2026, category-level discipline will be critical. The strongest results will come from scaling replenishment and needs-based categories aggressively, and expanding efficiency-led verticals selectively.

Summary + 2026 Focus

In 2025, Walmart often rewarded sellers willing to invest aggressively in scale. Incremental traffic continued to convert, but lower order values and higher CPCs compressed returns.

For 2026, the opportunity shifts from expansion to optimization. Sellers who preserve the scale they built in 2025 — while improving AOV, tightening targeting, and setting clearer efficiency thresholds — are best positioned to turn Walmart into a more sustainable growth channel.



Key Takeaways & Priorities for 2026 Marketplace Selling

Taken together, here's what all of the data from 2025 marketplace performance tells us about what to expect and plan for through 2026.

Takeaways

1. **Efficiency has shifted from a secondary consideration to a primary constraint on growth.**
   In 2025, growth remained available on both Amazon and Walmart, but it became increasingly sensitive to cost, conversion, and basket economics. Sales did not disappear; the margin for error did. In 2026, the question is not whether growth exists, but how much inefficiency the business can absorb while pursuing it.

2. **Amazon and Walmart now reward fundamentally different behaviors.**
   Amazon increasingly behaves like a mature auction — incremental revenue is available, but it is earned through precision: tighter bidding, stronger conversion, and higher order values. Walmart, by contrast, continues to reward scale first, but returns increasingly depend on converting that scale into sustainable efficiency. Treating the platforms interchangeably materially increases risk.

3. **Incremental spend must be evaluated based on which performance lever is most likely to deteriorate first.**
   Across both marketplaces, efficiency pressure did not show up uniformly. On Amazon, higher CPCs and softer conversion constrained returns. On Walmart, lower order values were a major contributor to efficiency pressure. In 2026, sellers should assess incremental investment by asking which metric is most likely to see negative impact next, rather than assuming volume will carry returns.

4. **Timing matters more as seasonal peaks sharpen.**
   Prime Day and Q4 drove a disproportionate share of 2025 growth and efficiency. Outside of these windows, returns were more fragile and sensitive to cost and mix. In 2026, budget pacing and timing decisions will have an outsized impact on blended ROAS, particularly as competition intensifies around fewer, higher-leverage moments.

5. **Category dynamics reflect structural constraints.**
   Category performance in 2025 was driven more by demand fundamentals than platform mechanics. High-performing categories shared traits — repeat behavior, strong intent, stable conversion — while weaker categories required disproportionate spend to move revenue.

6. **The winning strategy in 2026 is calibrated ambition.**
   Amazon calls for increasing precision to sustain returns, while Walmart allows faster expansion but exposes inefficiencies quickly at scale. The strongest sellers in 2026 will be those who align investment to where each platform sits on its maturity curve, scale where economics support it, and pull back where efficiency signals weaken.

Action Items

Amazon

Priority: Build efficiency without sacrificing volume. Expand full funnel advertising and multi-marketplace selling.

- ✅ Tighten CPC control as auction pressure persists
- ✅ Focus on CVR and AOV gains
- ✅ Scale selectively around high-leverage moments (Prime Day, Q4)
- ✅ Prioritize efficiency-proven categories where possible

Walmart

Priority: Convert scale into sustainable efficiency. Expand full funnel advertising and multi-marketplace selling.

- ✅ Rein in rising CPCs through tighter targeting
- ✅ Rebuild AOV through merchandising and bundle strategy
- ✅ Treat upper-funnel formats as optimization opportunities, not just reach drivers
- ✅ Aggressively prioritize Q4, where ROAS peaks

Resources & Next Steps

Resources

Need a refresher or deeper dive on specific marketplace behaviors? Check out these additional resources from Teikametrics: deeper insights and concrete examples related to the dynamics covered in this report.

- Hitting 8-Figures on Amazon & Walmart: 5 Strategies Real Brands Used
- 3 Reasons You're Not Profitable On Amazon & Walmart
- Tracking SKU-Level Ad Profitability: Your Key to Smarter Growth on Amazon
- How Top Brands Are Rebuilding Their Ad Strategy Around AMC & DSP
- Funko Expands Ecommerce Success with Full-Funnel Strategy and Amazon Marketing Cloud
- Vegamour Scales Efficiently With Teikametrics Smart Campaigns
- How Caudalie Boosted Sales & Visibility with a Full-Funnel Strategy

Next Steps

Many of the patterns in this report point to the same challenge for the months ahead: growth decisions are increasingly interconnected. Advertising performance can't be evaluated without understanding catalog quality, inventory position, and profitability at the SKU level.

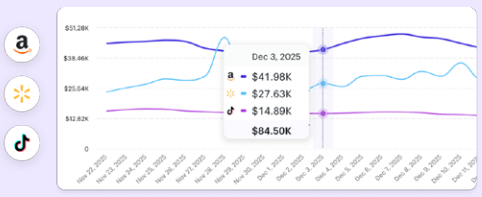
The Teikametrics ARI platform is designed around that reality. ARI brings together:

- **Advertising intelligence** to optimize bids and budgets across Amazon and Walmart based on profit, not just spend or ROAS
- **Catalog intelligence** to keep listings accurate, competitive, and conversion-ready as conditions change
- **Inventory insights** to align advertising with real supply, avoiding wasted spend or missed demand
- **Unified insights** that connect ads, sales, inventory, and competitive signals in one view

Together, these capabilities make it easier to apply the insights in this report continuously — not as a one-time analysis, but as an operating framework for day-to-day decisions.

ARI

Learn more about the ARI platform →



Request a custom demo →