

TEXTE

Why Nike, Adidas and Ralph Lauren stuff is getting tougher to find

By Nathaniel Meyersohn, CNN Business, January 8, 2022

5 Looking to buy Nike sneakers, Adidas sweats, Crocs clogs, Polo shirts or Canada Goose parkas?

You're likely to have better luck these days snagging them from their own stores or on their websites than at mom-and-pops and smaller chains.

10 These major brands and other top shoe and clothing labels are all cutting back on the number of outside retailers that carry their goods and concentrating their efforts on getting customers to buy directly from their own channels as well as a narrow group of wholesale partners.

The shift means shoppers will find fewer places to buy leading brands and also puts pressure on retailers that will no longer be able to stock highly sought-after shoes and clothes on their shelves, according to retail experts.

15 Selling to customers directly allows brands to make more money, control their prices and showcase products exactly the way they want in their store displays. They also can prevent their labels from being discounted too heavily, which could weaken their brand image and pricing power.

"We are less interested in undifferentiated, small players that don't have particularly good service levels or in-store standards," Crocs CEO Andrew Rees said on an analyst call in April.

20 Strategies to pull away from other retailers started well before the Covid-19 pandemic, of course, but have sped up over the last two years.

In fact, brands have used the pandemic to accelerate plans to grow directly through their own channels, especially online. At the beginning of the pandemic, for example, stores were closed, with no choice but to push customers to buy online.

25 Once stores reopened and customers pounced on new clothes, shoes and wardrobes, there was a huge mismatch between demand and supply. Brands had little, if any, extra merchandise to send to retailers, and they prioritized feeding inventory to their own stores and websites.

In addition to tightening up their wholesale partners and growing online, many of these brands are opening new stores.

30 Some, such as Under Armour, Adidas and Crocs sell to Amazon, but Canada Goose and Ralph Lauren have stayed away from the online giant. Some brands have been hesitant to sell on Amazon out of concerns they won't have control over the customer experience.

Nike announced in 2019 it would stop selling on Amazon.