

## Amazon looks to clean house? literally

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Is Amazon.com thinking of providing good housekeeping as its next Prime member perk?

Two Seattle job postings for "home assistants" on Amazon's website suggest so.

They call for potential recruits to join "Amazon Assistants," which the company describes as "experts in helping Amazon customers keep up their home."

That means helping customers with "tidying up around the home, laundry, and helping put groceries and essentials like toilet paper and paper towels away."

The goal is to provide, as part of a two-person team, "timesaving assistance to Amazon Prime members," so they can run an "errand-free" home.

Amazon didn't respond to a request for comment.

The apparent venture serves to underscore how creative Amazon is becoming when it comes to reasons to join the Prime membership program.

Members pay \$99 a year for guaranteed shipping, and also get perks that range from a Netflix-like streaming video service to photo storage and even free books.

Membership also includes discounts to Amazon Music Unlimited, a Spotify-like music-streaming service, in addition to a more limited music library at no extra cost.

In exchange, Amazon receives cash flow that helps cover the cost of the perks. Most important, it gains loyal shoppers. Members spend twice as much as nonmembers do (\$1,200 annually on average, according to Consumer Intelligence Research Partners, a research firm.)

The success of the program has been such that it has become one of Amazon's main "pillars," multibillion-dollar revenue generators. Nearly half of U.S. households belong to the program, according to analysts.

CIRP, the research firm, says membership growth is beginning to slow somewhat as it starts to reach the limit of households that can afford it.

So the obvious way to stir up more interest is by packing in more perks. CEO Jeff Bezos highlighted Prime in his most recent letter to shareholders, saying that "we want Prime to be such a good value, you'd be irresponsible not to be a member."

Amazon devotees can already hire a housekeeper through Amazon's marketplace for independent home-service providers, launched last year.

But this seems different: Amazon's job posting is for a housecleaning Amazonian, with benefits ranging from Amazon stock and health insurance, as well as possibly overtime pay.

The posting is written with the cheerful prose the company uses to entice engineers or data scientists.

"If you love making a house feel like a home then this is the role for you," the ad says.

"Tasks you will become awesome at" include housecleaning alongside a professional cleaner, washing and folding laundry, restocking essentials and groceries.

Also, Amazon is looking for "outgoing, detail-oriented, and tech savvy" college graduates or those with an equivalent degree to fill the job. Five or more years of experience as a hotel concierge or a barista help, according to the job posting.

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