

Amazon curtails ventures amid push to control costs

October 14 2022, by Lauren Rosenblatt



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Amazon is shuttering more projects, with a digital travel experience and a high-performance robotic system the most recent to get the ax.

That comes after announcements this month that Amazon will stop testing delivery robots, end production of a video device for kids and

pause hiring for its corporate retail division. Earlier this year, it also said it would end its health care venture, Amazon Care.

Now, Amazon has confirmed it is ending Glow, its video device designed to help kids connect with family, and Explore, its virtual travel experience. It did not confirm or deny that it was ending two robotics projects, Canvas and Orca, or comment on Aqua, the AWS service.

A post on Blind, an anonymous messaging board used by tech workers to talk about [job interviews](#), [job cuts](#) and office gossip, listed a half dozen ventures coming to an end, as well as a consideration to end Aqua, a product from Amazon Web Services. The post was billed as an up-to-date "project shutdown" thread.

"At Amazon we think big, experiment, and invest in [new ideas](#) to delight customers," spokesperson Brad Glasser told The Seattle Times. "We also continually evaluate the progress and potential of our products and services to deliver customer value, and we regularly make adjustments based on those assessments."

Amazon declined to comment on how many workers would be affected, but said some employees would move to other areas of the business.

Like many [tech companies](#), Amazon has slowed its expansion this year, facing economic pressure after the explosion of demand for its services amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Already, it has slowed or stopped plans to expand its warehouse footprint, including a potential new fulfillment center in Seattle's Rainier Valley. Earlier this year, Amazon's top executives signaled the company would focus on controlling costs and take a more targeted approach to hiring. It also paused construction on new office buildings in Bellevue, the site of the majority of its future Puget Sound growth.

Amazon said earlier this month it would freeze hiring for its corporate retail division, which includes online and physical stores, its marketplace for third-party sellers and its Amazon Prime subscription service.

The company expects to resume hiring for that division next year. A spokesperson declined to say how the temporary stoppage would affect its Seattle headquarters or its offices around Puget Sound.

"Amazon continues to have a significant number of open roles available across the company," Glasser said. "We have many different businesses at various stages of evolution, and we expect to keep adjusting our hiring strategies in each of these businesses at various junctures."

Google's parent company Alphabet said in July it would slow hiring for the rest of the year; Microsoft cut some jobs that same month, including in its Azure cloud business and security software unit; Meta, the parent company of Facebook, said last month it was reducing its head count for the first time in [company](#) history.

Earlier this month, Amazon confirmed it is ending field tests for Scout, an autonomous personal delivery device that had been scooting around Kirkland to drop off small packages for residents. Amazon is "reorienting the program" after learning there were parts of the service that "weren't meeting customers' needs," spokesperson Alisa Carroll told The Seattle Times last week.

Amazon now may be shutting down the program entirely, according to an update on the messaging board Tuesday.

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Citation: Amazon curtails ventures amid push to control costs (2022, October 14) retrieved 27

April 2024 from <https://techxplore.com/news/2022-10-amazon-curtails-ventures.html>

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