

Amazon flexes muscles for click-and-collect offer



Amazon is thought likely to launch an Argos-style click-and-collect service called Amazon Flex after preparations for a pilot were spotted in the US.

Signs inside a new Amazon warehouse in Kirkland, Seattle, suggest the retailer is preparing to allow customers to pick up packages they have ordered.

A picture of an Amazon Flex-branded sign was published by tech blog GeekWire. It read: "Please take a ticket located behind you. Please look for your number on the top corner of the wall on your left. Proceed to pick up your package once your number is displayed."

The warehouse the sign was spotted in is understood to be a distribution centre for the company's Prime Now service, which allows customers to receive deliveries within one hour.

Prime Now is yet to be offered in Seattle but is expected to launch imminently.

The sighting of the potential click-and-collect service comes after it was reported that Amazon was setting up a New York store after being inspired by Argos's tie-up with eBay.

The Amazon Flex service would be the latest fulfilment innovation from the retailer, which is pushing hard for regulatory approval for drone deliveries.

Boss Jeff Bezos recently revealed that he expected drone delivery technology to arrive in the UK before the US because of the UK aviation regulator's more relaxed approach to drones.



A worker selects items in an Amazon distribution centre

Amazon is also gearing up to launch its Fresh grocery proposition in the UK, which is expected to be tested in London in the next few weeks.

Amazon has not yet responded to a request for comment about Flex. MATTHEW CHAPMAN