



# Marketplace Safety by Design

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## I. Executive Summary

Consumers are shopping online more than ever before, and they regularly buy products using digital marketplaces—shopping hubs run by companies that operate broader digital platforms.<sup>1</sup> A Consumer Reports (CR) [nationally representative survey](#) of 2,191 U.S. adults from October 2025 found that most consumers (95%) had used a digital platform to make a purchase in the past 12 months.<sup>2</sup> However, U.S. laws and regulations have not yet caught up to this new marketplace reality, leaving U.S. consumers vulnerable when shopping online.<sup>3</sup> Many digital marketplaces also have a growing number of third-party sellers, which are independent entities that do business on these platforms.<sup>4</sup> By one estimate, sales from these third parties will make up “59% of global e-commerce sales” by 2027.<sup>5</sup>

As platforms increasingly turn to third-party sellers to drive growth,<sup>6</sup> their roles facilitating relationships between consumers and sellers and controlling the products sold on their website are more critical than ever. Digital marketplaces should have internal corporate policies and practices in place that ensure the safety of all products sold on their platforms, including those sold by third-party sellers. CR’s October 2025 survey found that 84% of U.S. consumers feel that online retailers should be responsible for the safety of products sold by third-party sellers, just like physical stores are responsible for the safety of products on their shelves.<sup>7</sup> Unfortunately, there’s much debate about whether platforms are legally responsible for many products sold on their marketplaces, especially those sold by third-party sellers.<sup>8</sup> With this lack of clarity, consumers remain at risk with the possibility of no recourse if a product harms them. Consumers should be able to feel confident that the products they buy online do not pose unreasonable risks to their health or safety, and digital platforms have an instrumental role in making that expectation a reality.

With the growing importance of online shopping in consumers’ everyday lives, CR sought to better understand how platforms perform across multiple factors related to product safety and the consumer journey. With this in mind, CR evaluated four platforms—Amazon, Target,<sup>9</sup> Temu, and Walmart—using information that is publicly available to online shoppers. CR chose to evaluate these four platforms because they are among the largest or fastest-growing marketplaces currently operating in the U.S. that host third-party sellers.<sup>10</sup>

CR’s evaluation of digital marketplaces found many inconsistencies that may impact a consumer’s ability to make an informed decision when shopping online. Our review of three product categories—cribs, children’s pajamas, and pacifiers—found five overarching actions that platforms need to take in order to make the shopping process safer and clearer for consumers: 1) Provide more complete and accurate product information; 2) Prevent misleading or false safety claims; 3) Remove imagery that contradicts established safety guidance; 4) Make information related to recalls, banned/prohibited products, and sellers more accessible; and 5) Strengthen internal practices for recalls notices and remedies, as well as timely seller communications with consumers.

This report is directed to digital platforms that host third-party sellers, and calls on them to act on our findings by implementing several recommended practices to improve marketplace safety and support more informed consumer decision-making. Our evaluation and findings show that it is feasible for digital platforms to meaningfully improve consumer safety by adopting CR's recommendations outlined in this report. Each of the platforms we evaluated has demonstrated, in different instances, that requiring sellers to provide specific information, maintaining accessible recall pages, and preventing the sale of banned products are achievable.

## II. Introduction

Consumers are shopping online more than ever before, and they regularly buy products using digital marketplaces—shopping hubs run by companies that operate broader digital platforms.<sup>11</sup> A Consumer Reports nationally representative survey of 2,191 U.S. adults from October 2025 found that 95% of consumers used a digital platform to make a purchase in the previous 12 months.<sup>12</sup> To meet the growing demand from consumers, digital retail platforms are evolving quickly. However, U.S. laws and regulations have not kept up with the changes and are falling well behind some other jurisdictions, such as the European Union and Great Britain.<sup>13</sup> That leaves U.S. consumers at risk of purchasing unsafe products when shopping online, and without clear remedies if a product they purchased from a third-party seller—an independent entity that does business on these marketplaces—has been recalled.<sup>14</sup>

Online shopping has also created new ways for businesses to sell their goods, including an increased reliance on third-party sales to drive growth.<sup>15</sup> Many digital platforms now allow third-party sellers to sell goods through their digital marketplaces.<sup>16</sup> Platforms that host third-party sellers are expected to be the world's largest and fastest-growing retail channel by 2027, and by one estimate, sales from third parties will make up 59% of all global e-commerce sales.<sup>17</sup>

The growing presence of third-party sellers has resulted in not only convenient shopping options for consumers and growth opportunities for businesses but also a proliferation of products that may put consumers at risk of serious injury or even death.<sup>18</sup> For example, CR routinely finds banned infant sleep products such as certain loungers and padded crib bumpers, which have been linked to infant deaths, for sale on platforms such as Amazon and Temu.<sup>19</sup> CR also found water beads that pose serious ingestion hazards to children in Amazon and Walmart's digital marketplaces. In short, consumers who shop on these platforms continue to walk unknowingly into a digital minefield of products that pose serious risks.

As the marketplace evolves and outpaces efforts to update product safety laws and regulations, there's much debate about whether platforms are legally responsible for many products sold on their marketplaces and, in particular, products sold by third-party sellers.<sup>20</sup> In the absence of a clear legal framework that accounts for digital marketplaces, U.S. consumers have little choice but to rely on platforms themselves to keep them safe and hold third-party sellers accountable. As a result, the platform's role in facilitating relationships between consumers and sellers, and in

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controlling the products sold on its marketplace, is more critical than ever. For more on what policymakers can do to address the current gaps in the law and regulations, see CR's November 2024 report "Marketplace Accountability in a Digital World."<sup>21</sup>

This role is especially crucial in light of consumer expectations for digital platforms and consumer product safety. A [nationally representative CR survey](#) from April 2025 found that most consumers (88%) agreed that the government should oversee digital marketplaces, like Amazon and Walmart, to prevent them from selling recalled, banned, or otherwise unsafe products.<sup>22</sup> In addition, CR's October 2025 survey found that 84% of consumers agreed that digital retailers should be responsible for the safety of products sold on their platforms by third-party sellers, just as traditional brick-and-mortar stores are responsible for the safety of all products they sell.<sup>23</sup> Finally, a [nationally representative CR survey](#) from September 2023 found that almost all consumers (99%) said they expect that the products they buy are designed and tested to be safe before they are sold.<sup>24</sup>

These consumer expectations support the notion that products should be safe before they are sold online or in stores, and that governments and digital platforms alike should step up. Congress and other regulators should address the gap in the law and help create safe and fair digital marketplaces.<sup>25</sup> Especially in the absence of further legislative or regulatory action, digital platforms should have the mechanisms and internal corporate policies in place that ensure the safety of all products sold on their platforms, including those sold by third-party sellers.

Consumers should be able to feel confident that no products they buy online pose unreasonable health and safety risks, and digital platforms have an instrumental role to play in making this vision a reality. As such, digital platforms should provide consumers with accurate, readily available safety information to help them make informed purchasing decisions and ensure the safety of all products sold on their marketplaces. If something goes wrong, platforms should be ready to respond quickly to address product hazards and work to make consumers whole through prompt outreach and appropriate remedies.<sup>26</sup> Such a response should entail regular and timely engagement with regulatory agencies and customers, and straightforward instructions that make it as easy as possible for consumers to take part in a recall.

With the growing importance of online shopping in consumers' everyday lives, CR sought to better understand how the largest and fastest-growing platforms help protect consumers from unsafe products that could put them at risk of injury and death. This includes gaining a better understanding of the information consumers have access to when shopping on a digital marketplace. With this in mind, CR evaluated four platforms—Amazon, Target,<sup>27</sup> Temu, and Walmart—using information that is publicly available to consumers. CR chose to evaluate these four platforms because they are among the largest or fastest-growing retail marketplaces currently operating in the U.S.<sup>28</sup> that host third-party sellers. This report summarizes CR's evaluation methodology, provides a detailed account of our findings, and offers recommendations that could be adopted by any platform that hosts third-party sellers.



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Our evaluation and findings show that it is feasible for digital platforms to meaningfully improve consumer safety by adopting CR's recommendations outlined in this report. Each of the platforms we evaluated has demonstrated, in different instances, that requiring sellers to provide specific information, maintaining accessible recall pages, and preventing the sale of banned products are achievable. With a better understanding of the feasibility of our recommendations, this report is directed to digital platforms that host third-party sellers. We encourage digital platforms to review CR's findings and implement the recommended practices outlined in this report to improve marketplace safety and support more informed consumer decision-making. Platforms should also refer to our [Digital Marketplace Safety Playbook](#) and [Digital Marketplace Safety Framework](#) for more information on CR's recommendations and expectations for digital platforms.

## III. Methodology

In line with our Digital Marketplace Accountability Framework,<sup>29</sup> CR's evaluation and analysis focused on whether consumers had access to information that was clear, accurate, reliable, and sufficient to enable them to make safe and informed decisions when purchasing products online. Without access to this information, a consumer may unknowingly bring an unsafe product into their home and put themselves or their family at risk of injury or death. To conduct this work, CR devised objective procedures and test parameters that could be standardized and repeated by our evaluators. For this evaluation, CR focused on three children's product categories—full-sized cribs, pacifiers, and children's pajamas—all of which are required to meet mandatory federal safety standards and can present an unacceptable risk of harm to children if they are not designed properly.

For each product category, we reviewed the online listings for seven unique offerings on each platform between May 2025 and October 2025. In our evaluations, CR sought to mimic a consumer's typical purchasing process, both in a web browser and on the platforms' mobile apps for iOS and Android. This included assessing the clarity and availability of the information provided by platforms and sellers, and how effectively this information helped (or hindered) consumers in making informed decisions. For these assessments, we sought detailed information on the product (dimensions, color, age grading), the seller (contact information, address), and platform policies (restricted/banned products, recall information and procedures).

In reviewing the publicly available information on a platform's marketplace and offerings, CR asked questions about three key safety factors:

- (1) Helpfulness: Does the platform provide adequate, high-quality information (textual and visual) that would help a consumer make an informed decision?
- (2) Findability: How easy is it to locate desired information in the platform and its pages?
- (3) Parity: Is the same desired information available on both the mobile app and desktop browser?

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For this evaluation, CR organized the safety information into the following categories:

1. **Helpful product information:** Information that effectively mimics an in-store shopping experience by enabling consumers to gain a better sense of how the product looks, feels, and even performs. This type of information includes product dimensions, colors, and weights, along with clear images of the product from multiple angles.
2. **Critical safety information and warnings:** Information that provides insight into the potential hazards associated with a product and how to use the product safely. We focused on information about safe infant sleep guidelines and recommendations; flammability; strangulation; age grading; supervision requirements; warnings; and other potential hazards, including images and text on how to use the product appropriately and safely.
3. **Information regarding banned and restricted products:** Publicly available information on items that sellers are prohibited from selling by law or platform policy. This includes providing clear explanations for product bans or restrictions.
4. **Information and processes regarding recalled products:** This includes information about recalls involving the platform and how platforms notify consumers about recalls.
5. **Information regarding third-party sellers:** Information about the third-party sellers on the marketplace, including identity, reputation or seller score, and selection standards.
6. **Information about product and seller endorsements and designations:** This includes phrases and explanations of endorsements or labels, including “Amazon’s Choice,” Target’s “Bestseller,” Temu’s “Best Seller,” and Walmart’s “Pro Seller.”

## Notes on Scoring

Most of our evaluation procedures used ratings of “exceeds expectations,” “meets expectations,” “slightly below expectations,” and “does not meet expectations.” Numeric scores were assigned to each result, combined by topic area, and each topic area was assigned one of five color-coded ratings.

In a handful of cases in which our recommended practices were likely to be new to platforms or take significant time and resources to implement, we collected data solely for informational purposes and the data did not factor into the Overall Score. For example, one of CR’s recommendations is to make a database of testing certifications available to consumers, allowing them to access documentation confirming that a product meets specific safety requirements. Another example is for platforms to provide consumers with a detailed seller safety record on seller pages. We intend to score those practices in future evaluations.





























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CR shared the data with the evaluated platforms and asked each to work with CR to improve policies, practices, and consumer experiences. We welcomed their feedback and solutions to address CR's concerns. Platforms were also given the opportunity to implement changes that adopted CR's recommendations, which, in some cases, could have raised their scores. CR's scores were adjusted only when such efforts and changes were determined to be platform-wide. More granular changes, such as removing a concerning image from a specific listing, typically did not affect our scoring. After allowing time for review and engagement, Amazon and Temu committed to implementing changes aligned with CR's recommendations and findings. Target responded to our findings with general commitments to the principles evaluated but did not declare any changes that would have impacted its score for a specific procedure. As such, we could not update Target's scores. Walmart declined to discuss the evaluation and recommendations with CR's team at this stage.
























For more information on CR's recommendations and expectations for digital platforms, refer to our Digital Marketplace Safety Playbook and Digital Marketplace Safety Framework.

## IV. Findings

Each platform excelled in a different area of our evaluation, suggesting that CR's recommendations and expectations are reasonable and achievable. That said, our evaluation revealed that each of the four platforms has opportunities to strengthen its policies and processes.

	Target	Amazon	Walmart	Temu
<b>OVERALL SCORE</b>				
Helpful Information				
Safety Information				
Banned and Restricted Products				
Recalled Products				
Seller Contact and Policy Information				
Endorsements and Designations	NA			

### Finding 1: Helpful product information was more robust than other types of information but was inconsistent from platform to platform, especially in written form.

 All or most  Some  Little or none	Target	Amazon	Walmart	Temu
<b>Helpful Information</b>				
Product information (text)				
Images from multiple angles, including 360-degree images and video				
Information conspicuously placed?				
Equivalent information on browser and app				



CR reviewed a sample of product pages for cribs, pacifiers, and children’s pajamas for information provided on the product pages, including specific textual information about the product (brand name, product weight and size, age range) and visual images (360-degree view, product pictures from multiple angles) that help consumers choose the right product for their needs.

All four platforms provided some helpful information for consumers to make their purchasing decisions. We also found that the helpful product information was well placed on the product pages, making it easy for consumers to find. However, across all three product categories, no platform universally provided all of the helpful text and images that would have resulted in full marks from CR. Amazon and Target generally performed better than Temu and Walmart in terms of consistency and inclusion of comprehensive information. Despite performing more consistently, Amazon and Target did not always include adequate visuals, limiting consumers’ ability to assess a product’s construction, size, materials, and overall suitability for safe use. Temu’s and Walmart’s product pages consistently included fairly comprehensive visual information but did not provide adequate written product information, including accurate product specifications. For example, CR’s evaluation found missing product information, such as weight capacity for cribs and age ranges for pacifiers, on Temu’s and Walmart’s product pages.

**Recommendation:** Platforms should set minimum requirements for product information and visual aids that sellers must provide, including safety- and age-specific information, a comprehensive library of product images showing the product from multiple angles and close up, and, where feasible, 360-degree photos or videos for children’s products. CR’s findings across cribs, pacifiers, and pajamas—especially given the level of detail consistently available on Target’s website—demonstrate that platforms can require robust, standardized product information and imagery.



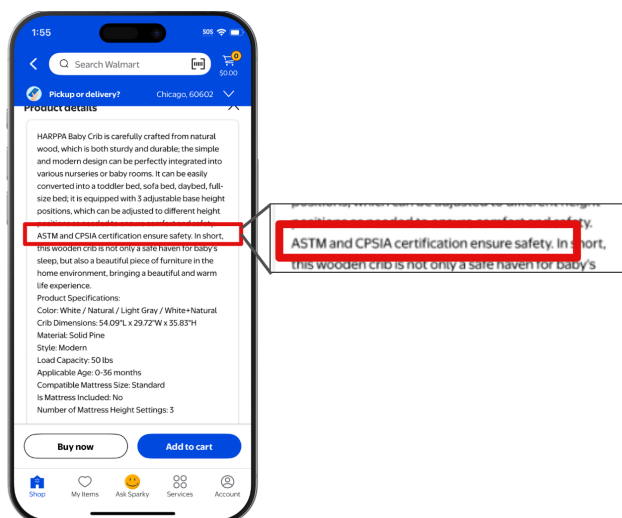
### Finding 2: Product safety information available on platforms varied by product category, with information on pacifier safety least likely to be complete or present.

 All or most  Some  Little or none	Target	Amazon	Walmart	Temu
<b>Safety Information</b>				
Key safety information—safe sleep				
Key safety information—flammability				
Key safety information—pacifier safety				
Visuals depict safe sleep practices				

When shopping for baby and children's products, safety is often a key factor that consumers consider before adding a product to their carts. In fact, in CR's October 2025 survey, two out of three consumers (66%) agreed that it was very important for "[digital] platforms [to] require safety information [like that required to be shown on a product package] to be clearly displayed on the product page."<sup>30</sup> Parents and caregivers, especially first-time parents, may use available images online to design their nurseries. As a result, they may mimic unsafe practices and introduce hazards into a child's environment, putting their child at risk. An analysis of 500 images found that more than three out of four stock photos of sleeping babies showed them in unsafe sleep environments, raising concerns that these types of images may create a false sense of security about unsafe practices linked to sleep-related death.<sup>31</sup> This analysis, plus CR's evaluation, underscores the need for accurate and consistent product safety information and guidance across digital marketplaces.

Across the evaluated digital marketplaces, crib product pages consistently lacked written safe sleep guidance, and pajama pages failed to include vital flammability-related information. Many crib and pacifier product pages also displayed images depicting unsafe sleep environments, such as the presence of pillows, blankets, and other soft items in cribs. While some product pages included information about compliance with safety standards or certifications, many pages included only incomplete, inconsistent, or, in some cases, inaccurate information, like stating that a product was "CPSIA certified." "CPSIA stands for "Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act of 2008," which is a federal law establishing a variety of stronger safety standards for children's products and does not certify products. A claim that a product is "CPSIA certified" or has a "CPSIA certification" is misleading to consumers who may believe the statement to be genuine.

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Product detail section falsely mentions “ASTM and CPSIA certification” for product.

Amazon and Target performed the best overall and most consistently provided information that CR determined to be critical for evaluating all three of these product categories for safety. This includes the pacifier strangulation warning, as well as detailed safety information for cribs and children’s pajamas that informs consumers of potential hazards. Comparatively, Temu and Walmart both performed worse than Amazon and Target, consistently missing information about safety guidelines or standards, indicating a lack of platform-level checks for safety disclosures on children’s products.

Initially, no marketplace consistently provided comprehensive, clear, and accurate pacifier safety guidance, making it the worst-scoring product category for all four platforms. CR also found images on some of the pacifier listings that showed babies sleeping in unsafe sleep environments. These findings highlighted the need for stronger, more consistent safety disclosures and stronger guardrails that would prevent unsafe, and potentially misleading, imagery on pacifier product pages across all four platforms.
















Upon receiving our findings, Amazon updated its requirements for pacifier listings to include the strangulation risk warning. (Consumers would have access to those crucial warnings in a brick-and-mortar store because they are required on packaging by federal law.) Temu also committed to make updates in the pacifier category. Pacifiers sold on Temu are now required to submit bisphenol A (BPA) testing for review, indicate on the listing that pacifiers are BPA-free, and include the strangulation warning. Because of the new BPA requirement, all pacifiers were removed from Temu pending verification of BPA testing, and at the time of publication of this report, CR was only able to verify one pacifier listing that had completed the BPA testing process and included the strangulation warning update

**Recommendation:** Inclusion of safety information and guidance on safe sleep, pajama flammability, and pacifier safety across all platforms should be improved on digital marketplaces. Across the three product categories, digital marketplaces too often failed to

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consistently provide clear, accurate, and comprehensive safety information, such as guidance on how to use the product safely and visuals that encourage safe practices. Such gaps in information highlight the need for stronger checks to ensure that critical information is included in each listing, to foster informed consumer decision-making that will better protect children.

### Finding 3: Restricted or banned products were available for sale on three of the four platforms.

 All or most  Some  Little or none	Target	Amazon	Walmart	Temu
<b>Banned and Restricted Products</b>				
Public list of banned/restricted products with explanations easily found				
Restricted/banned products not for sale				

Consumer Reports evaluated platforms for whether they sold banned or restricted products that are unsafe for babies or children. Banned products are either unlawful to sell by federal law or voluntarily banned by the platform. This includes federally banned infant sleep products such as inclined sleep products, soft-nest products sold for sleep, and padded crib bumpers. Platforms may also choose to restrict the sale of certain products due to a potential hazard associated with a specific use case, like water bead products marketed as toys for children.

In our evaluation, Target was the only platform where banned or restricted children's products, such as inclined sleepers, water beads marketed for children, padded crib bumpers, weighted infant sleep sacks, and drop-side cribs, were not offered for sale. By contrast, CR found products that were prohibited by law or banned or restricted by corporate policy on Amazon, Temu, and Walmart. CR found federally banned crib bumpers for sale on Amazon and Temu.<sup>32</sup> We also found company water beads marketed for children on Amazon and Walmart, which were restricted voluntarily by the platforms in 2023 and subject to a federal standard in 2025, effectively banning them as toys if they expand beyond a specific size.<sup>33</sup> The product listings were removed after CR shared our findings.

In addition, CR's evaluators searched platform pages for clear information about which products are prohibited from sale. Evaluators could not easily find information on banned or restricted products or related policies on any of the four platforms. On CR's recommendation, Temu made a prohibited products page available to consumers by app and browser. Amazon has committed to a similar change that's expected soon.




















**Recommendation:** Platforms should use any and all means necessary to flag and remove prohibited and restricted products from sale to protect consumers from unknowingly purchasing an item that could harm a child. CR acknowledges that this is a difficult aim to achieve, and that some third-party sellers operate in bad faith and repeatedly evade marketplace policies and

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system checks. As such, this problem requires continued proactive enforcement that incorporates novel approaches and uses all available technology to prevent the sale of these products.

**Recommendation:** Platforms should make this information more accessible by adding a consumer-facing page that lists the banned or restricted products and explains which products are unlawful, banned/prohibited, or restricted.

### Finding 4: Platforms included easily accessible recall information, and two provided a personalized recall page for app users.

 All or most  Some  Little or none	Target	Amazon	Walmart	Temu
Recalled Products				
Dedicated recall page available and easily accessible				
Recalled products page includes all recent recalls from platform				
Personalized and tailored recall page available				

When a product is recalled for safety reasons, it should be removed promptly from the platform or blocked from purchase. CR's October 2025 survey found that most consumers (86%) think that platforms should at least notify consumers when a product they sell is found to be unsafe.<sup>34</sup> About two-thirds of consumers said that platforms should not only notify consumers but also provide a remedy, such as a refund, replacement, or repair of the product.<sup>35</sup>

At the time of CR's evaluation, Amazon, Target, and Walmart each maintained recall pages on both mobile apps and desktop browsers, though the user experience varied. For Walmart, the search experience was inconsistent, and at times it was difficult to locate any recall information. When found, Walmart's recall page included only the last four months of recalls, which did not even cover the five most recent recalls involving products sold by Walmart.

By contrast, Amazon's and Target's recall pages listed the five most recently recalled products sold on their platforms and maintained recall histories dating back at least 12 months. At the time of our evaluation, Amazon was the only platform with a personalized recalls section on the app, indicating whether an individual had purchased a recalled product.
















After receiving CR's findings, Temu updated its recall information process, making the notices far more accessible and detailed on both mobile app and browser. Temu also added an account feature that displays recalls tied to personal purchase history.

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**Recommendation:** Because consumers often maintain accounts on platforms where they purchase products regularly, platforms should have a readily accessible recall page with information on all recalled items from at least the past year and clear, easy-to-understand instructions on how to participate in the recall.

**Recommendation:** Platforms should also provide consumers with a personalized page and notification system for any items they previously purchased that have since been recalled. A personalized approach would help ensure consumers are aware of recalls that affect them and increase the likelihood that they participate in the recall.

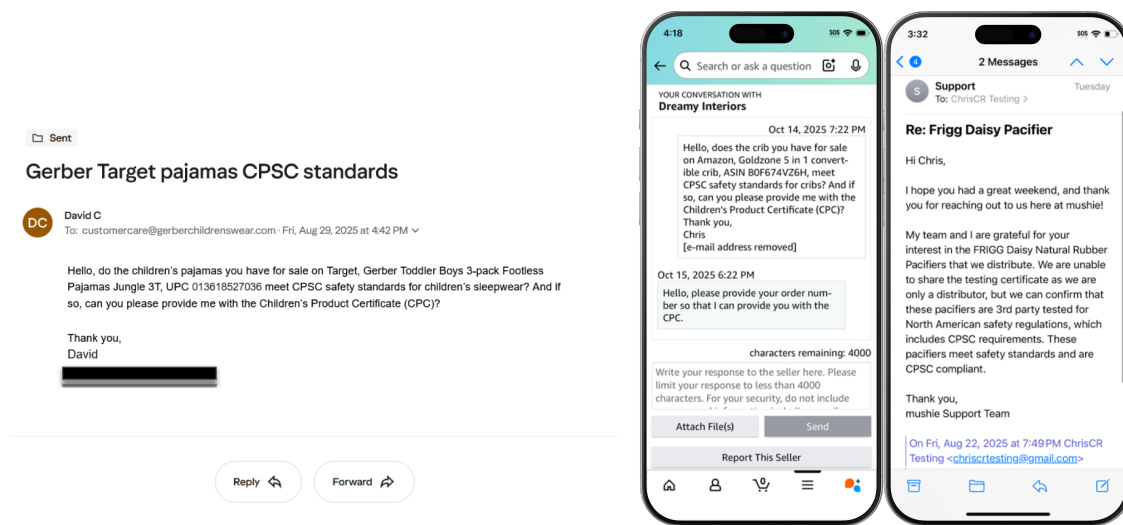
**Finding 5: Seller information and seller contact information were limited, and responses from sellers were inconsistent, infrequent, and unhelpful across all platforms.**

 All or most  Some  Little or none	Target	Amazon	Walmart	Temu
<b>Seller Contact and Policy Information</b>				
Seller contact information				
Seller policy information				

With more retailers and digital platforms hosting third-party sellers, our evaluation also looked at the state of information that is available to consumers about sellers, including their contact information and reputation, and the platforms' requirements for third-party sellers to sell on their marketplaces. CR's October 2025 survey results found that 86% of U.S. consumers think digital platforms should thoroughly vet third-party sellers before allowing them to sell on their sites.<sup>36</sup> Consumers also should not have to scour customer reviews or leave a product page to learn more about a third-party seller or a product they are interested in purchasing. The consumer should be able to easily learn whether a given seller is responsive, has been the subject of consumer complaints, or has sold recalled products. As such, platforms should ensure information about the seller, including contact information, is included and easily accessible throughout the marketplace. This would enable consumers to better interact with the third-party seller and resolve any issues or concerns that may arise.



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Screenshots of messages the team sent to different sellers, along with responses, if available.

Although all evaluated product pages linked to a seller page, all four platforms have opportunities to improve the usefulness of third-party seller information and the quality of seller responses. CR found that all platforms maintained seller pages, but the quality of information varied widely. While Amazon's, Target's, and Walmart's mobile apps consistently included seller contact information in English or provided consumers a reliable way to contact the seller, Temu's information on its mobile app was more variable, with six of 21 sellers reviewed on Temu's platform not providing any contact information or another way to contact the seller, like a platform chat or messaging function.

Moreover, when we contacted sellers using the available methods to make safety-related inquiries, none of the responses from Temu's sellers were satisfactory. This was in contrast to Amazon's near-perfect seller response rate, although several Amazon sellers did not provide a requested copy of the Children's Product Certificate (CPC) and instead stated only that the products had met Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) standards. One Amazon seller required an order number before providing safety documentation, which should not be a prerequisite, and another seller did not provide any safety information. Target's and Walmart's third-party sellers performed better than Temu's but not as well as Amazon's in this respect, providing incomplete or delayed responses to CR's safety-related questions.












CR found that no platform maintained a dedicated consumer-facing page outlining the requirements to be a third-party seller in its marketplace. This is the main reason for the platforms' generally lower scores for Seller Contact and Policy Information.

**Recommendation:** All third-party seller pages should include a clear, electronic method for contacting the seller—such as an email address or a contact button—to ensure consumers can easily ask questions before making a purchase or can raise concerns afterward. Relatedly, platforms should ensure that sellers respond promptly and fully to consumer inquiries, particularly those related to product safety standards and compliance documentation.

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**Recommendation:** Seller pages should be accessible not only through product pages but also through platform navigation tools, such as search, so that consumers can locate seller information even when a product listing is no longer available. Platforms should also provide easy access to clear information explaining their approach to selecting third-party sellers.

**Finding 6: Product and seller endorsements and designations were used on all four platforms, but most did not include clear explanations.**

 All or most  Some  Little or none	Target	Amazon	Walmart	Temu
<b>Endorsements and Designations</b>	NA			
Product endorsements/designations and explanations	NA			
Seller endorsements/designations and explanations	NA	NA		

Consumers often have thousands of options to choose from when searching for a product online, and marketplaces often use phrases or labels in search results and product listings to help differentiate and narrow their choices. These designations and endorsements may suggest to consumers that the product has been vetted by the platform or meets a defined set of criteria. However, these labeling criteria are not always clear, often mean something different from what consumers typically believe them to mean, and may confuse consumers—leading to unsafe purchases.<sup>37</sup> Consumers should be able to easily understand how and why the platform highlights specific product listings or sellers in its marketplace when the label is used.

All four platforms used some sort of designation or endorsement language for products. Only Amazon maintained a publicly available platform-level page or pop-up window explaining the criteria for platform-endorsed products (“Amazon’s Choice”). All four platforms used endorsements or designations for bestselling products. Amazon, Target, and Temu all provided explanations for their “best-selling” designations, but CR’s evaluators could not find this information for Walmart. Temu and Walmart also used endorsements or designations for third-party sellers and provided criteria explaining these endorsements or designations. Amazon and Target did not use endorsements or designations for their third-party sellers.

**Recommendation:** Designations and endorsements can help consumers make purchasing decisions but should be accompanied by clear explanations that help consumers understand how and why products and sellers are showcased. These types of explanations are important to ensure that consumers are not misled into believing such endorsements reflect additional vetting or reviews of safety or quality, when in reality they do not.

### **Note on CR's Expectation of a Testing Certification Database**

CR also looked for testing certification databases that included Children's Product Certificates (CPCs)<sup>38</sup> or third-party test reports but did not find one on any platform. We recognize that this type of database is a relatively new concept and therefore did not include it as part of our overall platform evaluation and scoring. This feature is one that all platforms should pursue moving forward.

When purchasing products online, especially children's products, consumers should have access to these documents, which could help build confidence among discerning consumers and give reviewers and influencers the ability to do additional research before making recommendations to consumers. Platforms can collect CPCs and General Certificates of Conformity (for non-children's products) and should make these publicly available for consumers to access through an online database for products they are considering buying.

## V. Corporate Commitments

CR shared the findings from our evaluation with each company privately in November 2025 with the hope that they would make necessary changes. Both Amazon and Temu participated in productive discussions about the evaluation and made changes to make their platforms safer for consumers.

CR verified some of those changes prior to publication, and some resulted in an improved score for the platform. These include:

- Amazon updated standards for pacifier listings to include a strangulation warning required by law on all pacifier packages.
- Amazon added [a safety page](#) dedicated to the flammability risk of children's pajamas.
- Temu launched a new, more accessible "Recalls and Safety Alerts Center," as well as personalized recall notices based on purchase history.
- Temu created a prohibited products list accessible to consumers via both the app and browser, and revised the guidance on that page to be clearer with regard to children's products.

Amazon and Temu also committed to making the following changes that did not go live in time for publication. CR will check and verify these in the future. All changes are expected to be implemented by the end of March 2026.

### **Amazon**

Clearer policy information for consumers:

- Adding the prohibited products information, formerly navigable only by sellers to the consumer site

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- Providing clear information to consumers on third-party seller requirements accessible through the app and main website

Updating children's pajama standardized sizing information:

- Updating seller guidance and clarifying the age grading rationale to address inconsistent sizing for pajama listings

ABCs of safe sleep:

- Launching a post-purchase email campaign for cribs and bassinets that will provide “Safe Sleep” education to all customers who purchase these products

Additional product safety warnings:

- Following CR’s findings that pacifiers were missing strangulation warnings found on product packaging, Amazon is conducting a review of other safety warnings to update product pages accordingly

### Temu

Addressing unsafe product listings:

- Requiring all merchants selling pacifiers to conduct BPA testing and submit testing reports for review. One merchant has already submitted testing, and Temu relisted the pacifier.

Improving the required safety information available on product pages by including:

- Product weight and maximum weight limit on all cribs pages, which has been verified on three current cribs listings
- Age ranges required for all pacifiers
- Strangulation warnings on all pacifier pages
- BPA-Free added to all pacifier listings

Both platforms also took down unsafe product listings that CR noted. Amazon removed listings for water beads and a crib bumper. Temu removed a product that was marketed as “Foam Strip, Multifunctional Child Safety Bumper for Crib,” which could connote to consumers that these products can be used as crib bumpers, which are federally banned. Temu also added crib bumpers marketed as “bumper tape” to its list of banned products. Both platforms committed to strengthening their processes for ensuring these products are not allowed to be sold.

Unfortunately, procedural commitments to stricter monitoring are challenging to independently verify, and no score changes were made based on removing listings. When CR took a follow-up look for banned products, we found crib bumpers using slightly modified names—possibly to avoid detection. On Amazon, CR found a product sold as “foam crib bumper tape.” On Temu, CR found a crib bumper sold as a “mesh liner.” The listings on both platforms have been removed. Both companies sought CR’s advice for how to be more effective in this process, and the conversations are ongoing.

## VI. Conclusion and Recommendations

Today's marketplace for consumer products continues to evolve and outpace efforts to update product safety laws and regulations. As a result, consumers may continue to encounter dangerous, banned, or recalled products online and be put at risk of serious harm.

CR's evaluation of digital marketplaces identified numerous shortcomings that we believe are likely to hinder or prevent consumers from making informed and safer shopping decisions online. This includes providing inconsistent information about the product, leaving consumers without the information they need to make an informed and safe decision. Across cribs, pajamas, and pacifiers, platforms need to provide more complete and accurate product information, prevent misleading or false safety claims, remove imagery that contradicts established safety guidance, and make information related to recalls, banned/prohibited products, and sellers more accessible.

Our evaluation and findings also show that CR's recommendations aimed at improving the information provided on a platform's marketplace are feasible. In several instances, platforms demonstrated that requiring specific information, maintaining accessible recall pages, or preventing the sale of banned products are achievable steps when clear rules and oversight are in place.

Based on these findings, Consumer Reports recommends the following actions:

### Immediate Actions to Protect Consumers

These recommendations are ones that platforms have already demonstrated to be feasible and should be implemented without delay.

1. **Set and require a minimum standard for category-specific product and safety information.** Platforms should require all product pages to have complete and accurate information before listings go live. This should include information that describes the dimensions, weight capacity, age range, materials, care instructions, and applicable safety standards. Platforms should also include multiple-angle images, close-ups of materials, and 360-degree images or videos where appropriate, and prohibit imagery that depicts unsafe use or unsafe sleep practices.
2. **Strengthen safety standard disclosures and prevent the inclusion of false claims.** Platforms should require clear, accurate disclosures of applicable safety standards and actively detect, correct, and remove false or misleading claims, such as references to non-existent certifications.
3. **Proactively detect and remove banned or restricted children's products.** Platforms should use all available tools to identify and remove products prohibited by law or



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corporate policy, including federally banned products and items known to pose serious safety risks.

4. **Improve recall resources, recall notification, and participation processes.** Platforms should maintain accessible recall pages and maintain a complete, public list of recalls involving products sold on their platform from at least the last 12 months. Platforms should also provide consumers with an easy-to-use recall page that is personalized with recalled products that they have purchased in the past.
5. **Ensure third-party seller transparency and responsiveness.** Platforms should require sellers to provide complete contact information in English and respond promptly and substantively to consumer inquiries.
6. **Ensure parity between mobile and desktop experiences.** Platforms should provide consistent access to all required product, safety, seller, and recall information across mobile apps and desktop browsers.

## Long-Term Efforts to Strengthen Platform Accountability

These recommendations address systemic issues that contribute to recurring safety concerns and may require sustained investment or governance changes.

7. **Implement automated validation and periodic audits of safety information.** Platforms should utilize available technology and implement automated tools that regularly audit required safety disclosures, guidance, and imagery.
8. **Establish and enforce strict consequences for repeat offenders and bad-faith sellers.** Platforms should adopt clear enforcement frameworks with meaningful penalties for sellers who repeatedly violate safety requirements or attempt to evade platform safeguards.
9. **Establish a publicly available testing certification database.** Platforms should create and maintain a testing certification database that consumers can access to view important documentation certifying a product's safety, which could help build confidence among discerning consumers and enable reviewers and influencers to conduct additional research when making recommendations.

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<sup>1</sup> Jennifer Dublino, "Online vs In-Store Shopping: What's Changed in 2026," [business.com](https://www.business.com/articles/retail-or-e-tail-buying-online-vs-buying-in-person/), January 6, 2026, <http://business.com/articles/retail-or-e-tail-buying-online-vs-buying-in-person/>. For the purposes of this report, we will be using the terms "digital platform" and "digital marketplace," respectively, instead of "online platform" and "online marketplace" in order to align with CR's broader work in the digital space.

<sup>2</sup> Consumer Reports nationally representative [American Experiences Survey](https://article.images.consumerreports.org/image/upload/v1762527064/prod/content/dam/surveys/Consumer_Reports_AES_October_2025.pdf) of 2,191 U.S. adults (October 2025), [https://article.images.consumerreports.org/image/upload/v1762527064/prod/content/dam/surveys/Consumer\\_Reports\\_AES\\_October\\_2025.pdf](https://article.images.consumerreports.org/image/upload/v1762527064/prod/content/dam/surveys/Consumer_Reports_AES_October_2025.pdf). (Only 5 percent of U.S. consumers said that they had not shopped on any digital platform in the last 12 months.)

<sup>3</sup> Oriene Shin and Laurel Lehman, “Marketplace Accountability in a Digital World,” *Consumer Reports*, November 7, 2024, <https://advocacy.consumerreports.org/research/marketplace-accountability-in-a-digital-world-consumer-reports-white-paper-on-digital-marketplace-accountability-for-product-safety/> at 3; Tom Wheeler, “The UK and EU establish positions as regulatory first movers while the US watches,” *Brookings*, March 8, 2023, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/the-uk-and-eu-establish-positions-as-regulatory-first-movers-while-the-us-watches/>.

<sup>4</sup> “The irresistible rise of third-party marketplaces,” *WARC*, July 28, 2022, <https://www.warc.com/content/feed/the-irresistible-rise-of-third-party-marketplaces/en-GB/7038>.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 15 USC § 45f(f)(6).

<sup>6</sup> Antonio Moreno, “Why Retailers Are Turning to Third-Party Marketplaces,” *Harvard Business Review*, January 8, 2025, <https://hbr.org/2025/01/why-retailers-are-turning-to-third-party-marketplaces?>.

<sup>7</sup> *Consumer Reports*, *supra* note 2.

<sup>8</sup> Shin and Lehman, *supra* note 3, at 5-7; see also Megan Chester et al., “The CPSC and Amazon: Navigating a Shifting Regulatory Landscape,” *JD Supra*, August 20, 2025, <https://www.jdsupra.com/legalnews/the-cpsc-and-amazon-navigating-a-1158565/>.

<sup>9</sup> Target—at the time of this review, Target’s third-party seller program (Target+) was still invite only and used a different third-party seller model than the other three platforms.

<sup>10</sup> Michael Gunther, “Are Temu’s Renewed Efforts in the US Market Working?” *Consumer Edge*, August 27, 2025, <https://www.consumeredge.com/resources/insights/are-temus-renewed-efforts-in-the-us-market-working/>;

“Top 12 Online Marketplaces to Sell on in the USA,” *Athos Commerce*, November 28, 2022, <https://www.intelligentreach.com/guides/best-online-marketplaces-usa/>; see also Frank Calviño, “Temu is now the second most visited e-commerce site in the world!” *Cross-Border Magazine*, September 16, 2024, <https://cross-border-magazine.com/temu-2-most-visited-e-commerce-in-the-world/>.

<sup>11</sup> Dublino, *supra* note 1; see also *Consumer Reports*, *supra* note 2.

<sup>12</sup> *Consumer Reports*, *supra* note 2.

<sup>13</sup> The European Union’s Digital Markets Act (DMA) went into effect in 2023, and the United Kingdom’s Product Regulation and Metrology Act (the PRAM Act) was enacted in 2025. Both laws address gaps in governance over digital platforms and their marketplaces. By contrast, the U.S. does not have any law in place or legislation under consideration that would help clarify a platform’s responsibility over products sold in its marketplace. “About the Digital Markets Act,” last accessed January 28, 2026, [https://digital-markets-act.ec.europa.eu/about-dma\\_en](https://digital-markets-act.ec.europa.eu/about-dma_en); “Product Regulation and Metrology Act: What next?” July 22, 2025, <https://dwfgroup.com/en/news-and-insights/insights/2025/7/product-regulation-and-metrology-act-what-next>.

<sup>14</sup> Shin and Lehman, *supra* note 3.

<sup>15</sup> Moreno, *supra* note 6.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> *WARC*, *supra* note 4.

<sup>18</sup> Shin and Lehman, *supra* note 3, at 4.

<sup>19</sup> See Lauren Kirchner, “These Aren’t Statistics. These are Babies.” Why Online Misinformation About Infant Sleep Is More Dangerous Than Ever.” *Consumer Reports*, October 24, 2025, <https://www.consumerreports.org/babies-kids/child-safety/misinformation-about-infant-sleep-more-dangerous-than-ever-a7076883803/>; Alexandra Frost, “5 Dangerous Infant Sleep Products That Are Still Easy to Find Online,” *Consumer Reports*, November 7, 2024, <https://www.consumerreports.org/babies-kids/child-safety/dangerous-infant-sleep-products-a9207359649/>.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*; Chester, *supra* note 8.

<sup>21</sup> Shin and Lehman, *supra* note 3.

<sup>22</sup> *Consumer Reports* nationally representative [American Experiences Survey](https://article.images.consumerreports.org/image/upload/v1744212505/prod/content/dam/surveys/Consumer_Reports_AES_April_2025.pdf) of 2,158 U.S. adults (April 2025), [https://article.images.consumerreports.org/image/upload/v1744212505/prod/content/dam/surveys/Consumer\\_Reports\\_AES\\_April\\_2025.pdf](https://article.images.consumerreports.org/image/upload/v1744212505/prod/content/dam/surveys/Consumer_Reports_AES_April_2025.pdf). The survey found that 59% strongly agreed with this statement and an additional 29% somewhat agreed.

<sup>23</sup> *Consumer Reports*, *supra* note 2.

<sup>24</sup> Consumer Reports nationally representative [American Experiences Survey](https://article.images.consumerreports.org/image/upload/v1696262259/prod/content/dam/surveys/Consumer_Reports_AES_Toplines_September_2023.pdf) of 2,089 U.S. adults (September 2023), [https://article.images.consumerreports.org/image/upload/v1696262259/prod/content/dam/surveys/Consumer\\_Reports\\_AES\\_Toplines\\_September\\_2023.pdf](https://article.images.consumerreports.org/image/upload/v1696262259/prod/content/dam/surveys/Consumer_Reports_AES_Toplines_September_2023.pdf).

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Shin and Lehman, *supra* note 3, at 10-11.

<sup>27</sup> Target—at the time of this review, Target's third-party seller program (Target+) was still invite only and used a different third-party seller model than the other three platforms.

<sup>28</sup> Gunther, *supra* note 10.

<sup>29</sup> “Digital Marketplace Accountability Framework,” Consumer Reports, February 19, 2026, <https://advocacy.consumerreports.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/Digital-Marketplace-Platform-Safety-Framework.pdf>.

<sup>30</sup> Consumer Reports, *supra* note 2.

<sup>31</sup> Robin Hilmantel, “3 in 4 stock photos of sleeping babies show them in an unsafe sleep space,” *BabyCenter*, January 28, 2025, [https://www.babycenter.com/presscenter/safe-sleep-stock-photo-analysis\\_40009896](https://www.babycenter.com/presscenter/safe-sleep-stock-photo-analysis_40009896).

<sup>32</sup> Both Amazon and Temu indicated that adjustments were made to the moderation processes that identify and remove banned and restricted products. CR's evaluators looked again in January 2026 to confirm whether these adjustments were effective and found padded crib bumpers still for sale on both platforms. Amazon had removed the offending water beads listing, and no others were located at the time. CR will continue to work with both companies to improve systems for detecting and removing banned products.

<sup>33</sup> Lauren Kirchner, “Amazon, Target, and Walmart Announce They Will Stop Selling Water Beads Marketed for Children,” *Consumer Reports*, December 12, 2023, <https://www.consumerreports.org/babies-kids/toys/amazon-to-stop-selling-water-bead-toys-a2333261526/>; Federal Register 90, no. 237 (December 12, 2025): 57820-57859, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2025-12-12/pdf/2025-22643.pdf>. (The CPSC's final water bead rule will go into effect March 12, 2026, after CR's platform evaluation period in 2025.)

<sup>34</sup> Consumer Reports, *supra* note 2.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Shin and Lehman, *supra* note 3; Scott Medintz, “Why Amazon, Temu, Walmart, and Other Retailers Aren't Responsible for the Safety of Many Products on Their Websites,” *Consumer Reports*, November 7, 2024, <https://www.consumerreports.org/corporate-accountability/online-retailers-arent-responsible-for-safety-of-products-a1083803430/>.

<sup>38</sup> The CPC is a document required by the Consumer Product Safety Commission and certifies that the product complies with applicable safety rules.