

The problem with being popular



Man, I never saw this coming. Sure, I take pride in my reviewing of products I buy off Amazon, but, really? The first few times, it was even fun, but now, the problem with being popular is that it's starting to feel like work!

It wasn't a problem at the beginning

When I first started ordering from Amazon, I didn't give a lot of thought to the reviews. Just a couple of lines and then, done.



Then this happened

Later, I started to look at it like little writing projects. You know, a beginning, a middle and an end. That apparently started getting me "noticed" on Amazon.com.

I detailed a bit of this in a previous blog post. No, no...you don't have to go looking, I'll put up a link for you. There you go.

Then came the popular

So, I started to see my "ranking" rise on Amazon.com and, as I said in the linked blog post, my numbers nerd took over and I kept trying to put out more entertaining reviews to "juice" my popularity.

When I cracked the top 600 or so, that's when I apparently triggered an alarm on various Amazon sellers' review box.

What followed were several offers to review products for free or even for money. Rest assured, I always refuse the money.

Limiting how popular I am

There were a few items that had no utility for me, so I graciously declined the offers. The few things I did get to review have been (thankfully) of excellent quality and usefulness.

But, I thought I had everything mostly under control. I mean, it was only a few requests.

Who turned on the spigot?

Now, I don't know if the oncoming holiday season is a catalyst, I suspect it is to some extent, but I am now getting deluged with testing/review requests.

I mean, sure, my ranking keeps climbing (it's a vicious circle: the more I do, the more I go up and the more offers I get, etc., etc.), but this is silly.

The stuff I'm getting asked about now is weirder and weirder. Some, just doesn't make sense for me (a warming pet blanket – I have no pets) and some are like “wha?” (gloves with multi-color LED fingers).

I agreed to test these mini Dino racer cars because at least I could use them as goody bag items (they were great, by the way). But more often than not recently, it's just stuff I would never use.

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And, I don't want to review stuff I wouldn't use because I would feel like a shill. Like those people who mooch slices of stuff at the deli counter and then just order a quarter pound of something else. Bleh.

Yet, I still feel some guilt about getting these offers and turning them down. I mean, it's flattering that sellers apparently value my reviews enough to want them on their products. And then I basically tell them to get lost (in the most courteous terms).

So, for me, the problem with being popular is that it's starting to feel like work. You know, that thing where you're asked to do a lot of stuff you'd really rather not do.

Oh well, my inner nerd won't let me stop trying to maximize my Amazon ranking (number one is so far away, still). So, I guess I'll have to live with the great burdens of popularity.