

New App Combats America's \$890 Billion E-Commerce Challenge and Loneliness Epidemic

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, January 20, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- When Yi Meng tried buying a gift for her newborn niece, she never expected the experience to inspire a company.

After sending link after link in a confusing family chat, losing track of which product everyone meant, and watching the joy drain out of what should have been a sweet moment, she realized the problem was bigger than a single purchase.

That experience eventually became [CoCarting](#), a collaborative shopping app that lets users create shared products list across more than 300 retailers. Friends and family can chat in one place, vote, give opinions, and make decisions together instead of guessing it alone.



The deeper issue behind CoCarting's creation is not just the chaos of long text threads. Nearly 40% of consumers return an online purchase every month, these endless send-backs break us. All adding [up to \\$890 billion in returns in 2024](#) and generating 9.5 billion pounds of waste in landfills in 2023 from the sent back products. Research shows that much of this comes from emotional shopping, impulse buying, and making choices in isolation.

The Loneliness Crisis Is Quietly Shaping How People Shop

According to the World Health Organization, one in six people worldwide experiences loneliness, and loneliness is associated with more than 871,000 deaths every year. Social connection has been shown to improve health outcomes and increase lifespan.

Loneliness fuels the urge to shop impulsively because people are looking for a momentary feeling of relief. Experts explain that shopping can feel like comfort in the moment, but real joy and peace cannot be added to a cart. Online shopping addiction is becoming increasingly common. It is linked to loneliness, emotional stress, constant instant gratification, and the anonymity of shopping alone. People often experience guilt, financial strain, hiding purchases, and conflict in relationships as a result.

How CoCarting Reduces Waste by Slowing Impulsive Buying

CoCarting naturally cuts down online shopping waste by slowing down the impulsive buying. When people shop alone, decisions are rushed and often emotional, leading to regret, returns, and unnecessary landfill waste.

By adding an item to a shared wishlist instead of buying immediately, shoppers pause, get feedback, and make clearer decisions. A quick comment from a trusted friend can prevent unnecessary purchases and reduce the cycle of changed minds.

Collaboration leads to more intentional buying, fewer returns, and less waste. CoCarting turns online shopping from an impulsive habit into a thoughtful, connected experience.

CoCarting Makes Shopping Collaborative, Connected, and Interactive

CoCarting changes the entire shopping experience by taking away the isolation. Instead of shopping alone and hoping for the best, people can invite their friends and family to help. They can talk about options, compare ideas, vote on choices, and take their time before clicking the buy button. The process naturally slows impulse buying and reduces emotional spending. It also turns shopping into something warm, social, and meaningful.

As Meng explains, "Shopping should bring people together. When you share a wishlist with someone, you begin to understand who they are. You see their interests, their hopes, and what matters to them. CoCarting is a safe social space built around everyday connection."

The wishlist app fits perfectly into modern life. Parents who are constantly juggling tasks use it to organize holiday shopping with family members. Friends planning birthdays or events use it to coordinate in one place. Couples use it to create shared lists for home projects or big purchases. Relatives use it to learn what their siblings, parents, or children actually want. Distance fades away when everyone is involved.

CoCarting wishlist app was started at the Ben Franklin Technology Accelerator innovation program, and the company started research with Penn State University, led by Professor Yim, to research collaborative shopping.

New Way Forward for Shopping and Connection

CoCarting is more than another [iOS](#) or Android app. It is a relationship builder, a safe social

platform, and a healthier way to shop. It creates happier buying decisions, reduces returns, cuts down on environmental waste, and strengthens friendships and family bonds. It brings people into each other's worlds in a natural, joyful way.

As Meng says, "Every shared wishlist is a window into someone you care about. CoCarting turns shopping into deep connections and overall well-being."

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