**A Message to Our Shareowners**

As we stated in our [1997 Letter to Shareholders](https://s2.q4cdn.com/299287126/files/doc_downloads/Shareholderletter97-(1).pdf), "A fundamental measure of our success will be the shareholder value we create over the long term." From the very beginning, our emphasis has been on the long term and as a result, we may make decisions and weigh tradeoffs differently than some other companies. Accordingly, it is important for you, our shareholders, to understand our fundamental management and decision-making approach so that you may ensure that it is consistent with your own investment philosophy. We will continue to:

* Focus relentlessly on our customers.
* Make bold investment decisions in light of long-term leadership considerations rather than short-term profitability considerations. There is more innovation ahead of us than behind us, and to that end, we are committed to extending our leadership in a way that benefits customers and therefore, inherently, investors -- you can't do one without the other. Some of these bold investments will pay off, others will not, but we will have learned a valuable lesson in either case.
* Focus on cash. When forced to choose between optimizing the appearance of our GAAP accounting and maximizing the present value of future cash flows, we'll take the cash flows.
* Work hard to spend wisely and maintain our lean culture. We understand the importance of continually reinforcing a cost-conscious culture.
* Focus on hiring and retaining versatile and talented employees, and weight their compensation to significant stock ownership rather than cash. We know our success will be largely affected by our ability to attract and retain a motivated employee base, each of whom must think like, and therefore must actually be, an owner.

We are firm believers that the long-term interests of shareholders are tightly linked to the interests of our customers. If we do our jobs right, today's customers will buy more tomorrow, we'll add more customers in the process, and it will all add up to more cash flow and more long-term value for our shareholders.

As Amazonians, we thank you, our owners, for your support, your encouragement, and for joining us on this adventure. If you're a customer, we thank you again!