

Costco's Early Extended Hours Have Made It Easier to Shop at Peak Times, According to a New Report

In June, Costco extended its hours at some stores for Executive members, adding an hour in the morning from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. on weekdays and Sundays and a half hour from 9 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. on Saturdays. By September, the perk applied to Executive members at all Costco stores.

Now, according to a new report released on Thursday from analytics company Placer.ai, the move has resulted in measurable effects in foot traffic for the wholesale giant, "likely improving the shopping experience for members overall" by creating "a more balanced flow of visitors."

Costco's earlier hours have shifted visits to earlier in the day while decreasing foot traffic during peak hours (which are typically weekday evenings from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., according to House Beautiful).

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"By extending special hours to Executive members, Costco not only rewards high-value customers, but also reduces congestion during traditional peaks," the report reads.

Costco's latest quarterly report, released in late May for the third quarter ending May 11, showed that sales momentum was strong for the company. Net sales increased 8% to \$61.96

billion, up from \$57.39 billion the previous year. The warehouse chain reports its fourth quarter earnings on Sept. 25.

An Executive membership at Costco costs \$130 per year. The Business and Gold Star memberships are each priced at \$65 annually.

Memberships are a prime revenue source for Costco, allowing the company to keep prices low by offsetting operating costs. Costco made about \$4.8 billion in membership sales during the 2024 fiscal year ending September 1, 2024, up from \$4.6 billion in 2023. In 2024, membership fees comprised close to 65% of Costco's overall \$7.4 billion net income for the year.

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The company had nearly 137 million cardholders in 2024, with a 90% renewal rate, per the company's 2024 annual report. Close to half of that count (47%) were Executive members.

Costco has 905 warehouses globally, including 624 in the U.S. and Puerto Rico, according to the quarterly report.

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