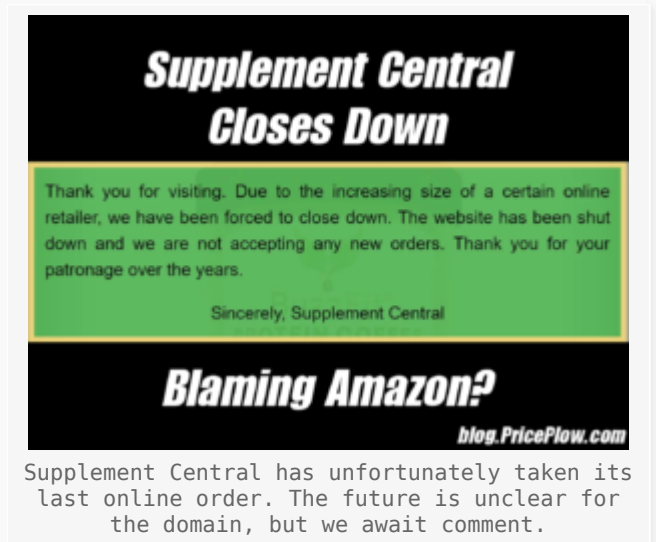


Supplement Central Shuts Down, Blames Current State of Retail?

written by Mike Roberto | April 23, 2018

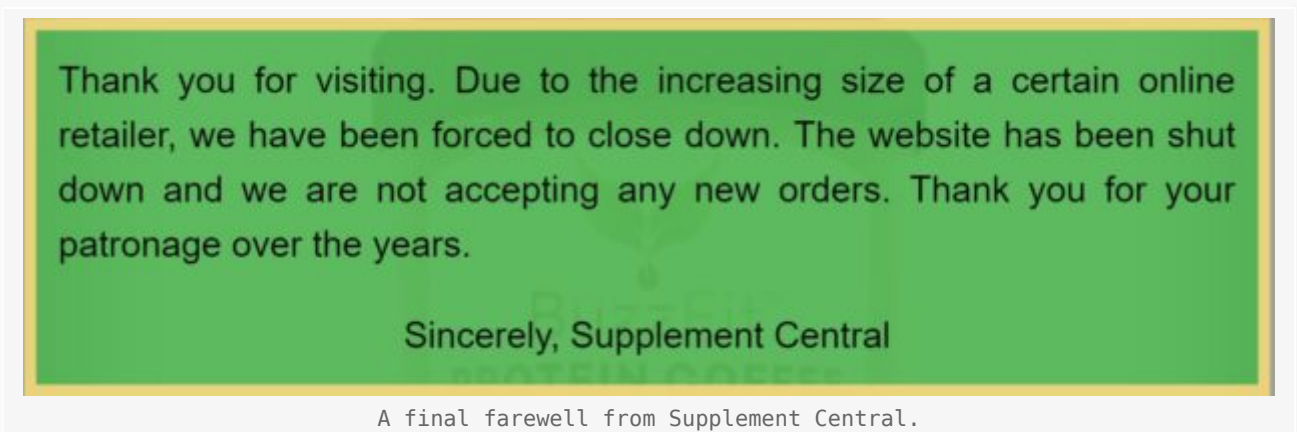
Is Supplement Central gone for good?



One of the larger online sports supplementation retailers has closed its doors for good. A favorite of many online supplement shoppers, **Supplement Central** held a major online presence over the years and it will no doubt be missed.

Unless you live in Pittsburgh, PA or Albany, NY, you may be unaware that the company has two physical retail locations. There is no word yet whether or not the two physical stores will be closing down as well.

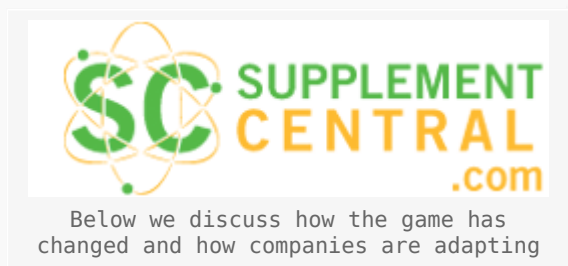
The store's website now has a pop-up message that informs customers it will not accept any new orders, stating it was "forced" to shut down due to other major online retailers.



Supplement Central offered fans international shipping and military shipping. With the likes of other major online supplement retailers offering frequent sales and heavy discounts, along with companies selling their products via

Amazon, there isn't much of a market left these days for the smaller guys.

A “certain online retailer”? Is Amazon to Blame?



The message above blames “*the increasing size of a certain online retailer*”, which leads us to believe they’re referring to **Amazon**.

We’ve been watching this coming for years, and Amazon is no longer the elephant in the room that nobody in the industry talks about – they are simply the “Death Star”, as industry consultant Joshua Schall often puts it.

Supplement Central’s shut down proves that. Who will be next?

As models change, where does this leave retailers?

Over the past few years, we’ve seen several brands change to various retail models, and one of them is the one-two punch of moving to *only* two channels: **Amazon** and **Direct to Consumer** (or D2C).

This leaves several retailers in a very sticky situation, as they’ve been cut out after years of price wars and me-too dropship distribution sites that have a tough time competing with Amazon’s Prime shipping and one-click patent. The price wars are made all the worse that they have to pay affiliates like PricePlow a sales commission.

Alternative models for retailers



Unfortunately, that leaves preferred retailers like Supplement Central out in

the cold. To adapt, retailers like **Suppz** have focused more heavily on unique content, **DPS Nutrition** and **Supplement Hunt** attack the coupons and deals harder than anyone else, and **Bodybuilding.com** is pushing for paid diet and training content to combat languishing sales. AI Supplements has taken on the BOGO throne that Bodybuilding left behind.

Meanwhile, **TigerFitness** has essentially become an MTS Nutrition house brand website + affiliate program (alongside other “YouTube brands” they manufacture), which is clearly working well for them, although many brands have been bailing out of their store seeing the writing on that wall. Similarly, some stores such as **Best Price Nutrition** and **MySupplementStore** have focused on selling items that Amazon *won't* list, such as Hi-Tech Pharmaceuticals and Blackstone Labs supplements.

Ghost and Vaxxen Labs: Two Unique Examples of Adaptation



Some brands, such as Vaxxen Labs have opted to keep their “mainstream” products on Amazon, while their hardcore products stay put on their own website. This allows them to hit two different angles with the model.

A more unique example is Ghost, who opt only to be sold on their website as well as at GNC, but *not* at Amazon. This helps them maintain total price control (with deals driven by their athletes’ *coupons*, one of which is **PRICEFLOW** – see below for a discussion on that) and far fewer headaches.



Meet the Chief Ghost, Dan Lourenco, who's given himself way fewer headaches with a one-two sales combo. GNC for IRL orders, his website for best deals online. Done and done.

Because of that, Dan and the team at Ghost have more time to have fun with content, unique products, and less infighting amongst retailers. If you want it in real life, you go to GNC, if you want it online, you go to [GhostLifestyle.com](https://www.ghostlifestyle.com).

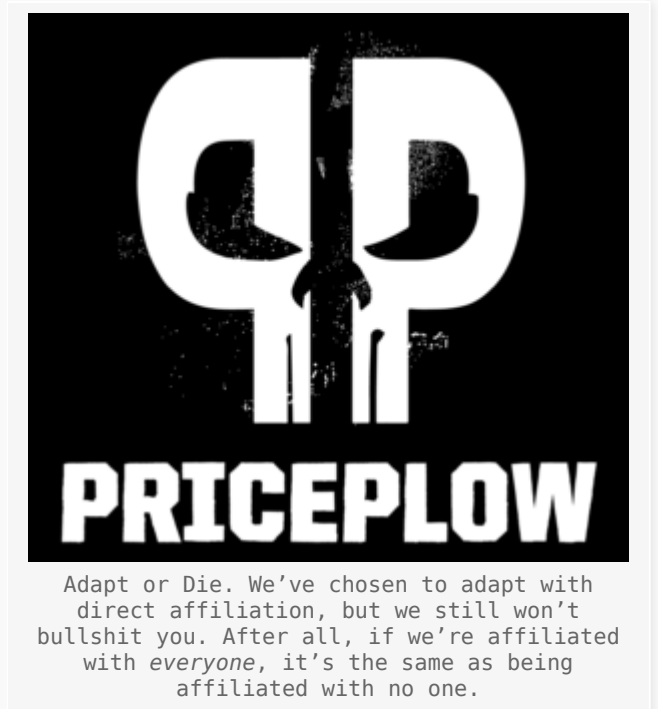
NutraBio goes against this grain

The one brand that's *not* following the above models is **NutraBio**, who is absolutely *everywhere* lately. In fact, they recently realized that you can get their ultra-clean, award-winning NutraBio 100% Whey Protein Isolate in over 3600 locations!!

Their tactic to keeping it real? Full disclosure and avoidance of distribution (along with a beast of a sales manager in yet another stud named Dan). More on their expansion later this week.

RedCon1 seems to be similarly hitting this (more news on *their* expansion coming soon too), but they definitely have a stronger focus on D2C. If you haven't noticed that, then you're clearly not on their newsletter!

PricePlow has been forced to adapt



Originally, we resisted the movement to direct-to-consumer at PricePLOW, because of the added technical headaches and fears of resentment from the community over bias.

However, with the direct-to-consumer model clearly the future, we've begun affiliating with more brands over time, leaving full disclosures in all of our price widgets. Consumers don't seem to care as long as we cite our sources, keep the reviews unbiased, and get them a good deal, and that's what we'll continue to do.

If you don't believe that, then you don't know how stubborn and committed CJ, Mike, and the growing team are about this. Plus, the blood tests don't lie!

In the changing world of online retail, "Adapt or Die" has never been a truer phrase, and we're very saddened to let you know that we lost one of our excellent retail partners this month.