

**BIZfact**

**\$41,500**

Average median wage for Long Island's 170 animal trainers

Source: New York State Department of Labor

**\$30M IN BILL WILL HELP BNL RENOVATE**

Brookhaven National Laboratory will use \$30 million in the federal spending bill signed into law Friday toward renovating a building for physicists to collect and process scientific data from Switzerland, Sen. Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) announced Friday.

The spending bill includes \$6 billion for the federal Office of Science, which also supports BNL's National Synchrotron Light Source II and the Relativistic Heavy Ion Collider.

Renovations to the old Light Source building on the lab's Upton campus, estimated at \$75 million, will add research space for computing and data storage.

Schumer said the building will serve as the U.S. hub for receiving, storing and processing data from the Large Hadron Collider in Switzerland.

The funding comes at a critical time for BNL, home to nearly 3,000 jobs. The lab reduced its workforce by 175 jobs last year through a voluntary buyout program.

Schumer called the new funding "a massive investment" that "will help BNL carry out critical projects that help put Long Island on the map as a global leader in research." He said the lab creates jobs through inventions that are commercialized by startup businesses.

BNL director Doon Gibbs said the spending bill "includes stable or increased funding across Brookhaven's programs and facilities. The bill is a strong vote of confidence in our science, energy, and national security mission areas."

Get business updates and sign up for the daily business newsletter.

newsday.com/biz

# SELLING on AMAZON

It pays for companies, but fees and competition require strategic choices



jherzlich@aol.com

Amazon is an undeniable powerhouse in online retail, representing more than 40 percent of all U.S. e-commerce sales, so for many companies it pays to have a presence there.

But access to the platform's potential to boost sales doesn't come without a price.

With growing competition from all sides, sellers have to be even more strategic about what they sell on Amazon and pay attention to some key changes for 2018 including an increase in third-party seller fees in certain categories, such as apparel.

Increases "could suggest Amazon feels empowered to raise rates as they grow their third-party seller business," says Simeon Siegel, a senior retail analyst with Manhattan-based Instinet LLC. "It could be a signal that Amazon may raise other product category rates going forward."

On the other hand, it could also be Amazon passing the higher costs of selling apparel online to customers, he explains, noting items like apparel have higher customer return rates. This is also true for the other categories impacted, which include accessories, shoes, handbags and sunglasses.

"They're more discretionary fashion-type purchases," Siegel says.

Among the increases, seller referral fees paid to Amazon for clothing and accessories are rising from 15 percent of the sale to 17 percent in April.

Conversely, in February referral fees for jewelry items sold above a price threshold of \$250 declined for one year, which may be an attempt by Amazon to attract more higher-end sellers in this category.

Amazon declined to comment on its fees.

Still, despite certain increases, generally speaking "there's more benefit to being



Kantian Skincare co-founders Richard, left, and Jon Klein know good product photography is critical. They use eight images on their product page, and Amazon recently allowed it to start using video.

**52%**  
**PERCENTAGE OF AMAZON** merchants who said their biggest fear was that Amazon would take away their seller privileges  
**SOURCE:** Feedvisor

on Amazon than not being on Amazon," says Sucharita Kodali, a vice president and principal analyst at Cambridge, Massachusetts-based Forrester Research.

But the marketplace is competitive and not just with other sellers, but with Amazon itself, which already has its

own house brand, AmazonBasics, and also owns other private label brands that don't bear its name.

Expansion of its private label brands is inevitable, Kodali says.

"They have a lot of data and a huge ecosystem of manufacturers who virtually make any type of product they want," she says.

That shouldn't stop entrepreneurs from selling on Amazon, but they must maximize the way they sell their products.

They should optimize keywords within their product listings so their items will appear in relevant searches, says Nicole

Larrauri, president of EGC Group, a marketing and digital services firm in Melville and Manhattan that launched a dedicated Amazon Marketing Services Division last year.

Beyond keywords, the Amazon ranking algorithm takes other factors into consideration such as total click-throughs (the number of times someone clicks on a business' Amazon product listing page), conversion rates (the percentage of people who looked at the product listing and then actually purchased the item), reviews, and how much you have sold, she says.

See AMAZON on A32

JOSEPH D. SULLIVAN