DoorDash to buy Instacart for $17bn

LEVEL B1



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I. WARM-UP

1. How often do you use delivery apps for food or groceries?
2. What makes a delivery arrive on time and in good condition?
3. Have you ever switched to a new app? Why?

II. KEY VOCABULARY

acquisition
the act of one company buying another company

brand
a name or identity that customers recognise

app
a software program on a phone or tablet

contractor
a worker who is paid but is not an employee

logistics
the planning and moving needed to deliver things

expertise
special knowledge or skill in a subject

partnership
an arrangement where two companies work together

market share
the percentage of sales a company has in a market

III. READING

DoorDash agreed a $17bn acquisition of Instacart to boost its grocery delivery business. DoorDash said the Instacart brand and app will remain, and Instacart shoppers can keep fulfilling orders. Instacart customers will also gain access to 50,000 additional stores covered by DoorDash.

Instacart, founded in 2012, specialises in grocery and convenience delivery in the US and Canada. Its 600,000 shoppers are independent contractors, and company filings say they completed 338m orders last year. Instacart is valued at $14bn.

DoorDash, launched in San Francisco in 2013, grew from restaurant delivery into pet food and electronics. It operates in 40 countries and handled more than 3bn orders last year using about 9m delivery workers. It is valued at $73bn and has expanded listings with Kroger and added delivery from Costco.

CEO Tony Xu said the deal would combine Instacart's grocery expertise with DoorDash's logistics. Market share figures show DoorDash has grown as Instacart has slipped, and some partnerships, such as Walmart delivery, may be affected.

Reading text adapted from reporting by **The Guardian***: "DoorDash to buy Instacart for $17bn in...". Original article linked at theenglishwire.com.*

IV. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What is DoorDash buying, and for how much?
2. What will happen to the Instacart brand and app?
3. How many Instacart shoppers are there, and what kind of workers are they?
4. Where does DoorDash operate, and how many orders did it handle last year?
5. Which partnership mentioned might be affected by the deal?

V. DISCUSSION

1. Is it good for customers when big delivery apps combine? Why?
2. Which features matter most in a grocery app for you?
3. Should delivery gig workers be employees or contractors? Why?
4. How might this deal change prices or speed for customers?

VI. GRAMMAR FOCUS

Reported speech

We report what someone said without quotation marks: reporting verb + that-clause. With a past reporting verb (said/showed), we usually move the tense one step back: will → would, can → could, present → past, past → past perfect. If something is still true, we can keep the tense.

> *"CEO Tony Xu said* **the deal would combine Instacart's grocery expertise**.*"*
>
> *"DoorDash said* **the Instacart brand and app would remain**.*"*

VII. GRAMMAR EXERCISE

Complete each sentence in reported speech: put the words in brackets one tense back.

1. DoorDash said shoppers (can keep) ___ fulfilling orders. _____
2. Company filings said they (completed) ___ 338m orders last year. _____
3. DoorDash said users (will gain) ___ access to more stores. _____
4. Figures showed DoorDash (has grown) ___ as Instacart slipped. _____
5. Figures showed Instacart (has slipped) ___ in share. _____

Teacher's Notes

TEACHERS ONLY

These notes are designed to help you get the most out of this lesson. Please do not share this page with students.



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I. LESSON GUIDE

- Timing: 8–10 minutes warm-up, 10 minutes vocabulary, 12–15 minutes reading and comprehension together, 8–10 minutes grammar, 10–12 minutes discussion.
- Pre-teach key figures and names: $17bn, 50,000 stores, 338m vs 3bn orders, Instacart, DoorDash, Tony Xu, Walmart, Kroger, Costco.
- For reading, set a skim for what is being bought and why, then a second read for numbers and places; pair-check answers before a brief whole-class review.
- Differentiation: stronger students write a three-sentence summary of the deal; others match vocabulary to definitions first, then reread to find each term in context.

II. DISCUSSION FACILITATION TIPS

1. Start with a quick poll, then pair students with different views to exchange reasons and examples.
2. Board example features (price, speed, accuracy, selection) and ask students to rank their top three.
3. Set mini-debates in pairs; prompt students to define employee vs contractor and give one effect.
4. Elicit predictions first, then ask for one risk and one benefit, pushing for clear cause–effect links.

III. EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Debate: In teams, write and deliver a 90-second argument for or against the acquisition's benefits to customers.

Writing: In pairs, draft a 70-word message Instacart could send to users explaining what will and will not change.

IV. ANSWER KEY OVERVIEW

Comprehension questions: short factual answers from the text.

Grammar exercise: Reported speech

Discussion: open-ended. Accept any reasonable ideas supported by examples and reasoning.

Answer Key

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IV. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What is DoorDash buying, and for how much?
   Instacart, for $17bn.
2. What will happen to the Instacart brand and app?
   They will remain, and shoppers can keep fulfilling orders.
3. How many Instacart shoppers are there, and what kind of workers are they?
   About 600,000, and they are independent contractors.
4. Where does DoorDash operate, and how many orders did it handle last year?
   In 40 countries, and more than 3bn orders last year.
5. Which partnership mentioned might be affected by the deal?
   Walmart delivery.

V. DISCUSSION

Open answers. Accept any reasonable ideas supported by examples and reasoning.

VI. GRAMMAR FOCUS

Key point: We report what someone said without quotation marks: reporting verb + that-clause. With a past reporting verb (said/showed), we usually move the tense one step back: will → would, can → could, present → past, past → past perfect. If something is still true, we can keep the tense. (Example 2 constructed.)

> *"CEO Tony Xu said* **the deal would combine Instacart's grocery expertise**.*"*
>
> *"DoorDash said* **the Instacart brand and app would remain**.*"*

VII. GRAMMAR EXERCISE

Complete each sentence in reported speech: put the words in brackets one tense back.

1. DoorDash said shoppers ___ fulfilling orders. **could keep**
2. Company filings said they ___ 338m orders last year. **had completed**
3. DoorDash said users ___ access to more stores. **would gain**
4. Figures showed DoorDash ___ as Instacart slipped. **had grown**
5. Figures showed Instacart ___ in share. **had slipped**