

Shopping Online Saves More than Just Time: Many Consumers Are Now Shopping Online to Save Gas

Many shoppers are avoiding high fuel prices by shopping online. By offering flat rate and free shipping promotions, Internet retailers now have a new competitive advantage over some traditional retail establishments, especially in less urban areas.

Starkville, Mississippi (PRWEB) May 11, 2006 -- Many Internet users enjoy the convenience of shopping online. A few clicks and a credit card can transform an ordinary online experience into something tangible – a new book, clothing, home furnishings or even a vacation.

Some Internet insiders feel that recent increases in the price of gasoline will trigger additional online shopping. Many shoppers now factor in the cost of gas in deciding whether to shop locally or online, says Mike Allen, founder and president of Shopping-Bargains.com, an Internet mall featuring coupons and discounts for more than 1,000 stores. “With \$3 gas and SUVs, a round trip to the closest mall can end up costing \$8 or \$9. That’s more than many online stores charge to ship your entire order to your front door.” This is especially true for those online retailers offering free and flat rate shipping, Allen says.

A recent study by Forrester Research suggests that U.S. online sales will exceed \$200 billion in 2006. For the past decade, online sales have experienced rapid growth annually due to many factors including convenience, product availability, fast Internet access and security improvements.

A major growth factor has also been cost savings, according to Allen. For many consumers, especially those in less urban areas, only one or two local stores carry a given product. Online, however, hundreds of retailers are selling the same product. Because the competition online is so intense, retailers are frequently forced to lower their prices and offer coupons to gain a competitive advantage. “The bottom line is that consumers tend to get lower prices online,” says Allen.

So in spite of higher gas prices, savvy consumers are adapting their shopping strategies and finding ways to stretch their budgets. Could the trend for more online shopping actually reduce U.S. gasoline consumption and lead to lower prices at the pump? Many consumers hope so.

About Shopping-Bargains.com, LLC:

Since 1999, [Shopping-Bargains.com](http://www.shopping-bargains.com) has helped consumers save money online with coupons (coupon codes), [free shipping discounts](#) and bargains for more than 1,000 online stores. Shopping-Bargains.com, a free service for consumers, is updated daily and available online at [email newsletters](#).

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