

Consumer Corner

Point And Click To The Perfect Holiday Gift

(NAPSA)—As concerns over the economy and gas prices rise, many consumers are holding on to their wallets and turning their sights toward online shopping. With online sites providing some of the best deals around—plus the benefit of letting you shop without driving to the store—this holiday season is the perfect time to embrace online shopping.

So you won't get overwhelmed by the number of sites offering gifts for everyone on your list, here are some tips to help you make smart purchasing decisions:

Pick The Right Web Site

- *The more product information, the better*—The options within any given category, such as “digital cameras,” can be overwhelming, and sites offering specs and images are standard, so look for more. What about customer reviews? Tools that let you compare products simultaneously? One innovative online retailer, Buy.com, also offers tens of thousands of streaming video reviews, and even direct links to competitive sites selling the same product, possibly at a lower price.

- *Get familiar with security practices*—The last thing you want to deal with during the holidays is online fraud. Wherever you buy, look for the lock logo at the bottom of the screen when placing an order. Reputable online retailers have taken additional steps by teaming with trusted third parties such as PayPal, Google Checkout and eBillme to ensure the security and protection of your order and financial information.

- *Don't spend all your money on shipping*—Saving gas money



Focusing on digital cameras? Look for customer reviews and tools that let you compare products simultaneously.

by shopping online may end up being a letdown if shipping costs just as much as the product. Look for special “free shipping” symbols throughout online retailers’ sites (just keep in mind that this option may not be available with all delivery time frames).

Pick The Perfect Gift

- *Know what's hot*—This season's popular gifts will include video games, notebook computers, toys, watches and jewelry. If you're gifting anything within these categories, place your order as early as possible—and check out sites such as Buy.com, which offers a robust marketplace of other retailers selling the same product in case they run out of stock.

- *Ask and you shall receive*—If some people on your list are particularly hard to shop for, ask them to set up a wish list registry.

From the holidays to Mother's Day and more, the Internet offers deals that are great for saving money year-round. To learn more, visit www.buy.com.