

Holiday Shopping Tips

Getting The Most Out Of Bargain Shopping Sites

(NAPSA)—When it comes to shopping on the Internet, it's wise to know the territory.

In some ways, shopping for bargains online can be much like going to an old-fashioned “bricks and mortar” outlet store. Serious bargain hunters knew what kind of merchandise each store handled, when the stores got their best merchandise and what kind of items usually moved the quickest.

The same can be true when shopping online—particularly, since there are online retailers that operate much like outlet stores. The site called Overstock.com, for instance, sells both mass-market and designer merchandise in more than 130 categories, from high-fashion wristwatches to quality home furnishings to consumer electronics.

Even with that wide selection, however, there are tricks to getting the most out of the shopping experience. According to the company's CEO, Patrick Byrne, shoppers need to strike while the iron—and the bargain—is hot.

To get in on the best deals, Byrne says that on average, once a bargain is posted on the Web site, it lasts anywhere from 25 to 35 days. He does admit there are many items that sell out fast. The categories that tend to sell the fastest are home furnishings, apparel, shoes and jewelry.

Byrne suggests a three-pronged scouting strategy. First, he advises, shoppers should search the Web site weekly, since the best bargains



Some of the tricks savvy shoppers use at outlet stores may help them get the most out of shopping at online bargain sites.

disappear quickly.

Shoppers can check the Web site menu that lists “New Items Within 7 Days.” For instance, the results of one recent search included items in 28 categories, including a high-definition TV and a Vera Wang cashmere sleeveless sweater for \$170.

Second, try a natural language search. Shoppers using a search phrase like “blue blazer for under \$100” will find just what they are looking for.

Third, Byrne suggests searching by brand within categories where it makes the most sense, such as apparel and electronics. He adds that hundreds of designer brands are updated daily.

To learn more, visit the Web site at www.overstock.com.