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Internet Ideas

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Choosing An Internet Service Provider

(NAPSA)—With more than 100 million Americans regularly using the Internet, the choice of an Internet Service Provider (ISP) has become as important as such other basic utilities as telephone or cable TV service.

Just a few years ago, the market was crowded with ISPs. Recently, a few providers have emerged as leaders in both service and cost, displacing those ISPs with expensive fees, low connectivity rates and poor customer support.

According to *Consumer Reports*, 32 percent of Internet users polled cited low monthly cost as the most important factor in choosing an ISP. At only \$8.95 a month, Kmart's BlueLight Unlimited Internet Service, downloadable at www.bluelight.com, is the lowest-cost unlimited service in the country. Compared to AOL (\$23.90/month) or AT&T Worldnet (\$21.95) the savings can be significant.

According to the same survey, 35 percent of respondents switched ISPs because of troublesome phone connections that were often interrupted or had busy signals. When selecting an ISP, users should look to see how many local access num-



bers it has in their area. The more numbers, the easier it is to get online without a busy signal or disconnect. Studies show that BlueLight has the most local dial-up numbers of any of the leading Internet Service Providers—including access in areas its competition doesn't even reach. Currently, BlueLight has more than twice as many access numbers as AOL.

The important thing to keep in mind when choosing an ISP is that you shouldn't pay to be frustrated. Low monthly fees, quick connectivity and numerous local access numbers are must-haves in today's market. Choose your ISP based on those factors and you can be rewarded with smooth surfing.