

Web Savvy Searching

Kris Kringle's Comparison Shopping Tips

(NAPSA)—Whether your gift list feels as long as Santa's or you are just short on time or ideas, some savvy online product search sites can take the stress out of holiday shopping.

Santa has been an early adopter of technology for years—after all, he's already mastered traveling around the world in 24 hours—so it's likely he's already using the power of the Internet to make his shopping faster and stretch his dollars further. With new and improved shopping tools available just in time for the hectic holiday season, this year should be even easier for Santa and his helpers.

One of the most powerful and impressive aspects of shopping online is the ability to find exactly what you want, compare prices, features and merchants quickly and easily. The Internet is not limited to the stores in the shopping mall near you and encompasses all of the familiar major brands as well as hundreds of thousands of independent retailers that may have the more hard-to-find products you are looking for.

How do you find the exact toy truck your nephew wants quickly? Visit a Web site with product search capabilities. Many product search sites today are dedicated to helping you find the products and product information you need.

For example, Yahoo!, one of the original and most popular search sites, has now introduced a special product search (<http://search.yahoo.com/products>) where you can compare prices and products across a vast majority of merchants online.



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But once you've found the item you want, how can you be sure that you're getting the best price from a trusted merchant? Through Yahoo!'s Product Search, you can find specific product information, pricing, expert product reviews, consumer reviews and merchant ratings. Unbiased expert and consumer reviews are particularly helpful because they come from trusted sources like *Consumer Reports* and *PC World* as well as from fellow shoppers, providing valuable information about critical factors like customer service and product fulfillment.

Lastly, a quick money saving tip: The earlier you place your orders, the less likely you are to incur last minute shipping costs—which can add up. Try to complete the majority of your online shopping by December 9, for the best deals. But remember, if you find yourself in a panic on December 22—there are a myriad of merchants who can deliver gifts by the 24th, for a small price of course.