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6 Great Online Christmas Shopping Tips

By Rosie Fletcher

Christmas shopping is no longer confined to the local mall or an annual catalog that happens to find its way into your mailbox. Thanks to advanced technology, there is literally a whole world of shopping at your fingertips. The internet has revolutionized the way people shop and, besides, what better way to do your Christmas shopping than from the comfort of your own home. No longer must we suit up and weather the harsh winter days in the hopes of checking a few names off of our Christmas list. The store aisles, as we know them, are crowded and hectic.

But now, many store aisles are becoming virtual, a shopping cart is something you fill with images of a product and a checkout is something that you click on to confirm your order. Things have changed a lot in the past years and I wonder how many of us couldn't even imagine what life would be like without the convenience of shopping on the internet. There are several tips for online Christmas shopping, which can make the experience a smooth and pleasant one.

Online Christmas Shopping Tip #1: Be prepared

It's a good idea to start your shopping with a complete list. This will save you both time and money with having to go back and place a separate order later on. With most online stores, you pay a flat shipping fee. In some cases, if you spend a certain amount of money on your order, the shipping and handling fee is waived. It's always best to get everything you want, all at once, to save on shipping. Before you commit to buying from one store, shop around and compare prices on both the product and shipping.

Online Christmas Shopping Tip #2: The early bird gets the gift

If you want to get the best selection, begin your holiday shopping early. Internet stores generally carry large quantities of every item, but even they can sell out. As Christmas draws near, it becomes more difficult to find the exact item that you're looking for. There's nothing like finding the perfect item and seeing the words, 'Sold Out' written under the price.

Online Christmas Shopping Tip #3: Shop Safe

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When ordering anything online, check product reviews if available. Always shop secured websites because you will be entering your credit card, or banking information, for payment. You don't want your financial information accessed by anyone else, which is why all secured websites let you know how they protect your data.

Online Christmas Shopping Tip #4: Wrap it up

If you're like most, there's not a lot of extra time around the holidays. If you need to save some time on wrapping, most online stores offer a gift wrapping service for a small fee. At some point during the ordering process, you may be asked if you would like to add gift wrap or a name tag. It's as easy as the click of a button, which is much easier than trying to tie the perfect bow.

Online Christmas Shopping Tip #5: Check Delivery Dates

When placing your order, check to make sure that the item is in stock or will be delivered in time for Christmas. Many times, especially near the holidays, items will go on a backorder status. It's not uncommon for an advanced order item to have a delivery date of January, so be sure to check the status of the items in your shopping cart, along with their expected delivery dates. Not only that, but it's also a good idea to check on the company's shipping policy and delivery time for in-stock items.

Online Christmas Shopping Tip #6: Christmas Cards?

With all the stuff going on in December it's easy to forget to send out Christmas cards to family and friends. But if you forget to send traditional Christmas cards in time all is not lost. In fact, there are some great sites and services online that will send your christmas cards out for you (saving you precious time). You can find services that are both free and paid, and services that send both digital and tradition paper Christmas cards.

For some great Christmas card related resources check out

<http://cards.christmashub.com>

Christmas shopping online might or might not be for everyone. This article shows how doing it online, enhances your overall Christmas experience!

By Ebe Heng

Christmas shopping online is not for you? If you are one of those that share this thought, you probably like to enjoy the atmosphere of physical shopping. Doing your Christmas shopping online despite all its convenience, lack the festive mood. The convenience of online shopping has reduced the shopping experience to a browse and click mode, no mood and very little atmosphere.

So, you might think that despite the staggering numbers that shows how many people are actually

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doing their Christmas shopping online, they are just a minority out of the entire Christmas shopping population. Well, while I do not have the statistics to back this up -this thinking is likely to be true

To ascertain the fact that the Christmas shopping online folks are really a sub-set of the Christmas shopping crowd, just visit Marcy's, Barnes and Noble or one of the large departmental stores during the pre-Christmas period, and the crowd you see would highlight the fact that a very large proportion of shoppers are still doing their shopping offline.

And of course, it is this crowd that give rise to the Christmassy feelings. Never mind that you have to wait an hour to find a parking lot or half an hour to pay for your purchases, this feeling enhanced by the jingles that flood the stores is something that doing your Christmas shopping online would never be able to offer.

Having said so much about the value of shopping physically, are there any merits to doing your Christmas shopping online? Yes, from my own experience there are at least two major contributions that doing your Christmas shopping online can provide.

First, Christmas shopping online eliminates the hassle of browsing and deciding at absolutely ground zero on the spot. Imagine you are doing shopping with only a vague idea of what to buy for whom and your only reference is some scribbling on a post-it note.

Enter online Christmas shopping, and you are able to browse online and zero in on the category of items that you would like to get for your love ones. One of the biggest value of Internet is it allows you to conduct your research and craft a comprehensive list of items that you would like to get for your love ones. So that, when you are doing it physically, all you have to do is to choose from the different brands and decide on the ones that have the best value. Thus, saving time and allowing you to buy for more people in lesser trips.

The other contribution of online Christmas shopping is that it is able to take care of your 'bulk purchases'. What I mean is during this festive season of giving and sharing, there would be lots of gifts exchange, and gifts giving to acquaintances.

So, for this group of people, you would probably be getting something that is nice but would not invest

too much thought into it, and then you would buy plenty of it to last through the season. Doing your Christmas shopping for these folks online frees out more time for you during those shopping mall trips to choose something special for your love ones. It also takes care of the inconvenience of bringing a lot of stuff yourself (online shopping would have the purchase deliver right to your door steps).

There you have it! Online Christmas shopping allows you to do a thorough research on the gifts to get for your love ones and it also gives you more time in physically shopping for those gifts by allowing you to buy the generic stuff online. So, using technology allows you to enjoy the magic feeling of shopping under the thick Christmas atmosphere provides by shopping malls with lesser things on your mind to worry about.

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Having said all these, I hope you folks would integrate (what a word!) online shopping to brighten your overall Christmas shopping experience and enhances the joy and magic buying for those special ones...

Merry Christmas!

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Ebe is the editor of

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, which provides quality Christmas related links

and articles to better the joyous occasion. He reviews and ensures all contributions lead to a fun and easy online shopping experience for Christmas gifts

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Christmas shopping online might or might not be for everyone. This article shows how doing it online, enhances your overall Christmas experience!

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