

Seal those gifts with the best deal

SHOPPING TIPS

Sites like GiftFind helps shoppers find name-brand products

Camilla Cornell

Jason Brown has been building websites for businesses since he was 16 years old. But October of this year marked his most ambitious project. As founder and CEO of GiftFind.ca, the 26-year-old unleashed his comprehensive price comparison site just in time for the busy holiday shopping season.

"I shop online a lot," says Brown. "But it can be a big headache. Many retailers sell the same products and it can take you hours and hours to find what you're looking for at the cheapest price."

Brown launched GiftFind.ca to fill a perceived hole in the

Canadian market by helping consumers locate name-brand products at the lowest possible cost. "I felt there wasn't anyone in the marketplace doing a good job at aggregating all the really good e-commerce sites and making the experience easy for Canadians," he says.

His website features more than 300 million products from 500-plus retailers such as Amazon, Best Buy, Home Depot and Walmart. "Every big name in shopping is represented," says Brown. GiftFind.ca doesn't sell any products, but rather directs users to the stores with the lowest prices selling the items they're seeking.

Shoppers can check out the site's product and video reviews to narrow down shopping choices.

And if you're stuck on what to get a niece or nephew for a milestone birthday, you can type '21st birthday gifts' into the tool bar to get ideas. (Potential GiftFind options included a T-shirt emblazoned 'Made in 1994' and the Big Bad Ass Book of Shots.) "We have colour and price filters

as well, so you can customize your search," says Brown.

Brown expects a GiftFind mobile app to be released soon as well, but in the interim, he says, you can access the website on your smartphone if you want to make sure the deal you've found in a bricks-and-mortar store stacks up with the lowest prices online.

GiftFind is the newest shopping comparison site, but it certainly isn't the only one available in Canada. ShopBot.ca has been a player in the market since 2004 and offers a full range of shopping categories from computers to wine and gifts, as well as a collection of products and stores you may not find on other price comparison sites. It too directs you to the retailer with the lowest price. And fully two-thirds of its retailers are Canadian.

In addition, ShoptoIt.ca, launched in 2005, boasts a comprehensive selection of stores and products and Pricegrabber.ca and PriceFinder.ca both offer a product selection more heavily weighted on the side of electronics.



As you rush to get that holiday shopping done, there are tools out there to help you find the best price online. ISTOCK

Holiday helpers

Getting ready for the holidays can be stressful! Keeping track of gifts, planning get togethers, while staying on budget, is challenging. Here are a few apps to make the holidays go a little smoother.

Ink Cards - Free
iOS, Android

Turn smartphone photos into colourful greeting cards. Choose a theme, add a photo then email your holiday card to family and friends. You can also get Ink Cards



to professionally print and mail your card for you.

The Christmas List - \$1.99
iOS

Create a gift budget for multiple people then stick to it with this handy app. You can arrange your shopping list by stores or send your list to others if you're shar-

ing gift-giving duties.

Big Oven - Free
iOS, Android, Windows Phone

With more than 250 thousand recipes, you'll never run out of ideas for the holidays. This app also helps you prepare grocery lists, schedule your meals and comes up with ideas on what to do with the leftovers.

Sing Along Christmas Carols - Free
iOS

Learn the words to all your favourite holiday songs. This Karaoke-style app is perfect for Christmas carolling or teaching your kids new holiday songs. MIKE YAWNEY

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