

Web shopping clicks into place

For traditional stores, online shopping has become a cause for concern in a difficult retail environment. The Internet is accounting for more spending than ever. In addition, it also makes it easier for consumers to compare prices across a far bigger selection of items than a trip to the high street.

“The way the Internet encourages people to shop around is having a big impact on the market,” says Neil Brown of Verdict research, a consultancy. Internet retailers have been able to offer cut-throat prices because they do not have to bear the cost of running a physical shop.

Price-comparison websites such as Kelkoo, where a shopper can compare prices on any product from DVDs to Prada perfume to get the best deal, make the market even more competitive. “It is a lot more competitive online because you are always just one click away from a rival,” says a CEO.

Retailers selling electrical goods have been particularly hit by the Internet, as items such as televisions and DVD players become more common purchases. This creates a dilemma for retailers who sell products both online and in shops.

Some bricks-and-mortar retailers are adopting a model of dual pricing in order to keep their position online while maintaining margins in their shops. Mr Gladdings says dual pricing will become harder to practice as consumers become better at surfing the Internet.

To be successful in operating in the online and offline world, retailers should probably try to integrate the two as much as possible. Some businesses, for example, have set up their operation to allow customers to shop online, over the telephone or in stores.



Ex.1 Complete these collocations from the text with the words listed in the box:

concern, cost, deal, goods, impact, Internet, margins, online, prices (x2), pricing, purchase, shop, shopping, street,

1. online _____
2. cause for _____
3. to compare _____
4. the high _____
5. to have an _____
6. cut-throat _____
7. to bear the _____
8. to run a _____
9. to get the best _____
10. electrical _____
11. common _____
12. dual _____
13. to maintain _____
14. to surf the _____
15. to shop _____

Ex. 2 Find words in the text which mean the following:

1. detaliczny: _____
2. wydatki: _____
3. wybór: _____
4. wpływ: _____
5. konkurencyjny: _____
6. konkurent: _____
7. powszechny: _____
8. zakup: _____
9. marża: _____
10. założyć: _____

Phrasals, phrasals...

The way the Internet encourages people to shop around is having a big impact on the market. *This sentence from the text contains an interesting phrasal verb: "shop around", which means "rozglądać się, porównywać". Here are some other examples of sentences with this verb:*

- The following are five other things to look for when shopping around.
- I'm shopping around for a new winter coat.
- I think Sue's shopping around for a new boyfriend.

What does it mean...?

In addition, it also makes it easier for consumers to compare prices across a far bigger selection of items than a trip to the high street.

The underlined part of this sentence is an idiom. When we say in English "high street" we may mean either the main street in a town or city, with a lot of businesses (=firms) along it, or the business (=interes) done on a high street. Let's have a look at a few more examples:

- In Switzerland, banks are everywhere , not just in the main financial centres , but up and down every high street.
- The high street is now going through a difficult time.
- Sales in the high street continue to fall.
- The approaching Christmas season boosted the high street.

Grammar corner...

Let's study a few fragments of the reading text:

- The Internet is accounting for more spending than ever
- it also makes it easier for consumers to compare prices
- make the market even more competitive

- dual pricing will become harder to practice as consumers become better at surfing the Internet

All of them contain the same grammar structure – the comparative of adjectives (stopień wyższy przymiotnika). How do we form it? Adding the ending “-er” to short adjectives (small – smaller) or the word “more” to the long ones (intelligent – more intelligent). We have to remember that words ending in “y” will change it to “i” in their comparative form (healthy – healthier), and one-syllable words will double the last letter (big – bigger).

Ex. 3 Change the form of these adjectives, remembering about the rules above:

1. careful _____
2. dirty _____
3. famous _____
4. fast _____
5. fat _____
6. funny _____
7. great _____
8. happy _____
9. hard _____
10. hot _____
11. important _____
12. lazy _____
13. mad _____
14. necessary _____
15. nice _____
16. sad _____
17. silly _____
18. soft _____
19. suitable _____
20. wet _____

GLOSSARY	
cause	przyczyna, powód
concern	troska, zainteresowanie
retail	detaliczny
environment	środowisko
to account for	stanowić część czegoś
spending	wydatki
to compare	porównać
selection	wybór
item	sztuka, rzecz
to encourage	zachęcać
impact	wpływ
consultancy	firma konsultingowa
retailer	detalista
cut-throat	tu: bardzo niskie
to bear the cost	ponosić koszt
to run (a shop)	prowadzić
the best deal	tu: najlepsza oferta
competitive	konkurencyjny
one click away	o klik od, w odległości kliknięcia
rival	konkurent
CEO (= Chief Executive Officer)	Prezes firmy
to be hit by sth	doświadczyć jakiegoś problem
common	powszechny
purchase	zakup
bricks-and-mortar	określenie tradycyjnych sklepów w przeciwieństwie do tych prowadzonych jedynie online
dual pricing	podwójny cennik
to maintain	utrzymywać
margin	marża
to integrate	zintegrować
to set up	założyć, ustanowić

ANSWER KEY:

Ex.1

1. online shopping
2. cause for concern
3. to compare prices
4. the high street
5. to have an impact
6. cut-throat prices
7. to bear the cost
8. to run a shop
9. to get the best deal
10. electrical goods
11. common purchase
12. dual pricing
13. to maintain margins
14. to surf the Internet
15. to shop online

Ex. 2

1. retail
2. spending
3. selection
4. impact
5. competitive
6. rival
7. common
8. purchase
9. margin
10. to set up

Ex. 3

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| 1. more careful | 11. more important |
| 2. dirtier | 12. lazier |
| 3. more famous | 13. madder |
| 4. faster | 14. more necessary |
| 5. fatter | 15. nicer |
| 6. funnier | 16. sadder |
| 7. greater | 17. sillier |
| 8. happier | 18. softer |
| 9. harder | 19. more suitable |
| 10. hotter | 20. wetter |