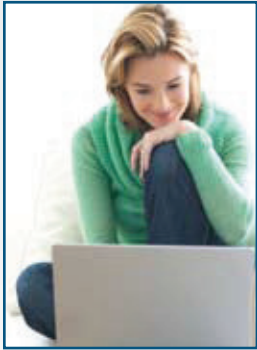




Internet Deals:

Using Social Media to Score Bargains



Discount deal websites use the concept of group buying to secure reductions of 50% or more on services, classes, retail and fine dining from businesses within the cities they serve. The hitch is that in order to get the discount, a certain number of people must select it within a short time frame, usually

a day or two. Once the offer reaches the minimum number of purchases, everyone who bought it gets the deal. However, if it doesn't attract the interest of enough people, no one receives it.

The purpose of group-buying websites is twofold—to **boost the customer base of local businesses** while offering cash-strapped consumers an opportunity to pounce on **premium services at a major discount**.

With the growing popularity of online shopping, it's never been easier to get big discounts on the items you buy, activities you enjoy and vacations to top destinations. Just sign up with a group-buying website and receive new deals every day through your email or mobile device.

57% of online adults visit daily deal or group-buying sites at least once a month.

Source: RetailMeNot.com/Harris Interactive

Types of Deals

Services: Get the best deals in town from local movers, decorators, landscapers and plumbers.

Sample Deal: An inspection and pest-control service for \$69, a savings of 52%.

Entertainment: Treat the family to a fun weekend with discounts on movie tickets, dinner theater and theme parks.

Travel: Some sites offer bargain prices on trips to places like Costa Rica and Mexico as well as romantic getaway weekends.

Sample Deal: A 4-night family getaway to Cabo San Lucas, Mexico for \$1200, a savings of 50%.

Shopping and Luxury: Most group-buying sites are full of deals on high-end goods and salon and spa services.

Recreation: Try kayaking, yoga, climbing, golf or skiing at less than half the regular cost.

Sample Deal: A golf package for \$65, a savings of 58%.



Yipit.com features deals from group-buying sites in 32 cities in the U.S. and Canada on one website.

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“Like” to Save 

The popularity of Facebook and Twitter has driven a variety of brands and retailers to the Web. Many companies offer special deals and discounts to people who “Like” them on Facebook or follow them on Twitter. In fact, more than 40% of consumers follow brands on social media platforms in order to receive discounts and promotions. Fans can also get free samples, the inside scoop on the latest products and services, and submit valuable feedback to the company.

Source: Social Media Today, January 11, 2011

Sample Deals:

- Brita offered its followers on Facebook a \$1 off coupon for a new Brita Bottle that filters tap water.
- The Body Shop announces online deals to its fans on Facebook, including additional discounts on current sales.
- Walmart uses Facebook to highlight major deals in their stores.

Like Comment Share

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Use Customer Ratings to Your Advantage

4 Stars 
 3 Stars 
 2 Stars 

Online consumer reviews have become a popular tool for customers trying to find products that fit their needs. Consumers trust product reviews more than television, magazine and radio advertisements.

Source: Nielsen Online Global Consumer Study April 2007

- ★★★★ **Look for items that have more than 100 ratings.** The more people who review the product, the more reliable the data.
- ★★★ **Read the most recent ratings.** Many companies release newer versions of their products, so reviews that are older than 6 months maybe out-of-date.
- ★★ **Give reviews.** Whether you loved or loathed a product, your experience with it can be valuable to others.

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Landing Bargains the Traditional Way

Many websites, including **coupons.com**, offer coupons for the goods and services you use every day. Think of these sites as the greener, online version of the coupons you get in the Sunday newspaper or your mailbox.



Consumers saved **\$3.7 billion** with coupons in 2010.
 Source: Valassis

CouponMom.com

the easiest way to save 

Couponmom.com has links to coupons at major grocery and drug store chains as well as links to discounts at major restaurants. The website also maintains a list of free samples and other special offers from a variety of businesses. While coupons for online stores are available, couponmom.com also offers printable coupons for use at traditional retail outlets. Additionally, participating retailers can scan your coupon from your iPhone.

The number of digital coupon offers increased **37%** in 2010.
 Source: Valassis

