

## Online Buyers Use Many Channels

November 11, 2008

### Amazon, eBay and MySimon all have their fans.

Some online buyers in the US like to make their purchases direct from fixed-price third-party sites such as Amazon. Others like auction sites such as eBay or comparison shopping sites such as MySimon.

However, no one platform dominates when it comes to online buying preferences, judging by a September 2008 study by Piper Jaffray. Respondents preferred fixed-price third-party sales most, followed by going directly to a retailer's Website, then search, auction and comparison sites. Because of the even spread of platform preferences, Piper Jaffray said offering products through multiple channels was key for online retail success.

Jeffrey Grau, senior analyst at eMarketer, said third-party fixed-price sites were popular because they were one-stop shopping destinations that offer a broad selection of products at competitive prices from many sellers.

#### Online Retail Platforms Preferred by US Online Buyers, September 2008 (% of respondents)



Source: Piper Jaffray, "September 2008 eCommerce Survey" as cited in "The Turbulent Teen Years of eCommerce," October 2008

099334

www.eMarketer.com

"Comparison shopping sites, like Shopping.com and Shopzilla, are gaining popularity because they also offer broad selection and competitive prices," Mr. Grau added. "However, purchases cannot be made on these sites. Instead shoppers are redirected to a retailer's Website."

Online is expected to be one of the few bright spots for retail this holiday

season. eMarketer predicts that 2008 holiday retail e-commerce sales will grow 10.1% compared with 2007. In contrast, overall retail sales are predicted to grow anywhere from a mere 0.5% ([Archstone Consulting, September 2008](#)) to 3.0% ([Deloitte, September 2008](#)), depending on who's counting.

#### Comparative Estimates: US Holiday Season Retail Sales Growth, 2008 (% change\*)

Archstone Consulting**, September 2008	0.5%-1.0%
Deloitte, September 2008	2.5%-3.0%
National Retail Federation (NRF), September 2008	2.2%
ShopperTrak, October 2008	1.7%-1.9%

Note: sales are for November and December; excludes sales at automotive dealers, gas stations and restaurants; \*vs. holiday season 2007; \*\*includes sales at gas stations and restaurants

Source: various, as noted, 2008

098880

www.eMarketer.com

eMarketer also estimates that online sales during the holiday season consistently represent almost one-quarter of annual retail e-commerce sales, which is evidence of the importance of this time of year to retailers.