



For Immediate Release:  
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## ONLINE COMPARISON SHOPPING SHOWS STRONG GROWTH AS HOLIDAY SEASON NEARS, ACCORDING TO NIELSEN//NETRATINGS

*Shopping.com, BizRate, PriceGrabber and NexTag See Over 50 Percent Annual Visitor Growth; eBay Extends Commerce Lead*

**NEW YORK — October 13, 2003** — Nielsen//NetRatings, the global standard for Internet audience measurement and analysis, reports that online consumers are flocking to shopping comparison sites to research products, prices, and merchants. More than 21 million online users, or 16 percent of active U.S. Internet users, visited one or more comparison shopping sites in August 2003 at work and at home.

Leading the rapidly growing set of shopping advisors, Shopping.com (formerly DealTime) attracted 11.9 million unique visitors from home and work during August 2003 (see Table 1). BizRate Shopping garnered 5.9 million visitors during the same month. The third most popular shopping comparison site was NexTag, drawing in 4.6 million consumers. PriceGrabber grew 81 percent during the past year to attract 3.9 million shoppers. The ten top comparison sites as a group grew 34 percent from August 2002 to August 2003, as more consumers used multiple comparison shopping sites in August 2003.

**Table 1. Nielsen//NetRatings Top Comparison Shopping Sites, August 2003 (U.S., Home & Work)**

Brand	Unique Audience (000)		Percent Growth
	Aug-02	Aug-03	
Shopping.com (DealTime)	7,019	11,916	70%
BizRate Shopping	3,778	5,869	55%
NexTag	2,629	4,573	74%
PriceGrabber.com	2,160	3,909	81%

Source: Nielsen//NetRatings, August 2003

“Shopping comparison sites are no longer just about comparing price,” said Robert Leathern, director of commerce analytics, Nielsen//NetRatings. “Consumers want to examine features and functionality along with user and merchant reviews.”

The shopping comparison category continues to grow significantly even as eBay and Amazon remain the dominant online commerce sites, attracting 42.6 million and 26.1 million consumers respectively in August.

“eBay has proven that small firms can sell and compete alongside multi-channel retailers, who have established brands and local stores. Amazon continues to evolve into a form of comparison shopping site itself, blending its own inventory with large branded merchants, and small Marketplace sellers.”

“Consumers also focus a great deal of their online product research on finding ballpark prices for products they actually buy offline. Shopping comparison sites and portal shopping sites are thus having an increasing impact not just online, but on purchases made in stores as well,” Leathern continued.



**Table 2. Top Portal Shopping Sites, August 2003 (U.S., Home & Work)**

Brand	Unique Audience (000)
Yahoo! Shopping	15,145
AOL Shopping	7,451
MSN Shopping	4,943

Source: Nielsen//NetRatings, August 2003

"Portal shopping sites have traditionally relied on retailer sponsorships and CPM-based advertising, and their customer experience has often fallen short to that of the comparison shopping sites," reported Leathern. "With the recent shift in marketplace acceptance of cost-per-click online advertising, portals like Yahoo! have regrouped and implemented new shopping features and functionality, which are more consumer friendly and also likely to attract customers this holiday season."

**Amazon and eBay Still Dwarf Comparison Shopping and Portal Shopping Categories**

eBay and Amazon remain the primary consumer starting points for online commerce. eBay was the leading shopping destination on the Web, reaching more than 31.3 percent of U.S. online users in August of 2003 (See Table 3). During the past 12 months, eBay has grown its audience by 40 percent while Amazon has grown by 11 percent.

**Table 3. Nielsen//NetRatings Amazon and eBay (U.S., Home and Work Combined)**

Brand	Unique Audience (000)		Percent Growth %	Active Reach % Aug-03
	Aug-02	Aug-03		
eBay	30,399	42,622	40%	31.3%
Amazon	23,604	26,098	11%	19.2%

Source: Nielsen//NetRatings, August 2003

"As shopping comparison sites continue to evolve and grow as sources of qualified consumer leads, retailers should seek to more aggressively advertise and work with these companies," Leathern concluded.

**Nielsen//NetRatings Shopping Search Report Availability**

The research featured in this press release is taken from the Nielsen//NetRatings Shopping Search Report, which is produced monthly and includes detailed Commerce analysis and metrics. Please contact Patrick Thomas at (212) 703-5941, pthomas@netratings.com for more information.

**About Nielsen//NetRatings**

Nielsen//NetRatings is the global standard for Internet audience measurement and analysis and is the industry's premier source for online advertising intelligence with its NetView, AdRelevance, @Plan, WebRF, LemonAd, MegaPanel and SiteCensus services. Covering 70 percent of the world's Internet usage, the Nielsen//NetRatings services offer syndicated Internet and digital media research reports and custom-tailored data to help companies gain valuable insight into their business. For more information, please visit [www.nielsen-netratings.com](http://www.nielsen-netratings.com).

Editor's Note: Please source all data to Nielsen//NetRatings.