



For Immediate Release:
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2004 ONLINE HOLIDAY SHOPPING SEASON OFFICIALLY KICKS OFF WITH A 60 PERCENT JUMP IN SHOPPING VISITS; HOME AND GARDEN, BOOKS/MUSIC/VIDEO, AND TOYS/VIDEO GAMES WEBSITES LEAD GROWTH, ACCORDING TO THE NIELSEN//NETRATINGS HOLIDAY ESHOPPING INDEX

Nielsen//NetRatings Launches its Sixth Annual Holiday eShopping Index

NEW YORK, NY – November 23, 2004 – Nielsen//NetRatings, the global standard for Internet audience measurement and analysis, today launched its sixth annual Holiday eShopping Index. The Index revealed that this year's online holiday shopping season officially kicked off the week ending November 14, increasing 60 percent in online shopping visits from the week prior. Shopping visits to Websites within the home and garden, books/music/video, and toys/video games categories led the growth.

Several Websites led the home and garden category to experience the largest jump in weekly growth traffic with an 88 percent increase. Sites such as Home Depot and Pottery Barn soared 159 percent, and 97 percent, respectively, in shopping visits. The books/music/video games category took the second spot with an 87 percent increase as sites such as BarnesandNoble.com and BeMusic surged 233 percent and 67 percent, respectively.

Other categories that experienced significant growth were toys/video games, which jumped 85 percent as traffic to KBT Toys.com skyrocketed 276 percent, and EBgames.com jumped 210 percent. Apparel saw a 75 percent increase, as sites such as Gap rose 245 percent and Lands' End increased 68 percent. Shopping comparison/portals rounded out the five fastest growing categories in the Index with a 73 percent increase as sites such as Yahoo! Shopping grew 174 percent and MySimon jumped 133 percent.

“As Black Friday, the day after Thanksgiving, traditionally the biggest shopping day of the year, approaches, shoppers are flocking online to research holiday gifts, comparison shop, and look at the vast array of products available, saving shoppers time and money and often times a trip to the store,” said Heather Dougherty, senior Retail analyst, Nielsen//NetRatings.

Table 1: Top 5 Holiday Shopping Categories (U.S., Home & Work)

Category	Percent Growth from Weeks Ending 11/14 and 11/7
1) Home and Garden	87.8%
2) Books/Music/Video	87.2%
3) Toys/Video Games	84.5%
4) Apparel	74.5%
5) Shopping/Comparison Portals	73.3%
TOTAL (for 10 categories)	59.7%

Source: Nielsen//NetRatings, November 2004

Note: The index is comprised of approximately 10 representative sites across 10 categories, and is meant to act as a barometer to gauge the level of interest on online retail sites during the holiday season.



Broadband Penetration Remains Key Factor in Driving Holiday Traffic

Broadband penetration remains a critical factor in driving increased eCommerce during the holiday season due to its fast, always on nature. Shopping/comparison portals, in particular, should see more online shoppers as consumers use these sites to research a variety of products, discover merchant-related information, and compare prices.

“Shopping /comparison portals such as Froogle and NexTag should see major increases in online shopping visits this holiday season, as consumers educate themselves on merchandise and search for the best price,” said Dougherty. “This should have a noticeable impact offline, as the 2004 holiday shopper becomes a more informed buyer.”

About Nielsen//NetRatings Holiday eShopping Index

The weekly Nielsen//NetRatings Holiday eShopping Index is based on total shopping trips at work and at home, measuring the amount of Web surfing activity at online retail sites during the course of the holiday season. The Index is comprised of approximately 10 representative sites in each of the 10 category and is meant to act as a barometer to gauge the level of interest at online retail sites during the holiday season. Categories tracked include apparel, books/music/video, computer hardware/software, consumer electronics, flowers and gifts, home and garden, jewelry, retail, shopping comparison/portals, and toys/video games.

About Nielsen//NetRatings

Nielsen//NetRatings (Nasdaq: NTRT) 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.

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

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