

DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP SERIES

DIGITAL COMMERCE

DIGITAL COMMERCE is buying and selling goods and services online. This practice includes buying items from department stores, online auction sites (such as eBay), online classified ads (Dusty Attic

or Craigslist), and subscription services (Netflix or iTunes). Social media sites, such as Facebook, Pinterest and Twitter are also used to advertise and sell items. Why is digital commerce important?

An estimated 192 million American citizens shop online. The average person spends about \$1,300 per year online. That is more than \$200 billion in total sales per year.

SHOPPING ONLINE

- PROS**
- > Can access the online stores at any time of day or night.
 - > Some stores have sales that are online only.
 - > Convenient for people who are unable to get out and shop.
 - > Larger selection—you aren't limited to the stores that you can drive to. You can shop from anywhere.
 - > Saves time. You can visit several stores online in a matter of minutes.

- CONS**
- > You have to wait to have the item shipped to you.
 - > Shipping can be expensive.
 - > You have to be careful when you submit your payment information online. Be sure the site is secure.
 - > It may be difficult or expensive to return an item if it isn't what you expected.
 - > Items can get lost or damaged in the mail.

DIGITAL COMMERCE STATISTICS

- > In the United States, there are more than 200,000 online retailers generating \$198 billion.
- > Michael Aldrich invented online shopping in 1979 by connecting a phone line and modified television.
- > In 2014, Amazon shoppers each spent an average of \$625 (non-member) and \$1,500 (PRIME members) on the site.
- > Netflix video streaming service has 60 million global users.
- > PayPal conducts \$8,680 in transactions every minute and pays customers in more than 100 currencies.
- > 46% of online users consult social media (such as Facebook and Twitter) before making a purchase.
- > If online shoppers are forced to create an account, they will abandon their cart 26% of the time.

amazon.com

PayPal

NETFLIX

DIGITAL COMMERCE & KIDS

Research company Huge, Inc., found that 10-year-olds can easily navigate a website and can quickly find the “add to cart” icon. Huge also found that kids were attracted to sale and clearance items, which showed an understanding of saving money. The kids also were attracted to images instead of words on the screen. They enjoyed anything they could customize—even if it was building a pizza online for their family to order.



Tips for Buying Online

- > Parents should always supervise buying and selling online.
- > Use gift cards to shop online stores to keep from having to share personal information online. PayPal is a company that offers some added security to shopping online.
- > Research the website and seller carefully. Look for the lock icon at the bottom of the page to make sure the site is safe.
- > Review shipping and return policies. There should be contact information, such as phone number and email address.



Talk About It

Does your family shop online? Why is buying and selling online becoming more popular? What steps can you take to be sure your

information is safe when you shop online? What advantages and disadvantages are there to shopping online?

In The News

Look through your newspaper for examples of commerce — buying and selling products and services. You may find advertisements for stores. You may read classified advertisements buying and

selling items. What strategies or techniques are used to encourage and persuade shoppers? How many advertisements include a link to a website or an option to shop online?



Try It:

With the help of an adult, find 5 online stores to evaluate. Make a chart with these headings:

1. Website Address
2. How easy was the website to navigate?
3. Is the contact information displayed (email and phone number)?
4. Is it a product or a service offered on the website?
5. Is there an option to find a store or order by phone?
6. What steps does the site take to keep information secure?

Academic Standards: Reading nonfiction text for main idea and supporting details. Making text-to-self and text-to-world connections. Making inferences. Analyzing data.