

Germany: Mobile online shopping on the increase

WIESBADEN, GERMANY: Last year, 38.1 million Germans aged between 14 and 69 bought goods or services on the internet. This represents a rise of four million on the number of online shoppers in the prior year. Of these, 18.5 million bought online travel services and 10.1 million were consumers buying items from private individuals. These are the findings of the 2011 Online Shopping Survey (OSS) carried out by ENIGMA GfK.



The league table of products with the most online sales continues to be led by books (18.9 million), followed by clothing (17.2 million), event tickets (13.3 million), music (11.3 million) and hotel bookings (10.9 million). Once again, the strongest increase in online sales was recorded by books (+4.0 million), ahead of hotel bookings (+3.4 million) and music (+2.8 million).

Changes in top shopping site rankings

With 24.7 million online shoppers, Amazon has again recaptured top place from ebay (20.9 million) in terms of customer numbers. Weltbild and its 7.6 million online shoppers has overtaken Otto for the first time to occupy third place in the rankings, making it the highest placed multi-channel shopping site.

Growing impact of mobile internet on buying behaviour

Of the total 49 million consumers aged between 14 and 69 who used the Internet last year from a location in Germany, one third stated that they also had mobile phones with Internet access. In tandem with the market success of enhanced Internet functions is the number of consumers actually using their cell phones to go online, which last year rocketed a massive 4.7 million to 10.6 million. This corresponds to a 79% rise.

Particularly dynamic growth was recorded by consumers using their cell phones to carry out transactions, the number of which was up by 157% from 2.1 million to 5.4 million users. While 2.6 million cell phone users downloaded games, 2.1 million downloaded music and 1.9 million used their mobile phones for online banking. These were closely followed by 1.4 million users, who didn't just download items, but shopped online for goods and services.

Email was the most popular of the mobile internet functions, ahead of sending/receiving photos (MMS). Ranked third among the functions used came GPS navigation and of the editorial offerings on the mobile web, weather forecasts came top of the list by far, followed by political and sports news. Most mobile social media activities centred on online networks and video portals.

For stationary, as well as for online trading, the growing success of mobile internet is having the effect of further intensifying the competition. After all, more advantageous, better value, nearer and quicker offerings are just a click away for the user in the era of the world wide web. In future, appliances which makes such clicks possible will be found with increasing frequency in consumer jacket pockets or handbags.

The survey

The Online Shopping Survey (OSS) is carried out on an annual basis by ENIGMA GfK, the specialist German media research institute belonging to the GfK Group, which offers information services for the TV, print, radio and internet media. In January and February 2011, the OSS surveyed 1,179 individuals aged between 14 and 69 in Germany by telephone on the internet and its impact on sales of 29 product and service categories.

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