

Online Retail Buying Drops After Strong Holiday Season

Reston, VA (February 15, 2000) – After a strong Holiday season, top Internet retailers saw online shopping levels decline in January, according to the latest e-tailer rankings by PC Data Online. Toy and apparel sales fell to pre-Holiday levels, and many dipped below PC Data Online's Top 40 rankings.

January's top site was amazon.com with over 1 million unique buyers despite a 33 percent drop from December. Americangreetings.com and cdnow.com came in Nos. 2 and 3 respectively.

The leading online toy retailer eToys.com lost 82 percent of its unique buyers, down from No. 3 in December with 521,000 unique buyers to No. 20 with 95,000 unique buyers in January. Top apparel retailer was jcpenny.com, down from No. 6 with 356,000 unique buyers in December to No. 12 with 153,000 unique buyers in January, a drop of 57 percent.

"We expected a fall-off from the Holidays," said Cameron Meierhoefer, Internet analyst for PC Data Online. "But instead in January we saw e-tail regulars – such as pets and health and beauty – emerge with strong overall patterns."

Four pet sites ranked among the Top 40 sites. They were: 1) pets.com at No. 28 with 67,000 unique buyers; 2) petopia.com at No. 29 with 67,000 unique buyers; 3) petstore.com at No. 31 with 66,000 unique buyers; and 4) petsmart.com at No. 40 with 49,000 unique buyers.

Five health and beauty sites in the Top 40 sites were: more.com at No. 7 with 296,000 unique buyers; 2) drugstore.com at No. 10 with 200,000 unique buyers; 3) healthquick.com at No. 15 with 128,000 unique buyers; 4) planetrx.com at No. 16 with 124,000 unique buyers and; 5) mothernature.com with 95,000 unique buyers.

With students returning to school, college book sites also fared well. Ecampus.com was the site of choice. It came in at No. 17 with 115,000 unique buyers. Making impressive leaps upward were VarsityBooks.com at No. 34 and bigwords.com at No. 40.

PC Data Online defines Internet retail sites as web sites where visitors can actually purchase products. They include neither shopping domains that provide free downloads, product reviews, or purchasing incentives such as coupons, nor other types of e-commerce sites such as auction, travel reservation, or financial service sites.

PC Data Online estimates the purchase rate based on the number of unique home-based web users who visit a transaction-related page within each site.

The information is gathered through a proprietary software tool that tracks "unique visitors" and "unique buyers" on each web site. Each visitor or buyer is counted once, regardless of how many times the individual visits a site or buys from a site. This sample includes over 100,000 home Internet users. Total home Internet users are estimated at approximately 67 million.

Headquartered in Reston, VA, PC Data was established in 1991 and is the leading provider of technology intelligence. PC Data Online tracks Internet usage as well as hardware and software sales. It has established a state-of-the-art capability to conduct real-time Internet surveys.

Jan E-tailer Rank	Dec E-tailer Rank	Web Site	Unique Buyers (000)	Overall Reach (%)	Unique Users (000)	Buy Rate (%)
1	1	amazon.com	1,009	21.2%	14,189	7.1%
2	2	americangreetings.com	848	8.7%	5,814	14.6%
3	*	cdnow.com	698	9.6%	6,451	10.8%
4	4	barnesandnoble.com	377	9.5%	6,354	5.9%
5	**	egghead.com	368	3.3%	2,220	16.6%
6	10	ticketmaster.com	298	4.3%	2,866	10.4%
7	9	more.com	296	2.1%	1,383	21.4%
8	7	iprint.com	247	5.0%	3,381	7.3%
9	5	buy.com	219	3.6%	2,378	9.2%
10	8	drugstore.com	200	2.5%	1,657	12.1%
11	18	gateway.com	175	4.0%	2,661	6.6%
12	6	jcpenny.com	153	2.8%	1,860	8.2%
13	16	quixtar.com	146	1.2%	782	18.6%
14	17	familywonder.com	140	1.4%	962	14.5%
15	--	healthquick.com	128	1.3%	897	14.3%
16	15	planetrx.com	124	2.4%	1,586	7.9%
17	--	ecampus.com	115	2.0%	1,332	8.7%
18	12	fingerhut.com	115	1.6%	1,094	10.5%
19	11	mothernature.com	109	2.8%	1,846	5.9%
20	3	eToys.com	95	3.6%	2,412	4.0%