



AskTheLocal.com

PRESS RELEASE

Contact Information

Paula Abrahamson, CEO
AskTheLocal!
0207 735 4756
paula@askthelocal.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Don't Expect Father Christmas to Deliver

Online-Shopping Sites Keep the Public in the Dark About Christmas Delivery Dates

London, United Kingdom - December 6, 2006. UK online-shopping services are not being open with consumers about the risks of missing Christmas day for gift delivery, because they do not mention the last date for delivery on their websites.

Global Reviews, a customer experience benchmarking firm, found that no leading UK online retailer displays the last order date for pre-Christmas delivery on their homepage. And only four out of fifteen show a link off their homepage which mentions Christmas delivery dates. Websites that don't specify a delivery time are only obliged to deliver the goods within 30 days, which means that consumers may already be out of luck if they expect gifts to arrive before the 25th of December.

"Last year, we received a lot of calls from consumers who were upset when the gifts that they ordered online didn't turn up in time for Christmas," said Carol Brady, Operations Manager for the Government-run Consumer Direct.

Unlike last year, there are now alternative ways of finding gifts which avoid the risk of late delivery. Local-shopping search engines fill the void for Internet users who appreciate the search facilities of online-shopping, but can't wait for the product to arrive weeks in advance.

News Agency, Adfero, said on 21 November that "a new online service, AskTheLocal!, combines the best of online retail with shopping locally by allowing buyers to source goods in their area. Having compared prices online, consumers can purchase products from 'bricks and mortar' shops instead of waiting for delivery."

Local-shopping search-engines, which find products, should not be confused with yellow pages and other local search sites which find businesses. For example, while a local-shopping search will show pictures, prices, and descriptions of "LCD TVs", a yellow pages can only show a list of businesses, forcing people to phone or visit each business in turn to find similar information.

About AskTheLocal!

AskTheLocal! is the UK's first local-shopping search engine and can be found at

<http://www.askthelocal.com>

The site launched in November and has a growing database of 7.8 million products, or 88,000 unique products in 3,000 shops across the UK.

Consumers needing advice about online shopping can call Consumer Direct on 08454 040506, or visit:

<http://www.consumerdirect.gov.uk>

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