

Website rings up the best prices

Matthew Sheldon (Cape Argus): 3 November 2010

South Africa's leading price and product comparison website, PriceCheck, has officially relaunched a revamped version of its website.

PriceCheck, which compares over four million products from more than 170 online South African shops, has improved its speed, features and has an effective search engine in place.

The relaunch of the website took place in October, when PriceCheck was acquired by MIH Internet Africa. The aim of the website is to help consumers make informed and accurate decisions before purchasing an item at a shop. Kevin Tucker, the intrepid founder and manager of PriceCheck, said the idea came about after he moved to London to further his studies in information technology.

"While I lived in London, I used to be an online shopper and would compare products before I went out to purchase an item at a shop," said Tucker. "I discovered that this was becoming the future and that South Africa had no online shopping and product comparison website."

Tucker said it had taken him six months to create the website – spending most of his time working and compiling the data needed to run the site.

PriceCheck was officially launched in 2006. The website now attracts a crowd of 400 000 visitors a month and 25 000 a day.

In a survey conducted by PriceCheck, it was revealed that 42 percent of South Africans who make use of the website trust purchasing products online. The head of marketing for PriceCheck, Liz Hillock, said there had been a steady increase in the number of online purchases made by South African consumers. "We are starting to see a trend in online shopping which has not been that common in South Africa. It is becoming more evident that online shopping will become the future and consumers will be the ones who will benefit from the convenience," said Hillock. The survey also showed that 30 percent of South African internet users' average income was R10 000 or less.

In addition, it was discovered that 82 percent of South African users turned to the internet for information first when considering a purchase.

Tucker said it made sense that the Internet was where shoppers would go when considering a purchase, to read reviews and find the best deals.

Products listed on the database that could be looked up and compared ranged from irons to computers and Ipads to cellphones, she said.

"The improved relaunch of the website boasts the most cutting edge shopping comparison technology in the country and is also a global leader in this regard," said Tucker.

Part of the website's new look is that it has included a social network aspect which lets users log in with their Facebook account details, become fans of products and recommend pages to friends.