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The growing influence of comparison shopping

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The early 20th century might be looked back upon as the age of choice. Today, whether you want to buy a can of baked beans or a new house, there are more choices than ever before when it comes to varieties available, outlets selling them and different ways to pay for them. It is enough to send your head into a spin, but fortunately, the internet doesn't just provide us with options, it also guides us through the decision making process.

Comparison sites used to be all about airlines, hotels and insurance companies. But today, you can find online comparisons for just about any product or service you might need. It sounds like the ideal scenario, but is there a darker side to comparison shopping and placing too much trust in it? Let's take an objective look at the pros and cons.

Comparison shopping – the pros

A good comparison site does all the legwork in analysing the products and services on offer and presenting them in a way that is easily digested. Google Shopping is a case in point – it has the gravitas of being presented by one of the most respected and powerful businesses on the planet. [Shopping.com](#) is a similar platform that was developed by the people at eBay. While these are great for putting similar products in front of you and showing you where you can buy them, the real benefits are derived when you also get some expert advice.

Specialist comparison sites exist across many industries and help you to make a decision based on more than just price and convenience. For example, Maple Slot specialises in online casino gaming sites. If you look at this [review of LeoVegas](#), you will see they also drill into the types of games available, mobile compatibility and customer support quality. It's not just about which provider is offering the cheapest deal.

It is an extension of the sort of reviews and comparisons that you in the automotive sector. If we all simply bought the cheapest car available, the car industry would look very different!

Downsides of comparison shopping

This leads us to the biggest negative of comparison shopping. The examples above are exceptions to a general rule of focusing on price above all else. It is a problem that first became manifest with those insurance comparison sites. Calls to action would encourage you to buy the cheapest policy at the top of the list. This would prove to be fine as a way to be road-legal, but often led motorists to a world of hurt when they needed to make a claim.

It is also important to research the comparison site itself. While there are plenty that are trustworthy, some are thinly disguised advertising platforms that will promote whichever supplier pays them the money to do so.

Comparison sites are here to stay, and that's a good thing as they provide a valuable service. Just make sure you always approach them with both eyes wide open and the above points in mind.

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