

Found it!

BY THEO BOSHOFF

IF YOU ARE STRUGGLING TO FIND WHAT YOU NEED, THEN SHOPPING ONLINE MIGHT HELP YOU OUT AND SAVE YOU TIME AND EFFORT IN THE PROCESS.

Shopping for a product or service that you need is not always the easiest thing in the world. The internet and online shopping specifically can, however, lift the time-consuming burden and ease your hunt for those elusive one-of-a-kind things you need or advice you seek.

There is so much more to online shopping than buying groceries and airplane tickets. You can get almost anything you need online, such as advice from a pharmacist or life insurance. Need medical advice? Then go online and simply ask a doctor or pharmacist a question, and they'll get back to you with an answer or solution to your problems.

MWeb GM Natalie Thayer says shopping online is the most predictable way to shop, "because you know exactly which website to go to, how much the product will cost and when the product will reach you".

To help you find what you are looking for there are also online directories dedicated to online shopping, such as www.sabest.co.za and www.onlineshopping.co.za, listing shops and service providers as well as supplying links to these sites.

There are also online one-stop-shops providing anything from home appliances to flowers and even snack foods, such as www.edreams.co.za. These shops usually stock products you rarely see on shop shelves or only at speciality shops, so it might be a good idea to check out these items. Who knows? You might spot something you've been looking for for ages.

Says trends analyst Dion Chang about online shopping: "It gives consumers the freedom of bespoke and the ability to get exactly what they want. Soon you will be able to order your own designed Muesli with the exact amount of raisins, just as you like it, packaged in a design of your choice."

There are also online services or shopping communities, as CEO and founder of www.luxury4less.co.za, Arnd Herrmann, calls it, that will give you access to products not found locally. Herrmann says that in future, the company might be offering members the option to request specific products, which the company will then source from across the world.

Online shopping is not just a fad, but really makes sense.

Chang says it's a very viable option and one that will grow even more popular with the activation of the Seacom high-speed internet cable in July. He notes, however, that buying clothing online tends to be less popular with people, because they still want to touch, feel and try clothes on before they buy.

Apart from saving time and money, online commerce will enable you to find what you are looking for without leaving your house. Best of all, you can do it anytime at your convenience as most online services are available 24/7.



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