



National Retailers Hard To Find In Search Results

Brick-and-mortar stores were represented only 5% of the time compared with Web-based shops.

By Thomas Claburn, [InformationWeek](#)

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Over the holiday season, Internet retailers were six times more likely to appear on [search](#) results pages than major brick-and-mortar retailers, according to [a study](#) conducted by search marketing company Internet-Engine.

The study indicates that major retailers haven't invested in search marketing and are coasting on the strength of their brands. Based on an analysis of 2,000 online searches at Google, MSN, and Yahoo for popular consumer products, the study found that the sites of national retailers were represented in only 5% of search results.

Thom Disch, Internet-Engine's founder and CEO, says the data is a sign that "the big-box stores are not participating in search marketing programs." As it happens, Internet-Engine sells search services.

National retailers "can't ignore search marketing forever," says Debra L. Zahay, Acxiom Corp. professor of interactive marketing at Northern Illinois University.

Happily for Disch's company, Zahay appears to be right. [Another recent study](#), this one by JupiterResearch, claims online browsing and research will prompt offline retail sales to grow at an annual rate of 12% over the next five years.

The study asserts that "off-line retail giants like Wal-Mart are making strong progress in the online arena" and predicts increased online competition for e-merchants.

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