

## Editorial Resources

- [Archive Search](#)
- [Current Issue](#)
- [News Stories](#)
- [Departments](#)
- [Industry Events](#)
- [Press Releases](#)
- [Buyers Guide](#)

[IR2007 Conference Details](#)

[E-Commerce Technology Guide](#)

[Top 500 Guide](#)

[IR Media Kit](#)

## news stories

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### Big retail chains lost in Internet search, study says

The retail web sites of major retail chains showed up in only 5% of holiday season 2006 Internet searches across 10 product categories, including digital cameras, iPods, plasma TVs and baby strollers, research firm Internet-Engine reports in a new study.

The study analyzed more than 2,000 results from searches conducted on the three leading search engines, Google, Yahoo and MSN. It found that the results directed online shoppers to online-only or independent multi-channel retailers six times more often than to major retail chains. Other types of web sites included comparison shopping/referral, manufacturers' and information/media. The product categories also included watches, power drills, snow blowers, global positioning system devices, treadmills and access ramps.

Web-only and independent multi-channel retailers scored the highest overall across all products, at 32.3%, followed by manufacturers, at 20.8%; comparison/referral, 20.6%; information/media, 7.9%; and retail chains, 5.3%. An unidentified "other" category of sites accounted for 13.1% of search results.

The results varied widely for some products, however. Manufacturers' sites scored the highest for Plasma TVs, at 41.1%; snowblowers, 35.7%; and iPods, 33.8%. Comparison/referral sites scored the highest for digital cameras, at 52.7%.

Following are the share of results for product searches by type of web site:

Watches: Retail chains, 2.5%; web-only/independent retailers, 40.8%; comparison/referral, 34.2%; manufacturers, 11.7%; information/media, 1.3%; other, 9.6%.

Baby strollers: Retail chains: 4.3%; web-only/independent, 50.2%; comparison/referral, 35.4%; manufacturers, 4.8%; information/media, 0%; other, 5.3%.

Power drills: Retail chains, 3.3%; web-only/independent, 42.9%; comparison/referral, 26.4%; manufacturers, 9.9%; information/media, 2.8%; other, 14.6%.

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