



Online shoppers want convenience and relevance

November 20, 2008

By Chris Reidy

Despite the slumping economy, online shoppers this holiday season are more concerned about convenience and finding the right gift than price.

That's the headline of a holiday shopping survey from ChoiceStream Inc., a Cambridge company that provides personalization services for clients that include retailers as well as entertainment, TV, and mobile brands.

"Although the current economic climate is predicted to curb consumer spending this holiday season, we were surprised to find that shoppers are still more concerned with shopping convenience and finding the right gift than they are with getting the best price," Toffer Winslow, executive vice president of sales and marketing at ChoiceStream, said in a statement. "We believe that this presents retailers with a unique opportunity to earn consumers' limited shopping dollars by improving the online customer experience instead of focusing on discounts and margin-eroding promotions. Consumers have signaled their desire for useful shopping guidance and recommendations, and the retailers that provide it will have a distinct edge."

Winslow's statement also said: "The fact that consumers appear to be shopping at a small number of online retailers makes it even more important for retailers to lock in loyalty with good service and a quality customer experience. In addition, the fact that shoppers do not spend a lot of time 'window shopping' on their preferred online shopping destinations means that retailers must engage shoppers with relevant products upfront to increase conversions and average order size during these fairly short visits."