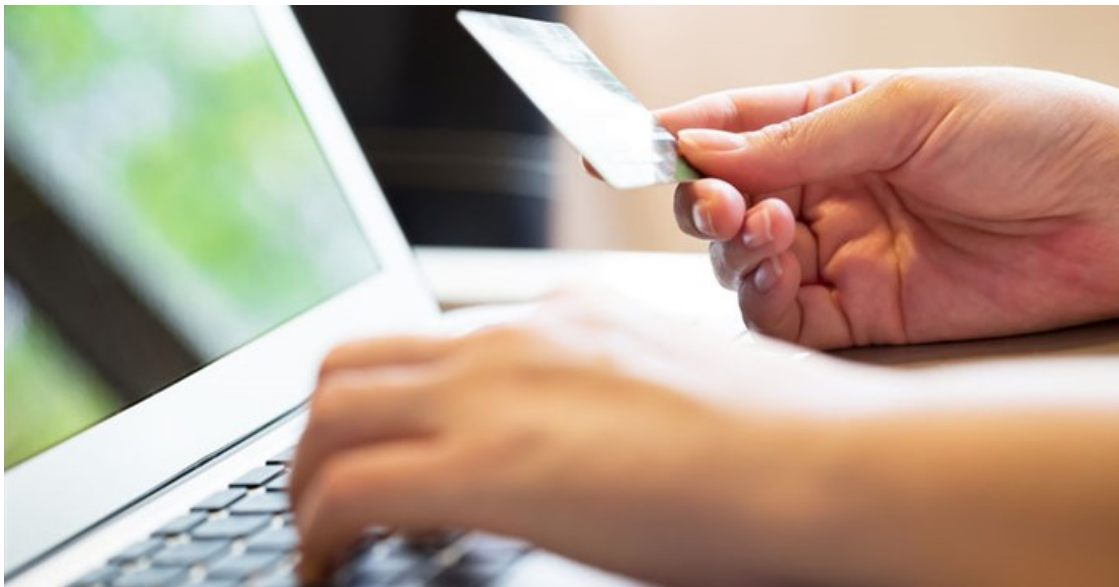


# Tips for online shopping are the same for online marketing

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E-commerce and online shopping are on the rise in Africa. Sure, a [2014 study by Ernst & Young](#) indicated that e-commerce represented less than 1% of the retail market, but, in the digital age, two years is a long, long time for improvements. Increased availability of the internet, computers, and smartphones has facilitated a year-over-year growth in e-commerce trends, which means that the number of 'new' internet users in Africa is growing at almost seven times the global average. The internet hasn't [made traditional retailers obsolete](#), but it is changing how many Africans shop.



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With that in mind, I've gathered some of the best tips for saving money and shopping wisely when you're buying on the internet. Ideally, no matter where you're from, you can take advantage of this advice to save big on shopping and shipping.

## Comparison shopping online

If you were shopping for an item at a traditional brick-and-mortar retailer, you'd be able to [compare prices](#) of similar items at a similar store, and decide which is cheaper and better suited to your needs. And you can effectively do the same thing while shopping online. Don't buy a product just because it's on your favourite shop's website; do a quick internet search to see what other stores sell the same product, and if you can save.

Make sure to search thoroughly! Some [online shopping sites](#) act as price aggregators, so that you can view the price of a single item at different stores and compare. And don't make the mistake of not including the cost of shipping in the final price.

## Discount and Coupon Codes

Many big retailers offer frequent discount and coupon codes. Many of these are published in newspapers and mailers, but many websites exist that collate and gather all of the varied discounts and coupon codes that stores offer, and publish their details for the public.

If there's a store you know you want to shop from, take the time to search the internet for discount or coupon codes for that retailer. You'd be surprised how much you can save with this trick. Often, it's as simple as copying a coupon code and pasting it into a special field during the checkout process. You can also subscribe to the email alerts and newsletters on the stores of some retailers, which typically allows them to email you with information on sales, discounts, and other opportunities to save money.

If you aren't often at a computer and have a smartphone, there are even some apps you can install that will let you browse coupons and savings on the go, if you're planning to do some shopping online. Using this tactic can help ensure that your email inbox isn't cluttered with advertising emails.

## **Set price alerts**

Did you know that some websites will allow you to set price alerts on specific items and will let you know when they go on sale? Amazon.com and several other retailers will do this right from their own websites, but if the website you want to shop from doesn't have its own internal system to allow this, don't worry. PriceZombie, CamelCamelCamel, and Slickdeals will all track prices for you from many different websites.

## **Follow your favourite brands on social media**

Social media is very hot for advertisers and marketers, and many big brands now manage their own social media accounts. If there's a brand you love, make certain to follow it on social media websites like Twitter and Facebook. They will often publish special savings and discounts only for dedicated fans who follow them on social media.

## **Never forget to shop safely online**

Savings are great, and online shopping is incredibly convenient, but it also carries some risks. No matter how much you want to save, be careful about the websites you visit, and try to ensure that they're legitimate, well-known companies. Unscrupulous website owners will sometimes set up online shops to scam unwary buyers, so always look for SSL security certificates and [other signals](#) that you're working with a trustworthy website.

## **ABOUT IVAN DIMITRIJEVIC**

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