



**TOPPRICE**

compare prices buy cheapest

# CONSUMER PRICE REPORT

February 2010

ELECTRONICS

## INTRODUCTION

As of the beginning of 2010, there has been little or no price comparison research done in Ireland. Shoppers visiting retail stores have to rely on special offers advertised in morning newspapers or price catalogues picked up in-store; Irish branches of UK consumer electronics shops do not offer localised websites with up-to-date prices and only a trip to a shopping centre or a suburban retail park may provide one with (a very limited) overview of the prices.

In contrast to the Irish market, the UK boasts over 50 different price comparison web sites: from independent services offering advice on a wide range of products to services like Tesco Price Check, where the supermarket's prices are compared against their competitors' offers.

We all use Google every day to access and research information; Daft.ie is the obvious first step to house-hunting. A well-built, simple to use price comparison site is the first step to shopping online. Populated with reviews and ratings submitted by users, it can simplify the decision-making process and save consumers money: be it a €5 on an MP3 player or €150 on a laptop or even €500 on a TV.

The general rule of thumb for online shoppers is that the more expensive the item is, the more they will save by shopping online.

## THE REPORT

Products we have picked for this report are a representative sample of ranges stocked by Irish retail stores and e-shops shipping to the Republic of Ireland. All prices collected were given in Euros.

The report shows that it pays off to 'shop around' – some of the price differences we have recorded while preparing this report are quite remarkable. On average, online shoppers can expect to save 12.35% or €40.51 on an item of their choice. That figure varies, depending on category: up to 27.57% (€19.00) on a set of computer speakers or 19.18% (€49.26) on a Blu-ray player. The exception to the rule is the eBook reader segment, where retail prices were, on average, 3.48% or €7.20 cheaper than their online counterparts.

How much do these savings matter? They are relatively insignificant if the items are already low-priced, but on higher-priced items, such as TVs or Blu-ray players, the difference is quite significant. E-commerce outlets, how-

ever, ship the items to customers using courier services and online shoppers should be aware that the price they see on screen will increase by the time they type in their credit card number. Shipping is not very expensive, but again, in the case of low priced items it may render a retail store a better option.

Our reviews and ratings feature will help customers make an informed decision, and visitors who have already had experience with certain e-commerce sites and purchased products will be encouraged to share their opinions on these shops. Our users can bookmark items of interest and stay up to date with price changes via e-mail. Smart-phone users can avail of a mobile phone version of the site.

The report that you are about to read is the first in a series. Over the coming months, Toprice.ie aims to create a comprehensive image of the Irish e-commerce and retail market, serve as a database of price trends and customer behaviour, ultimately becoming an irreplaceable tool for shoppers and sellers alike.

**12.35%**  
**AVERAGE SAVING**  
**€40.51**

Irish-based e-tailers, namely Komplett and Elara, have also opened dedicated pick-up points for customers; orders are still placed online, but customers pay and receive their purchases at the pick-up point, free of any shipping charges in Komplett and with a nominal charge in Elara.

In order to produce this report, we have collated prices of over 200 items in 11 categories and searched through the data to find items stocked both by Irish-based retailers and e-commerce sites. Having found 39 items, we then began to compare their prices, closely examining the differences in retail and e-commerce pricing and analysing them on a per category basis.

## NETBOOKS

All four product picks in this category come from companies with a long-established market presence and are advertised as solid and affordable entry-level netbooks for the average customer.

Asus 1001HA, with its eye-catching, seashell-inspired design and a multi-touch trackpad is subject to the biggest price difference - over €100, or 30% - when comparing PC World and Pixmania prices.

Samsung N130, boasting a 16:9 screen aspect ratio and a 5-hour battery life, has the most consistent prices of our four models. Buying it online would save just under €17 (5.86%).

On average, e-commerce prices of netbooks are 18% cheaper than in retail, which in the case of the models we compared, translates to €63 less for a computer.

# 18.49%

AVERAGE SAVING

# €62.88

Product name	Pc World	Harvey Norman	Peats	Power City	Argos	Komplett	Pixmania	Shopireland
Samsung N130			€299.00	€269.95	€289.99	€267.89	€268.79	€271.95
Asus 1001HA	€329.99					€249.01	€229.00	
Toshiba Nb200-12W		€429.00						€367.94
Compaq 110C-110SA		€349.00		€279.95		€238.02		€225.51

Product name	Average price retailer	Average price e-shop	Average price difference	
Samsung N130	€286.31	€269.54	€16.77	5.86%
Asus 1001HA	€329.99	€239.01	€90.99	27.57%
Toshiba Nb200-12W	€429.00	€367.94	€61.06	14.23%
Compaq 110C-110SA	€314.48	€231.77	€82.71	26.30%
<b>Average e-commerce saving</b>			<b>€62.88</b>	<b>18.49%</b>

## LAPTOPS

In this category, we decided to compare prices of two MacBook models and two PCs, manufactured by leading companies in the field – Compaq and Dell.

While PC prices can differ quite a lot, most retailers selling Apple computers price them according to official Apple prices. In the case of e-tailers, there are savings to be made: the powerful MacBook Pro, priced at €1149 in retail, is over €70 (6.44%) cheaper when picked up from Komplett.ie and over €150, or 13% cheaper when ordered from ShopIreland.ie.

Similarly, the rule applies to the stylish and thin MacBook Air (€1699), which is on average €200 (11.92%) cheaper when bought on the Internet. The biggest percentage saving, however, was to be made on the popular and marketed as a computer for the budget-savvy Dell Inspiron 1545 (average retail price €549), which costs about 20% less when purchased online, translating to €99 on average.

The laptop comparison results show that shopping on the Web can save you €120 (13%) on average, which can come in very handy when looking for additional accessories for your newly purchased computer.

# 13.17%

## AVERAGE SAVING

# €121.51

Product name	Pc World	Harvey Norman	Argos	Komplett	Pixmania	Elara	ShopIreland
Apple MacBook Air MC234	€1699.00			€1599.00	€1394.00		
Apple MacBook Pro MB990	€1149.00	€1149.00	€1149.00	€1075.00	€1099.00		€987.20
Dell Inspiron 1545	€549.99			€465.00	€436.81		
Compaq CQ61-401SA		€619.00				€526.35	€533.25

Product name	Average price retailer	Average price e-shop	Average price difference	
Apple MacBook Air MC234	€1699.00	€1496.50	€202.50	11.92%
Apple MacBook Pro MB990	€1149.00	€1053.73	€95.27	8.29%
Dell Inspiron 1545	€549.99	€450.91	€99.09	18.02%
Compaq CQ61-401SA	€619.00	€529.80	€89.20	14.41%
Average e-commerce saving			€121.51	13.16%

## TV SETS

Samsung's 42" LED TV (UE46B6000), with its ultra-slim body (30mm) is the most awe-inspiring set, but at the average price of €1500 in a high-street shop, it is far from affordable. If crystal-clear picture and sleek finish is what you are after (regardless of the cost) then our advice is to, again, check out what web shops have on offer: Komplett.ie sells the 42" Samsung nearly €200 (12.61%) cheaper than in retail, which, in turn, buys a decent enough Blu-ray player, or a 5.1 home cinema system...

The 32" Sony (KDL32S5500U) television is the biggest reward for a smart shopper. With its clear picture and very good sound (built-in USB Media Player allows you to connect your media player directly to TV and play music or a photo slideshow), Argos priced it at €698, whereas our research shows that the same TV costs nearly a third less - €496.92 - on Pixmania!

On average, the savings made on TV sets through shopping online are about €65 or a little over 6% of a unit's price.

The television category is one where the rule of 'the higher the price, the more can be saved online' is particularly relevant.

Televisions like the Philips 32" LCD are an exception to the rule. If we hadn't taken that particular model into account, the average e-commerce saving would amount to €103.67, or 12.47%

# 6.17%

AVERAGE SAVING

# €65.37

Product name	Pc World	Harvey Norman	DID	Peats	Power City	Argos	Komplett	Pixmania
Samsung 46" Full HD LED UE46B6000(VWXX)	€1529.99		€1499.95				€1337.00	€1419.00
Sony 32" HD Ready KDL32S5500U				€509.00		€698.99		€496.92
Philips 32" HD Ready LCD 32PFL3404H		€379.00			€399.95			€439.00
Philips 42" Full HD LCD 42PFL3604			€629.95				€563.00	

Product name	Average price retailer	Average price e-shop	Average price difference	
Samsung 46" Full HD LED UE46B6000(VWXX)	€1514.97	€1378.00	€136.97	9.04%
Sony 32" HD Ready KDL32S5500U	€604.00	€496.92	€107.08	17.73%
Philips 32" HD Ready LCD 32PFL3404H	€389.48	€439.00	-€49.53	-12.72%
Philips 42" Full HD LCD 42PFL3604	€629.95	€563.00	€66.95	10.63%
Average e-commerce saving			€65.37	6.17%

## HOME CINEMA

Both models we decided to compare are equipped with a built-in FM tuner and play a wide variety of media file formats. Sony's system, with an iPod dock, Bluetooth/ Wi-Fi capabilities and a CD-to-MP3 ripping tool is the more expensive of the two, but shopping around and comparing offers from retail and web outlets can save you as much as 24% of its price - €71.92.

Samsung's home cinema system lacks the impressive features of the Sony product, but is still regarded as a high-quality piece of equipment in its range. Choosing to order the set from Pixmania for €138 rather than buying it in Argos saves €31.99 (18.82%).

Price differences in the Home Cinema category aren't staggering, but certainly worth that extra bit of looking around – your time will be worth over €30, or 15% of the average item price.

# 14.76%

## AVERAGE SAVING

# €31.35

Product name	Pc World	Harvey Norman	DID	Peats	Argos	Komplett	Pixmania
Samsung 5.1 Home Cinema HTZ120R		€159.00			€169.99		€138.00
Sony Home Cinema 5.1 DAVDZ280	€249.99		€259.95	€269.00	€299.99	€228.07	€239.00

Product name	Average price retailer	Average price e-shop	Average price difference	
Samsung 5.1 Home Cinema HTZ120R	€164.50	€138.00	€26.50	16.11%
Sony Home Cinema 5.1 DAVDZ280	€269.73	€233.54	€36.20	13.42%
Average e-commerce saving			€31.35	14.76%

## BLU-RAY

All three players compared can be connected to the Internet and have a USB socket for external storage devices. With a High Definition television set, Blu-ray players can offer crystal-clear picture and amazing sound quality.

The two devices, BDP1580 and BDP7500 are considerably less expensive when bought on the Internet. The price difference for the two is 25% on average when purchased online, which can save a savvy customer up to €100.

# 19.18%

## AVERAGE SAVING

# €49.26

Product name	Pc World	Harvey Norman	DID	Power City	Argos	Komplett	Pixmania	Shopireland
Samsung Blu-Ray DVD Player BDP1580		€179.00	€149.95	€149.95		€131.48		€106.46
Samsung Blu-Ray DVD Player + Home Cinema BD7200	€609.99		€649.95			€593.15	€599.00	
Philips Blu-Ray DVD Player BDP7500		€249.00			€299.99	€203.55	€199.00	

Product name	Average price retailer	Average price e-shop	Average price difference	
Samsung Blu-Ray DVD Player BDP1580	€159.63	€118.97	€40.66	25.47%
Samsung Blu-Ray DVD Player + Home Cinema BD7200	€629.97	€596.08	€33.90	5.38%
Philips Blu-Ray DVD Player BDP7500	€274.50	€201.28	€73.22	26.67%
Average e-commerce saving			€49.26	19.18%

## GPS

This category features two names which over the last years became synonymous with Global Positioning Systems – Garmin and TomTom.

Garmin's Nuvi 255w and Nuvi 1340, versatile and easy to use car navigation units have all the features necessary for hassle-free driving, like traffic information, or a range of safety features. Online, the 255w is on average 21% (€34.77) less expensive than in a retail store, with Pixmania and Shoplreland selling it for €120. In retail stores, Nuvi 255's average price is €159.

TomTom's voice-controlled GO 750 comes from a little higher price range; with Argos selling the unit for €300, it pays to go online – Shoplreland.ie have it on offer €60 (20%) cheaper. The entry-level TomTom Start, a great choice for casual drivers, records the lowest average price difference of just over 1%, or €1.35, across retail and online stores.

# 11.88%

## AVERAGE SAVING

# €22.01

Product name	Pc World	Peats	Argos	Komplett	Pixmania	Elara	Shoplreland
Garmin Nuvi 255w	€159.99			€129.00	€119.00	€130.68	€122.20
Garmin Nuvi 1340	€159.99		€203.99	€149.00	€149.38	€154.88	€148.64
Tomtom GO 750		€249.99	€299.99		€269.00		€240.18
Tomtom Start EU		€139.99	€119.99		€139.00		€118.29

Product name	Average price retailer	Average price e-shop	Average price difference	
Garmin Nuvi 255w	€159.99	€125.22	€34.77	21.73%
Garmin Nuvi 1340	€181.99	€150.48	€31.52	17.32%
Tomtom GO 750	€274.99	€254.59	€20.40	7.42%
Tomtom Start EU	€129.99	€128.65	€1.35	1.03%
Average e-commerce saving			€22.01	11.88%

## MP3 PLAYERS

A comparison of MP3 players has to include Apple iPods. In this price report, we compare three most popular versions: low-capacity but feature-packed Nano (with a built in camera and an FM radio), iPod Classic with a 160 GB hard drive and a feature-packed 32 GB iPod Touch. With retail prices set by Apple across the board, opportunity for savings, however modest, lies online. On average, buying an iPod on the Web saves a trip to the store and €10 to €15, or 5% of the player's price.

This is an area where shops like Komplett can be a benefit, with free pick up available in Dublin, thus eliminating delivery costs that may negate the saving.

# 6.38%

## AVERAGE SAVING

# €10.74

Product name	Pc World	Harvey Norman	DID	Peats	Power City	Argos	Komplett	Pixmania	Shopireland
Apple iPod Nano 16GB	€169.00	€169.00	€169.00	€169.00	€169.95	€152.10	€159.26	€155.00	€153.72
Apple iPod Classic 160GB	€229.00	€229.00	€229.00	€229.00	€229.95	€229.00	€225.02		€212.62
Apple iPod Touch 32GB	€279.00	€279.00	€279.00		€279.95	€249.99	€266.09		€248.30
Creative Mozaic 8GB	€69.99					€67.49		€59.00	€66.29

Product name	Average price retailer	Average price e-shop	Average price difference	
Apple iPod Nano 16GB	€166.34	€155.99	€10.35	6.22%
Apple iPod Classic 160GB	€229.16	€218.82	€10.34	4.51%
Apple iPod Touch 32GB	€273.39	€257.20	€16.19	5.92%
Creative Mozaic 8GB	€68.74	€62.65	€6.10	8.87%
Average e-commerce saving			€10.74	6.38%

## SPEAKERS

While not all of us feel the need to invest in a window-shaking sound system, a good set of two speakers and a subwoofer has the potential to transform a laptop or desktop into a half-decent home entertainment hub. For this comparison, we decided to go with the brands whose products are synonymous with quality sound.

Logitech X240, which appeared on the market nearly three years ago, remain very popular, stocked by five sellers: retailers, who price the set at €55 to €59 are no competition to web shops where one can order the speakers for as little as €29.61 (a 50% saving at Shopireland.ie). Creative's Giga Works T40 record a smallest average price difference (12%/€15.61), but still, spending €105 at Komplett seems more appealing than €150 at Peats.

What goes by the name of 'Amazing Offer' in the retail business, seems to be the usual run of the mill online, with the average savings in the speakers category standing at 27% or €19.

# 27.57%

## AVERAGE SAVING

# €19.00

Product name	Pc World	Harvey Norman	Peats	Argos	Komplett	Pixmania	Elara	Shopireland
Creative Giga Works T40 II Series	€109.99		€149.99		€104.77		€124.00	
Creative Inspire T10	€69.99			€54.99	€43.23		€44.77	
Logitech X240	€59.98	€54.99	€54.99			€31.47		€29.61
Sony SRS-D211	€69.98					€54.83	€52.00	€55.71

Product name	Average price retailer	Average price e-shop	Average price difference	
Creative Giga Works T40 II Series	€129.99	€114.39	€15.61	12.00%
Creative Inspire T10	€62.49	€44.00	€18.49	29.59%
Logitech X240	€56.65	€30.54	€26.11	46.09%
Sony SRS-D211	€69.98	€54.18	€15.80	22.58%
Average e-commerce saving			€19.00	27.57%

## DIGITAL CAMERAS

Canon Ixus 200IS, featuring an intuitive 3" touch screen and a wide-angle lens is a perfect choice for beginners who want to make the most of their compact camera. It is also much more expensive than other compacts we have seen: the 12 megapixel, HD Video shooting gadget will set you back nearly €400 at a retailer, but when ordered online its price drops to a much more palatable €289.82 at Shopireland, which is a 27% saving.

A somewhat extreme example of digital camera prices is Canon Powershot A480. From what we gathered, a price difference of 22% (€28) is quite common and in a few stores it can reach as high as 40%, or €64 - budding photographers are better off investing that amount in a membership of the Dublin Camera Club, which is €90 for a year.

For the more advanced photographers, a Digital SLR is the obvious choice. Both the Canon EOS 450D and Nikon D3000 are considered entry-level equipment, but at the same time are sophisticated, powerful cameras. The 450D, priced €562 at Pixmania is a real bargain when compared to how much it costs at a regular store (€699.95 at DID), whereas Nikon D3000 is cheaper by 25%, if ordered online – the price difference between a retailer (€599.99 at PC World) and one of the web outlets (€445 at Pixmania) is a not-to-be-missed €154!

# 16.92%

AVERAGE SAVING

# €60.05

Product name	Pc World	Harvey Norman	DID	Argos	Pixmania	Elara	Shopireland
Canon Ixus 200IS	€360.00	€397.00		€359.99	€343.64	€341.22	€289.82
Canon Powershot A480		€159.00		€95.99	€95.00	€106.48	€94.58
Sony Cybershot DSCW210	€149.98		€179.95	€155.34	€129.00	€145.20	€134.22

Product name	Average price retailer	Average price e-shop	Average price difference
Canon Ixus 200IS	€372.33	€324.89	€47.44 12.74%
Canon Powershot A480	€127.50	€98.69	€28.81 22.60%
Sony Cybershot DSCW210	€161.76	€136.14	€25.62 15.84%
Average e-commerce saving			€33.95 17.06%

## DIGITAL CAMERAS

## CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

Product name	Pc World	DID	Argos	Pixmania
Canon EOS 450D	€659.99	€699.95		€562.00
Nikon D3000	€599.99		€479.99	€445.00

Product name	Average price retailer	Average price e-shop	Average price difference	
Canon EOS 450D	€679.97	€562.00	€117.97	17.35%
Nikon D3000	€539.99	€445.00	€94.99	17.59%
Average e-commerce saving			€106.48	17.47%

Product name	DID	Peats	Power City	Argos	Pixmania
Sony DCRSX30EL	€219.95	€299.00	€219.95	€239.99	€205.00

Product name	Average price retailer	Average price e-shop	Average price difference	
Sony DCRSX30EL	€244.72	€205.00	€39.72	16.23%
Average e-commerce saving			€39.72	16.23%

## EBOOK READERS

Ideal for long-distance commuting and travel, those portable devices are capable of storing a whole library of books in your back pocket. An ebook reader's screen does not glare in the light, and advanced technology makes the contrast between lettering and background sharp enough to read without tiring your eyes.

For the purpose of our report, we picked two readers from Sony, a leading manufacturer in the field. It came as a surprise that both models are marginally more expensive online than in retail stores; the difference in PRS-300 prices was €12 (6.25%) on average and the more advanced PRS-600 Touch was €2 (0.7%) more expensive online versus retail.

**-3.48%**  
**AVERAGE SAVING**  
**-€7.20**

Product name	Harvey Norman	Peats	Power City	Argos	Komplett	Pixmania	Elara
Sony PRS-300	€179.00	€179.00	€159.95	€268.87	€179.00	€229.00	€219.00
Sony PRS-600 Touch Edition	€269.00	€299.00	€249.95	€368.46		€294.90	€302.50

Product name	Average price retailer	Average price e-shop	Average price difference	
Sony PRS-300	€196.71	€209.00	-€12.30	-6.25%
Sony PRS-600 Touch Edition	€296.60	€298.70	-€2.10	-0.71%
Average e-commerce saving			-€7.20	-3.48%

## GAMING CONSOLES

Similarly to Apple products, gaming consoles in Ireland are sold at a price set by the manufacturer. Visiting retail stores in search of a PS3 or an Xbox doesn't result in much of a saving and specialised game stores try to attract buyers with a multitude of bundles, free games and accessories. Unexpectedly, Harvey Norman decided to break this tradition and offered an Xbox 360 Elite €30 cheaper than other retailers, selling the console at €219. On the web, the console costs €9.45 (3.86%) cheaper than in an average retail store.

The handheld Nintendo DSi is also cheaper at a retail store: Game Stop asked €149.99, but only if we were buying a black or white model – colourful DSis were priced €20 more. In case you feel that a boring white or black-clad Nintendo is not for you, other retailers and web shops have desirable offers. Web shops sell Nintendo DSi on average €11 (7%) cheaper than retailers.

The average price difference in the category stands at €10.66, which is 4.83% of a console's price.

# 4.77%

## AVERAGE SAVING

# €10.57

Product name	Pc World	Harvey Norman	DID	Power City	Argos	Game Stop	Game	Komplett	Pixmania	Elara
Playstation 3 Slim, 120 GB	€299.99	€299.00	€299.95	€299.95	€298.75	€300.00	€300.00		€289.00	
Xbox 360 Elite	€250.00	€219.00	€249.00		€249.99	€250.00	€250.00	€241.44	€229.00	
Nintendo Dsi	€169.99	€169.00	€179.95	€169.95	€169.29	€149.99	€170.00	€158.34	€158.00	€153.79

Product name	Average price retailer	Average price e-shop	Average price difference	
Playstation 3 Slim, 120 GB	€299.66	€289.00	€10.66	3.56%
Xbox 360 Elite	€244.67	€235.22	€9.45	3.86%
Nintendo Dsi	€168.31	€156.71	€11.60	6.89%
Average e-commerce saving			€10.57	4.77%

## NOTES

Prices compared in this report were collected between 15th and 18th February 2010 in the following stores:

**PC World** Airside/ Blanchardstown/Jervis Street  
**Harvey Norman** Airside/ Blanchardstown/ Rathfarnam  
**Peats** Blanchardstown/ Peats.com  
**DID** Blanchardstown  
**Power City**  
**Argos**

**Komplett.ie**  
**Elara.ie**  
**Pixmania.ie**  
**Shopireland.ie**

[Toprice.ie](http://Toprice.ie)

48 Western Parkway Business Park  
Lower Ballymount Road  
Dublin 12  
Ireland

[www.toprice.ie](http://www.toprice.ie)

[info@toprice.ie](mailto:info@toprice.ie)