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June 06, 2005

Another Comparison Shopping Shoe Drops



Rob Hof

Less than a week after eBay **announced** it would buy Shopping.com, another comparison shopping site has been snapped up. E.W. Scripps just said it's **buying** Shopzilla, known until recently as BizRate.com Inc., for \$525 million. The funny thing is that so far, the traditional Internet portals haven't been the acquirers, even though many observers think thought they would be.

In fact, Gary Little, a venture capitalist with Morgenthaler Ventures who invested in NexTag, another shopping site, told me

Friday that he thought all the major portals would add comparison shopping if they haven't already. "There is definitely an opportunity for a comparison shopping site to be independent," he said.

Maybe. But I'm more doubtful than ever now. I know relatively few people who know about these sites, let alone visit them regularly. The sites rely to varying degrees on buying traffic on Google or running Google ads or both. You have to wonder why Google, which has a related shopping site called Froogle, won't eventually short-circuit that loop--that is, if portals like Yahoo! or left-field entries like Amazon's A9 search site don't do it first. In which case, this feeding frenzy may end as quickly as it started.

04:48 PM

e-commerce

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Tracked on June 7, 2005 07:18 AM

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Because if Google re-routed the traffic and didn't have the conversion they would lose a ton of money.

Posted by: Matt at June 7, 2005 12:21 AM

Sites such as Shopzilla and Shopping depend heavily on Google to get traffic. It is not necessarily the case for other Shopping comparison sites such as PriceGrabber.com.

Shopping comparison is the only way to shop. If you don't use it, you are simply throwing your money away. It is here to stay.

Posted by: **Andre** at June 7, 2005 03:23 PM

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