

25 October 2022

Shop local, shop savvy, and shop safely this Christmas - Guaranteed Irish and .IE

- **Consumers advised to shop local and exercise caution when purchasing online during the Christmas period as part of a joint campaign from Guaranteed Irish and .IE.**
- **.IE CEO: “For many of us, Christmas means shopping, celebrating and a holiday. But cybercriminals looking to take advantage of online shoppers don’t take a break over the festive period.”**

Shoppers making online purchases this Christmas are being encouraged to keep it local and keep their guard up, as part of a joint message by Guaranteed Irish and .IE, the managers of Ireland’s trusted .ie online address, who have joined forces with some top tips to keep shoppers safe and secure as they shop local.

More and more consumers are turning to websites to make their purchases since the Covid-19 pandemic. With a higher volume of online shopping comes a greater need for vigilance by consumers.

The value of shopping local highlights the connection between the producer and the product and essentially means that money circulates in the local economy on locally sourced goods and services and wages. In fact, figures from Eurostat Research shows that €20 spent in the local community is worth €100 to the Irish economy, while every €100 spent is worth up to €500 to the economy.

The recent .IE Tipping Point 2022 report shows that Irish consumers embrace the convenience of online shopping, and they rate native SMEs as more trustworthy, faster and more reliable, and as having better order tracking certainty when compared to international retailers.

But before clicking ‘buy’ here’s what shoppers need to know:

1. When it comes to buying gifts online, shop with trusted retailers and recognisable brands. If you are suspicious, do your research to see if other shoppers have the same concerns or have had bad experiences.
2. Before making a purchase online, check the address and location of the retailer. Websites with a .ie address are the easiest way of finding businesses with an Irish connection. Though it might not be physically located on the island of Ireland, all .ie websites have already proven their connection to Ireland. 91% of .ie websites are registered by businesses and individuals that are located here.
3. If prices seem too good to be true, they most likely are! Avoid clicking on unsolicited links and use your common sense when it comes to deals and prices.
4. Always look for delivery details so that you know all the costs associated with the delivery of your items, including taxes, customs and charges. This information is usually found on the FAQ, help, or shopping cart areas of a website. If it is not available, email or phone customer service for clarification.
5. Shop early to avoid disappointment! In the lead-up to Christmas, there can often be delays in receiving items due to increase in demand, potential supply issues, and delivery delays. Shopping early helps to ensure you will receive your items on time.
6. Always look for the returns policies so that there are no surprises or hidden costs if you need to return the item later.

7. Shop with websites whose addresses begin with a https:// (as opposed to a http://). In simple terms, look for the lock icon! The lock icon ensures your data is protected in transit and your credit card transaction is safe from hackers.

Comment from David Curtin, Chief Executive of .IE

David Curtin, Chief Executive of .IE said: “The Christmas season is a perfect time for cyber-criminals to ramp up their illegal activities. By using common sense and obeying basic security rules, online shopping is a safe and convenient experience. However, consumers need to be sure to keep their guard up and be aware of scams.”

“When it comes to buying gifts online, shop with trusted retailers and recognisable brands. If you're suspicious, check online forums to see if other shoppers have had your concerns. Avoid clicking on unsolicited links that promote deals and prices that seem too good to be true.”

“At the online checkout, make sure your web address bar has a lock or shield icon; this means your connection is safe and can't be intercepted by a third party. If it is not there, don't buy.

“Over the Christmas period, keep account of every payment you make online and compare it with your bank statement. If you think your account has been compromised, contact your bank immediately.

“If you are a business, we would urge you to be upfront with information for customers by making all terms and conditions visible and accessible on your website to avoid any unnecessary confusion and disappointment later.”

Comment from Bríd O’Connell, CEO of Guaranteed Irish

“This is the second consecutive year of our initiative with .IE, which not only reassures consumers they are shopping securely but supports our local economy and communities and shortens the supply chain, which ensures less damage to our environment.

“Every €20 spent on a Guaranteed Irish gift this Christmas is worth €100 to the Irish economy. This helps our Irish producers, makers, and suppliers to keep trading while giving the consumer a feeling of solidarity in supporting our exceptional local businesses. We are encouraging everyone to look out for the Guaranteed Irish symbol and .ie websites for a local, secure, and seamless online purchasing experience.”

Keeping these tips in mind, all that's left to do is start your e-window shopping through guaranteedirishgifts.ie. With lots to inspire, you're sure to find something for everyone on your Christmas list.

Visit GuaranteedIrishGifts.ie for hundreds of gift ideas this Christmas. Shop local on a trusted .ie website.

For media enquiries, contact 360, A Finn Partners Company

Nuala Ryan | nuala.ryan@finnpartners.com | 083 421 2733
Stephen Mangan | stephen.mangan@finnpartners.com | 087 995 2800

About .IE

.IE is the national registry for .ie domain names and the trusted and progressive guardian of Ireland's unique .ie online address. Our purpose is to enable and empower people, communities, and businesses across Ireland to thrive online.

We operate the domain name system ([DNS](#)) for the .ie namespace, facilitate an [independent dispute resolution service](#), and operate a public [WHOIS](#) lookup service for .ie domains.

In cooperation with our Registrars, technical partners, and stakeholders, we help advance Ireland's internet ecosystem. Good governance is evidenced in our [policy development process](#) for the .ie namespace, which follows a bottom-up, consensus-driven approach through a multi-stakeholder Policy Advisory Committee.

At .IE we are committed to digital advocacy for local towns, communities and SMEs. Through stakeholder engagement initiatives such as [.IE Digital Town](#), we work with and support SME organisations to improve their members' online presence and e-commerce capabilities so they can unlock the power of the internet to boost sales and productivity.

We also produce fact-based research for the business community and policymakers, such as the [.IE Domain Profile Report](#) and the [.IE Tipping Point](#), which charts the attitudes to digital of Irish SMEs and consumers during the Covid-19 pandemic.

There are over 330,000 .ie domain names registered. As part of the domain registration process, every applicant must provide tangible evidence of its identity and its connection to Ireland.

www.weare.ie

About Guaranteed Irish

Guaranteed Irish is a business membership network championing business based in Ireland since 1974. The Guaranteed Irish symbol is the national symbol of trust in business in Ireland. The official Guaranteed Irish licenced mark is awarded to businesses based in Ireland that support sustainable jobs, contribute to our local communities, and are committed to Irish provenance. Guaranteed Irish currently backs over 1,900 business members, employing 100,000 people across Ireland, generating an annual combined Irish turnover of €12.9bn.

www.guaranteedirish.ie
www.guaranteedirishgifts.ie

ENDS