



Embargoed until: 00:01hrs Friday 18th March, 2011

A THIRD OF BRITS BUY ONLINE TO SAVE THEIR BLUSHES

The internet doesn't just save money, it also spares British shoppers' blushes, according to new research from [InvisibleHand](#), the free to download online shopping tool. A third of people (33%) go online for products that are just too embarrassing to buy in person, with bashful Brits baulking at buying items such as haemorrhoid creams, lice shampoo and wart remover face-to-face^[1].

Shy shoppers are worried about the stigma attached to buying embarrassing items in person (50%) while others hit the internet to avoid nosy shop assistants (37%). Almost a third (32%) don't want to carry the offending item around, while over a quarter (28%) cringe at the idea of being recognised by someone they know (28%)^[2].

Bashful Brits are big business as far as online shops are concerned, spending **£47** a month on average on 'embarrassing' items. But while bashful, many are clearly in the mood for love, spending an average of £5 a month online on sexy underwear and £6 a month on sex aids, toys and porn^[3].

The survey also shows that British men are not as macho as they like to think – at least when it comes to buying embarrassing items. While almost six in ten men (57%) go online to avoid the stigma of buying in person, just four in ten women feel the same (42%). On the flipside though, women are more worried about carrying embarrassing items around than men (36% compared with 29% of men)^[2].

And some areas of the country are far more prone to blushes than others – while Scottish shoppers top the league for being too embarrassed to buy certain items in person, the Northern Irish are far less bashful, coming bottom of the regional rankings^[1].

The InvisibleHand Shy Shoppers League^[1]:

| UK region | % of shoppers too embarrassed to shop for certain products in person |
|-----------------------------|--|
| 1. Scotland | 39% |
| 2. East Midlands | 38% |
| 3. North East | 35% |
| 4. South East | 34% |
| 5. West Midlands | 34% |
| 6. London | 34% |
| 7. South West | 30% |
| 8. North West | 29% |
| 9. Yorkshire and the Humber | 29% |
| 10. Wales | 23% |
| 11. Northern Ireland | 22% |

Robin Landy, founder of [InvisibleHand](#), says: “Not only is the internet saving us money, it’s also saving our blushes, allowing shy shoppers to buy embarrassing items in the comfort and privacy of their own home. Instead of running the high street gauntlet of nosy shop assistants, knowing looks and the embarrassment of being seen by a friend, a third of us are going online instead.

“Whether you are going online to save face or money, shopping around is key and this too is easier now than ever. By downloading InvisibleHand for free you can visit your favourite online shops and travel sites while InvisibleHand does the hard work behind the scenes finding you the best price. Not only can online shoppers save their blushes, they can save on legwork too.”

InvisibleHand has already identified almost £52 million in savings for UK online shoppers. It is free to download from www.getinvisiblehand.com.

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Note to editors:

Research referred to in the below was conducted on behalf of InvisibleHand by OnePoll among 2,000 UK shoppers between 18th – 21st February, 2011.

1. In response to: 'Have you ever bought products online because it's too embarrassing to buy in person?' 32.60% said 'yes'.
2. In response to: 'Why is this the case?'
3. In response to: 'On average per month, how much money do you spend online for each of the following items (in pounds)?'

About InvisibleHand

InvisibleHand is a free price-finder tool for online shoppers and travellers who want to be confident they have found the best price before clicking the 'buy' button. Instead of undertaking painstaking online research or relying on the out-of-date prices on shopping & flight comparison sites; consumers can download and install InvisibleHand on their computer for free. Once installed, the next time you go shopping InvisibleHand will work behind the scenes to automatically find the best price on products & flights, no matter where you're searching on the web.

InvisibleHand's price alerts appear in a temporary, drop-down bar when a better deal is found on over 60 million products and airfares. To-date, InvisibleHand has been downloaded by over 1.5 million people and has already found savvy online shoppers over £52 million worth of savings in the UK alone.

InvisibleHand is free and easy to download from www.getinvisiblehand.com.

InvisibleHand is part of the Forward Internet Group, a privately funded collection of internet-based businesses focused on consumer engagement and innovation.