



Eye to Eye

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What does it take for a shopping site to turn a visitor into a repeat customer? How are companies keeping holiday shoppers from clicking away and running on the competition? That's what the *Ziff Davis Smart Business* Labs and [eyeTracking.com](#) wanted to find out. Using the latest eye-tracking equipment to conduct our showdown, we uncovered several usability rules. By following the testers line of sight and the length of time spent searching, we determined what shoppers look at first—and what holds their attention when they shop on the Web. These sample screens called GazeTraces show exactly where the testers were looking—and what helped or hindered their online shopping experience. (For complete test results for all 20 sites, visit our Web site at [www.smarbusinessmag.com](#). For more information on eyetracking; visit [www.eyetracking.com](#) or send an e-mail to info@eyetracking.com.)

Dumb It Down

Simple navigational tools—tabs and hyperlinks—work better than elaborate and detailed tools. Customers won't stay to figure out your site.

Search Engine Tune-Up

When shopping for a specific item, customers would rather use product search engines than click through pages—keep your search engine finely tuned, and always.

Center Stage

Customers' eyes land immediately on the center of the page. Treat this as prime real estate and place product graphics here—skip the text.

Lose the Lists

Customers don't like to select items from long lists—they often miss the product they're trying to find.