

How To Snag The Best ONLINE DEALS

As the pace of e-commerce picks up, so does the confusion about where to buy. Cut-throat competition and shopping festivals ensure that prices are always coming down. To take advantage of this, everyone needs a little bit of help, say **Hitesh Raj Bhagat & Karan Bajaj**

Discount Coupons

CouponDunia.in
This covers almost every big shopping website in India. You can view deals by category (travel, food and fashion) or browse through the list of stores. A handy search bar at the top lets you find deals quickly. Codes are not visible directly and you need to click on the box to view them. It also shows you success rates for each coupon.

Cuponation.in
Cuponation offers coupons and offers from over 2,000 brands. You can choose to view the top 20 deals, check out the latest coupons, browse coupons available in different categories or just view an alphabetical list of all stores. Moreover, they also have a dedicated page to show deals for the Great Online Shopping Festival 2014. Discount vouchers open up in a pop-up window along with a link to directly visit the partner.

Mydala.com
Mydala looks more at offline deals. The site lists deals on restaurants, salons, spas, hotels, cabs, groceries and activities like dance classes, movies and events. The process is simple – you select a deal, purchase a deal coupon and then either sign-in to your mydala account or get the deal code on your mobile number by paying a minimal amount. The coupon will be sent via email to you – just present the coupon to the offline retailer to avail the deal/discount.

Refurb Products

Refurb or refurbished products are those that were returned due to a small defect and are being sold again by the manufacturer after fixing the issue. They could also be pre-owned, products with minor cosmetic damage or products with damaged or missing boxes. If you're OK with this, there are some great deals around. Check out www.greendust.com, www.reglobe.in and www.gobol.in – all of them let you sell or purchase pre-owned and refurbished devices. Other times, you can get surplus stock, damaged boxes and factory seconds for a song. For most of these devices, you get a 3 or 6 month warranty from the company instead of a full year. Just make sure to read the fine print before placing an order. We've seen that most products on these websites get sold out so you need to check back regularly for new additions.

Cash Back Deals

At the moment, www.cashkaro.com is our service of choice in India and it works with over 500 online retail partners. To earn cash back, you need to register for a free Cashkaro account. You can then browse through Cashkaro's partners and head to a partner e-commerce site using the website link on Cashkaro to make a purchase. Now you just need to shop normally and once you have completed a transaction, the retailer passes on a commission back to Cashkaro for a referral (usually within 72 hours). When Cashkaro receives this commission (usually within 4 – 12 weeks), they share a bit of the cash with you by adding it to your account (the amount varies). You can request for a transfer of the money into your own bank account once you have ₹250 or more saved up in your account. You can also try www.paidkart.com, www.pennyful.in and www.gopaisa.com.



Price Comparisons

Phonecurry.com
As is evident from the name, Phonecurry lets you compare prices for mobile phones. You can search for a smartphone within a specified price range according to your requirements or browse through popular lists. The site shows you the lowest price available across various e-commerce websites, along with a direct link to buy the product and links to expert reviews.

Mysmartprice.com
Mysmartprice lets you compare prices for electronics, apparel, baby products, beauty products, kitchen appliances and even health products. Apart from viewing prices across various online retailers, you can also set to be notified via mail alert for a price drop on a particular product. The site also has a price history graph for the price of each product – this can be helpful to understand the price change pattern of a product.

Ixigo.com
If you're specifically looking for travel deals, check out Ixigo. Here, you can compare fares for flights, trains, hotels and buses across flight operators and travel websites. They also have an option to set fare alerts and can display a lowest fare graph to find the best deals. You can also compare prices of destination packages across various operators. A new addition is their LTC cashback offer through which you can redeem cash on completion of a travel booked via Ixigo.

Junglee.com
Junglee lets you compare prices of a product across more than 2,300 shopping websites. You can compare prices for electronics, books, appliances, toys, men/women apparel, furniture, baby products, gourmet food items, health products, musical instruments, pet supplies and even automobile accessories. You can view prices across various websites, seller rating, and estimated delivery times. You can also set to be notified of a price drop via mail.

Compareraja.com
Along with detailed price comparisons, Compareraja shows you various coupons available on the site for additional discounts. If there are any special offers running on the website, they too are listed along with the price details for the product. This allows you to find the best price and save additional money on an online retailer. Like many other websites, you can set a price drop mail alert so that you don't have to keep checking back.

LAUNCH PAD



Xolo Omega: Omega is a new smartphone from Xolo and comes in two variants – Omega 5.0 (5-inch HD display) and Omega 5.5 (5.5-inch HD display). The phones run Xolo's own Hive user interface based on Android 4.4. Both phones have octa core processors, 1GB RAM and 8GB storage. In terms of camera, the Omega 5.0 has an 8MP primary camera and 2,100mAh battery while the Omega 5.5 sports a 13MP rear camera with a 2,600mAh battery. Common features include a microSD slot for expansion, 2MP front camera, 3G support, WiFi and Bluetooth connectivity.



Acer Liquid smartphone series: Acer's smartphone series includes two phones: Liquid Jade and Liquid E700. Both phones have 5-inch HD displays (1280 x 720 pixels), quad core Mediatek processors, 2GB RAM, 16GB storage, microSD slots (up to 32GB supported), 2MP front camera and Android 4.4. Liquid Jade is a dual SIM smartphone with a 13MP rear camera and 2,100mAh battery. The Liquid E700 is a triple SIM device with 8MP rear camera and a 3,500mAh battery. Both phones will be available exclusively on Snapdeal.



Asus Zenfone 5 Lite: As is evident from the name, this is a cheaper version of the Asus Zenfone 5. While it still has a 5-inch display, resolution has been reduced to 960 x 540 pixels. Specs include a 1.2GHz dual core Intel Atom processor, 1GB RAM and 8GB storage. The dual SIM smartphone has dual cameras (8MP rear, VGA front) and a microSD slot for expansion (up to 64GB supported). Other features include Android 4.4 with Asus' Zen UI, 3G support, WiFi, Bluetooth 4.0 and GPS. The only improvement is the increased battery capacity (2,500mAh) but that comes at the cost of the phone being a tad thicker than the first Zenfone 5.



Intex Aqua i5 Octa: This budget smartphone from Intex is powered by a 1.4GHz Mediatek octacore processor and runs Android 4.4. Other specifications include 1GB RAM, 8GB storage, a microSD slot for expansion (up to 32GB supported) and a 2,000mAh battery. The dual SIM phone has a 5-inch display with a resolution of 960 x 540 pixels, dual cameras (13MP rear, 5MP front) and USB host. Other features include 3G, WiFi, Bluetooth, GPS, compass, gravity sensor, proximity sensor and ambient light sensor. The phone will be available exclusively on Amazon India.



Micromax Canvas Xpress: The Canvas Xpress is a new dual SIM Android smartphone that follows in the footsteps of the Android One series. It features a 4.5-inch display (854 x 480 pixels), a 'metallic edged body', 1.3GHz quad core processor, 1GB RAM, 8GB storage (expandable, up to 32GB supported) and a 1950 mAh battery. The 5MP rear camera is capable of recording 720p video. The front camera is a VGA unit. Other features include 3G support, WiFi, Bluetooth, light sensor, gravity and proximity sensor. The phone will be available exclusively on Flipkart.



Toshiba WT-8: This is Toshiba's new 8-inch (1280 x 800 pixels) tablet running Windows 8.1. It is powered by a quad core Intel Atom processor, 1GB RAM and has 32GB storage (expandable, up to 128GB cards supported). The tablet is a lightweight 385 grams, has 4 dual speakers, dual cameras (5MP rear, 1.2MP front), USB host, WiFi and Bluetooth connectivity. The box includes a USB data and charge 'Y-cable' that lets you use a USB accessory while charging the tablet. It will be available exclusively on Amazon India.

ET REVIEW

Smartphones | Tablets | Cameras | Apps | Laptops | Games | DSLRs | Televisions | Home Theatres | Projectors

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To a certain set of people, you will never have to explain what OnePlus is and why they're so popular. Less than a year after inception, this Shenzhen based company founded by two young entrepreneurs has managed to capture the hearts and minds of geeks everywhere. The reason is simple – the company wants to get the best possible product out at the best possible price. They make little to no money upfront (on the sale of the phone), instead choosing to first acquire 'fans', disrupt the current state of the industry (which they see as flawed) and then look at monetising in the long term. Demand for their first phone, the One, is so strong that they have to use a unique invite system to get the product to their fans. The invite system has been called various names by detractors, but it works – skyrocketing the product's popularity and at the same time, allowing the young company to scale up gradually without over-stressing the manufacturing, logistics and service.

The device itself is a revelation considering the price. There is only one version available right now – the 64GB sandstone black (which is again unique in terms of the sandpaper-like back panel). The rough finish feels unlike any other phone you may have held, but in a good way. It's memorable and makes for a great grip. The attention to detail is astounding and the One reeks of quality workmanship and design. The back panel is removable though you would need a special tool called a spudger – it's not designed to be user removable so the micro SIM is housed in a removable tray. The memory is not expandable which could be a deal-breaker for some (not because of the lack of space – you have 64GB – but for those who like to swap cards between devices).

CyanogenMod was touted as one of the main features of the One – the super-customisable

ROM has a large fan following and active community around the world. However, because of an exclusive deal that Cyanogen has signed with another Indian company, it will not be officially supporting the OnePlus One. The device will still come with CyanogenMod and you can choose to retain it and do updates manually. Or, you could choose to upgrade to OnePlus' own Android L based ROM which will be out in Feb 2015. The company promises that the new ROM will be close to stock Android without any bloatware to slow down the device. This spells good news for anyone who likes to run their Android phone fast and lean.

SPECTACULAR VALUE & PERFORMANCE
The display is a 5.5-inch 1080p IPS LCD and offers good performance – especially with colours and outdoor readability. The contrast and viewing angles may not match a super amoled panel but are still pretty good. Having said that, there are some irregularities in the display. Specifically, we have observed a yellow hue on certain parts of the screen and different colour casts on different devices. The irregularities, if present, are minor irritants at best and only noticeable to those in the know, when viewing a white test screen.

The camera is a 13MP unit with multi lens optics and an Exmor sensor borrowed from Sony. While it can't match the expensive new flagships like the iPhone 6 Plus and Galaxy Note 4 in performance, it still performs well above its price range with rich colours, good low light performance, depth of field and sharp details. As a plus, it offers brilliant uncompressed 4k video recording too while the front camera is capable of 1080p video. Performance from the Qualcomm Snapdragon 801 quad core processor is strong – bolstered by the 3GB RAM and Adreno 330 GPU. The software benchmarks place it above the Xiaomi Mi4 and HTC One M8 but below the Samsung Galaxy Note 4.

OnePlus One
₹21,999
★★★★★
Spectacular value, great design, build, performance & attention to detail
Invite system limits potential, no OTA Cyanogen updates for India units, some devices have yellowish screens or a slight yellow hue towards screen edges

ALSO SEE **Lenovo Vibe X2**
₹19,999
Mediatek octa core, 2GB RAM, 5-inch IPS LCD (1920 x 1080), dual SIM, 32GB storage, 13MP rear + 5MP front, 4G capable, BT 4.1, WiFi ac, GPS, FM, 2,300mAh battery, Android 4.4, 120 grams

HARD TO RESIST BUT DIFFICULT TO GET
Some of the unique software enhancements include the AudioFX (5 band equaliser plus other effects), Screencast (to record everything on the screen as a video, complete with screen presses), Privacy Guard (to control the amount of information about you that the installed apps can access), a built in call/message blacklist and loads of customisation options that go beyond what the typical Android phone gives you (processor performance profiles, custom notification lights, custom lock screens, navigation bar,

SPECIFICATIONS
2.5GHz Qualcomm Snapdragon 801, 3GB RAM, 64GB storage (non expandable), 5.5-inch 1080p LCD, 13MP rear + 5MP front, 4K video recording, 4G capable, BT 4.1, WiFi ac, NFC, 3,100mAh battery, Android 4.4, 162 grams



screen off animations, notification drawer behaviour and so on).
If we were to nitpick, OnePlus could still add a few more things – an IR emitter (for universal remote), microSD slot, removable battery and water/dust proofing. So, in a nutshell, you get fantastic hardware and performance, great camera, good battery life and unbeatable value. Anyone looking for a flagship phone for less money will find it hard to resist. It is highly recommended and definitely worth a buy – provided you can get your hands on an invite.