



Online Shopping Warning Signs *

Law enforcement officials who have worked cases involving Craigslist say there are a number of warning flags that may indicate the person placing an ad is involved in criminal activity. These may also be applied to other online “shopping centers” where individual sellers and buyers can post their advertisements for goods and services.

- The seller does not know specific or technical information about the product or how it works.
- The price of a new or used good is substantially below its market value – even 10 percent or less of its market value.
- The seller stresses the need to sell it immediately, at all hours, and only will accept cash.
- A complex product, like a computer or digital camera, lacks accessories, owners manuals or original packaging.
- Items advertised as new have either never been opened or do not include original packaging.
- Serial numbers have been removed.
- The seller insists on meeting in public locations, even for large household items.

* **Cracking down on Craigslist crimes - The online classifieds are home to thieves, con artists, prostitution** By Jim Redden *The Times*, Nov 29, 2007