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INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY IN A GLOBAL SOCIETY
HIGHER LEVEL AND STANDARD LEVEL
PAPER 2

Monday 19 May 2014 (morning)

1 hour 15 minutes

ARTICLE

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

• Do not open this booklet until instructed to do so.
• This booklet contains the article required for information technology in a global society higher level and standard level paper 2.
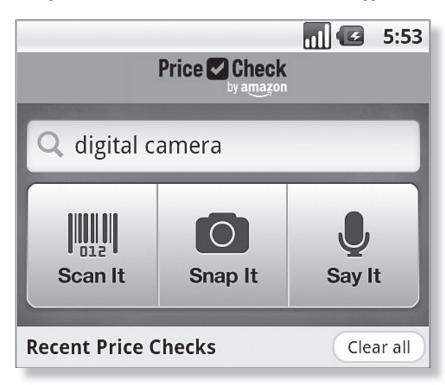
Theme: Business and employment

IT system: Using cell/mobile/smart phones and online databases

Smart phones that can be used to access the internet have become less expensive and increasingly popular, changing the way people shop. More and more people are using smart phones to buy goods that they used to buy in local stores. In China, for example, people who used smart phones to buy goods and services mostly bought digital products such as ringtones and games, but that has
5   changed. Now Taobao, one of China's most popular online shopping companies, reports that physical merchandise such as shoes, baby products, cosmetics, and clothing account for a large proportion of online sales. In China, the number of online transactions tends to peak when people are commuting to and from work. In fact, people can now shop anywhere.

Many shoppers are still going to local stores as they still enjoy a shopping environment where they
10   can touch and try on goods and ask assistants for advice. However, a significant number of shoppers avoid salespeople, preferring to use an app (an application – typically a small specialized program downloaded onto mobile devices) to check the product online and frequently going on to buy it from a competitor at a lower price. In the UK, researchers report that "One in every three mobile (shopping) transactions is done while in a store."

15   Shoppers can do this because Amazon and other sites now provide easy-to-use mobile shopping apps that allow shoppers to check prices, find discount coupons, and research product reviews and details online. The diagram below shows how Amazon's Price Check App looks on a smart phone.

[Source: www.amazon.com/Amazon-com-Price Check/dp/B005QTZSRA/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1346776760&sr=8-1& keywords=amazon+price+check+app, 5 October 2012]

Once they have used the app to access information about the product, shoppers can use their smart phone to purchase items online. They can even do this in a store if the price online is better than
20   in the store. They can also choose not to buy the product if the reviews are poor.

In order to purchase these items online, shoppers are required to set up an account and provide personal information. This information is held in the store's online database. Additional information, such as the shopper's location, may be picked up from the smart phone.

[Source: www.business2community.com/mobile-apps/mobile-shopping-soars-in-china-as-smartphones-shopping-apps-proliferate-0221436; www.intersperience.com/knowledge_more.asp?know_ID=63 and http://mobileoffice.about.com/od/smartphoneapps/tp/The-Best-Mobile-Shopping-Apps.htm?p=1, 5 October 2012]