

Front Lines

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ShipMyPlants.com Comes Online

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This is a concept I've been hearing about for a little while now and we received word of the official launch of [ShipMyPlants.com](https://shipmyplants.com) late last week.

It's not necessarily a new concept, as it's essentially what Amazon does, but with an industry-oriented twist. It's an online, multi-vendor platform where sellers post products and buyers are directed to them based on their location. Visitors put in their ZIP code right away and the product they see would be from the closest seller to them (something Amazon doesn't do, at least not that I'm aware of).



The twist is, for the sellers on the site, there are a couple of benefits. One, the barrier to entry is much lower than larger online platforms—this is based on a membership fee (there are tiers available based on the amount of products a seller wants to post). There are additional fees, like a transaction fee and commission, details of which you can find in the “Sellers FAQ” on the site.

Another benefit is the embedded NetPS Plant Finder Database, which has nearly 40,000 unique plant listings already built in. That means the sellers don't have to find images, write up a description and cultural information or add it to the platform—it's already in there. However, the site isn't limited to plant material, and sellers of all sizes can list hardgoods, décor, controls and more.

Currently, if you peruse the site, you'll notice lots of products posted by Alsip Home & Nursery, a garden center with stores in Illinois and Indiana (or at least that's what I see based on my ZIP code). That's because Rich Christakes, founder and CEO of ShipMyPlants.com, is also the CEO of Alsip and has been for over 20 years.

“Niche marketplaces are the future of retail,” he said in the recent announcement of the website's launch. “Until now, the consumer horticulture industry did not have any dedicated platform in which people can buy and sell goods at lower commission fees than our traditional big-box marketplaces.

By seamlessly connecting plant buyers with sellers, it's an ideal avenue for green industry businesses to establish turnkey e-commerce stores with minimal time and investment.”

It's an interesting concept, and if you don't already have e-commerce, it might be worth checking it out to see if it

works for you! **GP**