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Call 4 Action: Save Money When Ordering Products Online

POSTED: 4:41 pm EDT May 7, 2008

PITTSBURGH -- Shopping online is a great way to find the lowest price for a product.

But with gas prices surging, your total cost barely resembles the advertised price after you add up all of the extras.

That's not necessarily for the product, but for the shipping -- including something known as a fuel surcharge.

The Orange Savings Account advertisement showing 3.00% APY, No Fees, No Minimums, ING DIRECT logo, and Member FDIC.

It sounded like a killer deal -- until adding standard flower delivery (\$9.99), vase shipping (\$1.63), a new "courier fuel surcharge" (\$1.93) and tax (\$1.50).

The total was just over \$45 -- or 50 percent more than the advertised price.

But Web sites like freeshippingon.com will link you to thousands of products, including flowers, that come with free shipping. These sites will help you find free-shipping coupon codes that the online retailers don't always advertise.

Don't forget about the different shipping options that are available.

"People are going to use three-day shipping instead of overnight. They'll slow down a little. They'll be a little more price sensitive," said Carnegie Mellon University economist Robert Strauss.

Also, companies like Wal-Mart will ship your order to their nearest store for free. But you should always do the math and figure out what's cheaper, the gas for your car or the cost of shipping.

Here's one more thing to consider: Does a Web site charge for each individually shipped item? If not, order as many as you can at the same time.

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Call 4 Action has found a few ways to get around that, and save you money.

Mother's Day is the first example. Reporter Aaron Saykin found a price of \$29.99 for two dozen assorted roses that he wanted to be sent to his grandmother.

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