

## THE DIGITAL SOLUTION

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### Buy the Stroller Now or Wait for a Price Drop?

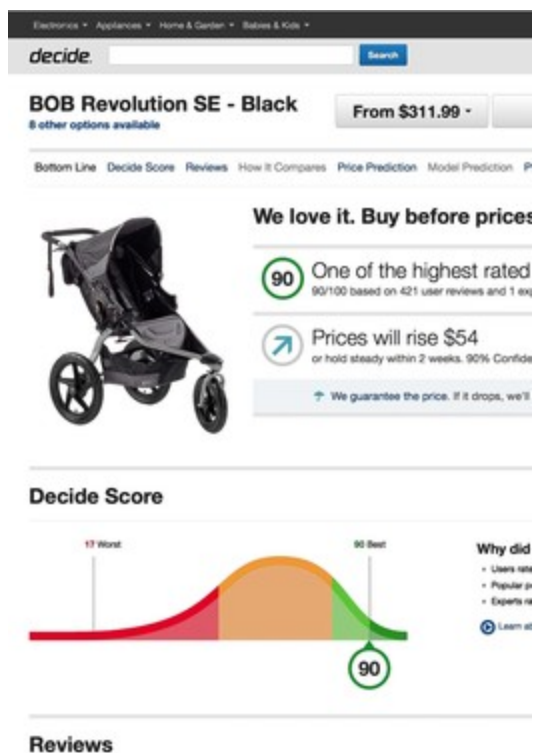
*Decide.com Adds Children's Gear to the Range of Products Whose Prices It Forecasts; Green Means Go for It*

By KATHERINE BOEHRET



Decide.com, a website that can predict if a price of a product will go up or down, has launched a new category of products that are especially challenging to buy: Babies & Kids. WSJ's Katie Boehret says the site will be a lifesaver for some shoppers.

After more than a decade of online shopping, it's still difficult to comparison shop without doing a lot of detective work. People read consumer-product reviews, troll the Web for prices, ask friends for input and create spreadsheets compiling all of these factors.



Decide.com

Part of the Decide.com page for the BOB Revolution SE stroller. The graph shows its Decide Score and its place on the site's color-coded system. If a product's score is in the green, Decide suggests buying it. Yellow means a buyer can do better and red means don't buy it.

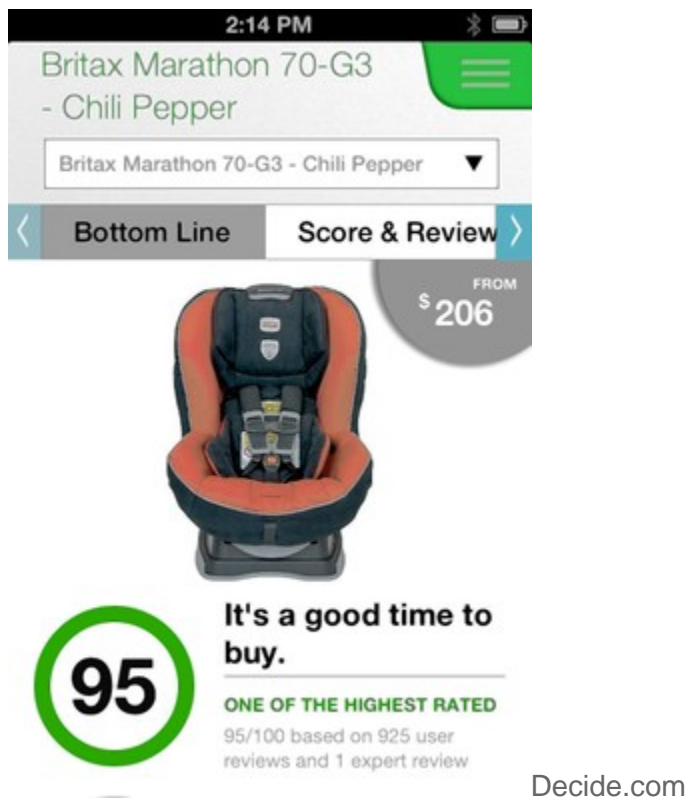
This week, I put my feet up and let an algorithm do the work for me by using Decide.com.

This website has two main features that help it tell you whether or not you should buy something. First, it gives products a Decide Score out of 100 points based on user reviews, as well as expert reviews from sources like Consumer Reports. Second, it uses a price-predicting technology to tell you whether or not the price is likely to go up or down in the next two weeks, so you don't have to go through the frustration of buying something only to see the price drop right after.

Tuesday, Decide.com launched a new category of products that are particularly challenging to buy: Babies & Kids. This category is a significant addition to the site that triples its number of products. Decide.com now covers 135 categories and 2.9 million products. By the end of this year, the company plans to cover 100 million products in every major category found on [Amazon.com](#) [AMZN](#) -0.58% .

Decide.com launched two years ago with a focus on consumer electronics and gadgets and expanded last year to include appliances and home and garden items. It was co-founded by the same person who created Farecast, which predicts airline ticket prices and was bought by [Microsoft](#) [MSFT](#) +0.85% for use in Bing Travel.

Its price-prediction technology, which the company claims is 80% accurate, works by looking at over 100 factors, including past price trends; seasonality; product life cycle; the number of retailers carrying the item, which reflects price competition; and other market signals.



The bottom line on a car seat.

I happen to be a prime candidate for the new Babies & Kids category as I'm expecting my first child in September. Unlike creating a wedding registry, where I selected items I knew I liked and had used before, I'm intimidated by figuring out which baby products to get. On my first trip to a baby store, I left overwhelmed and teary with hardly anything on my registry, convinced I would select the wrong things.

I got early access to Decide.com's Babies & Kids category and I've been using it as well as the rest of the website for the past two weeks. Compared with other sites that are littered with text, confusing graphics and ads, Decide.com is a breath of fresh air.

People can use Decide.com free of charge to view Decide Scores and up to eight price predictions. For an annual membership fee of \$30, you get unlimited price predictions and price guarantees, under which Decide.com pays you via PayPal or a check when the price of something you buy drops within two weeks. An iOS app is available now and an Android app is in the works.

On the downside, not all products have Decide Scores. Instead, they just say whether or not now is a good time to buy. And price guarantees don't include factors like shipping and tax. You also can't buy something directly from Decide.com. You must navigate out to another online retailer like Amazon, Lowe's or [Wal-MartWMT -0.08%](#).

Decide limits the amount of information you see on each initial page and circles the Decide Score with a color-coded system of dark green, light green, yellow and red to mean We Love It, We Like It, You Can Do Better or Don't Buy It, respectively. The scores change daily as the site takes in new reviews, which carry more weight than older ones, and they often change in real time, the company says.

I sprinted through searches for highchairs, carriers, strollers, refrigerators, laptops and kitchen hoods. I especially appreciated seeing all of a product's user reviews compiled in one neat list. With one click, I could read the highest or lowest ratings.

Users can start a search on Decide.com by typing in their exact product or manufacturer name, like "Ergobaby" or "Samsung." They can also opt to search by category and subcategory like Babies & Kids—Strollers.

Search results immediately fill the page in a clean grid. And a handy cheat sheet on the left summarizes the page so you know what you'll find without scrolling through all of the products.

One unexpected perk of using Decide.com: I discovered online websites I didn't know about like Albee Baby, where I found a good price for an umbrella stroller with a 90 Decide Score; and Appliances Connection, where I found the best price for a new Samsung refrigerator that scored a 91 on Decide.com.

I found a BOB Revolution SE stroller that Decide.com said was at one of its lowest-ever prices. I was fascinated to see the stroller cost \$312 at JustKidsStore.com, while the same stroller at Nordstrom cost \$449. Decide.com's price predictor said it was 90% sure prices would rise \$54 within the next two weeks, so it suggested buying now. A handy chart showed me the price of this stroller over the past two years.

If you see a product you like, but you don't feel like buying it right then, click an option to set up an email alert. You'll get email notifications if the prices goes up or down, and you can tell Decide when to send these alerts (daily, only when price fluctuates or when the price changes by a certain amount).

Decide.com's frank explanations and clean interface will be a lifesaver to online shoppers, and its new Baby & Kids category will be especially appreciated by expectant mothers like me.

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