

May One Take Advantage of a Price Glitch?

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Question: When engaging in online commerce, one often discovers price glitches where a mistake was clearly made in the price given online. For example, one may find a product or deal that is supposed to be worth \$1,200 but is listed by mistake for \$120. Is it permitted to take advantage of such a price glitch? Does it matter whether one finds it on one's own or on a website dedicated to tracking such occurrences?

Answer: It is very difficult to claim that an actual *issur* exists in such cases. After all, there is no problem of *gezel akum* (stealing from a non-Jew) or *mateh akum* (deceiving a non-Jew), since purchasing the item is entirely legal.

Nevertheless, perhaps we should consider as a community whether it is appropriate to take advantage of such mistakes en masse. Due to our ability to communicate with each other quickly and effectively, we in the *frum* community are often the ones who take advantage of these glitches. This capitalizing on such mistakes on a mass level could potentially damage our image and reputation as religious Jews.

The Smag (Sefer Mitzvos Gedolos) states that when *mashiach* comes, we do not want the *goyim* to question us at this time, it may affect our reputation in the eyes of others.

It is therefore recommended that everyone consult their individual *moreh hora'ah* (rabbinic authority) before taking advantage of a price glitch.

With regard to the second part of the question, although there may not be a difference between taking advantage of a price glitch when stumbling across it on one's own and finding it through a site dedicated to tracking such glitches, perhaps one should think twice before publicizing the glitch or spreading it further to others for the reasons discussed above.