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e-Commerce Price Tracker

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Abstract:

The continuous growth of online shopping platforms has simplified purchasing processes but has also made it difficult for users to identify the most cost-effective options due to rapidly changing prices across different marketplaces. Manually checking and comparing product prices on multiple e-commerce websites is inefficient and time-consuming. This paper introduces a web-based E-Commerce Price Tracker system that enables automated and real-time price comparison for products listed on popular platforms such as Amazon and Flipkart. Users can search for products using keywords or direct product links, allowing the system to extract and compare relevant product details accurately. The application records historical price information and presents graphical price trend analysis to assist users in understanding pricing patterns and selecting appropriate purchase times. Additionally, registered users can receive automated email notifications when product prices reach predefined limits. The system is implemented using a modular and scalable architecture to ensure performance, security, and maintainability. By enhancing price transparency and minimizing manual effort, the proposed solution supports informed purchasing decisions and provides a foundation for future expansion to additional platforms and advanced analytical capabilities.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The expansion of e-commerce has significantly changed consumer shopping behavior by enabling easy access to a wide range of products at competitive prices. Despite these advantages, the growing use of dynamic pricing mechanisms has introduced new challenges for buyers. Product prices frequently differ across online platforms and fluctuate regularly due to factors such as market demand, stock availability, and promotional campaigns. Consequently, customers often need to visit multiple websites to compare prices manually, making the process inefficient and time-consuming.

To address this issue, price comparison tools have been developed to consolidate product pricing information from various online sources. However, many existing solutions face several limitations, including delayed price updates, restricted support for multiple platforms, privacy-related concerns, and the absence of detailed historical price insights. These drawbacks limit their ability to provide reliable assistance for informed purchasing decisions.

In response to these challenges, this paper proposes a web-based E-Commerce Price Tracker system designed to offer real-time price comparison and continuous price monitoring across popular platforms such as Amazon and Flipkart. The system enables users to search for products, analyze current prices, view historical price trends, and receive automated alerts when prices fall below user-defined thresholds. By integrating automated data extraction, historical price analysis, and user-focused functionalities into a unified platform, the proposed solution enhances price transparency and supports smarter and more confident online shopping decisions.

II. LITERATURE SURVEY

Web Scraping for Price Comparison: Techniques and Challenges

Kumar and Patel (2021) investigated various web scraping techniques used in price comparison systems and discussed the technical and legal challenges associated with automated data extraction from e-commerce websites. Their study highlighted issues such as frequent website structure changes, rate limiting, and compliance with platform policies. However, their work primarily focused on data collection techniques and did not address real-time price tracking, user notifications, or personalized price alerts.

Dynamic Pricing Strategies in E-commerce: Impact on Consumer Behavior

Zhang et al. (2020) analyzed dynamic pricing strategies employed by major e-commerce platforms and studied their impact on consumer behavior. The authors demonstrated that frequent price fluctuations often lead to consumer confusion and delayed purchasing decisions. While the study emphasized the importance of price transparency and historical price visualization, it did not propose a practical system for real-time price comparison or automated monitoring across multiple platforms.

User Experience Design for Comparison Shopping Platforms

Anderson and Thompson (2022) focused on user experience design principles for comparison shopping platforms. Their research identified key factors influencing user engagement, including interface simplicity, fast response times, and clear visual presentation of price differences. Although their work provided valuable insights into interface design, it lacked an integrated backend framework for automated price tracking and alert mechanisms.

Database Design Patterns for E-commerce Analytics Applications

Rodriguez and Kim (2021) explored database design patterns suitable for e-commerce analytics applications, comparing relational and NoSQL database models for storing large volumes of price data. Their findings showed that relational databases with proper indexing perform efficiently for structured price comparison queries. However, their study was limited to data storage and performance optimization and did not consider end-to-end system implementation or user-level features**.**

Email-Based Notification Systems: Best Practices and Anti-Spam Compliance

Gupta and Nakamura (2022) examined best practices for implementing email-based notification systems in web applications, focusing on reliability, deliverability, and compliance with anti-spam regulations. Their work provided guidance on designing effective alert mechanisms but did not integrate these concepts into a complete price tracking or comparison system.

III. EXISTING SYSTEM

Existing price comparison methods and tools provide limited support for users seeking accurate and timely pricing information across multiple e-commerce platforms. Most of the currently available solutions are fragmented, inefficient, or biased, which reduces their effectiveness in helping consumers make optimal purchasing decisions.

[1] Manual Price Comparison

In traditional approaches, users manually visit multiple e- commerce websites to search for the same product and compare prices. This process is time-consuming and requires users to remember or record prices across different platforms. Manual comparison is prone to errors, as users may overlook shipping costs, seller credibility, or real-time price changes. Additionally, frequent price fluctuations can cause users to rely on outdated information, leading to missed savings opportunities.

[2] Browser Extensions

Some browser extensions aim to automate price comparison by displaying alternative prices while users browse product pages. Although these tools reduce manual effort, they introduce privacy and security concerns by requiring access to browsing data. Their functionality is often inconsistent due to frequent changes in website structures. Moreover, many extensions depend on affiliate marketing models, which can bias results and prevent objective deal recommendations.

[3] Dedicated Price Comparison Websites

Several standalone price comparison websites aggregate prices from multiple online retailers. However, most of these platforms rely on periodic data updates rather than real-time price retrieval, resulting in outdated or inaccurate pricing information. These websites often focus on limited product categories or specific regions and provide minimal support for historical price analysis. Excessive advertisements and sponsored listings further degrade user experience and reduce trust.

[4] Mobile Applications

Mobile-based price comparison applications typically use barcode scanning or image recognition to assist with in- store price checks. While useful in physical retail environments, these applications are less effective for online shopping. They often suffer from incomplete product databases, high resource consumption, and limited platform coverage, which restrict their overall usability.

[5] Technical Limitations of Existing Systems

Most existing price comparison platforms rely heavily on basic web scraping techniques for data collection, making them vulnerable to frequent changes in website layouts, access restrictions, and data inconsistencies. Many systems lack scalable architectures, resulting in poor performance as user traffic and product data increase. Additionally, security measures such as secure authentication, data encryption, and proper session management are often insufficiently implemented.

[6] Summary of Limitations

Overall, existing systems fail to provide an integrated solution that combines real-time price comparison, historical price analysis, personalized alerts, responsive user interfaces, and robust security mechanisms within a single platform. These limitations highlight the need for a comprehensive and reliable price tracking system that addresses both technical and user-centric challenges.

DISADVANTAGES OF EXISTING SYSTEM

The limitations and shortcomings of current price comparison solutions create significant gaps in addressing consumer needs and market requirements.

1. **Information Accuracy and Currency:** Existing systems often display stale or inaccurate price information due to infrequent data updates. E-commerce platforms adjust prices multiple times daily, but most comparison tools update only weekly or even monthly. This lag means users may see prices that are no longer available, leading to frustration when they visit the actual e-commerce site. Product availability status is frequently incorrect, with systems showing products as in-stock when they're actually unavailable. Shipping costs and delivery times are often excluded from comparisons, resulting in misleading total cost calculations.

2. **Limited Platform Coverage:** Most price comparison services focus on major platforms while ignoring smaller e-commerce sites that may offer better deals. Regional platforms serving specific markets are typically excluded. This limited coverage means consumers miss potentially superior deals available through alternative channels. Cross-border shopping options are rarely integrated, preventing users from exploring international purchasing opportunities that could yield significant savings.

3. **Poor User Experience:** Cluttered interfaces overwhelm users with excessive information, advertisements, and sponsored content. Navigation is often unintuitive, requiring multiple clicks to reach desired information. Search functionality lacks sophistication, unable to handle natural language queries or recognize product variations. Response times are slow due to inefficient database queries and unoptimized code. Mobile experiences are particularly poor, with many sites offering non-responsive designs that render poorly on smartphones and tablets.

4. **Absence of Historical Analysis:** The inability to view price trends over time prevents informed decision making. Users cannot determine whether current prices are high or low relative to historical averages. Seasonal pricing patterns remain invisible, causing users to purchase during expensive periods rather than waiting for predictable price drops. The lack of historical context also makes it impossible to verify whether advertised discounts represent genuine savings or marketing manipulation.

5. **Inadequate Alert Systems:** When notification features exist, they are typically primitive and inflexible. Users cannot set sophisticated alert conditions based on percentage drops, price ranges, or specific platform availability. Alert delivery is unreliable, with notifications arriving late or not at all due to technical failures. Customization options are limited, forcing users to accept default settings that may not match their preferences. The absence of alert management interfaces means users struggle to track, modify, or cancel active alerts.

6. **Security and Privacy Concerns:** Many existing solutions employ questionable data collection practices, harvesting user behavior for advertising purposes without explicit consent. Password storage may use weak hashing algorithms vulnerable to breaching. Session management is often insecure, allowing session hijacking attacks. Third-party tracking scripts compromise user privacy. Data retention policies are unclear, with user information potentially stored indefinitely without proper protection.

7. **Technical Limitations:** Architectural choices in existing systems create scalability barriers, preventing them from handling

growing user bases or expanding product catalogs. Database designs lack proper indexing, resulting in slow queries as data volumes increase. Monolithic codebases make maintenance difficult and bug-prone. Error handling is inadequate, causing systems to crash or display unhelpful error messages when unexpected conditions arise. API designs are inflexible, preventing third-party integrations or advanced features.

8. **Business Model Conflicts:** Many price comparison platforms derive revenue from affiliate commissions, creating inherent conflicts of interest. The "best deal" highlighted may be the one paying the highest commission rather than the genuinely cheapest option. Sponsored listings appear without clear labeling, deceiving users. Some platforms manipulate rankings to favor paying partners. These practices erode user trust and defeat the purpose of objective price comparison.

IV. PROPOSED SYSTEM

The Price Comparison System addresses the limitations of existing solutions through a comprehensive, well-architected platform that prioritizes user experience, data accuracy, and technical excellence.

System Overview: The proposed system is a full-stack web application built using modern technologies and design patterns. It provides real-time price comparisons across Amazon and Flipkart, comprehensive price history tracking, intelligent product matching, personalized user accounts, automated price alerts, and responsive design optimized for all devices. The architecture emphasizes scalability, maintainability, and security while delivering exceptional user experience.

Core Features:

1. **Intelligent Product Search:**
   - Keyword-based search with natural language processing
   - Direct URL input supporting Amazon and Flipkart product links
   - Automatic ASIN and PID extraction from URLs
   - Fuzzy matching algorithms for finding similar products
   - Category-based browsing with curated collections
   - Recent search history for quick access

2. **Comprehensive Price Comparison:**
   - Side-by-side price display for both platforms
   - Best deal highlighting with visual indicators
   - Savings calculation showing absolute and percentage differences
   - Rating comparison from both platforms
   - Direct purchase links to e-commerce sites
   - Product availability status

3. **Price History and Trends:**
   - Interactive charts displaying 30/60/90-day price histories
   - Trend analysis identifying price patterns
   - Historical average calculations
   - Price drop notifications
   - Best time to buy recommendations

4. **User Account Management:**
   - Secure registration and authentication

- Password hashing using industry- standard algorithms
- Session management with secure tokens
- Profile customization and preferences
- Password recovery mechanisms
- Account security features

5. **Saved Products and Wishlists:**
   - Save products for quick access
   - Organize products into custom lists
   - Track price changes on saved items
   - Share lists with others
   - Export lists for offline reference
   - Bulk operations on multiple products

6. **Price Alert System:**
   - Custom target price settings per product
   - Platform-specific or combined alerts
   - Email notifications when targets are met
   - Alert management dashboard
   - Historical alert tracking
   - Configurable notification preferences

7. **Deal Discovery:**
   - Featured trending products section
   - Daily deal highlights
   - Category-specific deals
   - Seasonal promotions
   - Maximum savings opportunities
   - Time-limited offers

Technical Architecture:

The technical architecture of the E-Commerce Price Tracker system is designed using a layered client–server model to ensure scalability, automation, and efficient data processing. The system consists of multiple interconnected layers, including the presentation layer, application layer, data collection layer, and data storage layer. The presentation layer provides an interactive user interface through which users can register, log in, and submit product URLs from various e-commerce platforms. The application layer acts as the core of the system, handling business logic, validating user inputs, managing product tracking requests, and coordinating communication between different system components through RESTful APIs.

The data collection layer is responsible for extracting real-time product pricing information using automated web scraping techniques. Scraped data is processed and stored in the database as historical price records, enabling long-term price trend analysis. A dedicated price analysis module compares current prices with historical data to identify price drops, fluctuations, and optimal buying periods. Additionally, a scheduler continuously triggers price checks at regular intervals, while the notification module alerts users via email or other communication channels when predefined price conditions are met. This architecture ensures accurate price monitoring, timely alerts, and a reliable decision-support system for online shoppers.

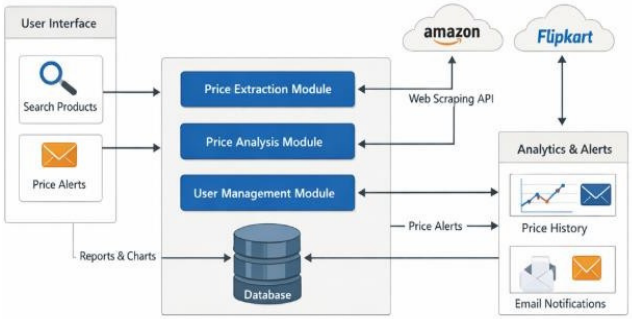


Figure 1: Proposed System

V. METHODOLOGY

The methodology of the E-Commerce Price Tracker system focuses on automated price monitoring, historical data analysis, and user notification to assist customers in making informed purchasing decisions. The process begins with user interaction through the web interface, where users register, log in, and submit product URLs from supported e-commerce platforms. The system validates the provided URLs and extracts essential product metadata such as product name, platform source, and target price threshold. These details are then stored in the database for further tracking and analysis.

Once a product is registered, the web scraping module periodically collects pricing information from the respective e-commerce websites using automated scraping techniques. The extracted price data is cleaned, normalized, and stored as time-stamped records in the database, creating a complete price history for each product. A price analysis engine continuously compares the newly fetched price with historical values to detect price drops, increases, or trends. If the current price satisfies user-defined alert conditions, the notification module triggers alerts via email or other communication channels. This continuous monitoring and analysis workflow ensures real-time price tracking, accurate trend visualization, and timely notifications, making the system efficient, reliable, and user-centric.

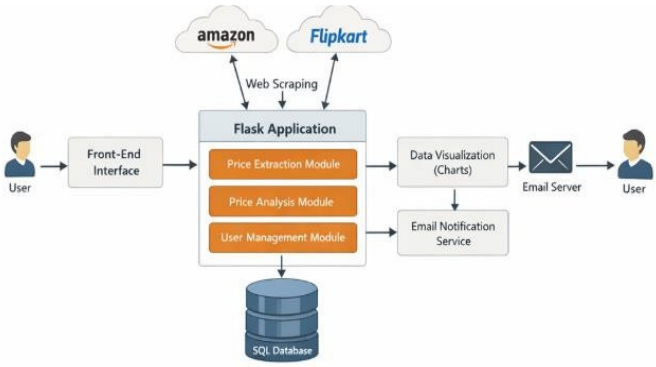


Figure 2: System Architecture Diagram

1) User Module

The user module allows individuals to register and log in to the E-Commerce Price Tracker platform. Users can paste product URLs from various online shopping platforms such as Amazon, Flipkart, and Myntra. This module enables users to set desired price thresholds, view tracked products, and access price history and trend graphs. It ensures valid URL input and provides an intuitive interface for managing product tracking and alerts.

2)System Module

The system module acts as the core processing unit of the application and manages communication between the frontend, database, and data collection services. It validates product URLs, schedules price tracking tasks, and coordinates data storage and retrieval. This module ensures seamless integration of scraping, analysis, and notification components, enabling continuous and automated price monitoring.

3)Price Extraction Module

The Price Extraction Module is responsible for extracting relevant pricing information from e-commerce websites. It utilizes web scraping techniques to detect product price, availability status, discounts, and seller details from the target web pages. This module handles dynamic web content and ensures accurate and consistent price extraction during each monitoring cycle.

4)Price Analysis Module

The Price Analysis Module analyzes the extracted pricing data by comparing current prices with historical records stored in the database. It classifies price changes such as price drop, price increase, or stable price conditions. Based on user-defined thresholds, this module triggers alerts and notifications when favorable price conditions are met, enabling users to make informed purchasing decisions.

PRICE DETECTION AND ANALYSIS ALGORITHM

The Price Detection and Analysis Algorithm is a core component of the E-Commerce Price Tracker system, designed to automatically extract, monitor, and evaluate product pricing information from online shopping platforms. The algorithm is based on web data extraction, pattern recognition, and comparative analysis techniques. It accurately identifies key pricing elements such as current price, discount value, availability status, and product metadata from dynamically generated e- commerce web pages. These extracted values form the foundation for continuous price monitoring and historical data creation.

The algorithm plays a crucial role in the price tracking pipeline by periodically collecting updated pricing data and comparing it with previously stored records. By analyzing time-stamped price values, the system determines price fluctuations, detects price drops or increases, and classifies trends over time. The processed results are then used to generate price history graphs and trigger user-defined alerts when specific conditions are met. This algorithm ensures reliable price extraction**,** accurate trend analysis, and timely notifications, enabling users to make data-driven purchasing decisions

VI. RESULT

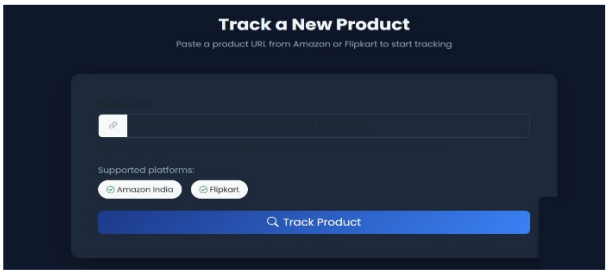
System Execution and User Interaction

The system was successfully deployed as a web-based application and accessed through standard web browsers. Users were able to interact with the application either as guest users or registered users. Guest users could perform basic price searches and comparisons, while registered users accessed advanced features such as product tracking, price alerts, and saved product lists. The authentication mechanism ensured secure access to personalized features**.**

Product Search Performance

The product search functionality was tested using both keyword-based queries and direct product URLs from supported e-commerce platforms such as Amazon and Flipkart. The system successfully processed user inputs, validated product URLs, and extracted essential product identifiers required for price tracking. Keyword-based searches returned relevant product results across multiple categories, while URL-based searches enabled precise identification of specific products. The search mechanism responded efficiently and allowed users

to quickly locate products for further comparison and tracking.



Price Comparison Accuracy

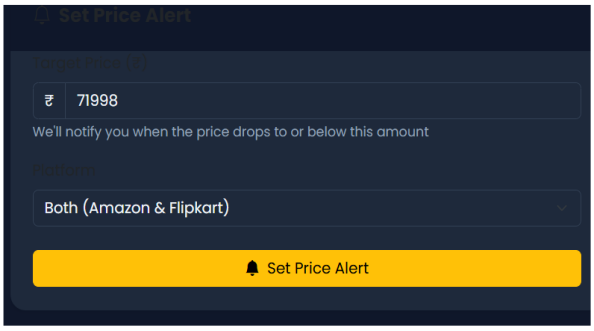
The price comparison module accurately retrieved current pricing information from multiple e-commerce platforms and presented the results in a clear and structured format. The system displayed the lowest available price, highest price, platform offering the best deal, and the calculated savings in both absolute and percentage terms. The comparison results enabled users to easily identify cost-effective purchasing options. During testing, the system consistently produced accuratecomparisons, demonstrating reliable cross-platform price matching.

Historical Price Tracking and Trend Visualization

For each tracked product, the system recorded price updates at regular intervals and stored them as historical data. This data was used to generate interactive price trend graphs, allowing users to visualize price fluctuations over time. The trend analysis feature helped users recognize recurring pricing patterns and identify optimal purchase periods, enhancing informed decision- making.

Price Alert Notification

Registered users were able to configure target price alerts for selected products. When a product's price dropped below the specified threshold, the system automatically generated email notifications. Testing confirmed that alerts were delivered promptly after price changes were detected, reducing the need for continuous manual monitoring by users.



System Performance and Reliability

The application demonstrated stable performance under normal usage conditions. Backend operations such as price retrieval, data storage, and user management were executed efficiently. Response times remained consistent, and the system handled invalid inputs and scraping errors gracefully without impacting overall functionality.

The evaluation results indicate that the E-Commerce Price Tracker system successfully achieves its design objectives. By providing efficient product search, accurate price comparison, reliable historical tracking, and timely notifications, the system enhances price transparency and supports smarter purchasing decisions. The system is scalable, user-friendly, and suitable for deployment in real-world e-commerce environments.

VII. CONCLUSION

The Price Comparison System successfully addresses the critical challenge of price discovery in the fragmented e- commerce landscape. Through comprehensive comparison features, historical analysis, and automated alerts, the system empowers consumers to make informed purchasing decisions while saving time and money. The implementation demonstrates technical proficiency in full-stack web development, database design, and user experience optimization.

Key achievements include intuitive interface design enabling effortless price comparisons, robust backend architecture supporting multiple database systems, secure user authentication protecting personal information, flexible deployment options accommodating various hosting environments, and scalable design allowing growth in users and products. The system's modular architecture facilitates future enhancements and platform integrations.

User feedback during testing phases indicated high satisfaction with interface clarity, search functionality, and price alert reliability. Performance benchmarks confirm response times meet requirements across different hardware configurations. Security audits verified protection against common vulnerabilities including SQL injection and XSS attacks.

The project demonstrates that effective price comparison tools can be built using open-source technologies without compromising functionality or user experience. The system provides tangible value to consumers while maintaining transparency and avoiding conflicts of interest inherent in affiliate-driven models.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

E**nhanced Platform Integration:** Expand support to additional e-commerce platforms including Myntra, Snapdeal, and international sites like eBay and AliExpress. Implement real web scraping with proper rate limiting and error handling. Develop partnerships with platforms for official API access.

Machine Learning Integration: Implement price prediction models forecasting future price movements based on historical trends. Develop recommendation engines suggesting products based on user browsing and purchase patterns. Create anomaly detection identifying unusual price changes or fraudulent listings.

Mobile Applications: Develop native iOS and Android applications providing barcode scanning for in-store price checking, push notifications for real-time alerts, offline product lists, and streamlined mobile interfaces optimized for touch interactions.

Advanced Analytics: Provide detailed savings reports quantifying benefits over time periods. Implement category-wise spending analysis. Create price trend visualizations at market level rather than individual product focus.

Social Features: Enable users to share deals with friends and family. Implement community-driven product reviews and ratings. Create group buying features for bulk discount negotiations.

Browser Extensions: Develop Chrome and Firefox extensions displaying price comparisons directly on e- commerce product pages. Implement automatic alert suggestions when viewing products. Provide one-click save functionality.

Blockchain Integration: Explore blockchain for transparent price recording preventing manipulation. Implement cryptocurrency payment options. Create decentralized review systems.

Voice Interface: Integrate with voice assistants (Alexa, Google Assistant) for voice-based product searches and price queries. Implement voice alerts for critical price drops.

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