

Background

Online services

Do you read fashion magazines and look at dresses by famous designers and think, 'How beautiful!?' Unfortunately, these dresses are **expensive**. We can't all pay one thousand dollars for one dress for one **special occasion**.

However, a new website has the **solution**. *Rent the runway* rents expensive dresses for one night. You choose from hundreds of dresses and order them *online. Then they deliver it for the special day. So now you can wear a dress from a famous fashion designer but you only pay one hundred dollars – not one thousand dollars! After you wear the dress, you put it in an envelope and send it back. The price includes cleaning.

So renting online is now big business. The company *Netflix* is a good example. You pay a **monthly subscription** and then you order your DVDs. Netflix

delivers the DVD in a day and you have the film for an *unlimited time – there are no **late fees**. Now, the company also rents computer games and customers can also watch films online at the Netflix website.

And if you can rent clothes, videos and computer games online, why not children's toys? Lori Pope is a young mother with two children. When she buys toys her children play with them for a few weeks and then don't use them. Now, Lori provides the perfect service with her company, *Baby Plays*. Her customers pay a subscription every month and she delivers four new toys. Now she has over 200 **regular customers** with lots of happy children!

So do you have a good business plan for online renting? Great, but be quick. Lots of other people do too!

Glossary

**online* = on the Internet

**unlimited time* = no end date

Exercises

1 Discuss these questions as a class.

- 1 What products do you rent?
- 2 Which companies rent products? For example: *Avis rents cars*.

2 These online companies rent products. Read the text quickly and match products a–d to the companies 1–3.

- 1 Rent the runway _____
 - 2 Netflix _____
 - 3 Baby Plays _____
- a DVDs
 - b toys
 - c dresses
 - d computer games

3 Read the text again. Are these statements true (T) or false (F)?

- 1 Women do not buy the dresses in fashion magazines because they don't like them.
- 2 *Rent the runway* delivers dresses and customers return them.
- 3 *Netflix* sells DVDs and computer games online.
- 4 Lori Pope rents toys for her children from the Internet.
- 5 The writer of the article thinks renting online is a good business idea.

4 Match the words in bold in the text to definitions 1–7.

- 1 an amount of money you regularly pay: _____
- 2 an important event such as a birthday, an anniversary, a party, etc.: _____
- 3 money you pay when something is late: _____
- 4 an answer to a problem: _____
- 5 every month: _____
- 6 a lot of money: _____
- 7 people buying your product or using your service all the time: _____

5 Complete the text with these verbs. Use the present simple and change the verb where necessary (for example: *order* – *orders*).

order deliver play rent be pay

www.computergamesdelivery.com

Don't buy computer games because ComputerGamesDelivery.com ¹_____ over a thousand different games. It ²_____ easy!

You can ³_____ a maximum of three games and we ⁴_____ them to your door in two days. And remember, you can ⁵_____ them for as long as you want because you never

⁶_____ a late fee with ComputerGamesDelivery.com.

6 Look at the verbs in 5. Talk about your company and its customers using the verbs.

7 Look back at the text and choose three words that you could use in your day-to-day work.

8 Work with a partner. Discuss these questions.

- 1 What is good about the services in the text? Do you want to use them?
- 2 Do you use other online services?
- 3 Do you have a new business idea for the Internet?