Project Proposal: Where2Buy – AI-Based Instant Finder for Online and Local Shops

Overview

Where2Buy is a lightweight, no-login web platform that helps users instantly find online stores and nearby physical shops for items they want to buy. Instead of searching each item one by one on Google, users can simply upload a photo of a handwritten list or type the items in a search bar. The platform uses AI to understand the input and provides separate results for online and offline shops.

Problem Statement

People often have to search for each item individually when shopping — whether it's shoes, books, clothes, or sports gear. This involves switching between Google, online marketplaces, local maps, and social platforms, wasting time and creating unnecessary hassle. There is no unified platform that handles both online and nearby store discovery efficiently.

Proposed Solution

Where2Buy will act as a third-party aggregator. Users can upload a photo of their shopping list (handwritten or typed) or type items directly into a search bar. The system, powered by Gemini API, will:

- Extract and understand the list of items using AI (OCR + NLP).
- Search and display relevant online stores with direct links (e.g., Daraz, Amazon, Instagram pages).
- Locate and display nearby offline stores using Google Maps API, showing store name, contact, directions, and status (open/closed).

No sign-up or user account is required. The user simply inputs their list and gets instant actionable results.

Key Features

- **No login required**: Completely open access platform.

- **Image and Text Input**: Upload image of list or type directly.
- **AI Extraction and Categorization**: Uses Gemini API for text understanding.
- **Online Stores Integration**: Provides links to websites and social media shops.
- **Offline Shops Discovery**: Uses Google Maps API to fetch nearby store information.
- **Clean UI**: Mobile-first, minimal interface for fast usage.

Optional Features (Future Work)

- "Add to Basket" to save items temporarily for later browsing.

Target Users

- Students and hostelites looking for daily essentials.
- Busy professionals wanting quick item lookup.
- People unfamiliar with online shopping but familiar with search basics.

Technology Stack

- **Frontend**: Next.js / React with Tailwind CSS
- **AI Processing**: Gemini API for image + text analysis
- **Backend (if needed)**: Node.js / Express
- **Map Integration**: Google Maps API
- **E-commerce APIs**: Daraz, Amazon, and Instagram scraping/API

Conclusion

Where2Buy bridges the gap between online and offline shopping by providing users a fast, AI-powered solution to find where they can buy their desired items — whether on a website or a nearby store. It saves time, reduces friction, and streamlines the discovery process without needing user sign-up or tracking.