

Cyber Monday—Better deals, less hassle

by JOSEPH PIMENTEL
AJPress

GLENDAL—For those who did not want to wake up in the early morning or camp out overnight for discounts at one of the local Best Buy, Target, Walmart or Macy's for Black Friday shopping, Cyber Mondays may offer a better solution with less hassle, according to recent surveys.

Black Friday crowds will have a less chaotic shopping option just three days later," said officials from the National Retail Federation (NRF). "Cyber Monday, the Monday after Thanksgiving, is expected to be more promotional than ever this year as retailers offer one-day sales and special offers to bring holiday shoppers online."

the first day of Holiday shopping, has become the busiest shopping day of the year with lines snaked around stores and angry shoppers all trying to get their hands on "door buster deals."

This year the NRF estimates that more than 128 million people will shop this weekend. And with the economy still sagging, that number may increase as the weekend is over.

However, Cyber Monday, the ceremonial kickoff to the online holiday shopping season, traditional retailers, who have long just marketed to walk in shoppers, will have thousands of promotions to offer this holiday season.

"As shoppers focus on price this holiday season, online retailers will be extremely competitive to offer the very best deals," said Scott Silverman, Executive Director of Shop.org. "Americans who are looking to put a dent in their holiday shopping will be able to find thousands of bargains on Cy-

ber Monday." According to an eHoliday Survey conducted for Shop.org, 83.7 percent of retailers have a special promotion for Cyber Monday, up from 72.2 percent last year. Websites like CyberMonday.com are expecting more than 1.5 million visitors.

A majority of those shopping will be workers with Internet access.

"72.8 million people will shop for holiday gifts from work," according to a Bigresearch survey, another survey done for Shop.org.

The Bigresearch survey found that 70 percent of young adults in the age 18 to 34 demographic with Internet access will shop at work and that men are more likely to shop from work than women (60.3% vs. 51.5%).

Adding to the increase in web shopping is the number of retail websites offering free shipping.

With Black Friday continuing to be as chaotic as ever, expect more shoppers staying home to shop online. ■



A little boy waits in a shopping cart for his mom at the Wal-Mart store in Mayfield Hts., Ohio on Thursday, Nov. 13, 2008. Wal-Mart Stores Inc. reported a 10 percent increase in third-quarter profit Thursday but trimmed its profit outlook because of the troubled global economy and the renewed strength of the dollar. AP Photo by Amy Sancetta

Black Friday shoppers out in force, but cautious

NEW YORK—Shoppers, who had snapped their wal-

lets shut since September, flocked to stores before dawn of Nov. 28 to grab deals on everything from TVs to toys on the traditional start of the holiday shopping season, feared to be the weakest in decades.

It was clear that despite the crowds that showed up for the discounts, shoppers' worries about the economy—massive layoffs, tightening credit and dwindling retirement accounts—tempered buying.

Black Friday received its name because it historically was the day when a surge of shoppers helped stores break into profitability for the full year. But this year, with rampant promotions of up to 70 percent throughout the month amid a deteriorating economy, the power of this landmark day for the retail industry could be fading.

Still, while it isn't a predictor of holiday sales, is an important barometer of people's willingness to spend for the rest of the season. And particularly this year, analysts will dissect how the economy is shaping buying habits in a season that many analysts predict could see a contraction in spending from a year ago. (AP)

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