

A promotional graphic for Black Friday. The background is a dark, monochromatic photograph of numerous gift boxes wrapped in black paper and tied with black ribbons. The boxes are scattered across the frame, creating a sense of abundance. In the center, the words "BLACK FRIDAY" are written in a large, white, sans-serif font. The text is enclosed within a thin, bright red rectangular border. The overall aesthetic is sleek and modern, emphasizing the theme of shopping and gifts.

BLACK
FRIDAY

The Genesis

In the American lexicon, any day that is preceded with “black” generally portends bad things. “Black” any day is not Wall Street’s best moment.

Black Tuesday foreshadowed the full and complete economic collapse of the Great Depression. Not a good thing.

But “Black Friday” — what’s the story? Well, sort of similar.

WHAT IT’S NOT

First time anybody ever heard of the term “Black Friday” was in 1869 and it was related to the market. Jay Gould and Jim Fisk, the president and vice president of the Erie Railroad and reputed to be Wall Street’s had a reputation as two of Wall Street’s most ruthless investors hatched a plot to drive up the price of gold, buying up huge reserves.

President Ulysses S. Grant smelled it out and flooded the market with gold. The counter measure precipitated a stock market crash.

“Black Friday” was felt by the U.S. economy for years, starting with the thousands of speculators who were left financially ruined.

Farmers were hardest hit. Many witnessed the value of



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their wheat and corn harvests dip by 50%.

The journal *Factory Management and Maintenance* in 1951 was said to have used the term to describe people calling in sick the day after Thanksgiving so they could have an extra day off work.

Or perhaps too much pumpkin pie.

WHAT IT IS

Santa’s elves are huffing and puffing on Black Friday, make no mistake, but the day was also rough on the Philadelphia police. That’s Black Friday as we know it, the day-after-Thanksgiving shopping mayhem.

“The Philadelphia Police Department used the term to

describe the traffic jams and intense crowding of the downtown retail stores,” said David Zyla, author of “How to Win at Shopping,” to the *Huffington Post*.

He noted one of the first uses of the term appeared in an ad in a 1966 issue of *The American Philatelist*. However, a story in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* in

1994 told the story of one of its reporters using the term.

Said that reporter, Joseph P. Barrett: “In the early 1960s, [Nathan] Kleger [another reporter] and I put together a front-page story for Thanksgiving and we appropriated the police term ‘Black Friday’ to describe the terrible traffic conditions.”



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Remember to Shop Local

The little guys of small business have struggled during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The holiday season offers a great opportunity to help them get back on their feet as the pandemic subsides and the economy rebounds with trillions of dollars poured in from our generous Uncle Sam. And there are many other good reasons to shop them.

YOUR MONEY STAYS LOCAL
That's another way to love your

neighbor during the holiday season. Each dollar you spend locally allows three times that amount to enter the local economy, according to a study conducted by the American Independent Business Alliance. Online shopping is the same.

Locally owned businesses generally buy supplies from other locally owned business, the staff eats out in the community and grabs a beer or coffee at the local pub or café. In short, multiple businesses benefit from your dollar spent.

Local business also invests in the community and, most importantly, non-profit organizations. The National Technical Reports Library

has produced data that shows local non-profits receive 350% more money from its local small business neighbors than from out-of-town and larger corporate retailers.

Among those are community shelters, fundraisers and other community partners.

Local business is also hiring its neighbors.

SHOPPING LOCAL IS ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY

When you buy local, your carbon footprint is decreased because your purchase doesn't have to be transported by air or ground. The locally owned business is also probably expending

fewer resources.

A BUSINESS BUILT ON SERVICE

The local small business also offers better customer service. Why? Because they have to work twice as hard to keep you coming back and referring others. The local business is the best way to receive individual, customized attention and products. The prices will be more competitive, too.

Small businesses selecting products based not on a national sales plan, but on their own interests and the needs of their local customers, guarantees a much broader range of product choices.

What Are the Best Deals?

Black Friday 2021 is on Nov. 26. Based on data from a year ago published by Techradar.com, the best deals will be found in the tastiness of the MacIntosh Apple, among other tech toys.

DO YOUR HOMEWORK

Follow your mother's advice from childhood and study hard. It's more than helpful for the big day. For example, some retailers will increase prices from August through to October to offer what appears to be amazing markdowns on Big Friday. Know the true market value.

Those markups are prevalent in expensive consumer electronics, such as TVs or laptops.

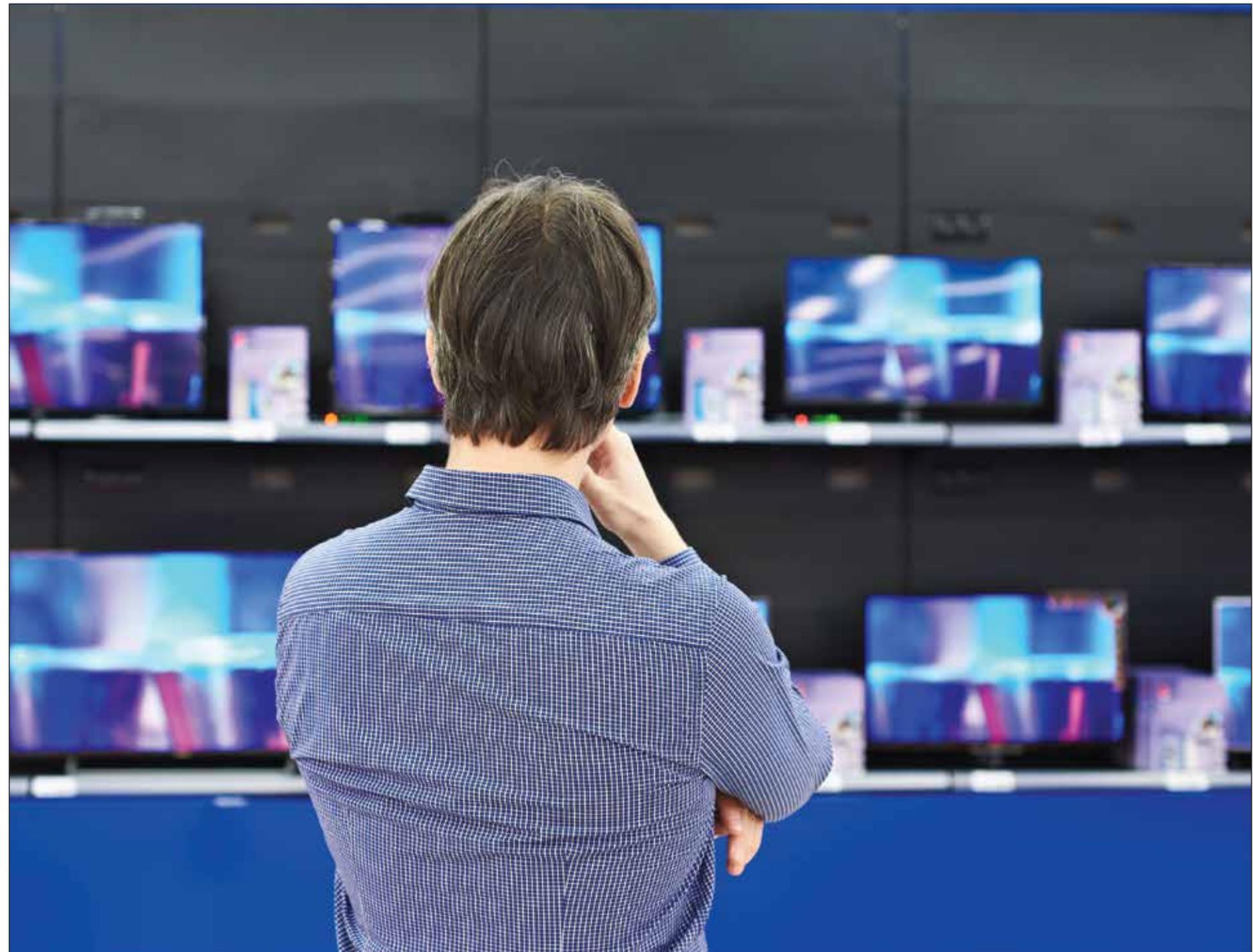
Also, be flexible: If it's a Samsung UHD TV you long for, it's best to think about the features you want rather than a specific model number. One model might not be discounted on Black Friday, but an almost identical set with the specification you want probably will be.

Research if poking and prying with a purpose.

BEST DEALS FROM 2020

Per Techradar.com:

1. Toshiba 32-inch 720p smart Fire TV: \$119.99 at Amazon, a savings of \$60. This



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32-inch Fire TV doesn't have 4K resolution (it's not big enough), but this is still a fantastic price for a smart TV that comes with a massive range of apps. And an even better option if you're looking for a smaller display for a bedroom or kitchen.

2. TCL 50-inch 4K Smart TV:

\$229.99 at Best Buy, a savings of \$120.

Save \$120. The TCL 50-inch 4K TV is compatible with the Google Assistant, and features a handy voice remote.

3. Insignia 70-inch 4K UHD smart TV: \$549.99 at Best Buy, a \$100 savings. The smart TV comes equipped with Fire TV

and Amazon Alexa fully built in - not bad value at all if you're looking for a one-stop inexpensive TV that's useful right out of the box.

4. LG CX 55-inch OLED 4K TV: \$1,399.99 at Best Buy, a savings of \$300. This is quite literally one of the best TVs you can buy right now - and, one of

our personally top-ranked displays for 2020.

5. Samsung 75-inch QLED Q70T Series TV: \$1,497.99 at Amazon, a savings of \$700. The Q70T Series TV delivers a premium picture experience thanks to Quantum Dot technology, and includes Amazon Alexa for voice control.

Companies Giving Back

For some retailers, Black Friday is not all about the point-of-sale systems working overtime spitting out receipts.

These companies, featured by Spectrum News, are leaders among those businesses encouraging shoppers to give back, in addition to checking off gift lists.

IN FASHION WITH BLACK FRIDAY CHARITY DEAL

Angela Roi last year launched its second Black Friday charity initiative last year. The luxury vegan fashion brand offered 20% discounts to customers who could show through an online photo confirmation that they donated at least \$1 to a charity.

It's their way of getting into the spirit of the season.

AT DECIEM, BEAUTY IN THE EYE OF THE GIVER

Canadian-owned beauty company Deciem last year continued its tradition of "KNOWvember," an initiative that encourages customers to shop "based on education over impulse." In addition to a month-long 23% discount throughout November, Deciem hosts daily educational seminars on various aspects of physical health.

A SWEDE DEAL

IKEA tried something different in 2020 with its Buy



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Back Friday initiative, offering to buy back used furniture from would-be customers.

"Do something Green on Black Friday," IKEA's Chief Sustainability Officer Pia Heidenmark Cook tweeted of the program. "If we can't resell it, we will recycle or donate it to community projects to help those most affected by Covid-19."

Not everyone shared in the

company spirit. Stores in the U.S. didn't participate.

"We feel it's important to release the program in the United States when we can deliver the best possible experience for both our stores and customers," the company said.

REI OUTTA HERE

Outdoors retailer REI closed all 167 of its stores on

Black Friday a year ago for a sixth consecutive year, instead paying its some 13,000 employees to spend the day outdoors.

That's putting your money where your mouth is.

The company said it was particularly important to do it last year in light of the contentious election and civil unrest.

"In the middle of every-

thing, we have watched as people all over the world —, some of them for the first time — looked to time outside to reflect, restore and connect to one another," REI CEO Eric Artz wrote in an open letter. "In this year of unprecedented challenges staying true to our purpose, living our values and caring for our people and communities is more important than ever."

Shop Smart on Black Friday

Black Friday deals can be so big that it's easy to not only finish off your holiday shopping in less than 24 hours but also have money left to pay the electric bill.

That's an accomplishment. However, though retailers offer some of the best values of the entire year, particularly on electronics, appliances, sneakers, designer handbags and time specific travel, not all products have slashed prices. The Real Deal found a few things you should buy at different times of the year.

JUST SIT ON FURNITURE

Indoor furniture is at its lowest in January and July through August, while the best discounts on patio furniture happen between August and September. Knowledge is power.

SWITCH OFF LATEST-GEN GAMING CONSOLES

Typically, the best deals on a next-gen console or gaming PC, such as Nintendo Switch Lite, will happen the final week before Christmas as a last-minute push. There's a noted British poet from yesteryear who made "patience is a virtue" into a colloquialism. Live it.

SPRING AIRFARE NOT THE BEST FOR THE GREEN

Buying airline tickets far in

advance does not always yield the best airfare. And this goes for booking spring travel on Black Friday. Wait until after January to book tickets for spring travel. The optimum window to lock in airfare for this time of year is about six to eight weeks out.

DON'T TOY WITH BLACK FRIDAY

The best deals on toys are generally found about two weeks before Christmas, at 20% to 25% off. However, if on the prowl for the season's hottest toys, the buying experts recommend purchasing them

as soon as possible, particularly this year with shortages on seemingly everything and money to spend. It might sell out.

A WILD CARD FOR THE HOLIDAYS

There's nothing wrong with

giving a gift card at the holiday party, but you want to wait to buy it in the weeks after Black Friday. For example, iTunes has offered \$100 gift cards for \$70 to \$80, and bulk retailers like Costco and Sam's Club also sell them for less than face value.



Tips for Small Businesses

Black Friday is so named because it is said to play a big part in helping retailers meet their profit goals for the year.

Small businesses can capitalize on the unofficial Black Friday shopping holiday by being in top form for the big day.

LOOK YOUR BEST

It's important to get your store into the holiday spirit and make it attractive to customers on the big shopping day. VendHQ.com recommends making sure your window displays and fixtures are in top shape and bringing out new merchandise.

GrooveCommerce.com recommends extending that holiday theme to your website, in order to inspire holiday warm fuzzies and drive sales.

Quickbooks encourages small business owners to offer shoppers a respite from the Black Friday hustle and bustle. Set out free cookies, hot cocoa and chairs for shoppers to sit and relax. You could even offer live (relaxing) music, such as a pianist.

DEALS, DEALS, DEALS

Black Friday is all about the deals, so you will want to plan your sales strategy far in advance and bring your A game.

VendHQ recommends focusing on impulse buys,



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upsells and suggestive selling, as well as running specials, if needed. Keep in touch with your customers by e-mail and social media ahead of the big day. If you don't already have a text messaging program, consider starting one in the months leading up to Black Friday. Tease the deals and promotions you'll be offering.

Small businesses don't necessarily have to compete with

big box store deals. Highlight what makes your business unique and the advantages you offer. Quickbooks reminds proprietors: "Small businesses have the advantage of being able to offer personal attention. People like low prices, but they also like to feel valued."

Do you offer curbside pickup so customers can get their purchases sooner, without having to wait for parcel deliv-

ery? Do you offer a service guarantee? Free setup or installation? Play up your strengths in your pre-Black Friday marketing.

PREPARE YOUR STAFF

Black Friday is well known to be a stressful day for employees. Do whatever you can to lessen that stress on your staff. Be sure they are ready for the big day by letting them know

what to expect, and being sure they have the training and information they need to best help your customers. What happens if you sell out of an item? Will you offer a rain check? Are your policies clearly posted and communicated to customers? Think through these potential issues before the big day arrives and your staff will be prepared to do their best work for you.

First Post-Thanksgiving Sale

The Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade has for almost 100 years ushered in the holiday shopping season. The first one, in 1924, played a key role in what would one day become known as "Black Friday."

THE 'KING OF KIDDIES'

Santa Claus chose Thanksgiving Day to come to town, The New York Times reported. "With a retinue of clowns, freaks, animals and floats, the bewhiskered man in red, in sight of thousands of persons, arrived at 9 o'clock yesterday morning, and three hours later was crowned 'King of the Kiddies' on the marquee above the entrance to Macy's new store in 34th Street near Seventh Avenue," the report continued.

When Santa seated himself on the throne he sounded his trumpet, the signal for the unveiling of the store's Christmas window, showing "The Fairy Frolics of Wondertown," designed and executed by Tony Sarg.

"The police lines gave way and with a rush the enormous crowd flocked to the windows to see Mother Goose characters as marionettes."

The float he rode in on was in the form of a sled driven by reindeer over a mountain of ice. Preceding him were men dressed like the knights of old, their spears shining in the sunlight.

THE SURPRISE WAS TO COME

The Times reported that a crowd of almost 10,000 gathered on 34th Street, between Sixth and Seventh Avenues, to see Santa's approach and coronation.

"Children were in the majority, but a large part of the throng was made up of grown-up men and women."

The majority of participants were employees of the stores. There were, however, many professional entertainers who kept the spectators amused as they passed by, the Times reported.

There were three floats in all, four bands and animals from the Central Park Zoo, including camels, donkeys, elephants and goats.

On one of those floats was an announcement of a discount at Macy's the next day.

History tells us that Macy's was the first department store post-Thanksgiving Day sale in history.