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2011 BLACK FRIDAY SALES TO TOP \$800 MILLION ONLINE



What recession? BlackFridaySales.com announced their Black Friday 2011 predictions for online shopping with total sales to increase by over 24% from 2010. According to comScore, Black Friday shoppers spent \$648 million online in 2010 which means they are expecting over \$800 million for Black Friday 2011.

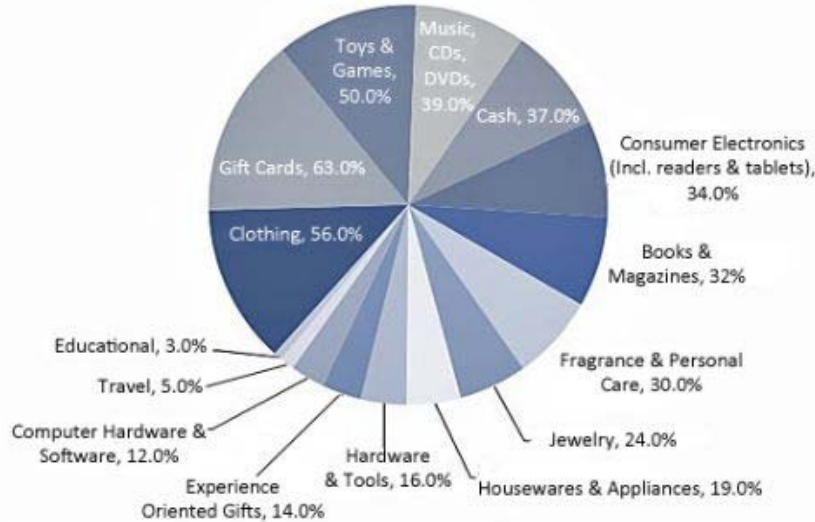
Online shopping has definitely made life easier for everyone. Not only does it save the hassle of visiting retail stores and risking exposure to Black Friday injuries but also preserves your privacy for buying personal items and anything that comes

wrapped in a brown box. However, with a global economic meltdown looming, unemployment at high levels and access to credit stricter than ever before, will Black Friday 2011 be all it's cracked up to be? Black Friday is the mother of all measurements for retailers forecasting holiday and year-end sales but has America gone a little crazy with their spending when teachers barely get paid enough to live, many families are one hospital visit away from bankruptcy and Congress members cannot agree on anything. It's unrealistic to think of this as a perfect world but maybe one day someone will create a "give to charity" day where people get just as excited about helping others as they do for a new pair of shoes. Thanksgiving is for family and a day we all should cherish however it seems that too is now changing and becoming pre-occupied with "early" Black Friday sales. There is no doubt everyone has some family issues and once the turkey is gone it's easy to wish a store was open, but really, do we need more activities that require a credit card to have fun?

Source: The Business Insider

WHAT YOU'RE GETTING FOR CHRISTMAS THIS YEAR

Percentage Of 2011 Respondents Who Plan To Give The Following Items As Gifts



Source: Goldman Sachs Research, International Council of Shopping Centers, Omnibus, OneSource.

Despite bleak consumer confidence, 51% of consumers expect to spend the same amount on gifts this holiday season compared to last year. 11% expect to spend more, according to 1,000 consumers polled by Goldman Sachs.

63% of respondents plan on giving gift cards, while 56% plan on giving clothing. Gift cards and jewelry are expected to gain significant "gift wallet share", which is the percentage of total gift spending. The "gift wallet share" for consumer electronics is up only 30 bp this year. Meanwhile, after declining 60 bp last year, the share of clothing is up 20 bp this year.

Source: The Business Insider

BLACK FRIDAY MORE ABOUT BARGAINS THAN HOLIDAY GIFTS



Black Friday should be called Bargain Friday, because 90% of the shoppers crowding stores that day are looking for bargains to buy for themselves, or for the family, rather than holiday gifts, said Michael Niemira, chief economist for the International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC). Niemira said he is sticking with the holiday forecast ICSC made in September of 3% overall sales growth in November and December. However, he said improving spending trends may prove that estimate to be too low. Niemira said he doesn't expect those trends to be strong enough to beat last year's holiday results, when sales rose 4.1%. Americans are expected to spend \$250.2 billion over the two-month period

this year.

ICSC/Goldman Sachs surveys found that only about 10% of purchases on Black Friday are gifts. Researchers also found that households with children are twice as likely to shop on Black Friday. Walmart, Target and Toys "R" Us vie each year to grab the bulk of Black Friday spending. Toys is one category where it is pretty certain items are being purchased for gifts, and Black Friday retains its traditional holiday kickoff focus.

Black Friday facts:

- Nearly 135 million people go out to shop on Black Friday every year
- More than 212 million shoppers purchased items in stores or online last year during Black Friday weekend
- The average shopper spent \$365.34 last year, up from \$343.31 in 2009
- The number of shoppers who started shopping at midnight on Black Friday increased from 3.3% in 2009 to 9.5% last year.
- The number of shoppers who make purchases on Thanksgiving Day, either online or in stores, went from 10.3 million in 2005 to 22.3 million last year.
- More than half of all shoppers purchased clothing or accessories last year on Black Friday, while 42% of shoppers purchased books, CDs, DVDs and video games
- In 2008, Jdimytai Damour, a temporary Walmart employee, was trampled to death on Black Friday when impatient shoppers at a Long Island shopping center pushed against the doors to get them to open.

IRONSIDE'S THANKSGIVING TRIVIA



Wherefore Turkey ...

How Poultry Made It's Way Onto Our Holiday Menu

On Thanksgiving, most of us will sit down to feast on a turkey dinner. The bird also shows up on the table at Christmas. How did we end up with the tradition of eating turkeys during the holidays?

They were fresh, affordable, and big enough to feed a crowd. Americans have long preferred large poultry for celebrations because the birds could be slaughtered without a huge economic sacrifice. Cows were more useful alive than dead, and commercial beef wasn't widely available until the late 19th century. Chicken was more highly regarded than it is today, but rooster meat was tough, and hens were valuable as long as they laid eggs. Venison would have been another option, especially during the 17th and 18th centuries, though it would have required you to hunt for your Thanksgiving meal. There was plenty of ham or brined pork around, but it wasn't considered fit for special occasions. Eating turkey was also in keeping with British holiday customs that had been imported to the New World.

Among the big birds, turkey was ideal for a fall feast. Turkeys born in the spring would spend about seven months eating insects and worms on the farm, growing to about 10 pounds by Thanksgiving. They were cheaper than geese, which were more difficult to raise, and cheaper by the pound than chickens. Cost was an important factor for holiday shoppers, because people weren't necessarily preparing just one meal; Thanksgiving was the time to bake meat and other types of pies that could last through the winter.

By 1863, when Lincoln proclaimed Thanksgiving a national holiday, turkeys had taken center stage at Thanksgiving. (Americans had started holding unofficial Thanksgiving dinners in the previous century.)

While the bird had already been associated with Christmas, the turkey also gained iconic status as a yuletide meal around the same time. The classic menu of turkey with gravy, stuffing, and plum pudding was popularized by Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, published in 1843 and widely read in the United States.

Source: The Slate

PASS THE GREEN BEAN CASSEROLE ...

Turkey may be the main attraction at Thanksgiving dinner, but everyone knows the meal isn't complete without sides. [The Daily Meal](#) asked its readers what their favorite side dish is and found that nobody voted for green bean casserole. Instead, stuffing won with 44% of the votes, followed by sweet potatoes (28%) and mashed potatoes (17%). Cranberry sauce received 11% of the votes.



Green bean casserole's major loss is surprising, given its recent trending status on Google. Perhaps everyone has forgotten the recipe (since the dish only pops up around the holidays). Or perhaps everyone is searching for alternatives. If you're tired of the canned-soup version, try

this modern and fresh twist on the Thanksgiving classic from the Food Network's Alton Brown. Alton ditches the traditional cream of mushroom soup and canned green beans, instead using real mushrooms, half-and-half and fresh green beans.

Best Ever Green Bean Casserole

(Serves 4-6)

Prep Time: 25 min., Cook Time: 45 min.

Ingredients

For the topping:

- 2 medium onions, thinly sliced
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons panko bread crumbs
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- Nonstick cooking spray

For beans and sauce:

- 2 tablespoons plus 1 teaspoon kosher salt, divided
- 1 pound fresh green beans, rinsed, trimmed and halved
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 12 ounces mushrooms, trimmed and cut into 1/2-inch pieces
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground nutmeg
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1 cup chicken broth
- 1 cup half-and-half

Directions:

Preheat the oven to 475 degrees F.

Combine the onions, flour, panko and salt in a large mixing bowl and toss to combine. Coat a sheet pan with nonstick cooking spray and evenly spread the onions on the pan. Place the pan on the middle rack of the oven and bake until golden brown, approximately 30 minutes. Toss the onions 2 to 3 times during cooking. Once done, remove from the oven and set aside until ready to use. Turn the oven down to 400 degrees F.

While the onions are cooking, prepare the beans. Bring a gallon of water and 2 tablespoons of salt to a boil in an 8-quart saucepan. Add the beans and blanch for 5 minutes. Drain in a colander and immediately plunge the beans into a large bowl of ice water to stop the cooking. Drain and set aside.

Melt the butter in a 12-inch cast iron skillet set over medium-high heat. Add the mushrooms, 1 teaspoon salt and pepper and cook, stirring occasionally, until the mushrooms begin to give up some of their liquid, approximately 4 to 5 minutes. Add the garlic and nutmeg and continue to cook for another 1 to 2 minutes. Sprinkle the flour over the mixture and stir to combine. Cook for 1 minute. Add the broth and simmer for 1 minute. Decrease the heat to medium-low and add the half-and-half. Cook until the mixture thickens, stirring occasionally, approximately 6 to 8 minutes.

Remove from the heat and stir in 1/4 of the onions and all of the green beans. Top with the remaining onions. Place into the oven and bake until bubbly, approximately 15 minutes. Remove and serve immediately.

**The staff of Saldutti Law, LLC wishes a
Happy Thanksgiving to you and your family!**



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