

# Black Friday: Bumper online shopping weekend expected

Consumers are spending differently this Black Friday. While retailers are expecting a bumper weekend of sales during the annual shopping holiday, many have launched month-long sales campaigns to give consumers early access to their promotions. This has been dubbed 'Black November'.



Source: ©Andriy Popov - [123RF](#)

It's a calculated move. Under immense pressure to make up for the lost sales over the year, retailers have moved away from a short, intense peak in response to the changing spending habits of South African consumers.

## Shifting shopping patterns

This is the view of Thomas Pays, CEO and co-founder of Ozow, who says that there has been a significant shift in the way people shop. "For the last 18 months, people have been mostly stuck at home. It's meant that they've done most of their engagement and shopping online – largely on their mobile phones."



### Black Friday 2021 expected to deliver sales growth

16 Nov 2021



According to Ozow, a staggering 85% of all transactions during Black Friday are done on mobile, with only 14% completed on desktop.

Pays says that, with more time being spent on social media, new shopping channels via apps and the improvement and optimisation of mobile websites, there has been a notable increase in online sales. “Bolstered by seamless checkout experiences, it has become a lot more convenient and quicker for consumers wanting to avoid packed malls and long queues in-store.”

Whether online or in-store, Black Friday is still considered the busiest trading day.

In 2020, Ozow saw a 139% increase in transactions on Black Friday, when compared to the previous day’s trading. More importantly, processing value increased by 210% on Black Friday compared to the rest of the month. The day also made up 17% of November’s processing value.

Historically, Capitec, FNB, Standard Bank and Absa respectively led the charge in processing the highest volumes and value of transactions over the Black Friday weekend.

## Online shopping growth despite tighter budgets

This year, however, budgets have become a lot tighter. Pays points out that the impact of the pandemic, the July riots and the weakened economy has been felt by consumers, who are spending significantly less than they did previously.

Based on Ozow’s transactional data, he says that consumers are spending 30% less on the average value of each transaction this month (November) in comparison to the same period in 2020. However, it doesn’t mean that there has been a slowdown in spending.

Despite being a lot more budget- and deal-conscious, Pays says that there has been an uptake in South Africans shopping online. “In comparison to previous years, we’re seeing an increase in the volume of transactions this November.”



### Black Friday can be more than a short-term revenue boost

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The time of the day makes a difference too. Pays expects consumers spend more on higher-value deals around 10h00 in the morning on the day. “Conversely, people will be more likely to purchase low-value items at 19h00 in the evening” (Based on Ozow’s transactional data in 2020.)

He believes that consumers are planning ahead, with people looking to capitalise on this year’s Black Friday to find affordable gifts for the festive season as well.

“Retailers need to understand that they are dealing with consumers who are more experienced and informed than before, with more options at their disposal. They will be on the lookout for a cost-effective, safe and seamless shopping process – which also includes an easy refund process, if required.”

As more people are expected to shop this year, retailers anticipate Black Friday 2021 to be far busier and more lucrative than previous years.

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