

South African Black Friday shopping habits reviewed - M4Jam survey

The way in which South African shoppers target and utilise Black Friday shopping deals has matured quickly. Particularly by combining online research with in-store browsing, local shoppers have found themselves widely able to score purchases at lower than regular retail prices, and without the angst which might accompany in-store-only shopping.



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This is according to gig technology company M4Jam, which surveyed more than 1,000 mainly young (73% of respondents were 25 to 34 years old) South Africans across all nine provinces following the big shopping event.

Respondents were asked about their shopping habits, successes and feelings on the specials they found. An overwhelming majority participated in Black Friday shopping, with more than half (55%) saying they thought they saved a lot of money. The research was conducted by gig technology company M4Jam.

A further 34% of those who shopped said while deals were not significantly lower than regular retail prices, they still saved money. Eleven percent of those surveyed had initially not planned on shopping Black Friday at all until they were lured by advertised deals. Forty percent of those who did not shop Black Friday said they were up for it, but the items they had wanted on special were not priced attractively enough.

Merged online and in-store strategy

M4Jam CEO Georgie Midgley says while Black Friday shoppers used a variety of media to research deals and construct a shopping strategy, television still ranks as number one.

“What is really interesting to note is that most shoppers (62%) combine an online and in-store strategy, with only 34% of shoppers visiting a store to hunt down deals. Seventy-one percent of shoppers felt Black Friday was worth waiting for and 63% felt they got the deals they were expecting, so doing enough research beforehand does pay off.”

35% growth in Black Friday online sales points to prepared shoppers, industry resilience



Priority purchases

While the level of excitement of those surveyed before Black Friday was high, with most respondents aiming to buy for themselves or perhaps the household, on the day it seems more South Africans – particularly young women – thought of their parents (144 mentions) or others and bought gifts for them.

Partners and spouses still seem to be at the back of the queue of recipients behind “myself” (686 mentions), “household” (549 mentions) and “kids” (449 times). One hundred and sixty-seven people had registered a change of mind while shopping Black Friday and bought for others.

Mostly, South Africans shopping Black Friday wanted clothing (778 mentions), groceries (587 mentions) and electronics (500 mentions), including mobile phones, laptops, PCs and TV sets. Beauty and fragrance purchases were mentioned 314 times and kitchen appliances 296 times.

“Interestingly, while children were mentioned by more than a third of shoppers as being intended recipients, toys are mentioned only 227 times as objects bought during Black Friday. Movies, books and music are – in the digital age – perhaps surprisingly low on mentions at just 159 mentions,” says Midgley.

Shopper savings

The order of intended purchases before Black Friday and scored items on the day remained identical, as the majority of shoppers hunted down bigger-ticket items where they might save the most money. Forty-two percent of shoppers spent more than R2,000 on the day, while nearly all those who shopped spent at least R500.

Nearly half (48%) of those who shopped claimed to have saved at least R100 to R500, while the 41% claimed to have saved between R500 and R2000 on their spend on the day. Ten percent said they saved more than R2,000. Fifty-nine percent of those who shopped were happy and impressed by the deals they found, while just 6% of shoppers were disappointed in the deals on offer.

Attitude towards Black Friday 2020

“Nearly 70% of shoppers will be up for Black Friday again next year and 27% say maybe, no doubt with a refined strategy and an even broader use of media at their fingertips. What the numbers are showing us this year is that more South Africans (83% of those surveyed) participated in Black Friday than last year (75%), and that the incidence of “I will not

shop next year” has been largely replaced by “maybe” for this coming year.

"It seems South Africans have worked out how to use the day to their best advantage," says Midgley.

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