

## Black Friday and Cyber Monday - Situation in Portugal

For many people these two days are more associated with countries such as the USA from where it started and UK, rather than Portugal.

However "Black Friday" "is increasingly rooted in Portugal and is one of the great moments of consumption of the Portuguese", says Google Portugal, with 63% of Portuguese consider shopping on this day.

Historically Black Friday was more about "physical retail shopping", rushing to the stores, whereas Cyber Monday is where people purchase online. However in recent years there is less distinction between the two, with a vastly increasing number of on-line shopping purchases being made on Black Friday. For this reason and because there is more data available concerning Black Friday in Portugal, that is the focus of this feature.

Although there are some fantastic bargains to be made on Black Friday (this year 29th November) and Cyber Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> December, unfortunately there are criminals who take advantage of this through various scams and on-line fraud.

### Shopping patterns in Portugal

**Black Friday** week in November "is the week of the year with the highest number of Google searches in Portugal, mostly on mobile devices, which shows that searching for opportunities, offers and promotions can happen anytime and from any device," according to Google.pt.

In 2018 more than half (56%) of *Black Friday* sales were for apparel and footwear, followed by technology (49%), perfumes and cosmetics (24%), appliances (21%) and toys (16%). Most purchases (58%) at this time are mostly for the consumer himself, followed by Christmas gifts (29%) and family and friends (27%).

The peak of buyer activity takes place as early as midnight and also in the morning: between 10 and 11am; a consumer buys an average of 3.2 products and people plan to spend on average € 216 in both online and physical stores.

Trends data for November 19-25, 2018 showed that a quarter (25%) of all Black Friday shopping inquiries in Portugal takes place on Friday. Customer interest begins to grow as early as Wednesday. On Saturday it returns to the same value it has on Tuesday. This trend is typical not only of Portugal, but of several other countries as well.

The significance of Black Friday can be shown by the fact that in 2018 in Portugal, Black Friday sales increased by a "whopping" 792% compared to a normal day. Such large numbers are frequent. For example, in the United Kingdom grew by 1708% in Germany over 2418% and in Austria - over 3000%.

In 2018 Portugal online shopping activity was more or less stable throughout the day, with the peak at midnight, as soon as the first Black Friday offers appeared, and later, between 10 and 11 in the morning, according to the data from the Black-Friday Global platform.

Statistical data from previous years show that the average discount in Portugal on Black Friday sales day decreased slightly from 56% in 2017 to 54% last year.

According to research conducted by Portuguese who intend to shop on Black Friday, 43% admit that they already know what they will buy.

### **Some tips to avoid being scammed.**

There are unfortunately many scams around. In 2017 the Food and Economic Safety Authority (ASAE) filed 39 administrative infringement proceedings against 255 traders in connection with the Black Friday rebate initiative, both in physical and online stores.

Despite the large number of customers potentially being scammed, only 14 per cent said they think about whether a website appears fraudulent when shopping in these sales, according to a study by a bank in the UK.

In the next few days you will likely be bombarded by advertisements for heavily discounted goods so what can you do to check whether these are genuine?

The following tips apply both to Black Friday and Cyber Monday

Consider whether an offer is too good to be true. Do you recognise the website or trust the retailer? Is the price realistic? If not it could be a sign that the website is fake. Only use trusted websites and stick to their recommended payment process. Look for the padlock symbol in the address bar and check the domain name.

No matter where you're shopping, always use a secure form of payment. This means opt for a credit card, a debit card, or even PayPal over any direct money transfers. Credit card is probably the most secure option in terms of shopper rights as you can dispute charges made if your item never arrives or dispute any suspicious charges generally.

Watch out for scam emails that may appear identical to real ones. Are the images copied from a web search? Only send an electronic payment to someone you know or trust.

If you are shopping on the go, make sure you are protecting yourself and avoid making purchases using public Wi-Fi as fraudsters may compromise this.

Fraudsters also use messaging apps to circulate links to "money off" vouchers or discounts. The links may be a ploy to infect your device with malware or make you part with your personal information.

Above everything, stop and think before you click. Fraudsters thrive on stressful or rushed situations because people are less likely to think it through before making a payment or surrendering our information. Always give yourself enough time to make a good decision.

Take this advice and enjoy your Christmas shopping safely.

David Thomas

President

Safe Communities Portugal

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