

A muted Black Friday for Canadians amid inflation, online shopping and longer deals

BRETT BUNDALE
The Canadian Press

Canadians hunting for Black Friday deals did so without facing long lines or crowded shopping malls this year, as an extended period of sales and decades-high inflation weighs on consumers and prompts some to rein in spending.

Retailers have stretched deals over several weeks and offered similar discounts online, taking some of the frenzy out of the holiday shopping event.

Several big box stores in the Greater Toronto Area, such as Best Buy and Walmart, lacked the usual early morning lineups that once epitomized Black Friday.

The Eaton Centre in the heart of Toronto appeared busy around lunchtime, but closer to a typical Friday rather than swarming with the crowds and queues seen in previous years. Few stores appeared to have lines of waiting customers.

A busy stretch of the city's Queen Street West, which includes H&M, Zara, Aritzia and Aldo stores, similarly didn't show signs of additional shoppers.

"We're seeing a dilution of Black Friday as a physical shopping event where you go to the store early in the morning," retail analyst Bruce Winder said Friday.

"It's finally sort of hit that tipping point where it's much less about the day and it's more about the shopping period."

The elongation of Black Friday sales has lessened the urgency for consumers to shop on one particular day, said Lisa Hutcheson, managing partner at consulting firm J.C. Williams Group.

"The need to line up isn't as necessary," she said Friday. "Most of the retailers have been on sale a good portion of the week already."

Shopper Amanda Ram said she normally comes to the Eaton Centre to check out Black Friday deals, though COVID-19 put a pause on that.

She said she normally tries to hit the mall before the after-work rush, but though it was busy she still noticed it wasn't as packed as she remembered from before the pandemic — fewer and shorter lines, for one.

Overall Black Friday sales are expected to be strong as inflation intensifies the hunt for deals, experts say.

Yet the rising cost of living will also lead customers to "cherry pick" sales, Winder said.

Ram said she's being more careful with her money as she shops for the holidays this year. With inflation driv-



CP PHOTO NATHAN DENETTE

People line up at the Toronto Premium Outlets mall on Black Friday for shopping sales, in Milton, Ont. on Friday. Experts say they expect big blowout sales and blockbuster one-day deals this Black Friday will draw consumers to stores in numbers not seen since pre-pandemic days.

ing up the price of her mortgage and everyday essentials, she feels less likely to get caught up in the allure of a great deal, and plans to do some online comparison at home before heading back to the mall.

She said she thinks inflation is definitely affecting how many people shop this weekend and heading into the holidays.

"It's got to be on people's minds."

Stores that offer blowout deals of up to 70 per cent off will be busy while retailers with more tepid discounts won't see the same traffic online or in stores, Winder said.

"If you're a retailer and you're trying to move something at 25 or 30 per cent off — it ain't gonna sell," he said.

Some retailers, especially those with high levels of inventory such as apparel, will likely offer bigger sales in stores than online.

"If the merchandise is already there and they're running short on space, they'll want to turn it into cash - especially if they don't have room to pack it up and hold it for another year," Winder said.

Meanwhile, after years of pandemic health restrictions, shopping in brick-and-mortar stores is expected to make a comeback this holiday season, including on Black Friday.

"We continue to see increased levels and excitement for in-person shopping across all our 18 shopping centres," Sal Iacono, executive vice-president of operations for Cadillac Fairview, said in an emailed statement.

The company, which operates a number of malls across the country including the Eaton Centre in

Toronto and the Pacific Centre in Vancouver, has seen retailers extend promotions over a longer period of time but still expects Black Friday to be a big shopping day, he said.

"We anticipate Black Friday to be one of the busiest shopping days at all our retail centres and we are looking forward to continuing to see the prolonged momentum throughout the entire season," Iacono said.

Still, while some Canadians are eager to return to in-person shopping, others now prefer to do their holiday gift-buying online.

Bradley Thompson of Oakville, Ont., said he plans to do all his Christmas shopping on Black Friday — but won't be stepping foot in a store.

"I'm not a big in-store shopper. I'm a real millennial in the sense that I'll be doing all my shopping online," he said.

"As a personal challenge, I try to get all of my Christmas shopping done during the Black Friday sales."

He usually checks the sales at the big players like Amazon, Walmart and Best Buy, but Thompson said he's increasingly also shopping at Etsy and smaller local businesses online.

Overall, he said the Black Friday deals he's come across are good - but not great.

"The discounts don't seem to be quite as steep as they used to be but they run them a little bit longer," Thompson said.

"Inflation is crazy right now though, so every little bit I can save helps."

-- with files from Rosa Saba in Toronto.

Toronto Star parent company names new CEO, newspaper 'parting ways' with ex-president

The Canadian Press

TORONTO

Torstar Corp. says Neil Oliver will become the new chief executive of the Toronto Star newspaper's parent company.

Torstar spokesperson Bob Hepburn confirmed the appointment of the Metroland newspaper group president in an email to The Canadian Press.

He adds that the company has "parted ways" with Marina Glogovac, who joined the Star as its president in June.

Glogovac was previously the president and chief executive of fundraising company CanadaHelps, chief marketing officer at e-reader firm Kobo Inc. and chief executive officer of dating website Lavalife Corp.

Her departure and Oliver's appointment come after the company announced Star publisher Jordan Bitove had taken sole control of Torstar on Thursday, following a tense dispute between he and co-owner Paul Rivett.

The two had been in mediation and then arbitration since September, when Rivett sought a court order to wind up the company, saying his business relationship with Bitove had sustained "irreparable" damage.

This report by The Canadian Press was first published Nov. 25, 2022.

Torstar holds an investment in *The Canadian Press* as part of a joint agreement with subsidiaries of the *Globe and Mail* and Montreal's *La Presse*.

Sexual harassment prevention training required for 2023 world junior hockey tourney

The Canadian Press

The host provinces for the upcoming world junior hockey championship are requiring Hockey Canada to sign an anti-harassment policy and to ensure it oversees training to prevent sexual assault and harassment.

The Nova Scotia and New Brunswick governments confirm they have asked the national governing body for the sport to make sure all its staff and players take the training before the tournament starts Dec. 26.

Hockey Canada says it announced in July that all national team players, coaches and staff would undergo training on sexual violence and consent.

The organization says in an email that it also adopted a universal code of conduct last month that all players and staff must sign, adding that any breach could result in a lifetime ban from its programs.

Nova Scotia Premier Tim Houston says Hockey Canada is currently reviewing the conditions as part of an agreement with his province and he expects to hear back in the coming days.

New Brunswick says it is also talking to the organization about ways money can be raised from raffle ticket sales to support organizations working to prevent sexual violence in sport.

PUBLIC NOTICES



**DEVELOPMENT PERMITS APPROVED
NOVEMBER 17 TO NOVEMBER 23, 2022
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**

RESIDENTIAL

20 HERON COURT SW (Lot 7, Block 1, Plan 1911219)
PLDP20221006. Single Detached House.



COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL/INSTITUTIONAL

73 BRIER PARK BAY NW (Lot 8, Block 3, Plan 1210604) PLDP20220964. Self-Storage Facilities (Additional Storage).

101 602 13 STREET SE (Lot 21, Block 15, Plan 8610124) PLDP20220976. Change Of Use (Retail And Consumer Services).

525 2 STREET SE (Lots 6-8, Block 15, Plan 1491) PLDP20221001. Two Fascia Signs.

B 526 3 STREET SE (Lots 33 & 34, Block 15, Plan 1491) PLDP20221005. Change Of Use (Retail And Consumer Services).

300 12 GEHRING ROAD SW (Lot 5, Block 1 Plan 9112245) PLDP20221011. One Fascia Sign.

102 1221 KINGSWAY AVENUE SE (Lot 13A, Block 16, Plan 9310227) PLDP20221013. Change Of Use (Retail And Consumer Services).

A person claiming to be affected by a decision of the Development Officer or the Municipal Planning Commission may appeal to the Medicine Hat Subdivision and Development Appeal Board by completing and submitting to the City Clerk Department, the required Notice of Appeal form within twenty one (21) days of this publication. Notice of Appeal forms are available from the City Clerk Department, Third Floor, City Hall or on the City's website at www.medicinehat.ca.

All Development Permits listed are subject to conditions. Further information on any Development Permit may be obtained from the Planning & Development Services Department, Second Floor, City Hall during normal business hours (Telephone 403.529.8374).

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**PROTECT WATER LINES
FROM FREEZING**

The following actions should be considered to protect your water lines during the cold weather months:

- Repair broken windows and ensure windows/vents are closed during the winter.
- Insulate water pipes in unheated areas, including crawl spaces.
- For sinks located against a non-insulated outside wall:
 - Open the vanity door to allow warm air to reach the water pipes.
 - A light bulb placed near the water pipe may generate enough heat to keep the water flowing.
 - Heat tape wrapped around the pipe may keep the pipe from freezing.
- Residents of mobile homes should check the condition of the heat tape on their water service and water meter.
- Protect an unheated indoor water meter with an insulated box and water pipes should be wrapped in insulation using heat tape.
- Outside water faucets and underground sprinkler systems should have the water supply shut off inside the house at the isolation valve for the faucet/hose bib.
- Sprinkler lines and faucets should be drained/blown out.
- A thin stream of cold-water (as thick as a pen) running continuously from at least one faucet will help prevent a frozen water service.
- If you plan to be away from home over the winter period, close the main water isolation valve located next to the water meter in your home.
 - You should leave the heat on in your home and have someone check inside your home daily while you're away.

A frozen water service or a burst water pipe is an inconvenience and expense that most people would like to avoid. Please take all possible precautions to prevent this happening in your home or business.

For more information, refer to www.medicinehat.ca/frozenwaterlines or contact City Assets Environmental Utilities at 403-529-8176.

www.medicinehat.ca

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