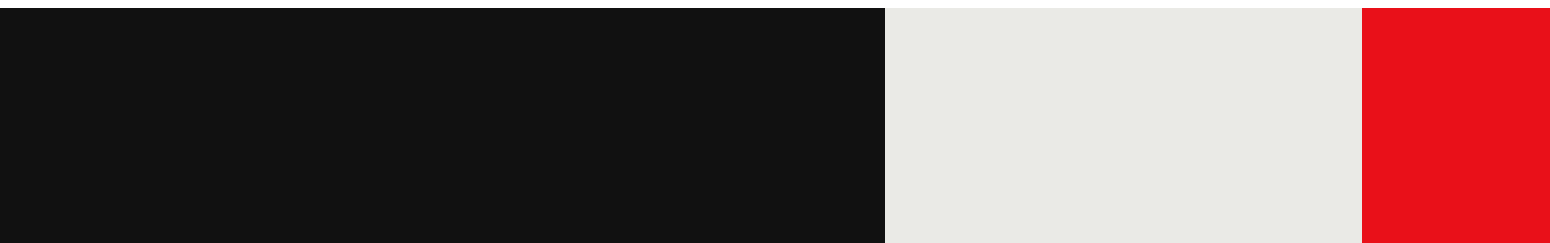



# How the Cyber Five are stacking up for holiday shopping

Article



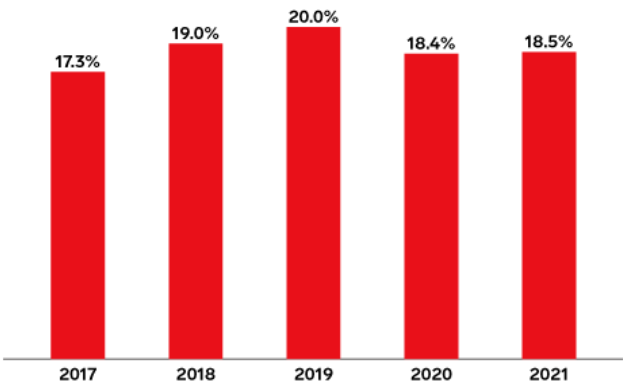
Black Friday and Cyber Monday have been growing in importance to holiday ecommerce for more than a decade, despite the persistent myth that early holiday promotions would pull demand forward to take the wind out of these promotions. Retailers other than **Amazon** will have difficulty activating consumers outside of established tentpoles.

However, because Amazon hosted a mid-October event last year, demand was materially pulled forward. As a result, the Cyber Five period (Thanksgiving through Cyber Monday) noticeably underperformed season-average growth rates. Nevertheless, Cyber Monday, Black Friday, and Thanksgiving were still the top three ecommerce spending days for the season.

What’s in store for this year?

**We expect the Cyber Five to deliver strong sales volume and solid (if unspectacular) growth rates.** We forecast the period will marginally increase its share of holiday ecommerce from **18.4%** to **18.5%** but still down from its high of **20.0%** in 2019.

**Cyber Five Share of US Retail Ecommerce Holiday Season Sales, 2017-2021**  
% of total

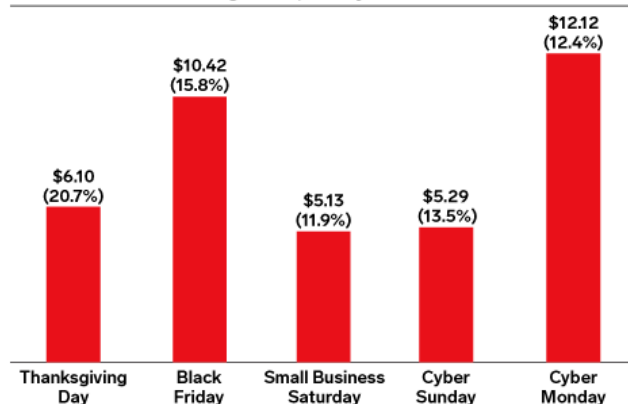


*Note: excludes travel and event tickets, payments such as bill pay, taxes or money transfers, food services and drinking place sales, gambling and other vice goods sales; includes products or services using the internet, regardless of the payment method or fulfillment; retail ecommerce sales are for Nov and Dec of each year*  
Source: eMarketer, Sep 2021

**Each Cyber Five shopping day will surpass \$5 billion.** The top two days—Cyber Monday and Black Friday—will top **\$10 billion**, but Thanksgiving Day and the weekend will post the strongest growth rates.

## US Cyber Five Retail Ecommerce Holiday Season Sales, by Shopping Day, 2021

billions and % change vs. prior year



Note: excludes travel and event tickets, payments such as bill pay, taxes, or money transfers, food services and drinking place sales, gambling and other vice goods sales; includes products or services ordered using the internet, regardless of the method of payment or fulfillment; retail ecommerce sales are for Nov and Dec. of each year  
Source: eMarketer, Sep 2021

269685

eMarketer | InsiderIntelligence.com

**Thanksgiving 2021 will be the fastest gainer of the top three ecommerce shopping days.** Key factors behind its expected ecommerce surge include the following:

- **The rise of smartphone-driven “couch commerce.”** Gathering on the couch to shop Black Friday deals on mobile devices has become an unofficial post-Thanksgiving meal tradition in recent years. Unlike the desktop ecommerce era when Thursday shopping meant scurrying off into another room, smartphones have given family members license to get a jump on Thanksgiving weekend shopping without being antisocial.
- **Early Black Friday online promotions.** Last year, retailers unleashed their Black Friday deals early in the week of Thanksgiving, and with travel constrained, many shoppers jumped on those deals on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. Early deals are likely here to stay, but the resumption of holiday travel this year means there will be more shopping than buying in the days leading up to Thanksgiving.
- **Brick-and-mortar stores going dark on Thanksgiving.** A near universal shutdown of Thanksgiving Day doorbusters among brick-and-mortar retailers—led by **Walmart, Target, Best Buy, and The Home Depot**—will keep traditional Thursday evening shoppers at home. But still, they’ll shop, and the purchases typically completed in-store will happen online.

**Black Friday 2021 will be a brick-and-mortar bonanza.** Following a year of strained in-person holiday shopping events and widespread store closures on Thanksgiving Day, consumers will hit the stores at a frenzied pace on Black Friday. Resumption of pre-pandemic shopping

rituals like door-busting at big-box retailers and fashion-finding at malls will generate strong foot traffic. Mobile traffic will also spike on Black Friday as consumers prepare for in-store shopping trips and engage in showrooming while there. We expect online sales to increase **15.8%** to **\$10.42 billion**, assuming the **No. 2** spending day position for the season.

**Cyber Monday 2021 will be the No. 1 US ecommerce shopping day ever.** Cyber Monday has been the **No. 1** ecommerce spending day every year since 2010, and this year will be no different as it once again sets new records. Despite significantly underperforming last year's benchmark—**15.6%** versus the holiday season's **32.0%** growth rate—this year, it will lag the season by just a few points. We forecast Cyber Monday to rise **12.4%** to **\$12.12 billion**, **6.2 times** the sales volume of the average day during the holidays.

[Read the full report.](#)