

BOOM TIME FOR SHOPPERS ON BLACK FRIDAY AS MARKETERS ADVERTIZE CRAZY DEALS



The day following Thanksgiving, is traditionally known as Black Friday, a day that most retailers look forward to, as it not only allows them to clear stocks and muster large sales, it also sets the tone for the Christmas shopping season. Analysts predict that this year, marketers other than retailers are also hoping to cash in on the day. Quite a few of these marketers are designing their campaigns similar to the retailers and are offering deals and discounts that include limits in time when the offer can be availed off, heavy discounted prices and similar enticing baits. Some are sponsoring events on social media like Facebook and Twitter that virtually guarantees huge viewership. Most of them are in such a big hurry to get an early advantage that they are already on the marks, prepared to take off on Monday for a race that culminates on Friday. Their campaigns utilize a marketing approach called "borrowed interest" wherein advertisers bracket themselves with major topical events that are tailed by the all-inclusive recognizable "everyone." Topical events that are likely to figure are the Hurricane Sandy, the President Obama's reelection and the Mars Rover, along with other local issues, specific to the area the ad is targeting. An example of the innovative ad is provided by Di-gel the over-the-counter stomach remedy, manufactured and promoted by the Ilex Consumer Products Group. One of the company's executive vice presidents Bernie Kropfelder said that their ad promotion is aimed at alleviating the stress that shopping on Black Friday brings. The company has readied a "Black Friday Comfort Zone" for shoppers, where they will provide them with restroom facilities, a heated tent, areas where they can charge their phones, along with relaxed seating, plus they will get free samples of the new Di-gel. Kropfelder says that they believe that this will give the strained shoppers a welcome breather from their shopping rigors. The promotion is also in keeping with the tagline for the gel, which says, "When you overdo, undo." Marketers feel that this is also an apt time for introducing a new product. The Balance Bar Company is launching its Balance Bar Dark line. Consumers who buy the bar till December 1st will get it for half its market price, if they buy it on Drugstore.com. Erin Lifeso, director of marketing at the Balance Bar Company in Valhalla, N.Y., said that launching the bar of Black Friday was an obvious choice as there was a marked connotation between "Black" and "Dark." Even though in Black Friday, the Black does not denote any hue, but the fact that on this day, as shoppers open their wallets, many businesses from being in the 'red' move into the 'black.' Decision-makers at Pizza Hut, part of Yum Brands are brainstorming how best to take advantage of Black Friday, especially since last year they had successfully launched their Big Dinner Box product. Kurt Kane, chief marketing officer at Pizza Hut in Plano, Tex., said that according to their sales data, the day before Thanksgiving turned out to be one of the busiest days in the eatery's life. The reason, he figures is because people preparing for shopping are "looking for alternative solutions for dinner on Wednesday night." To ensure that the trend does not break, Pizza Hut is introducing, 'Red Roof,' needless to say, named after the signature appearance of its restaurants. It is offering specific deals on its Website and Facebook Fan page, giving away 250 gift cards worth \$10 each. Brand fans will get 15 percent discounts on online orders. However, one concession is truly worthy of the Black Friday mood, when the first 1000 brand fans who buy the product over the eatery's website, will have to pay just half the price, which means that for the price of one, you get two. Shoppers are assured of one thing. Given the weak economy they can expect some absolutely crazy and mouth-watering deals.