

Press release

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Black Friday sales continue to increase in Europe

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Norbert Herzog
Tel. +49 911 395 4534
Norbert.Herzog@gfk.com

Stefan Gerhardt
Public Relations
Tel. +49 911 395 4440
public.relations@gfk.com

Nuremberg, December 7, 2018 – Discounts on so-called "Black Friday" are becoming increasingly popular among European consumers. In Italy, Germany, and France, sales of consumer tech goods saw a sharp rise compared to the Black Friday week of the previous year. Slightly lower growth was seen in Spain, while there was a flattened trend in the UK. The highest sales were generated from TV sets, smartphones, and notebooks.

Retailers and online stores were vying for customers' favor at the end of November with a large number of discount promotions. The special day of sales, which originated in the US and occurs after the Thanksgiving holiday, is now also a welcome opportunity for European consumers to benefit from low prices for larger purchases or Christmas presents. Especially in the area of consumer tech goods, almost all retailers are now offering corresponding discount promotions which sometimes last for one to two weeks.

In Europe's five biggest countries by population, however, there were differences in sales increases compared to the Black Friday week of the previous year. While sales in Italy increased significantly by 42 percent compared to last year, the increases in Germany and France were 15 percent and 13 percent, respectively. In Spain, sales increased by around seven percent. However, a flattened development was seen in the UK.

Norbert Herzog, consumer expert at GfK explains, "Even in Europe, Black Friday is becoming increasingly popular. In some product areas, the discount war at the end of November generates even higher sales than the traditional shopping days before Christmas. The fact that consumers often go for higher value products on Black Friday is positive for trade. The price reductions are often used to buy a model with more features than usual."

Online retail particularly benefits from Black Friday. In Europe's five biggest

GfK SE
Nordwestring 101
90419 Nuremberg
Germany

Tel. +49 911 395 0

Management Board:
Peter Feld (CEO)
Bobby Rajan (CFO)

Chairman of the
Supervisory Board:
Ralf Klein-Bölting

Commercial Register:
Nuremberg HRB 25014

countries by population, around 39 percent of Black Friday sales for consumer tech goods came from online retailers. Online retailers made about 167 percent more sales compared to average sales of a normal week. Retail trade in physical stores accounted for around 61 percent of Black Friday sales. Compared to a normal week, however, the increase in sales in retail trade was only around 94 percent.

Germany: relatively low Black Friday sales volumes

During the Black Friday week, trade in consumer tech goods generated sales of around 880 million euros in Germany. This is an increase of around 15 percent compared to last year for Black Friday trade. Sales were 73 percent higher compared to an average week, which is the lowest increase among the biggest European countries by population.

Of the Black Friday sales of consumer tech goods, in-store trade accounted for 59 percent this year, while online retail accounted for 41 percent. Online retail, which achieves 33 percent of sales on average in a normal week, can therefore particularly benefit from this.

The highest sales in Germany were seen in the product areas of smartphones, notebooks, TV sets, desktop computers, and vacuum cleaners. Compared to sales in normal weeks, the highest increases in sales were achieved by loudspeakers (+173 percent), TV sets (+151 percent), and food preparation equipment (+131 percent).

France: Black Friday sales twice as high as normal weeks

In France, around 13 percent more was spent on consumer tech goods during Black Friday Week compared to Black Friday last year. Compared to an average week, sales were 108 percent higher.

In-store trade accounted for 66 percent of sales, while online retail, which normally only accounts for 27 percent of sales on average, accounted for 34 percent. The e-commerce sector is benefiting more from Black Friday than traditional retail in France as well.

French consumers bought higher value products than in normal weeks, which is reflected in the increase in average prices paid. The largest contributors to sales for retailers were TV sets, smartphones, notebooks, vacuum cleaners, and tablet computers. Compared to sales in normal weeks, the largest increases in sales were achieved by gaming products (+274 percent), TV sets (+215 percent), and home audio systems (+208 percent).

UK: home audio systems, tablets, and hot beverages makers particularly popular

Black Friday is now a well-established event in the UK. Previously, each Black Friday has seen sales growth compared to Black Friday the year before – but this trend flattened out this year.

However, when compared to an average week, Black Friday sales this year increased by almost 140 percent - almost twice as high as in Germany.

E-commerce is particularly successful in the area of consumer tech goods in the UK. On Black Friday this year, online retail accounted for 61 percent of sales, while in-store trade accounted for just 39 percent. In normal weeks, sales are roughly equal across the two sales channels.

British retailers achieved the highest sales with TV sets, smartphones, notebooks, tablet computers, and wearables. The highest growth compared to normal weeks was recorded by home audio systems (+436 percent), tablet computers (+331 percent), and hot beverages makers (+292 percent).

Italy: Black Friday sales increase significantly

Black Friday is gaining enormous popularity in Italy. Around 375 million euros of sales were generated with consumer tech goods in Italy during Black Friday week. This is a 42 percent increase on 2017 and by far the greatest increase among the major European economies. Compared to a normal sales week, sales of consumer tech goods were 182 percent higher.

Online retailers increased their sales by 53 percent on last year and generated 17 percent of total sales. For in-store trade, sales increased by around 40 percent on last year and an enormous 83 percent of total Black Friday sales were generated here. This clearly shows that e-commerce in the area of consumer tech goods is still under-developed in Italy.

Retailers achieved the greatest sales with smartphones, TV sets, notebooks, vacuum cleaners, and dryers. Compared to a normal week, sales particularly increased for dryers (+477 percent), vacuum cleaners (+317 percent), and home audio systems (+286 percent).

Spain: only minimal growth for Black Friday sales

In the Black Friday week, about seven percent more sales were generated from consumer tech goods than in the Black Friday week in 2017.

However, compared to a normal sales week, these sales were 220 percent higher. Spanish consumers are therefore using Black Friday offers the most among the biggest European countries by population.

In total, 72 percent of Black Friday sales were generated by in-store trade. Online retail achieved a significantly better result than in normal weeks with 28 percent of sales and profited more.

The largest contributors to sales for Spanish retailers this year were TV sets, smartphones, notebooks, tablet computers, and washing machines. Compared to sales in normal weeks, sales increased particularly for TV sets (+370 percent), notebooks (+299 percent), and loudspeakers (+274 percent).



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