

Why is Friday black after giving thanks?

By  Teresa Jenkins, issued by [Litha Communications](#)

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Our smartphones keep pinging with messages from retailers offering discounts of up to 30% for Black Friday only. However, South Africa and Africa have so many special cultural and commemorative days, so where does 'Black Friday' come from - the African continent?

Well I finally found the source, what a 'trump card'! *We have the Americans to thank for this 'shopping holiday'. Black Friday is the day following Thanksgiving Day in the US (the fourth Thursday of November). Since 1932, it has been regarded as the beginning of the Christmas shopping season in the US and most major retailers open very early (and more recently during overnight hours) and offer promotional sales. In Germany, South Africa, Austria and Switzerland, Black Friday Sale is a joint sales initiative by hundreds of online vendors - Wikipedia.*



According to Dion Chang, trends expert and founder of Flux Trends, "We see a massive adoption of North American retail trends in South Africa – it is tested, it works and is already embedded in the minds of South Africans.

"Africa has an hour glass economy – with the rich getting richer, the poor getting poorer and the middle class being squeezed – people are going for deals just to make ends meet. For big and small businesses, this is definitely an opportunity for them to join and leverage this trend for their brand."

However, with the advent of smartphones and e-commerce many consumers prefer to make their discounted purchases from the comfort of their home or office, escaping the shopping centre rush and giving a whole new meaning to etailers taking over from retailers.

For the tech savvy, Cyber Monday follows Black Friday when online shoppers are out in full force again, looking for tech and gaming bargains. Both these iconic shopping days are good for small and large retailers, offering an opportunity to build some hype and benefiting from the noise generated by retailers with massive budgets for promotions and advertising.

So why does this affect us in South Africa and even Kenya and Nigeria?

The world was tired of the Americans getting in on all of the action and global retailers were only happy to oblige. As Black Friday has grown in popularity, the hype has become more intense which is why we now have millions of e-messages from South African stores a week in advance.

On a serious note, the one-day promotional event is continuing to influence e-commerce purchasing patterns and change shopping trends. With Black Friday and Cyber Monday, retailers and etailers can honestly say Christmas comes early every year and turns bank accounts from being 'in the red' to being 'in the black'.

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ABOUT TERESA JENKINS

I am a passionate international marketer with particular bias for building sustainable brands, from inception to managing premier clients' marketing strategies and results-driven Public

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