

US online sales surge 13 percent for holiday period

December 30 2010



An advertisement for a Cyber Monday sale is displayed on a BlackBerry smart phone in San Anselmo, California. Americans clicked up a record 30.8 billion dollars in online holiday sales in 2010, a jump of 13 percent from a year ago, a survey showed.

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The research firm [comScore](#) said holiday season retail e-commerce spending for the 56 days of the November-December holiday period had been fueled by a late surge in spending -- some 2.45 billion dollars was spent online in the week to December 26, a 17-percent jump.

"Online holiday spending has remained strong through Christmas and we've already seen the season totals easily surpass the levels of the past

few years to set a new record for spending at almost 31 billion dollars," said comScore chairman Gian Fulgoni.

"For at least this [holiday season](#), the American consumer has been able to shrug off the continuing economic challenges of high unemployment rates and depressed housing prices and spend at a rate that has been slightly stronger than we had expected," he added.

"After the past few years' struggles, it is gratifying to see e-commerce return to a state that can only be described as a very merry [holiday shopping](#) season."

Among the big sellers for the gift-giving season were computer and related products, up 23 percent; books and magazines (22 percent); [consumer electronics](#) (21 percent); [computer software](#) (20 percent) and toys (16 percent).

A separate survey this week by MasterCard Advisors SpendingPulse, showed a 5.5-percent increase in overall holiday spending, excluding autos, in the period from November 5 through December 24.

"If last year's holiday story was about gaining some stability, this year's is about getting back to growth," said Michael McNamara, vice president at SpendingPulse.

"We also saw a noticeable return in spending in the larger ticket items, as exemplified by the solid growth in jewelry, luxury and even the furniture category."

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Citation: US online sales surge 13 percent for holiday period (2010, December 30) retrieved 19 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2010-12-online-sales-surge-percent-holiday.html>

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