

Apps to help you skip those Black Friday lines

November 24 2011, By Reid Kanaley

While you're waiting at the stores on Black Friday, why not check if that deal you're blowing the day for is available online for less money or less aggravation. Here are some key smartphone shopping apps for the holidays.

Amazon Deals is one of several Amazon.com applications from AMZN Mobile LLC, which has Amazon apps for both Apple and Android devices. This one for iPhone delivers a stream of sales, a "deal of the day," and timed "lightning deals" available for the next few minutes. Tap "just missed" to view the deals that might have been. And there are teasers for the offers coming up next.

Tap "settings" to sign up for alerts for new deals in any of a range of categories, such as electronics, games, tools, or "everything else."

A free iPhone app from Lanuta LLC, iSlick, opens to "front-page deals" from many sources. There might be fishing gear from Wal-Mart, DVDs from Amazon, [computer equipment](#) or underwear.

The offers in iSlick are posted by the community of users at the SlickDeals.net website. Deals have user-written descriptions, thumbs-up or thumbs-down ratings, hyperlinks and "buy" buttons that take you to merchant Web pages. You also get a button for sharing your finds via text, email, [Facebook](#) or Twitter.

Search for specific items and set up deal alerts by tapping "watch" and

throwing the toggle switch for categories you want to hear about, such as "hot deals" and "freebies." You can also get more specific by entering keywords.

Etsy is a popular marketplace for handmade and vintage goods and original artwork. The Etsy iPhone app is free from Etsy Inc., which hasn't come out with an Android version. If you want to buy something on Etsy, you'll find yourself communicating directly with the seller - often the artist herself - and paying that person directly. Filter what you see by choosing the relevance, price range, or geography settings of your choice.

FastMall, free from MindSmack LLC, is for finding and navigating malls, the stores in the malls, and [deals](#) in the stores on Android or Apple devices. Tap the "parking" icon to record a message to yourself with the coordinates of your parking space. Tap "reviews" to submit or read reviews. There's even a category for restroom reviews, so you can tell other users how clean the facilities are.

FastMall for [iPhone](#) includes an icon for a companion app, ShopSavvy, to scan bar codes and do comparison-shopping for an item at stores nearby or online.

Free eBay apps from eBay Inc. put the auction site into your hand, so you can "watch" active auctions from anywhere. If you're short on holiday cash, you can use the [Android](#) or Apple app to photograph, describe and list for auction anything you already own.

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