

# LivingSocial goes national with Black Friday deals

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(AP) -- Here's one way to avoid getting trampled by bargain-hunting hordes knocking down store doors on Black Friday: Online deals service LivingSocial is unveiling a slew of bargains for the holidays that are just a couple of mouse clicks away.

LivingSocial is announcing Monday that it will offer discounts from national businesses such as [Verizon Wireless](#), Electronic Arts Inc. and the sneaker brand Sketchers USA Inc., a contrast to the local [deals](#) for spas, restaurants and weekend escapes that it's known for.

Such offers will give national brands access to social media-savvy customers who might not otherwise think to visit their stores. It's also good, cheap marketing, as the deals are often widely shared on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

LivingSocial, meanwhile, gets to sign up new subscribers and take a cut from the money they spend on the coupons.

It also gets to participate in a day-after-Thanksgiving shopping bonanza that's normally reserved for brick-and-mortar retail stores.

One set of deals, available for three days starting on [Black Friday](#), includes \$5 for magazine subscriptions that normally cost \$12. Customers won't be able to redeem those coupons until Monday, so stores already offering monster sales on Black Friday won't have to cut their [profit margins](#) even thinner.

On Cyber Monday, the online shopping day that follows Thanksgiving weekend, LivingSocial will unveil another set of deals. Nearly all of the discounts are 50 percent off - such as paying \$40 to be able to spend \$80 at wine retailer Wine.com. These coupons will go on sale Monday, Nov. 28, and can be redeemed starting the next day.

OfficeMax Inc. isn't known for attracting big holiday crowds, but Chris Duncan, a vice president of direct and loyalty marketing, said the company decided to offer a LivingSocial deal to reach new customers looking for e-readers, tablets and other gadgets.

Mitch Spolan, [senior vice president](#) of national sales at LivingSocial, said the service isn't changing its local-business focus, but gets the opportunity to offer something special nationally from time to time.

LivingSocial, which is based in Washington, D.C., has more than 46 million subscribers, who typically get deals through emails and other alerts sent at least daily.

LivingSocial's larger competitor, Chicago-based Groupon Inc., is not doing Black Friday promotions this year. Instead, it's promoting discounts on big, expensive experiences dubbed "once in a lifetime," such as \$5,000 for a three-day trip to studio tours and tapings of the Ellen DeGeneres Show.

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