

Video: Despite some retailers closing on Thanksgiving, 'Black Friday creep' remains, consumer behavior expert says

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Despite a trend recently of stores choosing to not open Thanksgiving Day ahead of Black Friday, many major retailers still have announced plans to [start their major holiday sales](#) just hours after most people finish their turkey and pumpkin pie, said a University of Kansas expert on consumer behavior.

Noelle Nelson, assistant professor of marketing and consumer behavior in the KU School of Business, can discuss trends and issues surrounding Black Friday, Cyber Monday and the holiday retail period. Nelson and Jessica Li, a KU assistant professor of marketing and [consumer behavior](#), discuss in this video issues surrounding Black Friday and factors that determine how businesses keep hours on Thanksgiving Day and Black Friday.

Q: Are there any significant trends you can see so far this year that seem to be different than more recent Black Fridays in the past?

Nelson: This year we're seeing not just that some stores are choosing to close on Thanksgiving but also a continued "Black Friday Creep." While it might have seemed—based on 2015—that the pendulum was swinging back toward more limited shopping hours in general, now it seems that some stores are clearly still competing heavily on Thanksgiving and

Black Friday. If anything, the new "trend" is that certain categories of stores are continuing the intense Black Friday marketing, while other categories are moving away from that.

Q: How has the emergence of Cyber Monday influenced Black Friday and retail marketing in general?

Nelson: The introduction of Cyber Monday basically formalized the spread of Black Friday deals. Online retailers pretty quickly realized that they were in a unique position where they didn't have to rely on just one day; right after Cyber Monday became popular, online retailers starting taking over Black Friday and even the rest of the week. Amazon has started Black Friday deals on Nov. 1 this year, indicating that, online at least, Black Friday and Cyber Monday don't matter much anymore.

Q: What seems to motivate consumers from exhibiting seemingly abnormal behavior—standing in line early in the morning, possibly in bad weather and participating in Black Friday—and how has it become such a popular and important event every year for retailers? Or, worded another way perhaps, what has helped Black Friday become so successful in general?

Nelson: For a long time, Black Friday really was special in that it was the time of year that people believed they could get the best deals. Not only were the deals great, but there were limited quantities. All this scarcity makes people pretty frantic. They feel like if they don't get aggressive on that one day, they'll miss out on something amazing. Additionally, Black Friday became part of the holiday season routine. People shop with their families. They make lists, and some plan on doing all of their holiday shopping on that one day. The combination of frenzy and tradition have

made it a very important day for lots of Americans.

Provided by Kansas State University

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