Black Friday Review: Shoppers Stuck in the Orbit of a Challenging Economy

by Steve Riordan

Over the last several weeks, most of the discussion regarding Thanksgiving weekend retail sales has been centered on the impact of opening stores on Thanksgiving Day. However, while this debate played itself out, pundits missed many of the bigger impacts on retail sales. The reality is that the broader US economy, while getting slightly better each year, is still restraining retail sales. Unfortunately, the gravitational pull of the economy and political uncertainty (Affordable Care Act, a second potential government shutdown, etc.) are preventing shoppers from breaking free and spending with confidence. The numbers now show that the Thanksgiving weekend was a disappointment and may have been one of the worst since the impact of the Great Recession in 2008.

The November release of the FIndex, a quarterly index of innovation in fashion trends (developed by Kalypso, Indiana University and CollegeFashionista.com) pointed toward this potential outcome for Thanksgiving retail sales. As we have previously revealed, FIndex respondents indicated that they have less money to spend this holiday season compared to last year and are less inspired about the level of innovation in fashion merchandise in the stores this holiday season.

It’s really no wonder that the weekend was a disappointment. What’s your view?

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What's your view? Add your question or comment
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