

RetailNext Forecasts a Solid 4 Percent Holiday Growth for U.S. Retail Sector

Volatility in Consumer Confidence Amid International Trade Tensions to be Offset by Deep Promotions

SAN JOSE, CA, UNITED STATES, October 9, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Today, RetailNext Inc., the worldwide expert and market leader in IoT smart store retail analytics for optimizing shopper experiences, announced a moderately positive forecast for U.S. retail performance over the upcoming November through December holiday period, projecting a 3.8 to 4.2 percent year-over-year (YoY) jump in sales, driven largely by off-price, mass merchandise and warehouse club sectors.



Based on broad macroeconomic data and current retail trends, RetailNext's forecast for U.S. retail stores during Holiday 2019 (November – December) includes:

- A 3.8 to 4.2 percent increase in overall sales YoY for the U.S. retail sector (excluding automobiles and petroleum), but with increasingly tight profit margins consistent with recent holiday seasons past
- Digital sales will continue to grow, increasing 15 to 20 percent as measured YoY
- Brick-and-mortar store performance will continue its current resurgence, initiated by holiday 2018's positive results, and post YoY increases in the range of 3 to 3.5 percent
- Top seasonal performers will include beauty, off-price, warehouse clubs, home improvement and home furnishings segments
- The holiday season will push total annual retail sales over \$5.5 trillion in 2019, with e-commerce approaching \$600 billion for the year
- Black Friday, November 29 will provide physical stores their highest [shopper traffic](#) day, but "Super Saturday" December 21 will be the biggest day in terms of in-store sales

"Despite very real concerns about international trade conflicts and the anticipation of more tariffs forthcoming, the American consumer will again drive retail growth over the upcoming holiday season," said [Lauren Bitar](#), head of advanced analytics and retail consulting at RetailNext. "Despite the growth, however, it's going to be an extraordinarily competitive environment for retailers and it won't be easy for brands to emerge as winners over the holidays."

Holiday Creep

In an attempt to rise above the holiday noise and capture shopper attention early, the past several years have seen retailers push holiday offerings into early November and even into October. This year, eagle-eyed shoppers may have already noticed some stores assorting holiday products, particularly decorations and home soft goods.

"The Thanksgiving weekend, with Black Friday and Cyber Monday, is the biggest holiday shopping weekend, but this year it arrives relatively late, with four weekends in November falling

prior to it," continued Bitar. "With retailers continuing to promote for Black Friday earlier each year, they will undoubtedly offer promotional incentives early, but they will need to be extraordinarily careful not to erode their margins or train shoppers that 'the deal will be there whenever I want it' any further."

"Some shoppers will be looking to avoid crowds, and they'll spur early November sales just a bit. However, many more shoppers will be searching for value and waiting out retailers for deeper promotions, and they're likely to be rewarded the two weekends prior to the holiday, December 14-15 and 21-22. Lastly, while Saturday, December 21 will be "Super Saturday," Saturday December 14, with its ability to meet even the tightest of shipping deadlines, will be a gigantic opportunity for retailing brands."

Forecasted Top Store Shopper Traffic Days

- 11/29
- 12/21
- 12/14
- 12/20
- 12/7
- 12/22
- 12/26
- 11/30
- 12/29
- 12/23

Forecasted Top Store Sales Days

- 12/21
- 12/20
- 11/29
- 12/14
- 12/22
- 12/19
- 12/7
- 12/19
- 12/15
- 11/30

Meeting Shopper Demands

A key driver in retail performance will be brands' and shopping centers' ability to meet and even exceed the ever-higher demands of shoppers. "Shoppers continue their quests seeking seamless, friction-free, connected shopping experiences," said [Bridget Johns](#), chief marketing officer and head of customer experience at RetailNext, "and brands who get it right both on- and offline will win. The same applies to malls too, where I expect shopper visits to be marginally positive for the malls that have made priority investments in bettering the shopper experience."

"In retail, winning the holiday season no longer equates to winning the year," closed Bitar, "and those retailers desperate for holiday success are those who've already painted themselves into a difficult corner with few, if any, options other than price promotions. However, when it comes to cash flow, selling inventory with little to no profit is the lesser of two evils as compared to taking inventory write downs."

"Winning retailers will continue to make product assortments easy to navigate and shop, both online and in-store, for gift givers who are looking for both convenience and value. They'll focus on the overall shopping experience, pre- and post-sale, and deliver the 'surprise and delight' moments, like product groupings and easy-to-assemble gift boxes and gift bags that directly address shoppers' most painful holiday shopping friction points."

About RetailNext

The first retail vertical IoT platform to bring e-commerce style shopper analytics to brick-and-mortar stores, brands and malls, RetailNext is a pioneer in focusing entirely on optimizing the shopper experience. Through its centralized SaaS platform, RetailNext automatically collects and analyzes shopper behavior data, providing retailers with insight to improve the shopper experience real time.

More than 475 retailers in over 85 countries have adopted RetailNext's analytics software and retail expertise to better understand the shopper journey in order to increase same-store sales, reduce theft and eliminate unnecessary costs. RetailNext is headquartered in San Jose, Calif. Learn more at www.retailnext.net.

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