Cyber Monday

There's a reason shoppers started doing more online shopping after Thanksgiving, but it had nothing to do with sales.

After the Thanksgiving turkey has been carved and Black Friday shoppers have gone home with their discounted loot, people will get online to score some Cyber Monday deals. Last year, Americans spent more than $9 billion online for Cyber Monday, making it the biggest e-commerce sales day in the country. But how did such a “holiday” come to be?

Thank Ellen Davis, senior vice president of research and strategic initiatives for the National Retail Federation, who coined the term in 2005. For several years in a row, the NRF had noticed a recurring spike in online revenue and traffic on the Monday following Thanksgiving. They believed it was because people were making purchases from their computers at work, where the Internet connections were faster and their kids couldn’t get a sneak peek at their gifts. Planning to shop this year? Here’s [how to navigate Cyber Monday like a pro](https://www.rd.com/list/cyber-monday-shopping/).

The group issued a press release a few days before Thanksgiving, 2005, where they debuted the term “Cyber Monday.”According to the press release, 77 percent of online retailers had seen their sales “increase substantially” on Cyber Monday the previous year and by NRF calculations could expect the trend to continue. Davis had considered calling the new online shopping holiday Black Monday, after Black Friday, or Blue Monday, after blue hyperlinks. But the former also refers to the day world stock markets crashed, and the latter sounded too depressing. In case you were wondering, this is [why Black Friday is called Black Friday](https://www.rd.com/article/history-of-black-friday/).

Long story short, the NRF was right. The *New York Times* report used the new term, and publicity about Cyber Monday spread. That Monday, online sales reached almost a half-billion dollars, a 26 percent increase from the previous year. Year after year, Cyber Monday became more recognized, shoppers bought into more of its deals and discounts, but it didn’t quite live up to the promise of “Biggest Online Shopping Day of the Year.” In time, companies that track online spending began to argue that it was primarily a marketing gimmick and wouldn’t break any records, as digital promotions rarely fell on the same day.

But in 2014, that all changed. That year Cyber Monday became the biggest online shopping day in the country, raking in over $2 billion in sales. And each year since the bar has been raised.