



Take the Stress Out of Holiday Shopping Through Productive Planning

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Black Friday, Cyber Monday and more can be made easy, fun and stress-free with a few tips from ACCO Brands

KETTERING, Ohio, Nov. 13, 2012 /PRNewswire/ -- With the start of the holiday season, stress levels are on the rise. This is particularly evident when it comes to holiday shopping, including Black Friday (Nov. 23) and Cyber Monday (Nov. 26). ACCO Brands Corporation (NYSE:ACCO), a leader in branded office and consumer products and print finishing solutions, has applied its vast experience in planning and organizing to this annual endeavor in an effort to reduce the stress it so often creates.

To help consumers get the most from their experience, the makers of industry-leading AT-A-GLANCE®, Day-Timer® and Day Runner® productivity tools have provided several holiday shopping tips. Ranging from creating a plan to working as a team, these are designed to streamline and enhance the entire experience and keep associated stress levels at bay.

- **Determine Your Needs:** Before you can prepare for shopping, you need to first determine what is actually needed. Create a gift list to make sure you have ideas for everyone on your list. In addition, create a separate list of items you may want/need that could be a part of holiday sales, such as appliances, household items and personal products.
- **Do Your Homework:** With gift and wish lists in hand, start looking online for holiday circulars and special Black Friday ads. If there's a deal for any of your listed items, write it down next to the item. The same applies for Cyber Monday sales. Also, use folders or expanding files to compile printed ads, circulars and coupons. In the end, you should have a list with all deal opportunities available.
- **Make a Plan:** This sounds simple enough, but it's probably one of the most overlooked steps taken for holiday shopping preparation. Make an itinerary or timeline with store hours and times of special sales, and include store locations so that a streamlined route can be determined. Don't forget to allow yourself extra time for waiting in lines, and always make sure to give yourself a break or two to "refuel."
- **Teamwork:** For the serious Black Friday shoppers, complete sales coverage is attained through a group of individuals. As part of your plan, divide and conquer stores and sales in order to maximize opportunities and lessen the burden on each person. Have folders and copies of your lists, who's looking for what, and sale information for each person in your group.
- **Reminders:** Incorporate your lists and plans into your personal electronic devices. Organizing and note-taking apps like Evernote as well as calendaring and e-mail programs like Microsoft® Outlook® are perfect for accomplishing this and offer reminders for tasks and events as well as on-the-go notations. Whether you're shopping individually or as part of a group, these reminders can help you stay on schedule—it's like having an extra holiday "helper" to make sure you don't miss any important events. Plus, all of this information is easily integrated with your personal planner.
- **Stick to the Plan:** It's tempting to wander about a store that's running holiday specials in every department, but if you're serious about fulfilling your gift list—not to mention staying on task and within budget—you need to stick to your plan. In addition, if there's an item on your plan that happens to fall through (e.g., the store runs out of the product), amend the plan and look for the item during subsequent sales or online.

Whether you're a novice shopper or an expert, a casual browser or a hardcore deal-seeker, these tips can prove beneficial. They help you not only accomplish your shopping goals, but following them can reduce stress levels and actually allow you to have some fun throughout the trip. After all, it is the holidays!

For more tips on how to be more productive and organized in all facets of life, visit the [Day-Timer blog](#), as well as the recently launched [AT-A-GLANCE blog](#).

About ACCO Brands

ACCO Brands Corporation is one of the world's largest suppliers of branded office and consumer products and print finishing solutions. The company's widely recognized brands include AT-A-GLANCE®, Day-Timer®, Five Star®, GBC®, Hilroy®, Kensington®, Marbig, Mead®, NOBO, Quartet®, Rexel, Swingline®, Tilibra®, Wilson Jones® and many others. More information about ACCO Brands can be found at <http://www.accobrand.com>.

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Bob Sadowski, APR, +1-937-495-2562