

# The online sales festival: here is what you need to know about it

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If you are an online shopper, you will find yourself in the midst of the annual festival sales offered by various e-commerce companies. This year, e-commerce companies, such as Flipkart, Amazon and Snapdeal, kicked off their annual sales from the first week of October.

Flipkart's Big Billion Days 2016 began from 2 October and will end on 6 October. Day 1 is for fashion, home décor, televisions and home appliances. Day 2 is for mobiles and mobile accessories. Day 3 is for all other electronic items and days 4 and 5 are for the complete range of products.

Amazon's Great Indian Sale ends on 5 October while Snapdeal's Unbox Diwali Sale will end on 6 October. ShopClues offers a 10-day sale which ends on 10 October.

## DEALS AND OFFERS

The discounts range between 10% and 70% depending on the product and the website you shop from. Along with this there is an additional cash back offered by banks if you use their debit or credit cards.

For instance, SBI's debit card holders get an additional discount for buying on Flipkart during the sale period. "SBI's credit card holders can avail 10% instant discount of up to Rs5,250 during the offer period. This is in addition to discounts given by the merchant," said Vijay Jasuja, chief executive officer, SBI Cards.

He further said that merchant-offered equated monthly instalments (EMIs) have been a big driver of sales. "We anticipate EMI purchases to contribute significantly to



the overall card spends this year too," said Jasuja. Banks tied up with e-commerce companies expecting more spends.

"Last year, we saw a growth of over 30% in our total credit card spends during the festive season. E-commerce spends rose considerably, upwards of 45% during the same period," Jasuja added.

Similarly, HDFC Bank Ltd has offers for Amazon customers, while American Express has tied up with Myntra and ShopClues to give additional discounts.

## KEEP IN MIND

Experts say that compared to the last 2 years, the discounts are lower this time. "If you notice, the message around discounts and offers has been very subtle and e-commerce companies are now focusing more on sustainability. Hence, consumers will, in a way, get less discounts than in the last couple of years," said Ankur Bisen, senior vice-president, retail and consumer, at the retail consultancy Technopak Advisors.

The retailers know that con-

sumers will buy and sensitivity to discounts is lower during the festival season. "There is a large segment that still buys around the festivals and we are seeing overall growth in consumption," said Devangshu Dutta, chief executive officer, Third Eyesight, a retail consultancy firm.

But to make the most out of what is on offer, shop around. Some companies give additional discounts if you buy through their app. So, you may get instant deals if you download the app and then buy.

Check your internet connectivity to avoid any glitches. Also, by registering with the websites, you can checkout faster.

Using credit cards and debit cards can give you additional discounts. Remember that no e-commerce platform offers additional discount for cash on delivery. Hence, choose the mode of payment wisely. Clean your browsing history as most of the e-commerce firms use algorithms to understand what you need and that could impact the prices.

Happy shopping.