

Nothing beats a Sydney Xmas

Paul Nicolaou



Australians are set to splurge an astonishing \$6.8bn during the four-day Black Friday-Cyber Monday sales bonanza.

About two-thirds of the retail bonanza from November 28 to December 1 will happen in NSW, with much of it in Sydney, the country's economic powerhouse.

And, of course, with Christmas shopping already in full swing, we are plunging into the biggest selling period of the year.

Email accounts are bursting with online offers for everything from ice cream-makers to fine pieces of jewellery.

According to the Australian Retailers Association, the Black Friday-Cyber Monday period represents a four per cent increase on last year.

At Business Sydney, we are all for online shopping, but we also think there is a lot to be said for the full CBD shopping experience.

It offers the bargains, but also so much more than a simple transaction with the tap of a computer key.

City shopping adventures offer the prospect of a multifaceted big city experience. They can be combined with a sumptuous lunch or dinner at a restaurant or cafe, a choice of live theatre shows or a visit to our great arts and culture venues.

Wonderfully, for many thousands of Sydneysiders, the Sydney Metro has brought the city just a quick train ride closer.

Retailers tell us many Sydneysiders adhere to generational retail rituals including loyalty to the bricks-and-mortar shopping experience.

Grandparents have fond memories of festive shopping forays into the city with their kids. Those halcyon days when big retailers turned their stores into Christmas wonderlands capped by a photo with Santa.

That wonderful world still happens. Go no further than the beautiful Queen Victoria Building for Christmas on steroids.

Not to forget the city's official Christmas tree in Martin Place. Our great department stores are also contributing to the magic.

So let the shopping spree begin. An estimated six million Australians are expected to participate in the Black Friday-Cyber Monday sales.

We hope many Sydneysiders will choose to shop in the heart of our wonderful city and enjoy the full experience.

Paul Nicolaou is executive director of Business Sydney