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Best Buy Shoppers Find Black Friday Deals Unreliable

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NEW YORK ([TheStreet](#)) -- **Best Buy**([BBY](#)) may be responsible for some empty stockings this holiday season.

The consumer electronics retailer is dropping the ball on some Black Friday orders, with shoppers complaining they have received e-mails over the past week from the company saying their orders have been canceled.

"We had ordered and [received confirmation] for a Holiday Bundle from Best Buy's Web site. We received a confirmation on the purchase and an expected shipping date," says Scott Mitchell of Ridgefield, Conn. "On Thursday of this past week we received an e-mail informing us that the order was being canceled."

Best Buy's online customer service forum has become a hub for shoppers complaining of similar situations.

"I placed two orders for the Fujifilm AX-350 on Black Friday for \$50 each. They have been back ordered up until today, one week before Christmas and now they are cancelled. I called up to inquire and they stated that there was nothing that they could do," Jcar posted. "This is ridiculous that Best Buy waited until this late in the season to cancel the order and offers nothing in return. Now I need to try and find something to replace these items. Poor customer service, especially considering that I spent over \$250 on other orders. Don't think I will shop here again.

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It does look like Best Buy is attempting to rectify some of these issues.

Mitchell received an e-mail yesterday evening after several attempts at contacting Best Buy's customer service: "I realize the cancellation of your order was absolutely untimely and I can understand why you would be upset...Upon pulling up your records here it is evident that you have been an exceptional customer of ours over the years and I we truly do appreciate that. Although we value every customer and will go to great lengths to gain and retain their business, your level loyalty does earn special consideration when unfortunate circumstances such as these arise."

Best Buy is offering Mitchell a gift card to go toward a replacement, but is not offering an outright replacement of the same bundle and the gift card would not be received until after Christmas.

Best Buy e-mailed this statement regarding the problem: "Due to overwhelming demand of hot product offerings on BestBuy.com during the November and December time period, we have encountered a situation that has affected redemption of some of our customers' online orders. We are very sorry for the inconvenience this has caused and we have notified the affected customers."

But this doesn't seem to be a new problem for Best Buy. Brad Wilson, who runs the deals site Bradsdeal.com and BlackFriday2011.com, says the company is not reliable to deliver on great deals.

"We have come to expect something like this when they promote aggressively," Wilson said.

Best Buy was particularly aggressive when it came to Black Friday discounts and promotions this year after dropping the ball in 2010.

The company's door-buster deals, which rivaled that of discount giants like **Amazon**([AMZN](#)), **Wal-Mart**([WMT](#)) and **Target**([TGT](#)), were praised by analysts, who expected these sales coupled with midnight Black Friday opening to propel third-quarter results.

But Best Buy failed to deliver to investors as well, reporting last week a 29% plunge in third-quarter earnings, with gross margin falling by a percentage point.

The discounts ultimately pressured the bottom line and did little in the way of revenue, with same-store sales up just 0.3%.

Best Buy shares were up 1.8% to \$22.97 in afternoon trades. Year-to-date, the stock has lost more than 30%.

-Reported by Jeanine Poggi in New York.

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