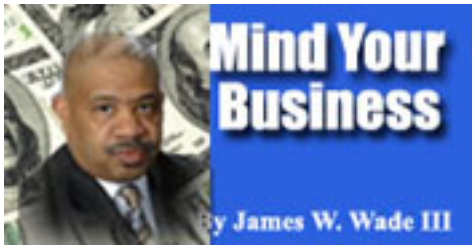

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denied credit
than are white-owned firms.

Black Friday reaps benefits

By JAMES W. WADE III

According to ShopperTrak , Black Friday sales were up seven percent over last year, with buyers spending more than $11 billion, the biggest year-to-year increase since 2007. That's the most ever for Black Friday

But cash could be a competitor for retailers. A Western Union survey found that 83 percent of consumers would rather receive $50 in cash than a $50 gift.

And Cyber Monday as well as plenty of online retailers are offering big discounts to get you to spend your money. Best Buy is offering a $10 gift card with a $100 purchase.

Kmart is offering free shipping on qualifying purchases of more than $49. At Macy's , free shipping is available on purchases greater than $75 but clearance items are 25-to-40 percent off.

On Cyber Monday, the day many of us start holiday shopping online, web retailers begin enticing shoppers to spend via clicks with killer deals. In addition to Cyber Monday being a lot more convenient than flocking to brick and mortar stores, it turns out shopping online can be greener. A study found in-store purchases represented an increase of more than 15 times the green house gases of online purchases.

Overall, the impact of Black Friday in 2009 was about 50 times that of Cyber Monday in 2009.

It's not so surprising when you think about the contrast. In-store shopping, most of the time, involves the shopper driving to the store so they're burning fuel, which emits CO2. And, then there are the carbon emissions associated with the electricity and power for the retail outlet itself as well as energy used for shipping the goods to the store.

In 2011, Cyber Monday was supposed to be even bigger than in previous years and bigger than Black Friday. Cyber Monday in 2011 could hit sales of $1.2 billion up from $1 billion last year, with 122 million Americans shopping via Cyber Monday deals.

In contrast, Black Friday hit sales of $816 million in 2011 according to comScore.

People are more comfortable shopping online than ever before this year and are turning to a more energy-efficient way of shopping – online.

With 7 billion people now on the planet, and 9 billion by 2050, it's just not sustainable to have masses of people physically driving to stores and buying stuffing all at the same time. There's a limited amount of space, fuel, and energy resources. Limited space is also why Black Friday has been marred in the past by things like stampedes and fighting.

And take the trend of dematerialization or digital goods replacing physical ones a step further and the Internet can help other sectors beyond shopping become more efficient, too.

E-readers are replacing the production of physical books and digital music downloads and movies are replacing the production and shipping of CDs and DVDs. Both of these digital dematerialization trends have been studied and suggest that they are reducing carbon emissions from the traditional businesses.

However, at the end of the day, buying less stuff is going to be better for the planet in general so it would be interesting to look at if Cyber Monday increases the buying of stuff overall and do people buy more stuff online for the holidays just because it's easier? If anyone is doing research in this area, hit me up. Is there a point where the Internet becomes such an efficient medium that it produces more consumption, not less?

Now with these figures, it seems the economy is doing as bad as the numbers say.

More unemployment and more sales, how does that add up? I guess my concern comes when I think of how many Black businesses do you shop at?

The Lee Harvard area has businesses coming and going a lot. Some have been there a while. But there's no longer a real sense of community shopping. Business is an important part of the community but it's the people who live who builds it.

My friend Michael Nelson Sr. posed a question… Is the existence of a Black community in Cleveland a thing of the past? Is there a Cleveland Black community equivalent of Little Italy, East 185th & Lakeshore, Kamms Corner, West 25th, etc. Where do Blacks own the businesses other than churches?

We need to have a common vision for what we would like to see develop, be nurtured and sustain us in any of our "communities/neighborhoods..." at least... certainly not as we perceive

other “communities” to have.

It seems like Black businesses in the community is a thing of the past. Are Councilmen trying to help Blacks open a new place in their ward? So even though Black Friday was a great day this year, the Black business community is not getting the same love.

Those Black-owned businesses , moreover, earn only 43 cents for every dollar earned by a white-owned firm. They also receive a disproportionately low portion of government-backed business loans.

African-American entrepreneurs face fewer opportunities and more challenges than others do in this country. So until more American companies embrace s upplier diversity and make it a practice to buy from Black-owned businesses, African-Americans will continue to face a dim future in the business world.

In the United States, Black-owned businesses are 35 percent more likely to fail than white-owned businesses. Black-owned businesses also tend to start with less capital and are four times more likely to be denied credit than are white-owned firms. In addition, African-Americans are less likely to benefit from the multigenerational family and social ties that so often lead to business partnerships among white-owned firms in this country.