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INTERNET NEWS

ONLINE RETAILERS SEE JOLLY HOLIDAYS IN SOFTWARE SALES

By Wendy Wilson 12/6/1999



DEC. 6 | E-tailers enjoyed brisk business during the opening days of the holiday shopping season, with DVD software among the most popular stocking stuffers for sale on the Web.

"The day after Thanksgiving, we were up over 20%, and it looks like we'll have a steady build through December," said DVD Express CEO Michael Dubelko.

DVD Express ran glossy newspaper inserts Thanksgiving day in at least six major cities, including its hometown of Los Angeles, in an effort to break through online clutter. "It's getting very crowded out there," Dubelko explained. "You turn on the radio, TV or look in a magazine, and everyone is a dot.com. There's a lot of competition to break through. You have to continue to advertise online and in print."

Other online competitors are equally bullish on their holiday DVD business.

DVD Empire announced that sales for the Monday after Thanksgiving were up 100% over the previous Monday, with president Jeff Rix predicting that November will end up the e-tailer's best month ever, topping its current high of 38,000 units sold in March.

At **DVDWave**, "the week before and through Thanksgiving was very strong, and these past few days since Thanksgiving have been even better," company president Sam Osborn said. "We're seeing an amazingly high level of excitement about DVD this holiday season."

Reel.com, too, saw DVD perform extremely well over the Thanksgiving weekend, chief operating officer Dave Rochlin calling it "sort of a continuation of what we've seen all year long." Popular items included New Line Home Video's *Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged Me* on both DVD and VHS, Warner Home Video's *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* on DVD, MGM's James Bond gift sets, and Disney titles.

"We've had some very ambitious projections, and we are still on target," Rochlin said, due in part to strong sales the day after Thanksgiving.

In the past, he added, "if you were one of those poor souls who had to work, you'd take a long lunch and spend the next four or five hours shopping. I think probably now you're seeing the Internet equivalent."

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