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Shopping trends change with the times

By Andy McKeever
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...R. Tasha Wallis, the executive director of the Vermont Retail Association, said that despite the increase in prices, customers are still spending a lot. Customers are now turning to the Internet market, she said.

According to Wallis, retailers are promoting "Cyber Monday." The term was coined a couple years ago for the first Monday following Thanksgiving. Retailers, she said will be holding special online promotions to increase sales.

"I think the way people shop is ever-changing," said Wallis. "Seventy-two percent of retailers will have special online promotions."

Wallis said that 15 percent of all in-store purchases are influenced by online prices, and over 50 percent of online shoppers shop while at work.

...The total amount of money Vermont retailers made this weekend was not available on Sunday, but Wallis said she expects the numbers to be high.

"Retail is a very important part of our economy," said Wallis. "It's important to see how retail is ingrained in our culture."

Wallis said that 59,000 Vermonters work in retail, and stores produced approximately \$800 Million in state tax revenue last year.

The Vermont economy also is getting a boost this year, Wallis said, from Canadians coming across from Montreal and other locations to shop. The U.S. dollar has dropped to a par with Canada's dollar, attracting neighbors from the north to head south.

"We did see a lot of Canadians in the Burlington area," she said.