



# Report: 2021 Holiday Shopping Trends: TCGplayer's Black Friday by the Numbers



# 2021: Holiday Shopping Trends

## TCGplayer's Black Friday by the Numbers

Black Friday is the most important sales day in the retail calendar, representing a period of time when the majority of all annual retail sales occur. However, this Black Friday – November 26, 2021 – was different than any TCGplayer has experienced before, driven in part by COVID-19-related e-commerce tailwinds, and our ability to invest in and scale our tools, fulfillment operations and team.

If you're curious about what else our record-breaking sales data shows, keep reading!

### Table of Contents

1. <a href="#">Section 1</a> : Collectible Card Games Surge in Popularity During Black Friday 2021	page 3
2. <a href="#">Section 2</a> : Record Breaking Holiday Weekend Generates \$10 Million in GMV with Massive Growth Across All Product Lines	page 4
2.1. <a href="#">Figure 1</a> : Top 10 Selling Collectible Card Games on Black Friday	page 4
2.2. <a href="#">Figure 2</a> : Growth in Collectible Card Game Sales During Black Friday 2021	page 5
2.3. <a href="#">Figure 3.1</a> : Top 10 Best-Selling Magic: The Gathering Singles	page 6
2.4. <a href="#">Figure 3.2</a> : Top 10 Best-Selling Yu-Gi-Oh! Singles	page 7
2.5. <a href="#">Figure 3.3</a> : Top 10 Best-Selling Pokémon Singles	page 8
3. <a href="#">Section 3</a> : Demand for Collectible Card Games Remains High Driven by Both Existing and New Hobbyists	page 9
3.1. <a href="#">Figure 4</a> : Black Friday 2021 Drives 80% Increase in Site Traffic	page 9
4. <a href="#">Section 4</a> : TCGplayer Pro and Direct by TCGplayer Sellers Benefit More from Black Friday Sales Growth	page 10
3.1. <a href="#">Figure 5</a> : Sellers Using TCGplayer Tools Outperform Average Sellers by 2x	page 10
3.2. <a href="#">Figure 6</a> : Direct by TCGplayer Black Friday 2021: Cards Authenticated and Shipped	page 11
5. <a href="#">Section 5</a> : TCGplayer's Marketplace and Seller Tools Continue to Fuel Hobby Collectible Market Growth	page 12
6. <a href="#">Appendix</a> : Glossary of Terms	page 13

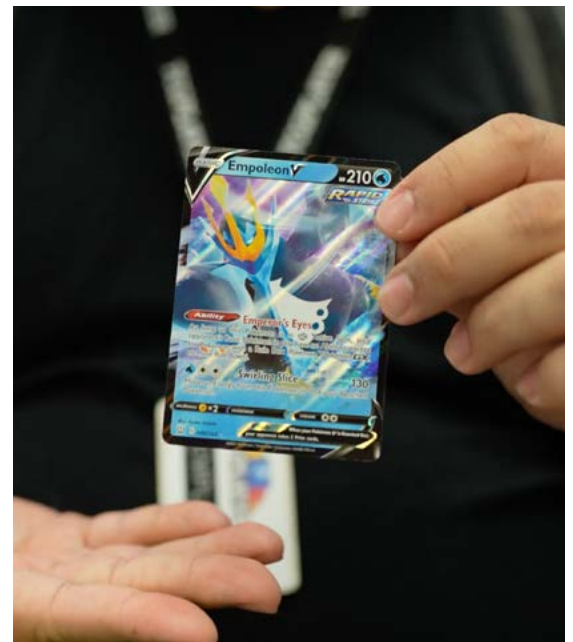
### 1: Collectible Card Games Surge in Popularity During Black Friday 2021



*TCGplayer team member authenticates cards*

To analyze Black Friday 2021 data, it's important to look back at 2020, at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. As lockdown mandates and other pandemic restrictions swept the nation, TCGplayer was well-positioned to help facilitate operations on behalf of our many partners. More and more brick-and-mortar stores turned to our tools and services, particularly our e-commerce capabilities like Pro and Direct by TCGplayer, to stay connected with their customers and meet the rising demand for their products. And as the hobby collectible industry benefited from a renewed sense of nostalgia with people spending more time at home, TCGplayer attracted more hobbyists (or what TCGplayer calls our buyers) and sellers to our platform, while making a series of key investments in our people, products and technology to keep up with this growing demand.

TCGplayer's data continues to indicate that the industry-wide growth seen during the pandemic has not slowed down. In fact, our Black Friday 2021 results confirm that many pandemic-related e-commerce sales trends are here to stay, as new games, gamers and collectors enter the market, and influencer-driven events fuel the industry's surge in popularity. To give you a sense of this growth by the numbers, during peak traffic times on Black Friday, the TCGplayer marketplace served 100,000 pages per minute and processed seven times more orders per minute compared to Black Friday 2020. Additionally, sellers who used TCGplayer's tools and solutions outperformed the average seller. This translated into a huge increase in sales growth and gross merchandise value (GMV),<sup>1</sup> and dramatic increases in the number of sellers and hobbyists who participated in the biggest sales day of the year.



*TCGplayer team member displays an Empoleon Pokémon card*

<sup>1</sup>Dollar amount of total sales over a specific timeframe



### 2: Record Breaking Holiday Weekend Generates \$10 Million in GMV with Massive Growth Across All Product Lines

This holiday weekend – from Thanksgiving Eve through Cyber Monday – **TCGplayer generated \$10 million in GMV. That represents 260% of last year's holiday weekend GMV.**

On Black Friday 2021, sales volume on the TCGplayer marketplace increased by more than 300% compared to Black Friday 2020. **An analysis of the top selling product categories by overall GMV again confirms that *Magic: The Gathering*, *Yu-Gi-Oh!* and *Pokémon* are TCGplayer's top performers.** Of the top three categories, *Magic: The Gathering* grew by more than 100% on an annual basis and *Yu-Gi-Oh!* experienced a lift of almost 230%. *Pokémon's* growth continued to outpace that of *Magic: The Gathering* and *Yu-Gi-Oh!*, with the product line growing by approximately 320% year-over-year.

**Figure 1: Top 10 Selling Collectible Card Games on Black Friday<sup>2</sup>**



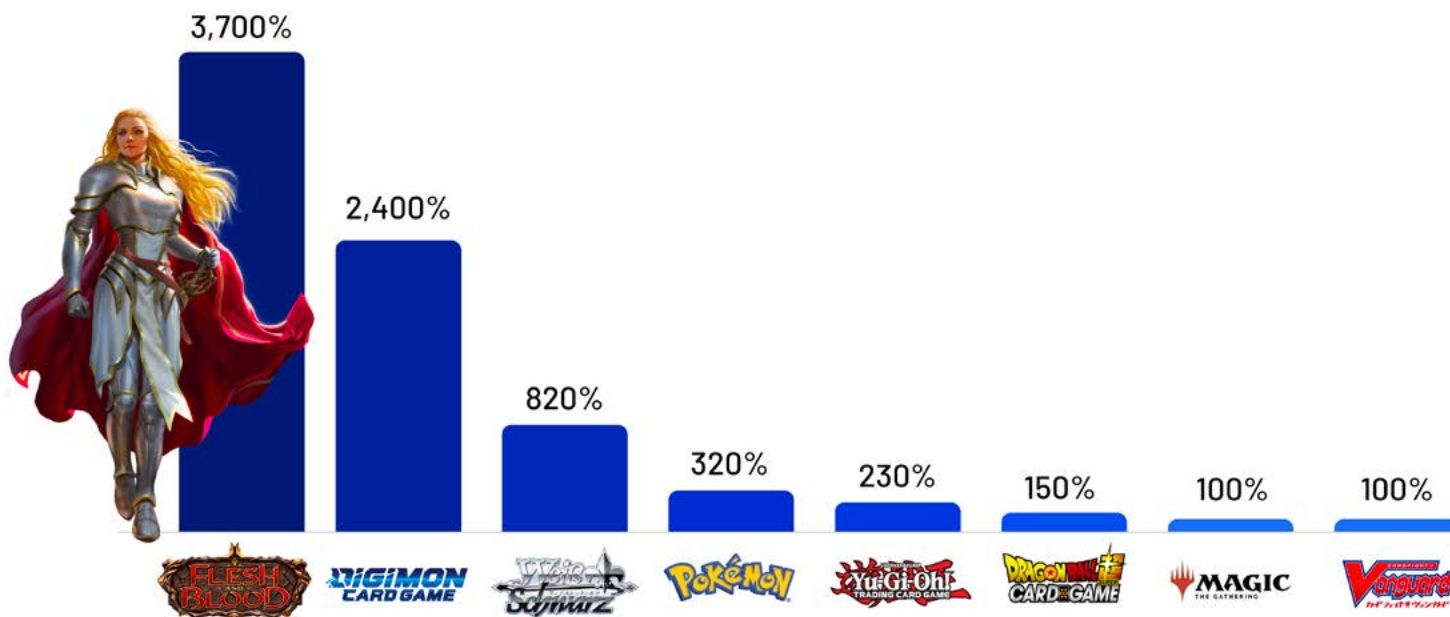
- 1 *Magic: The Gathering*
- 2 *Yu-Gi-Oh!*
- 3 *Pokémon*
- 4 *Flesh and Blood TCG*
- 5 *Digimon Card Game*
- 6 *Weiss Schwarz*
- 7 *Cardfight!! Vanguard*
- 8 *Dragon Ball Super Card Game*
- 9 *MetaZoo*
- 10 *Final Fantasy TCG*

<sup>2</sup> Based on the total GMV of products sold

Buying trends on Black Friday also indicate that there was very little crossover between games purchased by individual hobbyists. **In fact, 92% of hobbyists bought products related to only one game whereas only 6% bought products from two games.** For our top three categories – *Magic: The Gathering*, *Yu-Gi-Oh!* and *Pokémon* – only 1% of hobbyists purchased products from at least one other top three product line.

Outside the top three categories, *Flesh and Blood TCG* and the *Digimon Card Game* experienced the most explosive GMV growth, increasing by more than 37 and 24 times,<sup>3</sup> respectively, compared to 2020 Black Friday levels. The rapid growth experienced by *Flesh and Blood* was driven by broader adoption of the game across the hobby collectible industry and the return of organized and tournament play given easing pandemic restrictions. Additionally, TCGplayer and the game's creator, Legend Story Studios, partnered three times over the course of 2021 to promote *Flesh and Blood* products, offering a sweepstakes in January and running two direct-to-consumer campaigns designed to benefit local hobby shops: the [Monarch Campaign](#) and the [Tales of Aria Campaign](#).

**Figure 2: Growth in Collectible Card Game Sales During Black Friday 2021<sup>4</sup>**













<sup>3</sup> Digimon Card Game singles were added to the TCGplayer catalog in January 2021

<sup>4</sup> Approximate Black Friday GMV growth on an annual basis











Our top 10 best-selling singles by quantity for *Magic: The Gathering*, *Yu-Gi-Oh!* and *Pokémon*, demonstrate that buyers are still searching for the latest releases, despite the slow return of in-person events. Publishers continue to fuel demand with releases that highlight each game's history, and most popular themes or characters.

**Figure 3.1: Top 10 Best-Selling *Magic: The Gathering* Singles<sup>5</sup>**

1		<a href="#">Diver Skaab</a> <i>Crimson Vow</i>	6		<a href="#">Leinore, Autumn Sovereign</a> <i>Midnight Hunt Commander, display</i>
2		<a href="#">Sefris of the Hidden Ways</a> <i>Adventures in the Forgotten Realms Commander, display</i>	7		<a href="#">Oblivion's Hunger</a> <i>Zendikar Rising</i>
3		<a href="#">Sefris of the Hidden Ways</a> <i>Adventures in the Forgotten Realms Commander</i>	8		<a href="#">Vega, the Watcher</a> <i>Kaldheim</i>
4		<a href="#">Willowdusk, Essence Seer</a> <i>Commander 2021, display</i>	9		<a href="#">Wedding Announcement</a> <i>Crimson Vow</i>
5		<a href="#">Kazandu Mammoth</a> <i>Zendikar Rising</i>	10		<a href="#">Creepy Puppeteer</a> <i>Crimson Vow</i>











<sup>5</sup>Excludes basic lands

**Figure 3.2: Top 10 Best-Selling Yu-Gi-Oh! Singles**

1		<a href="#"><u>Dark Magician</u></a> <i>The Dark Side of Dimensions Movie Pack: Secret Edition</i>	6		<a href="#"><u>Pot of Extravagance</u></a> <i>Maximum Gold: El Dorado</i>
2		<a href="#"><u>Anti-Spell Fragrance</u></a> <i>Duel Devastator</i>	7		<a href="#"><u>Magician's Salvation</u></a> <i>2021 Tin of Ancient Battles</i>
3		<a href="#"><u>Speedroid Terrortop</u></a> <i>Legendary Duelists: Synchro Storm</i>	8		<a href="#"><u>Mystic Mine</u></a> <i>Maximum Gold: El Dorado</i>
4		<a href="#"><u>Lyrilusc - Beryl Canary</u></a> <i>Legendary Duelists: Synchro Storm</i>	9		<a href="#"><u>Aussa the Earth Charmer, Immovable</u></a> <i>2021 Tin of Ancient Battles</i>
5		<a href="#"><u>Cyber Dragon Nachster</u></a> <i>Cyber Strike Structure Deck</i>	10		<a href="#"><u>"Infernoble Arms - Durendal"</u></a> <i>2021 Tin of Ancient Battles</i>



**Figure 3.3: Top 10 Best-Selling Pokémon Singles**

1		<a href="#">Booster Pack</a> <a href="#">Code Card</a> <i>Fusion Strike</i>	6		<a href="#">Pikachu V</a> SWSH061
2		<a href="#">Galarian Slowpoke</a> <i>Battle Styles</i>	7		<a href="#">Pikachu</a> <i>Celebrations</i>
3		<a href="#">Sizzlipede</a> <i>Battle Styles</i>	8		<a href="#">Surfing Pikachu VMAX</a> <i>Celebrations</i>
4		<a href="#">Dubwool V</a> SWSH049	9		<a href="#">Flying Pikachu VMAX</a> <i>Celebrations</i>
5		<a href="#">Hatterene V</a> SWSH055	10		<a href="#">Greninja Star</a> SWSH144



### 3: Demand for Collectible Card Games Remains High Driven by Both Existing and New Hobbyists

A greater number of existing hobbyists purchased during Black Friday 2021, and on average they spent almost 30% more compared to last year. During Black Friday, TCGplayer saw a more than 110% increase in new orders compared to Black Friday 2020, with first-time purchasers more than doubling year-over-year. Overall, hobbyist traffic increased by about 80% on an annual basis with the marketplace experiencing about 12 unique product searches per second.

**Figure 4: Black Friday Site Traffic Grew by 80% YoY<sup>6</sup>**



*TCGplayer team member sorts cards in Syracuse, NY*

These data points indicate that the demand for collectible card games is healthy and trending up, and not only are more people buying – they're also spending more money.

<sup>6</sup> Year-over-year

### 4: TCGplayer Pro and Direct by TCGplayer Sellers Benefit More from Black Friday Sales Growth

TCGplayer Pro Sellers – sellers who qualify for and use TCGplayer’s suite of Pro tools – and Direct by TCGplayer Sellers – sellers who have opted into TCGplayer’s consignment-style fulfillment service program – **outperformed the average seller on Black Friday, capitalizing on increased hobbyist demand.**

The average GMV generated by each TCGplayer seller increased by 50% this Black Friday as compared to last year, driven by increased hobbyist demand and spending habits. However, TCGplayer Pro Sellers enjoyed a more than 70% GMV increase compared to last year. Additionally, sellers using Direct by TCGplayer experienced a GMV lift of approximately 125% on average compared to last year. **As a result, the average GMV of TCGplayer Pro Sellers and Direct by TCGplayer Sellers was more than twice that of the average seller on the TCGplayer marketplace.**

**Figure 5: Sellers Using TCGplayer Tools Outperform Average Sellers by 2x<sup>7</sup>**



“

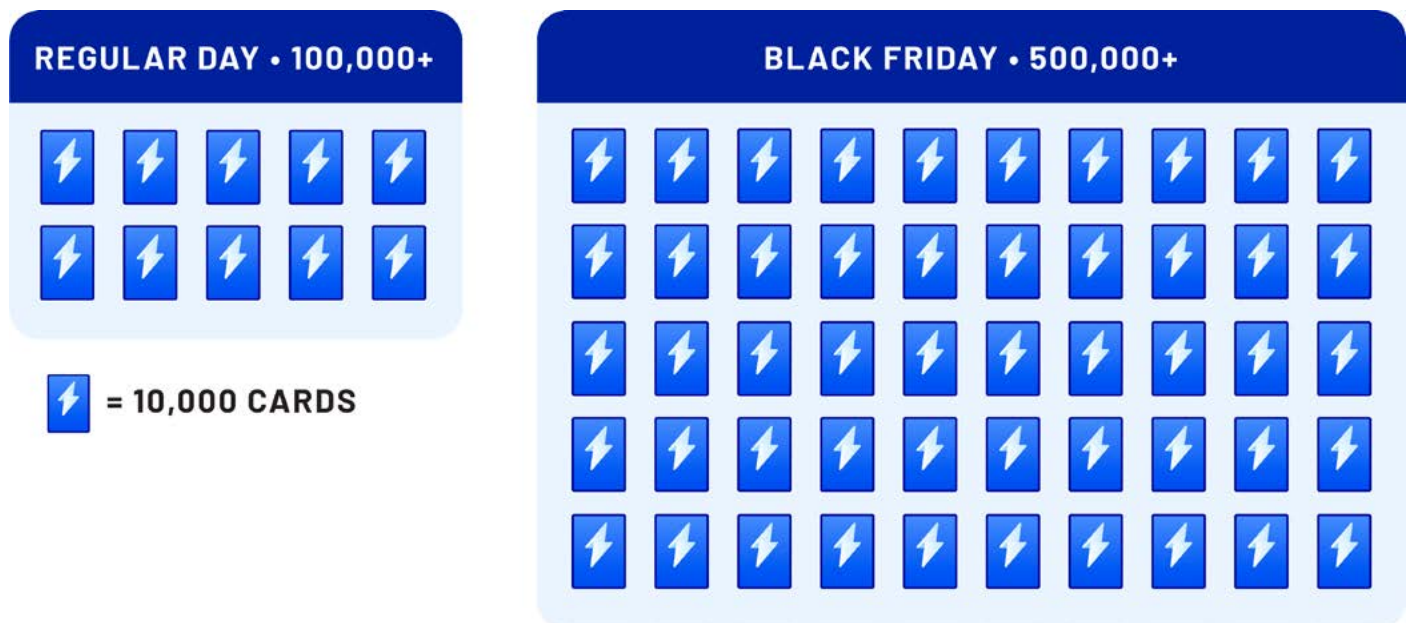
I love Direct. In just one month, we made as much as we did in our entire first year of business. The sales have been great and the program has saved my team so much time.

– **Dio Ayala**, YBM Gaming Lounge

Direct by TCGplayer had an outsized impact on sales during this Black Friday. The Direct service, which allows TCGplayer to take on all aspects of order logistics, including shipping, fulfillment and customer service was used to facilitate 60% of total products purchased on Black Friday.

**This means that more than half a million cards were shipped out of TCGplayer's headquarters in Syracuse, N.Y. as a result of Black Friday, all authenticated by our in-house team of experts for rarity, condition and edition.** By way of contrast, TCGplayer typically authenticates, packs and ships just over 100,000 cards a day.

**Figure 6: Direct by TCGplayer Black Friday 2021: Cards Authenticated and Shipped**





### 5: TCGplayer's Marketplace and Seller Tools Continue to Fuel Hobby Collectible Market Growth

---

The explosive growth experienced across all product lines this Black Friday confirms that the collectible card market continues to grow with more hobbyists shopping on TCGplayer than ever before, spending more money per transaction. Additionally, our data suggests that TCGplayer's seller tools and products allow sellers to compete more effectively in the market, enabling them to better take advantage of increased demand, growing their GMV in the process.

Though TCGplayer was well-positioned to capitalize on COVID-19-related e-commerce tailwinds, it was our ability to invest in and scale our team, technology and offerings that allowed us to better support our customers this Black Friday. Looking ahead, TCGplayer plans to continue to make strategic investments that create a competitive advantage for our customers — hobbyists and sellers alike — guaranteeing that we not only grow with the market but also fuel its growth.



---

## Appendix: Glossary of Terms

---

### Authentication

The process used by TCGplayer to physically examine and verify every product, confirming its rarity, edition and condition.

### Brick-and-Mortar Store

A physical store location as compared to sellers who only have an online or e-commerce presence.

### CCG

CCG stands for Collectible Card Game.

### Conditioning

TCGplayer organizes inventory into common quality labels called conditions that describe the state of a card based on its imperfections and the severity of those imperfections. The terms "condition" or "conditioning" are used instead of "grade" or "grading," to conform with terms used by our sellers to evaluate and describe their cards. TCGplayer utilizes five categories with clearly defined descriptions to sort cards: Near Mint, Lightly Played, Moderately Played, Heavily Played, Damaged.

### Direct by TCGplayer

TCGplayer's consignment-style fulfillment service built to save sellers time and resources, allowing TCGplayer to take on all aspects of order logistics, including shipping, fulfillment and customer service. When shoppers purchase products through the Direct by TCGplayer program, they have the ability to shop from thousands of local hobby stores around the country and receive all purchased products in one convenient package. All Direct orders are shipped from TCGplayer's headquarters in Syracuse, N.Y., and authenticated by a team of experts for rarity, condition and edition. Orders \$35 or more ship for free.

### GMV

Gross merchandise value (GMV) is the dollar amount of total sales over a specific timeframe.

### Hobbyists

Buyers who purchase products on the TCGplayer marketplace.

### Pro Tools

TCGplayer Pro Sellers have access to TCGplayer's cutting edge Pro Tools, which include [MassPrice](#), [Quicklist Card Scanning Software](#), [Sales Channels](#), [Pro Website](#) and [Kiosk](#).

### Sets

A group of cards that have the same set symbol and are printed in the same sealed product.

### TCG

TCG stands for Trading Card Game.

### TCGplayer Pro Seller

TCGplayer Pro Sellers are sellers who qualify for and use TCGplayer's Pro Tools. To be eligible for Pro, sellers need to complete at least 51 orders that have reached the Expected Delivery Date and have a feedback ratio of 90% or above.



