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## Occupy Promotes Shopping Mom-and-Pop on Black Friday

By Nigel Duara and Christina Rexrode  
 The Associated Press

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — Occupy protesters want shoppers to occupy something besides door-buster sales and crowded mall parking lots on Black Friday.

Some don't want people to shop at all. Others just want to divert shoppers from big chains and giant shopping malls to local mom-and-pops. And while the actions don't appear coordinated, they have similar themes: supporting

small businesses while criticizing the day's dedication to conspicuous consumption and the shopping frenzy that fuels big corporations.

Nearly each one promises some kind of surprise action on the day after Thanksgiving, the traditional start of the holiday shopping season.

In Seattle, protesters are carpooling to Wal-Mart stores to protest with other Occupy groups from around Washington state. Washington, D.C., is offering a "really, really free market," where people can donate items they don't

want so others can go gift shopping for free.

Others plan to hit the mall, but not for shopping. The 75-person encampment in Boise, Idaho, will send "consumer zombies" to wander around in silent protest of what they view as unnecessary spending. In Chicago, protesters will serenade shoppers with revamped Christmas carols about buying local.

The Des Moines, Iowa, group plans flash mobs at three malls in an attempt to get people to think about what they're buying.

"We didn't want to guilt-trip people at a mall," said Occupy Des Moines organizer Ed Fallon. "We wanted to get at them in a playful, friendly way, to support local businesses."

Protesters say the movement shouldn't take away money and seasonal jobs from the working-class majority it purports to represent. The corporations, not the shoppers, are the focus

movement, which presents itself as pushing back against corporate power.

"If you ask, a lot of small business owners identify as business owners, not specifically small business," said

home."

Another shop local movement, Small Business Saturday, was started last year to encourage people to shop at small businesses on the day after Black Friday. But the Occupy groups are underwhelmed, since Small Business Saturday was started by American Express.

"It's just another example of the banks and Wall Street trying to take the very real desires of working people to have a humane economic system and twisting it to their ends," said Peter Rickman, an activist with Occupy Milwaukee.

### Protesters around the country plan creative statements against consumerism

of any protests, they say. But organizers do hope their actions drive people to reconsider shopping at national chains and direct their attention to small, locally owned stores.

That may not fly with small businesses wary of any association with the

Jean Card, spokeswoman for the National Federation of Independent Business. "I would like to believe there is a silver lining, but I don't picture a frustrated consumer that can't get into a box store turning around and going to a small business. I see that person going

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