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**Subject:** Black Friday Actions  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 22, 2011 2:17:18 PM  
**Attachments:** [OCCUPY BLACK FRIDAY - 2011 General Brief.pdf](#)

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The attached document was prepared by the International Council of Shopping Centers regarding possible actions by the Occupy movements to disrupt retail activity on Friday. Please review and develop a one page product that we can send to our District Commanders to make them aware of the potential threat.

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# OCCUPY and Black Friday

Risk Briefing for Malls and Retail Sector

JusticeOnline.org  
November 15, 2011

PCIF

Information cut-off date: 1200 15 Nov

# Contents

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- Occupy movement – overview
- Key groups and locations
- Attitude towards Retail
- Specific known threats
- Trigger Issues and Trends
- Risk Advisory Support

# Occupy Movement - Overview

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## HISTORY

- Occupy arose from the 15 May (15-M) movement that still mobilises large numbers of protestors in Spain
- It is helped and supported by the Anonymous hacktivist collective and takes in other existing single-issue groups
- The movement initially tried to mobilise in US on July 12 – failed; re-launched as Occupy Wall Street (OWS) on September 17, with local success; media coverage muted
- Movement launched a “push” for global action on 15 October and finally achieved real traction in major cities worldwide

# Occupy Movement - Overview

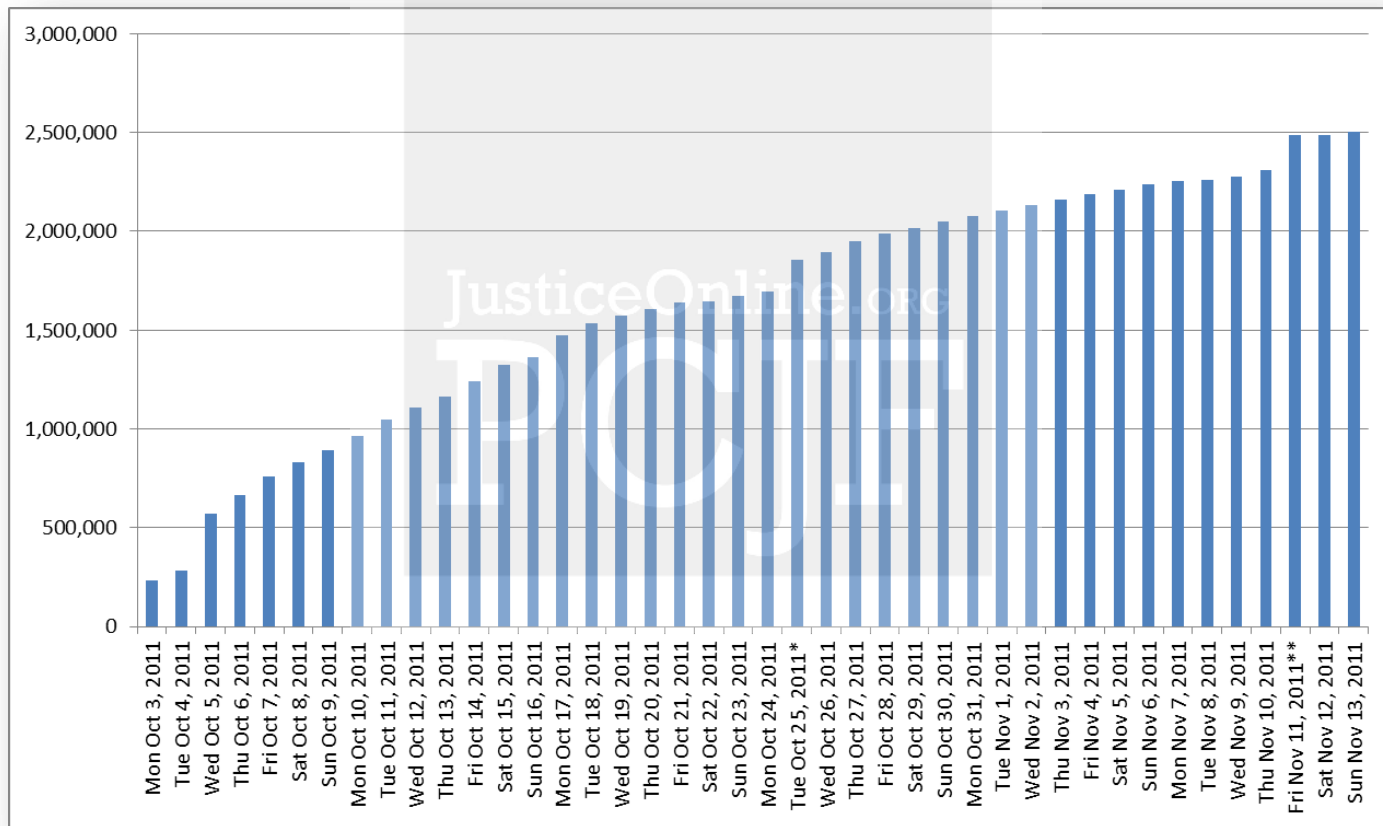
## ASSESSED WORLDWIDE PRESENCE (as of 9 Nov)



CLIENT IN CONFIDENCE

# Occupy Movement - Overview

## SUPPORT GROWTH – LAST SIX WEEKS (based on “likes”)



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# Occupy Movement - Overview

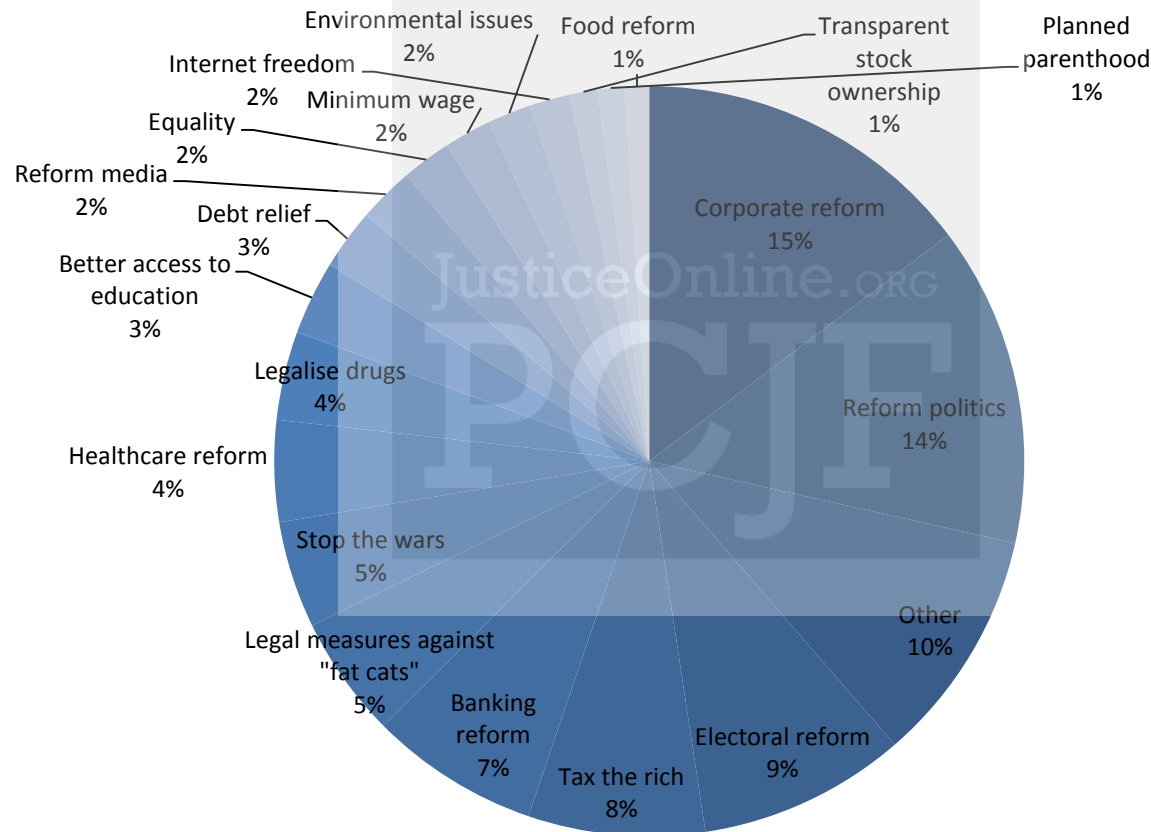
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## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- Although common themes have been evident, Occupy was initially very unclear on aims and objectives
- This has been a major failing and has acted as a limit on popular support for the movement
- Initial (but limited) efforts are now underway to correct this, using social media tools
- This is linked to efforts to improve communication and coordination between the various different groups

# Occupy Movement - Overview

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES - SUMMARY



CLIENT IN CONFIDENCE



# Occupy Movement - Overview

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## GENERAL ORGANISATION AND COORDINATION

- Some of the Occupy movement is “virtual” rather than physical, possibly in part due to the Anonymous overlap
- The physical parts of the movement are all unique but share certain similar characteristics (described on next slide)
- There are increasing efforts to establish similar structures and improve coordination
- Social media and use of web-based tools has played a very big part in coordination, including enabling national conference calls by the “interoccupy” movement: minutes of these are useful for research
- Training is increasingly being standardised and best practice is being shared through these means

# Occupy Movement - Overview

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## OVERALL CHARACTERISATION AND ASSESSMENT

- Occupy encompasses experienced activists, stay-at-home “hacktivists” and a large number of newcomers
- There are concerns within the movement that newcomers do not understand the boundaries of peaceful protest
- Members also fear penetration by elements intent on causing violence (suspecting that some may be agents provocateurs)
- Therefore, Whilst this is genuinely a peaceful resistance movement, we have already seen that violence can flare, especially when there is confrontation with authority figures
- The probability of violence increases as time passes and site clearances continue

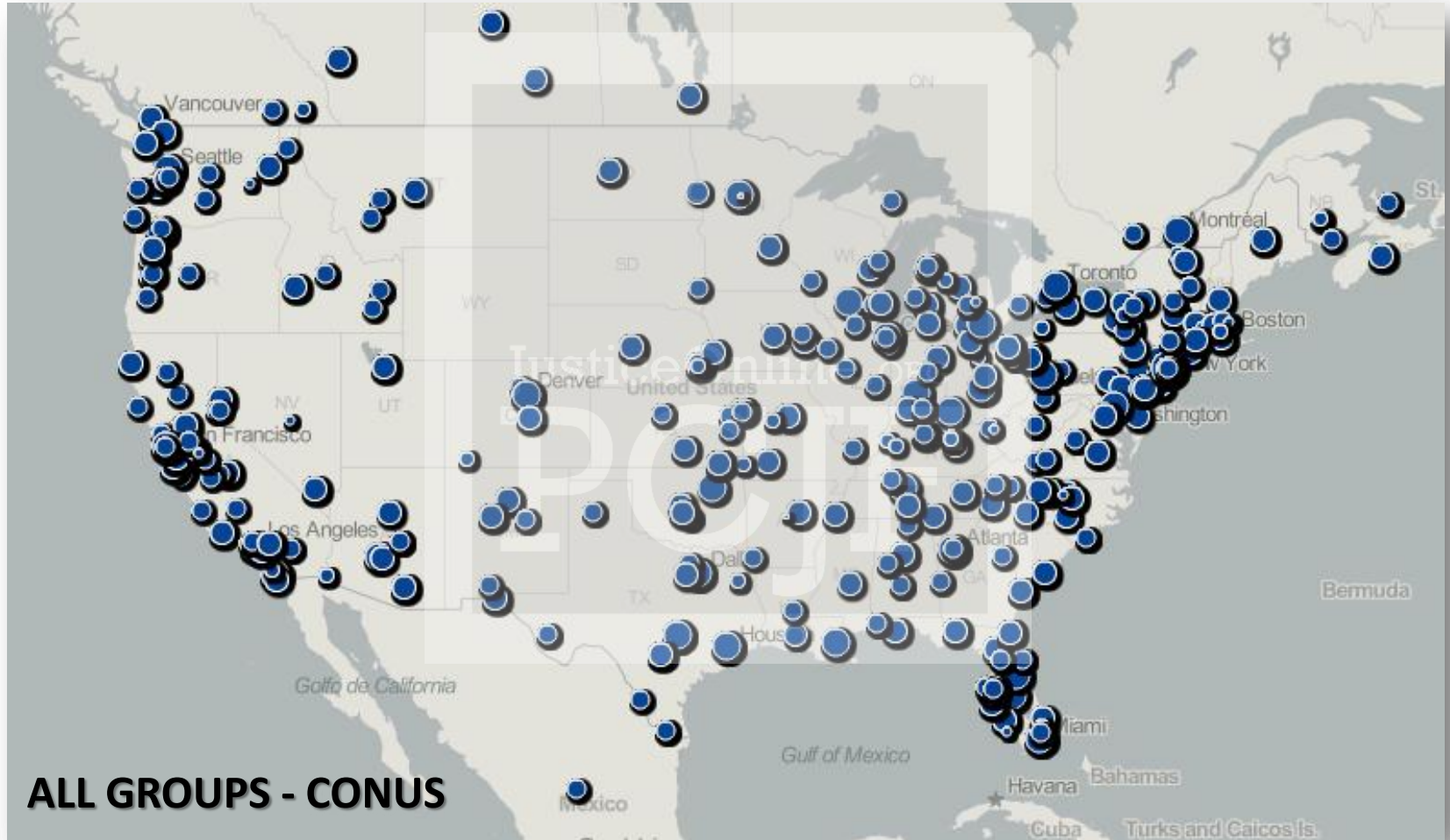
# Key Groups and Locations

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## OVERVIEW

- Occupy has established a strong presence across the US, especially from October onwards
- Detailed strengths hard to assess as many protestors are more likely to “rally” for specific events than “occupy” per se
- Facebook “likes” are not truly representative (being overstated), but give some basis for assessing relative strengths
- The following assessment therefore highlights what we consider to be the most important groups and areas to watch on a US national basis
- For more detail on your local area please see our constantly updated and growing spreadsheet of different known movements, which will be issued shortly

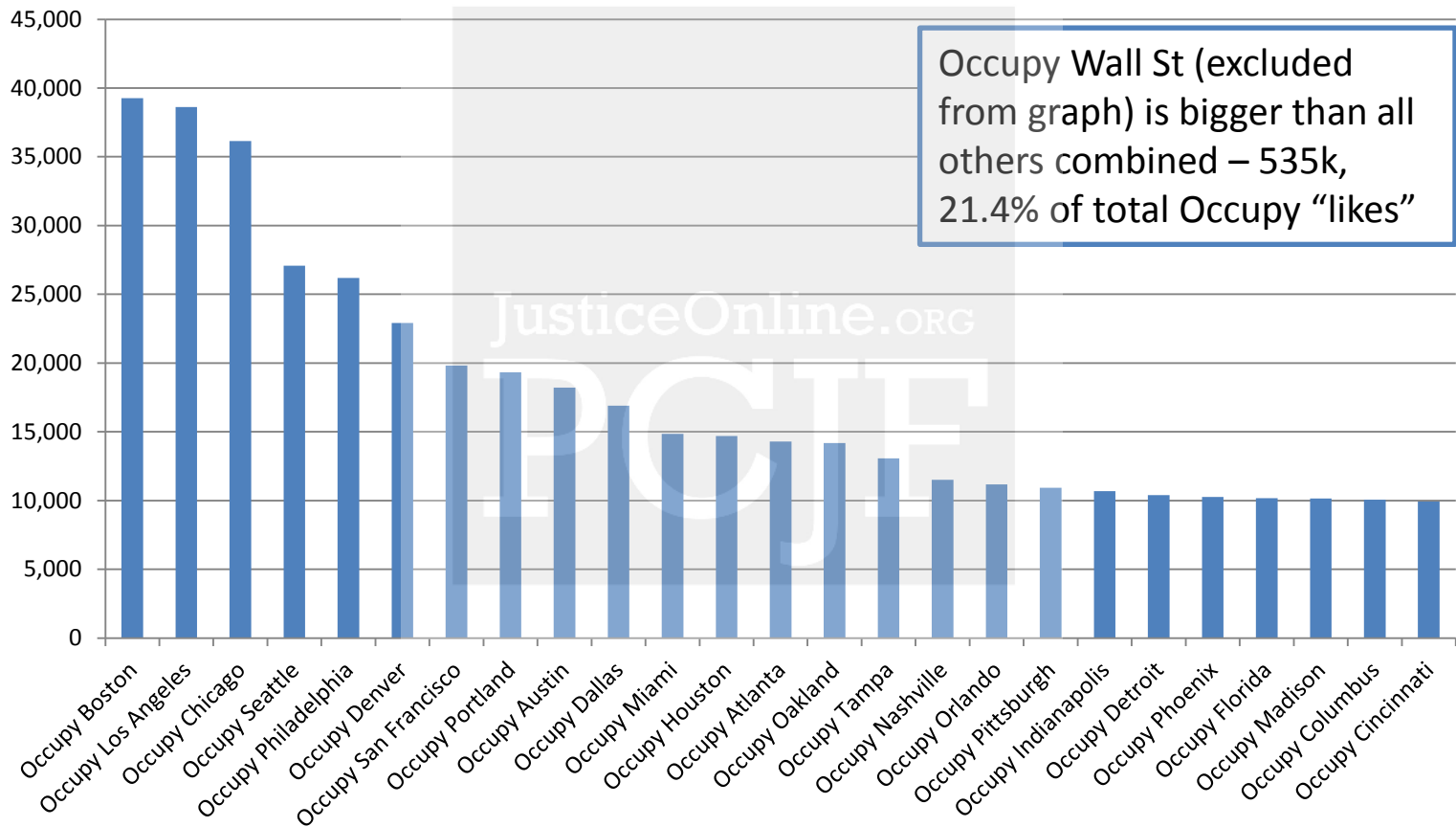
# Key Groups and Locations



CLIENT IN CONFIDENCE

# Key Groups and Locations

## TOP 25 PHYSICAL OCCUPY MOVEMENTS



# Key Groups and Locations

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## Groups that have seen notable violent incidents/confrontation

- Occupy Wall Street (#1)
- Occupy Denver (#7)
- Occupy Portland (#9)
- Occupy Oakland (#15)
- Occupy University of California-Berkeley (#108)

*Most are more popular as a result...Groups in and around these areas are increasingly likely to use more direct tactics*

# Attitude Towards Retail

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- Black Friday and the outpouring of money into retail forms a natural target for the Occupy movement
- Activists who are now involved with Occupy have attempted to launch nationwide boycotts for ten years (Buy Nothing Day); boycott calls are already being seen again from numerous sources, especially with retailers launching very early deals
- There is a major move to try to persuade people instead to “buy local” and support “small business Saturday”
- More worryingly, there have already been numerous calls to directly target malls and there have been incidents in Boulder and Anchorage
- Comments indicate that OWS clearance on 15 Nov has been seen as a move “just in time for Black Friday”
- However, many protestors think that targeting retail would hurt “the 99%” and this is far from being a popular target or tactic

# Attitude Towards Retail

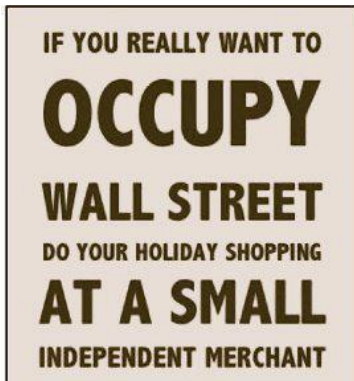
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- Social media will be used to call for and coordinate boycotts and direct operations; pages related to Black Friday actions have doubled this week
- Whilst retail disruption is therefore to be expected, research suggests widespread support for this sort of move is comparatively unlikely at this stage
- Aim will probably be to get shoppers to “buy local” and publicise the Occupy cause near malls (taking advantage of traffic)
- Direct action against malls is likely to focus on blockading entrances, car parks etc or causing passive disruption
- Most action will take place on public land so that the protestors cannot be moved on
- Groups are likely to be small – anticipate tens more than hundreds
- Within malls, flash mobs are possible (and we know some are being planned), with the aim being to draw attention to the cause



# Attitude Towards Retail

## SAMPLE ANTI-BLACK FRIDAY ICONS AND POSTERS



# Specific Known Threats

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- A number of specific threats to the mall/retail sector have already been identified
- These fall into two camps:
  - Those calling for a boycott/"buy local"/small business Saturday
  - Those calling for or planning direct protest action
- A summary of each main identified threat to date is on the following pages
- We will continue to observe and report on these and any emerging trends up until Black Friday

# Specific Known Threats

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## Historical Buy Nothing Day tactics which might be used by Occupy and other protesters:

- Public protests, especially at entrances to Malls
- Credit card cut up: Participants stand in a shopping mall, shopping center, or store with a pair of scissors and a poster that advertises help for people who want to put an end to mounting debt and extortionate interest rates with one simple cut
- Free, non-commercial street parties
- Sit-ins
- Flash mobs
- Alternative mass green transport activities
- Zombie Walk: participants wander around shopping malls or other consumer havens with a blank stare. When asked what they are doing participants describe Buy Nothing Day.
- Disruption in stores, initially posing as legitimate shoppers (e.g. turning up at tills with lots of stuff and then claiming money has “accidentally” been left at home)
- Wildcat General Strike -participants not only embargo stores for twenty-four hours but also obey a “green” strike, so use no power or fuel. This ties in with current 25 November general strike calls

# Specific Known Threats

## OCCUPY BLACK FRIDAY

Strength: 850-900



### Assessment

- Intent: peaceful. Aim is to drive national boycotting effort
- Occupy Black Friday has numerous smaller imitators, some of which share the name
- Biggest FB group to date, with multiple pages, and responsible for a lot of current
- Is looking for alternatives to “big business” to recommend to people
- Shortage of volunteers has been noted

### ACTIONS

- Trying to disseminate lists of alternatives
- Serves as one of the main rallying posts for anti-retail efforts

Website: <http://www.facebook.com/OccupyBF>

# Specific Known Threats

## BLACK FRIDAY BLACKOUT

**Strength: Hundreds**



### Assessment

- “A general strike is peaceful and non-violent, but can shake the corporations, investors, and politicians to the core. A general strike gains strength from the unity and organization of the people. If one person goes on strike, they will be fired. If everyone goes on strike, there is nothing any business or government can do to stop them. We will also be boycotting and picketing any organization that disciplines any person for joining the general strike. We need everyone to go on strike. The more people, the more effective. No work. No school. No shopping.”
- Several social media posts refer and the idea has traction
- Clearly ties into “buy nothing day” boycotts
- Unlikely to inspire direct action outside leafleting; however, may interact with other campaigns

### ACTIONS

- Has flyers for people to print and use in own campaigns
- Has discussion and contact form
- Can post up proposed locations

**Website:** <http://blackfridayblackout.com/>

# Specific Known Threats

## OCCUPY RENO

Strength: 3,800 (group)



### Assessment

- Event advertised via Google Calendar and Twitter – not initially Facebook or blog, possibly indicating desire to be covert
- Aim: to persuade buyers to shop locally
- Protestors will demonstrate on the corners of several shopping and target shoppers
- Leafleting will take place
- Group is strongly “liked” but turnout likely to be much lower than group size suggests

### Location

- Meadow Wood Mall, Legends, The Summit

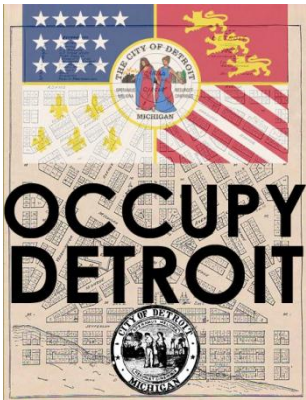
### Website:

[https://www.google.com/calendar/render?eid=aTNzNWUxYnBoaGtuODExNnF0dGI4dHB1cmVgaW5mb0BvY2N1cHlyZW5vLm9yZW&ctz=America/Los\\_Angeles&pli=1&sf=true&output=xml](https://www.google.com/calendar/render?eid=aTNzNWUxYnBoaGtuODExNnF0dGI4dHB1cmVgaW5mb0BvY2N1cHlyZW5vLm9yZW&ctz=America/Los_Angeles&pli=1&sf=true&output=xml)

# Specific Known Threats

## OCCUPY DETROIT

**Strength: 10,600  
(group)**



### Assessment

- Call out for a Black Friday event to support Occupy Detroit although as yet only seen by 7 people
- Possible closure of Occupy Detroit camp at Circus Park has caused them to reconsider plans
- Group is nonetheless likely to conduct some sort of action on Black Friday

### Location

- Unknown

**Website:** <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Support-Occupy-Detroit-on-Black-Friday/220900271313384?sk=wall>

# Specific Known Threats

## OCCUPY SEATTLE

**Strength: 27,200 (group), 21 (event)**



### Assessment

- “Occupy Black Friday is an invitation to intentionally forgo the shopping frenzy and participate instead in a celebration of community, creativity and caring that is too precious to have any price tag. Come meet people, make music, listen to music, dance, sing, make your own holiday gifts at our arts and crafts station, share a potluck, bring something to trade at the barter fair, meet new people, and more!”
- Aim; peaceful alternative.
- Leafleting likely in order to draw attention.
- Attendance likely to be high despite limited views of site due to cross-referencing with other Occupy Seattle channels and events

### Location

- Fri, November 25, 12pm – 5pm
- Westlake, 401 Pine St., Seattle

**Website:** <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Occupy-Seattle-Black-Friday-Day-of-Action/267498116618959>



# Specific Known Threats

## OCCUPY SEATTLE

**Strength: 27,200  
(group), 122 (event)**



### Assessment

- “So far, this flash mob promises to interrupt the shopping process peacefully and creatively. It will be entertaining for the shoppers but also compelling, with music that makes them pause for a second and ask the question: 'Why am I here?' And dance moves that present the idea that shopping is NOT where the true, deep human joy is to be found...or bought.”
- Instructional video - <http://youtu.be/DvpnyUTPIOs>
- Practice video - [http://youtu.be/nl\\_woapy6Og](http://youtu.be/nl_woapy6Og)
- Pictures of organisers are on Facebook, could be used to spot any reconnaissance of the location
- Rehearsal schedule also given and could be monitored for clues
- No direct threat but distraction may be unwelcome

### Location

- Fri, November 25,
- “It’s a surprise” – but clearly targeting shoppers

**Website:** <http://www.facebook.com/event.php?eid=301292623216548>

# Specific Known Threats

## OCCUPY ALLENTOWN

**Strength: 1,585 (group),  
42 (event)**



### Assessment

- Aim is to occupy from the 22 ramps to the entrance of the mall (owned by Simon) on the northbound side of the street
- Group comment: "WE WILL NOT BE GOING ON MALL PROPERTY. WE SHALL STAY ON THE SIDEWALKS"
- Peaceful intent but direct action nonetheless possible
- Better response than many other Occupy BF campaigns
- Has drawn attention to Target and Wal-mart
- Currently estimate 20 will turn up

### Location

- Lehigh Valley Mall, MacArthur Road/145/7th st, Whitehall, PA

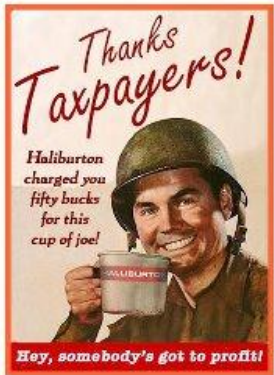


**Website:** <http://www.facebook.com/event.php?eid=287198037978988>

# Specific Known Threats

## OCCUPY BEE CAVES

**Strength: up to 40**



### Assessment

- Camp out on November 25-27
- Site chosen as right in the middle of two malls, and it is a private private property
- If successful, will be mounted every weekend till Christmas
- Aim: to educate how military spending has affected the economy – consistent with anti-war agenda of group
- Protestors aim not to be antagonizing shoppers, but hope to take advantage of passing traffic the biggest shopping day of the year
- Protestors will stand on sidewalks with our signs “practicing first amendment rights”
- Will camp on the property and hold teach-ins
- Representative of most actions that are likely near malls, taking advantage of publicity and crowds to draw attention to the cause

### Location

- 12701 HWY 71, Bee Cave, 78738 at the Old Trading Post building



- Will affect Hill County Galleria, Target and other local businesses

**Website:** <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Occupy-Bee-Cave/178161618937819>

**Twitter:**

**Other:**

# Specific Known Threats

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**There are also credible indicators of the following:**

- Reports of discussed action on Black Friday by:
  - Occupy LA
  - Occupy San Francisco
  - Occupy Jackson
  - Occupy Oregon (targeting Portland Business Alliance members)
  - Occupy Orlando
  - Occupy Santa Cruz
- Evidence that criminals were looking to take advantage of events in Denver on 12 November to loot 16<sup>th</sup> Street Mall – a possible secondary threat for areas where police are known to be busy elsewhere (as happened in London in August); Denver will remain an area where this is a potential problem
- Wal-Mart, Target, and Best Buy have all repeatedly been cited as the best and most suitable targets for protest activity
- We will continue to monitor, observe and report on threats

# Trigger Issues and Trends

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The following **factors or events** constitute triggers:

- **Time** – the longer protests go on without real accomplishments, the more the pressure to adopt different (more direct) approaches
- **Site clearances** – are escalatory and force protestors to adopt new tactics in order to continue making their point; winter weather may also force the same
- **A major flashpoint or issue** – significant violent flashpoints may help propel more militant, breakaway splinters to the fore across the wider movement
- **Penetration** – the movement is wary of agents provocateurs. If one were unveiled the consequences are unpredictable, plus it would prove that these fears were real
- **An “official” call for occupying malls** – a call to target malls from one of the major groups (especially OWS) could rapidly rally a great deal of support
- **A high-profile incident in a mall** – this could inspire copycats, although not immediately. The run-up to the holidays will continue to be a period of increased threat
- **Customer deaths on Black Friday** – would encourage direct action before the holidays

# Trigger Issues and Trends

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The following **dates** are worth noting:

- **Nov 15** – Mass rallies to counter OWS eviction. Interoccupy call at noon will discuss national activity.
- **Nov 16** – likely actions nationwide in response to ongoing clearances
- **Nov 17** – planned international day of action for Occupy groups
- **Nov 25** – Black Friday, with threats as previously mentioned
- **Dec 6-8** – Possible date for planned mass march on the National Mall, DC by groups from around the country (may be accelerated by current clearances)

# Risk Advisory Support

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Risk advisory and threat awareness support is being provided in the following fashion:

- This brief forms the **baseline assessment** and we are also releasing a slightly reduced version that can be presented directly to security staff
- We are providing **daily risk update briefings**, which will be disseminated via email at noon EST. These will summarise significant events over the last 24 hrs, changes in the threat picture, new strategic issues, emerging tactics, and a look forward at key likely events. They will have a strong predictive element and will also touch on any other threat issues that are noticed
- We will also issue **Alerts** if we get breaking news that requires action before the next daily summary is due (and may call conference calls if there are significant issues)

***You are encouraged to interact with the analytical team and pass on any comments, questions, interests or concerns to help ensure that the product meets your needs as best as is possible.***

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#### **A NOTE ON SOURCES**

*This analysis has been synthesised from numerous open sources and social media posts using intelligence techniques. On occasion human sources have also been used. In the document, references have been omitted for the sake of brevity.*

*Values are very important to us and at no point has anything in this brief been obtained unethically. Instead, the value comes from our ability to find, assess, and utilise sources (including from the morass of social media) and conduct meaningful analysis. This is based on our track record of monitoring , understanding and assessing protest groups.*

*We understand this is an important issue. If any readers would like more details on methodology and sources, they are most welcome to contact us.*