

## bogg bag cyber monday deal

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firm is liable for its actions, but not Facebook.

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who asked not to be identified, bought a Kindle Fire HDX for \$99.99 from Amazon.com in

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The scam is pretty easy. A company making a generic product in Shenzhen or Chenn

ai uses an intermediary to set up a Facebook group, Twitter account, or Telegram

channel with a name that attracts users looking for free merch. Private groups

like "Amazon Product Review" and the more clandestine "R\*\*fund Af

tr R\*\*view" bring in tens of thousands of people willing to write a few sent

ences and take a couple pictures in exchange for a product - and maybe \$5 to \$10

on top. (The cash bonus is usually paid on PayPal, which Amazon does not use.)

It may sound like a lot of money to dole out, but the gaming of Amazon reviews c

an be big business: According to an analysis by the e-commerce consultant Patter

n, a one-star increase on an Amazon listing can pump up sales by as much as 26 p

ercent, which is why so many sellers are juking the stats. According to the frau

ulent-review-detection service Fakespot, around 42 percent of 720 million Amazo

n reviews assessed in 2020 were bogus. The review fraud is not distributed equal

ly - with more scams in the \$15 to \$40 range of products, where brand names aren

&#39;t a necessity. Think home goods and cheap-ish tech products that consumers

don&#39;t expect to last forever. "When we look at categories where you can

start drop-shipping a product and slapping on a logo and competing with other p

people, those have a lot of fraud," says Saoud Khalifah, founder of Fakespot

. The most fraud-proof sector? "Books. You cannot fake a really detailed re

view talking about a book."

Naturally, Amazon, whose search rankings for its millions of listed products rel

y heavily on reviews, wants those write-ups to be real, not fake. Last week, the

company took one of its biggest actions to date: filing a complaint in Seattle&

#39;s King County Superior Court against the administrators of more than 11,000

Facebook groups recruiting people for review scams with the aim of finding out w

ho is running the pages and shutting them down. The company claims in the compla

int that these groups violate Federal Trade Commission laws prohibiting deceptiv

e endorsements in which there is a hidden connection between a seller and review

er.