

The Reason Why It's on Sale, is because there's Usually Something Wrong With It

Shôn Ellerton, January 23, 2024

If something's on sale or on discount, I can almost nearly guarantee that something's wrong with it. Or simply, nobody wants it.



I'm one of those people who struggle to find a pair of jeans that really works. They're either too long or too wide and baggy. Some major chain stores, including Connor, an Australian clothing store, have completely left out the inside length altogether with the intention to simplify stock. They assume if you're a 32-inch waist, you should also be a 32 in length, because, obviously, if you're a 32 waist, you're probably tall, young and slim. At least, according to the store's presumptions. Likewise, they assume that a 38 waist will belong to someone who's had a little more than their share of meat pies. So, yet again, they'll assume the Danny DeVito look and assume you're a 30 in length. In any case, most of these stores fail to deliver anything I can live with because most of anything I try on looks like a dog's breakfast. Sure, one can take the garment to one of those tailor places along the side streets in town, most of them owned by enterprising Asians, but more often than not, the results are still disappointing. As I don't seem to be a regular fit with the store's perception of what constitutes the average build of a bloke, I don't go to Connor for jeans, slacks or trousers.

In virtually all cases, I end up having to pay the premium by going into a proper jeans shop, like Levi's, for example. Here, I can pick up a pair of 32/30 jeans that not only look good, but are not tarnished or spoilt by trendy embellishments or some other funky weirdness. Unfortunately, any pair of jeans I buy *and* want to keep are never discounted.

Let me explain.

I'm sure most of us are familiar with those bargain discounts which line the front of many a clothes shop down at the local mall. Bright yellow signs to entice people off the street to clear stock the shops no longer want to keep on their inventories.

Buy one get one free!

Fifty percent off!

Ninety percent off! Which is, of course, no great big deal if the recommended retail price is three hundred bucks.

And for being jokey and sarcastic, something like, ***get one for the price of two!***

I've been drawn to these bargain bucket displays on the off-chance that I might find something worth wearing. It's become a futile exercise because I have *never* found a pair of jeans in the bargain bin which I'd want to buy. Bargain bin jeans are usually in a state of disorderly chaos constantly being handled and inspected by several other people vying for the same bargain. In essence, these are the jeans that nobody wants, or more correctly, *very few* want or could even use. There are jeans in there for skinny stovepipe stick insects to jeans made for blobby people whose height to width ratios are not far off the value of one.

People with average build and normal height to width ratios struggle to find much in the way of choice. But when that rare moment of chance occurs in which your size is catered for, suspicion is raised. Why is it in the discount bin? What's wrong with it? Surely the economic mechanisms of supply and demand are not being met to maximise the store's profits. Then one wonders about the whole dynamics of sales in general. Such tactics are used often in those kitchen utensil specialty shops by lifting up the recommended retail price by quite a lot and then having a sale that everything must go. I baulk at the idea that a Japanese carving knife, or any kitchen knife for that matter, should be worth three hundred dollars at the recommended retail price.

The dynamics of sales in the retail industry can be complex in general. Real bargains of quality can be had but they are often the sacrificial lamb on the basis that those same customers are going to get stung by buying other products in the same store which are often at a premium. The psychology here, of course, is to convey to the customer that their products are cheap. Supermarkets use this

strategy regularly. Those half price bargains at the end of the aisles are more than offset by the bloated prices commanded on regular essentials throughout the rest of the store. Getting higher footfall in any store is supremely important in the world of retail.

Another example of obtaining real bargains of quality may stem from those situations where a new line has come into the market. For example, in the world of electronics, a later model, often in very high demand like a new iPhone, may call for a price reduction or sale for the item in the old line. Another example might be obtaining bargains for women's fashion clothing, probably due to the vast array of differing fashion statements which change from year to year. Unfortunately, for men, obtaining such bargains are few and far between. This may be happening on two accounts. Men's design is generally more static year to year. A man wearing a suit from the 30s will probably not look entirely out of place even today whereas a woman might be mistaken to going to a costume or fancy dress party in a flappers dress. Another aspect, of course, is that there seems to be far more competition in the world of women's clothing. One need only research the ratio of men's to women's clothing shops within your local mall or factory outlet store.

However, in general, there are primarily two reasons why things are discounted and thrown into the bargain bin.

One. Nobody wants them.

And two. There's something wrong with them.

These two points are not mutually exclusive, naturally. The main reason that nobody wants them is that there's something wrong with them. Therefore, we can reduce this to one big fat glaring point.

There's something wrong with them.

It's not usually because there's a fault with them or that they are made with bad quality material. It's because some design dork thought it would look really cool to add unnecessary embellishments to an otherwise sound product. Perhaps a big patch on the side that says, '**Dude**', or an elaborate bit of country western piping stitching on the back pockets of a perfectly good pair of denim pants. Dozens of unnecessary zippers, buttons and pockets, as if you're going to become an urban version of [Bear Grylls](#). Men's T-shirts with obscenely low chest cuts, as if you want to show off all those big chest hairs. And worst of all, those jeans with

deliberately made holes that have somehow bucked the passage of time in keeping somewhat trendy. And trust me in saying this. The only reason for *anyone* to wear such a garment is to attract the other sex by showing how well bronzed and toned you look by revealing a tantalising small patch of exposed flesh. Needless to say, such apparel can only be worn by those with nice looking bodies.

And then! Deep in the bin, I find a pair of 32/30s jeans! And it's on sale!

I try them on and they fit perfectly. I pay for them and leave with a feeling of victory in securing a pair of discounted jeans that works.

The feeling was short-lived the next day when I put them on.

I tried to put my phone and wallet in the pockets only to find out that they were so shallow, half the phone stuck out. I failed in my duty to select a pair of jeans that worked for me by not testing out the depth of the pockets.

Now I know the reason why these jeans had been discounted! There was something wrong with them.

Who, in their right minds, would design a pair of men's jeans with little wee effeminate shallow pockets?

A pair of jeans with virtually no pocket space being essentially useless, I conceded that victory was not mine and I retired the discounted pair of jeans to my local charity shop.