

THE BUSINESS REPORT | BUSINESS STARTS ON 10B

RETAIL

Best Buy focuses on wireless

■ For the electronics retailer, China and the digital universe are the next frontiers. But physical stores will remain in key markets.

BY MAE ANDERSON
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Best Buy plans to open hundreds of smaller mobile stores and expand online and in China in an effort to be more competitive as consumers increasingly shop online.

The largest U.S. electronics retailer plans to shrink square footage at big-box stores by 10 percent over the next three to five years, a move that Best Buy said would eventually save it \$70 million to \$80 million annually.

Meanwhile, it plans to have 200 Best Buy Mobile stand-alone stores open in the United States by July 4 and 600 to 800 within five years, executives said at an analyst conference on Thursday.

Big-box stores are increasingly being seen as outmoded as more shoppers research and buy electronics online and competition from discounters like Target and Wal-Mart increases.

Best Buy has been re-

billion. Revenue in stores open at least a year, a key measure of a retailer's financial health, fell 4.6 percent during the quarter.

Best Buy is betting the mobile stores will help reverse falling net income. They have been more profitable than traditional Best Buy stores because of the popularity of smartphones and sales of add-ons like phone plans and accessories.

The Minneapolis company also plans to expand its online-only selection and aims to double its \$2 billion in online revenue in three to five years.

But Best Buy CEO Brian Dunn says physical stores remain a cornerstone of Best Buy's strategy.

"Physical retailing still matters," he said. "It is an important part of our strategy, because service matters." Best Buy has 15 stores in Miami-Dade and Broward counties.

In stores, Best Buy is expanding its appliance and



DAMIAN DOVARGANES/AP

A SHIFT: Employees restock items at a Best Buy in Glendale, Calif. Big-box stores will shrink some.

emphasis on the services and bling revenue in China to \$4

FLORIDA BRIEFS

• REAL ESTATE

Miami Beach condo sells for \$11.5 million

A penthouse unit at Apogee in Miami Beach sold for \$11.5 million on Thursday, according to selling agents Esther Percal and Pablo Alfaro, of Esslinger-Wooten-Maxwell Realty.

It is the fifth most-expensive condo unit sold in Miami-Dade County through the Multiple Listing Service, according to EWM. The buyers, who were not identified, hail from Europe.

The penthouse, one of three in the 67-unit Apogee, has 11,000 square foot terrace, a rooftop pool and panoramic views of the Atlantic Ocean.

TOLUSE OLORUNNIPA

Forty-one percent of Florida business owners currently provide their employees with healthcare benefits, up from 30 percent a year ago, according to the American Express OPEN Small Business Monitor, released on Thursday.

Meanwhile, 90 percent of Florida business owners reported making sacrifices in their personal lives in order to be an entrepreneur and 56 percent reported having cash-flow issues.

In addition, the study showed that 38 percent of Florida business owners are planning to hire within the next six months and 33 percent will make capital investments over the next six months.

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• **Turning a house into a billboard:** More than 100 South Florida homeowners have entered a contest to turn their house into a billboard and have their mortgage paid by a mobile advertising company.