

Shoppers Moving to More Traditional Focus this Holiday Season – Focus is on Family and Friends

Almost half will spend less this season

New York, N.Y. — November 23, 2009 — This year, holiday shoppers are returning to a more traditional sense of Christmas by focusing on family and close friends. Almost two in five holiday shoppers (38%) plan to spend more family time at home this year compared to last year, and 17% are planning more time away from home but doing activities with their family.

These are some of the results of *The Harris Poll* of 2,303 adults surveyed online between November 2 and 11, 2009 by Harris Interactive.

As part of this shift, Americans are reprioritizing where they can - almost half of holiday shoppers (46%) plan on spending less on holiday gifts this year as compared to last year, and 38% will spend less time hosting and attending holiday parties. In addition, shoppers will also devote more time to attend religious events (18%) and volunteering (15%) this year.

Despite the planned decrease in spending, 19% of holiday shoppers will increase their spending this year on immediate family members. “Shoppers appear to be shifting dollars away from spending on gifts for less significant relationships” said Mary Bouchard, senior research director, and lead retail industry expert for Harris Interactive. “Almost half said they will spend less this year on employees and colleagues (48%) as well as acquaintances (47%).”

Online and Discount Retailers are well positioned

With almost two-thirds (63%) saying price is the most important aspect for shopping this holiday season, many shoppers will continue to turn to online sources to get the best deal. Almost three in ten (27%) said they will spend more time shopping online, compared to one in ten (11%) who will spend more time shopping in a store. Discount retailers will benefit this year, as 26% of holiday shoppers plan to spend more at discount stores, while only 5% of shoppers plan to spend more at top tier department stores this year as compared to last year.

One of the few exceptions are the youngest consumers, age 18-32, who are more likely than any age group to spend more this season. One in five of this age group (19%) will spend more compared to just 6% of Baby Boomers (those aged 45-63) and 4% of Matures (those aged 62 and older). Younger holiday shoppers are also the only age group who plan to increase their spending in higher end stores.

So what does this mean for the retailer?

“Obviously, price will continue to be a primary purchase driver this holiday season” says Ms. Bouchard. “The spending shift to discount stores is consistent with behavior in other industries. For example, in the past year consumers have moved a greater portion of their budget away from casual dining and into fast food restaurants. In order to tap into the consumers’ need to maximize their limited budgets; retailers will need to utilize every avenue to communicate their sales and discounting strategies. Retailers can also capitalize on the mood of the

consumer by providing that calmer, more convenient shopping experience they are looking for as part of a simpler, more family focused holiday season.”

**TABLE 1
SPENDING TIME DURING THE HOLIDAYS**

"Compared to how you spent your time last holiday season, do you plan to spend more, less or about the same amount of time on each of the following this holiday season?"

Base: Adults doing holiday shopping

	MORE TIME (NET)	Much more time	Somewhat more time	About the same time	LESS TIME (NET)	Somewhat less time	Much less time
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Family time at home	38	12	26	55	7	4	3
Shopping for gifts online	27	6	22	51	22	9	14
Time doing spiritual/religious activities	18	6	12	68	14	5	8
Family activities away from home	17	5	12	61	23	11	12
Time doing volunteer activities	15	3	11	64	21	9	12
Attending holiday parties	12	2	10	58	30	13	16
Shopping for gifts in stores	11	3	8	59	30	21	9
Hosting holiday parties	10	2	7	53	38	13	25

Note: Percentages may not add up exactly to 100% due to rounding.

**TABLE 2
HOLIDAY SPENDING COMPARED TO 2008 - PEOPLE**

"Compared to what you spent last year on holiday gifts, how much do you plan to spend on each of the following this holiday season?"

Base: Adults doing holiday shopping

	Immediate family members	Extended family members	Close friends	Friendly acquaintances	Colleagues and employees	Service providers (your physician, lawn service, mailman)
	%	%	%	%	%	%
MORE (NET)	19	7	9	5	5	4
Much more	6	3	3	2	2	2
Somewhat more	14	4	6	3	3	2
About the same	59	53	56	48	48	51
LESS (NET)	22	40	35	47	48	45
Somewhat less	17	19	18	15	12	11
Much less	5	22	17	32	36	33

Note: Percentages may not add up exactly to 100% due to rounding.

**TABLE 3
HOLIDAY SPENDING COMPARED TO 2008**

"Compared to what you spent last year on holiday gifts, do you plan to spend..."

Base: Adults doing holiday shopping

	Total	By Generation			
		Echo Boomers (18-32)	Gen. X (33-44)	Baby Boomers (45-63)	Matures (64+)
	%	%	%	%	%
MORE (NET)	10	19	10	6	4
Much more this holiday season	2	5	1	2	1
Somewhat more this holiday season	8	15	9	5	3
About the same this holiday season	43	41	38	43	53
LESS (NET)	46	37	51	51	42
Somewhat less this holiday season	25	18	27	29	24
Much less this holiday season	21	19	24	22	18
Not applicable	1	2	*	*	*

Note: Percentages may not add up exactly to 100% due to rounding

* = less than .5%

**TABLE 4
HOLIDAY SPENDING COMPARED TO 2008 - STORES**

"Thinking of where you purchased holiday gifts last holiday season, do you plan to spend more, less or about the same amount of money in the following types of stores?"

Base: Adults doing holiday shopping

	Discount Stores (e.g. Wal-Mart, Target)	Mid-tier department stores (e.g. JCPenney, Kohl's)	Top-tier department stores (e.g. Saks, Macy's Nordstrom)	Specialty stores (e.g. jewelry stores, pet stores)	Electronic stores (e.g. Best Buy, Radio Shack)	Warehouse stores (e.g. Costco, B.J.'s)	Off price stores (e.g. TJ Maxx, Nordstrom Rack)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
MORE (NET)	26	9	5	7	10	13	9
Much more this holiday season	8	2	2	3	3	3	3
Somewhat more this holiday season	18	7	3	4	7	10	7
About the same this holiday season	55	57	43	44	49	52	51
LESS (NET)	19	34	52	49	41	35	40
Somewhat less this holiday season	10	13	13	14	13	10	11
Much less this holiday season	9	21	40	35	28	26	29

Note: Percentages may not add up exactly to 100% due to rounding.

**TABLE 5
MOST IMPORTANT IN CHOOSING STORES FOR HOLIDAY SHOPPING**

"While all may be important to you, which one of these is most important to you when you are shopping for gifts this holiday season?"

Base: Adults doing holiday shopping

	Total	By Generation			
		Echo Boomers (18-32)	Gen. X (33-44)	Baby Boomers (45-63)	Matures (64+)
	%	%	%	%	%
Finding the best sales and discounts	63	59	68	64	59
Shopping at stores where I have built a relationship/ where I routinely shop	6	6	5	4	9
Shopping where it's most convenient	10	10	10	9	14
Shopping where I can find the "hot" products of the season	3	7	2	1	*
Shopping where the experience is calm and enjoyable	12	13	6	15	10
Shopping where I can get the best customer service	7	5	10	7	6

Note: Percentages may not add up exactly to 100% due to rounding.

* = less than .5%

**TABLE 6
REASONS FOR SHOPPING IN CERTAIN STORES**

"When you think about where you will shop for gifts this holiday season, how important are each of the following to you?"

Base: Adults doing holiday shopping

	IMPORTANT (NET)	Very important	Somewhat important	NOT IMPORTANT (NET)	Not very important	Not at all important	Not applicable
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Finding the best sales and discounts	92	72	20	5	3	1	4
Shopping at stores where I have built a relationship/where I routinely shop	67	29	37	26	17	9	7
Shopping where it's most convenient	85	47	38	11	9	3	3
Shopping where I can find the "hot" products of the season	49	17	32	42	26	16	9
Shopping where the experience is calm and enjoyable	85	44	41	11	8	3	4
Shopping where I can get the best customer service	81	37	44	15	11	4	4

Note: Percentages may not add up exactly to 100% due to rounding.

**TABLE 7
HOLIDAY SHOPPING**

"Thinking about gift shopping for the holiday season, please select the statement that you most agree with."

Base: All adults

	Nov 2009	By Generation			
		Echo Boomers (18-32)	Gen. X (33-44)	Baby Boomers (45-63)	Matures (64+)
	%	%	%	%	%
DOING HOLIDAY SHOPPING (NET)	80	83	84	78	72
ENTHUSIASTIC (NET)	41	46	41	40	35
I'm excited about shopping for holiday gifts	18	25	17	17	11
I am looking forward to the holiday shopping that I will have to do	23	21	24	22	24
NOT ENTHUSIASTIC (NET)	39	38	43	38	37
Holiday gift shopping is a chore, but it has to be done	21	20	20	20	24
I dread the holiday gift shopping that I will have to do	18	18	23	18	13
I am not planning to do any shopping for the holidays	20	17	16	22	28

Note: Percentages may not add up exactly to 100% due to rounding.

Methodology

This Harris Poll was conducted online within the United States November 2 and 11, 2009 among 2,303 adults (aged 18 and over). Figures for age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, region and household income were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

All sample surveys and polls, whether or not they use probability sampling, are subject to multiple sources of error which are most often not possible to quantify or estimate, including sampling error, coverage error, error associated with nonresponse, error associated with question wording and response options, and post-survey weighting and adjustments. Therefore, Harris Interactive avoids the words "margin of error" as they are misleading. All that can be calculated are different possible sampling errors with different probabilities for pure, unweighted, random samples with 100% response rates. These are only theoretical because no published polls come close to this ideal.

Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in Harris Interactive surveys. The data have been weighted to reflect the composition of the adult population. Because the sample is based on those who agreed to participate in the Harris Interactive panel, no estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

These statements conform to the principles of disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.

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About Harris Interactive

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