

For Immediate Release

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**NEW AMERICA'S RESEARCH GROUP FINAL CHRISTMAS FORECAST REVEALS
RETAIL WINNERS AND LOSERS OF THE HOLIDAY SEASON
SEVEN RETAILERS DO BEST JOB OF RETAINING CUSTOMERS
FIVE DO NOT DO WELL
PLUS: MORE PARENTS THAN EVER - AT 43% - CUT BACK IN ORDER TO BUY
GIFTS FOR THEIR CHILDREN
CHILDREN'S CLOTHING HAS BIG LEAP – UP 25% FROM LAST YEAR
OF CONSUMERS SHOPPING THIS WEEKEND 44.2% DID NOT MAKE PURCHASE
ONLINE SHOPPING AT ALL-TIME HIGH - UP THIS YEAR FROM 45.6% TO 54.7%**

CHARLESTON, SC - According to the last America's Research Group Christmas Shopping Forecast of the season, more parents than ever at 43.7% cut back on giving to each other in order to buy gifts for their children. And children's clothing saw a big jump – up 25% from last year. ARG Chairman and CEO Britt Beemer said, “As predicted, more parents chose to wait months until the holiday season to buy back-to-school clothes so they could save money by taking advantage of big holiday discounts. Cutting back on gift-giving to each other in order to afford gifts for their children is another sign of the cautiousness that has been a hallmark of retail this season.”

Another key sign of the cautiousness is that of consumers shopping this weekend, which included “Super Saturday”, 44.2% did not even make a purchase. Shopping levels this weekend were the same as 2014 – 50.4% versus 50% last year. And those saying they are definitely waiting until the last three days before Christmas to shop – Monday-Tuesday-Wednesday - is at 36.8%, a large number.

The ARG survey from two weeks ago revealed more of the same cautiousness: more Americans said they are planning to finish their shopping by just before December 24th - a 12-year high. Of those waiting for the last four days before Christmas to finish shopping, the magic deal number is 60% off.; 50% is “dead.”

Of those not done shopping, according to this new survey, the two biggest reasons are “didn't have money” at 27.9%; and “not knowing what to buy” at 19.8%. “‘Nothing new’ has been one of the biggest attitude shifts among American consumers this season and has clearly affected retailers,” said Mr. Beemer. Of those spending more, 31.4% said they “found great deals.” Of

those spending less, 21.4% said the reason was “debt”; and, again, “nothing new to buy” at 19.6%.

Shopping online is at an all-time high this year, up from 45.6% to 54.7%.

As for the annual Winners and Losers of the Holiday Retail Season: The top seven retailers doing the best job of getting their customers to come back this Christmas shopping season and buy from them again are:

Walmart	88.6%
Amazon	79.2%
Target	75.8%
Dollar Tree	75.7%
Walgreens	72.0%
Sears	71.9%
Old Navy	71.7%

The top Losers – a total of five - who did not do well getting their customers to come back this season are:

Costco	50.6%
Best Buy	55.2%
Barnes & Noble	55.8%
Sam’s Club	58.8%
American Eagle	59.6%

ARG holds the position that retail sales for the season will be down from -.8% to -1.5%.

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For media on deadline, please call Britt Beemer directly at 843-345-0939

The ARG research consisted of 1000 interviews of adults across America conducted December 18-19, 2015 at ARG headquarters in Charleston, SC. The error factor is plus or minus 3.8%.

America's Research Group, one of the nation's foremost consumer research and strategic marketing firms, marks its 36th anniversary in 2015 and its 25th of doing these Christmas Surveys. CEO Britt Beemer is a key resource and advisor to leading brands and top retailers. He is author of *The Customer Rules*, published by McGraw-Hill. Britt Beemer is a winner of the American Business Award for Executive of the Year - Business Services and Company of the Year - Business Services.