

For Immediate Release

Contact:
Melissa Sones
Melissa Sones Consulting
917-806-4072mobile
Melissa@melissasonesconsulting.com

**AMERICA'S RESEARCH GROUP HOLIDAY FORECAST #1 REVEALS
CONSUMERS REPORT SPENDING MORE THIS SEASON AT RECORD HIGH
AMERICANS SPENDING LESS AT RECORD LOW
55% OF CONSUMERS SAY WILL SHOP THURSDAY EVENING/BLACK FRIDAY –
THAT NUMBER LIKELY TO REACH 65%
OF THOSE SHOPPING THEN 70% REPORT WILL SHOP EARLY BIRD SPECIALS
AMAZON BIG WINNER WITH 29.2% SAYING WILL SHOP THERE MORE
A FIRST IN RETAIL HISTORY: NUMBER SHOPPING WALMART LESS RISES
HIGHEST NUMBER OF CONSUMERS IN OVER TWO DECADES
REPORTS “BUYING SOMETHING NICE FOR THEMSELVES” OVER \$100**

CHARLESTON, SC - According to the first America's Research Group Holiday/Christmas Forecast of the season, 33.1% of American consumers say they will spend more this season, a record high since 2007; and a record low of 20.1% say they will spend less with the key reason being that families report making more money at 30.9%, a ten-year high.

Amazon is the big winner with 29.2% reporting that they will shop there more and only 6.8% doing so less. And for the first time in retail history, more Americans report shopping Walmart less at 26.1% versus 24.6% reporting that they will shop there more. This is the first time ever that the number of consumers going there less is greater than the number going there more.

Online shopping continues to grow with 27.1% reporting going online more this holiday season with only 10.5% saying they will do so less.

As for Thursday evening/Black Friday, the number of Americans saying they expect to shop then is at 55% compared to 49% last year, a number that last year actually grew to 60% thanks to early bird specials. This year that number is expected to grow to 65%.

Self-Gifting – purchasing a gift for oneself – is a key trend with the highest number in over two decades, at 44.8% reporting that they will “buy something nice for themselves.” The price is also up at \$100 and \$200 - \$300.

More Americans will also shop at off-price/membership warehouse clubs this year at 38.9% versus 35.1% last year. Only 7% said they will shop at enclosed malls more this year, the lowest since 2009.

Another record high this year: More Americans are influenced by store advertising at a record high of 58.8%.

The number of Americans who say they will take advantage of a 0% interest offer has doubled to 18%.

According to ARG Chairman Britt Beemer, “Based on this research, if retailers are super aggressive and give consumers incredible deals to kick off Black Friday, which includes Thursday evening, some retailers could see 5% increases in store sales while stores that are less aggressive could see increases in the 1% to 2% level.”

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

The ARG research consisted of 800 telephone interviews with consumers conducted November 1-9, 2017 at ARG headquarters in Charleston, SC. The error factor is plus or minus 3.8%. There will be one more national survey in November before Thanksgiving weekend.

America’s Research Group, one of the nation’s foremost consumer research and strategic marketing firms. 2017 is ARG’s 38th anniversary and the 29th year of 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.