

## **For Immediate Release**

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## **America's Research Group & Inmar "Black Friday" Weekend Shopping Results Huge Spending Levels on Thursday Friday Shopping Levels Low Disappointment with Early-Bird Specials Wal-Mart Go-To King for Gifts Computers Top Sellers Cyber Monday Shopping Expected to Drop**

**Charleston, SC / Winston-Salem, NC** (December 2, 2013) -- According to the Christmas & Holiday Shopping Forecast released today by America's Research Group and Inmar, of those who shopped Black Friday Weekend, consumers were disappointed in the lack of big early bird specials on Friday morning which they had come to expect. More consumers felt that there were a greater number of early-bird specials in stock last year (50.4% versus 63.5% last year), and that Friday's prices were not as aggressively priced. More people shopped in fewer stores this year over last year. 30.1% over last year's 24.2% report they shopped in just two stores Thursday and Friday and the number of consumers who shopped in three or four stores dropped from 30% last year to 22% this past Thursday and Friday.

"Despite early-bird special disappointment, consumers still spent more this past weekend than they had planned, largely due to deals being too good to pass up," said Britt Beemer, Chairman and CEO of America's Research Group. The survey also shows a record high increase for consumers spending more than \$750 Thursday and Friday, a percentage up from 9.5% last year to 18.6% this year.

As America's Research Group predicted, consumer electronics were the hot items this Black Friday weekend. "Computers and flat panel TVs flew off the shelves," said Beemer. "Laptops, notebooks and tablets showed an increase from 9.5% to 20% this year, and Wal-Mart took the largest market share."

Other top gift items this Thanksgiving weekend were video games (up 6.9% over last year's 2.3%); while toys took a big fall from 34% last year to 18.6% this year. And when asked about Cyber Monday shopping, 23.5% of consumers said they plan to shop online Monday for Christmas gifts, down from 29.2% last year.

“National retailers should be very concerned that consumers feel the early bird specials on Friday were not exceptional,” said Beemer. “In general consumers are feeling better overall about spending more and retailers would be wise to better entice them to pull out the plastic.”

Overall, the kick off to the holiday shopping was off to a strong start according to Inmar Analytics President and EVP, John Ross. “This year’s Black Friday proved a success for both retailers and shoppers. Retailers, employing strategic promotion – both in print and online – drew shoppers to the store where they found the shelves stocked, deep discounts readily available and adequate staff on hand. Shoppers responded by opening their wallets, taking advantage of advertised offers and energizing a holiday shopping season that is far from over.”

#### **SURVEY RESULTS SUMMARY:**

##### **More early bird specials Thursday & Friday this year compared to last year?**

63.5% (2012)

50.4 % (2013)

##### **Able to find advertised specials?**

82.5% (2012)

86.5% (2013)

##### **How many different stores shopped in?**

Two stores:

30.1% (2013)

24.2% (2012)

Three-four stores:

22% (2013)

30% (2012)

##### **How much spent Thursday & Friday?**

\$750-\$2,500

9.5% (2012)

19.6% (2013)

##### **Electronics sales**

Computers:

9.5% (2012)

20% (2013)

Flat Panel TVs

14.9% (2012)

18.3% (2013)

##### **Toy sales**

34.4% (2012)

18.6% (2013)

##### **Video Games sales**

2.3% (2012)  
6.9% (2013)

**Shopping at Wal-Mart**

53% (2012)  
62.5% (2013)

**Expect to online shop Cyber Monday?**

29.2% (2012)  
23.5% (2013)

The ARG/Inmar research consisted of 1000 telephone interviews conducted November 29 - December 1, 2013 at ARG headquarters in Charleston, SC. The error factor is plus or minus 3.8%. The next ARG/Inmar shopping survey will be conducted December 6-8. The surveys will continue every week through the shopping season.

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**About America's Research Group**

America's Research Group, one of the nation's foremost consumer research and strategic marketing firms, marked its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2009. 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 2012 American Business Award for Executive of the Year - Business Services and Company of the Year - Business Services. [www.argconsumer.com](http://www.argconsumer.com)

**About Inmar**

Inmar is a technology company that operates intelligent commerce networks. Our platforms connect offline and online transactions in real time for leading retailers, manufacturers and trading partners across multiple industries which rely on Inmar to securely manage billions of dollars in transactions. Our Promotions, Supply Chain and Healthcare platforms enable commerce, generate meaningful data and offer growth-minded leaders actionable analytics and execution with real-time visibility. Founded in 1980, Inmar is headquartered in Winston-Salem, North Carolina with locations throughout the United States, Mexico and Canada. [www.inmar.com](http://www.inmar.com)