

For Immediate Release

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**NEW AMERICA'S RESEARCH GROUP CHRISTMAS FORECAST REVEALS
MORE CONSUMERS PRIMARILY SHOPPED FOR BARGAINS BLACK FRIDAY
AT 75.9% - AN ALL-TIME HIGH**

**90.3% BOUGHT AT LEAST ONE EARLY BIRD SPECIAL – AN ALL-TIME HIGH
MORE CONSUMERS SHOPPED IN DISCOUNT STORES – AN ALL-TIME HIGH
31.9% OF CONSUMERS REPORT 75% OR MORE DONE HOLIDAY SHOPPING –
A NEW RECORD**

**NEARLY TWO-THIRDS OF AMERICANS SHOPPED WALMART – A RECORD
22% DELAYING SHOPPING UNTIL CYBER MONDAY**

CHARLESTON, SC – December 1, 2014 – According to the America's Research Group (ARG) Christmas Shopping Forecast, the third of the season, consumers shopped Thanksgiving evening and Black Friday morning for bargains as never before. 75.9% primarily bought early bird specials, an all-time high. 90.3% of Americans reported purchasing at least one early bird special, another record. The most Americans in the 25-year history of ARG surveys went to discount stores at 48.5%.

Results also included: 24.5% of consumers did their Black Friday shopping at just one store – another record; 44.2% of Saturday and Sunday (weekend) shoppers bought only the advertised specials – another record; Walmart shopping was up from 62.5% to 67.7%, two-thirds of all American consumers – a record; and 31.9% reported that they are at least 75% done with their shopping for the holidays – another record.

The loser this season is the enclosed mall, where only 29.4% of consumers shopped over this past weekend – an all-time low. According to ARG Chairman and CEO, Britt Beemer, consumers did not shop malls because malls did not provide the hot category of the season – electronics, notably flat panel TVs at bargain-basement prices. 18.5% of consumers bought flat panel TVs, which is what drove consumers into discount stores and to early bird specials in record numbers. “This is the strategy that was so successful for Walmart,” said Britt Beemer. “Malls are going to be the struggling ones this Christmas season and there are a lot of retailers in malls – all the department stores and almost all the apparel stores.”

And Cyber Monday promises to be a fruitful one with 22% of all consumers reporting that they delayed some shopping until Cyber Monday, up from 19.2% last year. In 2013, 21.4% of

Americans reported shopping on Amazon; this year that number rose to 24.2%. And shopping online in general so far for the holiday season went up from 26.1% to 29.6% this year.

Credit card usage was also up to 23% from 21.2% last year.

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

The ARG research consisted of a panel back survey of 854 telephone interviews with consumers who said they planned to be shopping over Black Friday weekend; the survey was conducted November 27-30, 2014 at ARG headquarters in Charleston, SC. The error factor is plus or minus 3.8%. The next ARG shopping survey will be conducted December 5-7, 2014. The surveys will continue every week through the shopping season.

America's Research Group, one of the nation's foremost consumer research and strategic marketing firms, marks its 35th anniversary in 2014. 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.