

For Immediate Release

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

AMERICA'S RESEARCH GROUP BLACK FRIDAY- CYBER MONDAY UPDATE
FEWER AMERICANS SHOP THAN LAST YEAR
LIKELY RESULT OF JUMP IN EARLY ONLINE SHOPPING
30% OF AMERICANS VISIT WALMART WEBSITE THURSDAY- HUGE NUMBER
CHILDREN/TEEN APPAREL BEATS TOYS/ELECTRONICS -- FIRST TIME
AMAZON BIG ONLINE SHOPPING LEADER THIS WEEKEND
BEATS WALMART 44% TO 14.9%

CHARLESTON, SC - According to America's Research Group's Black Friday – Cyber Monday Forecast, Friday regained its supremacy in the "battle" with Thursday. Of those who shopped the Thanksgiving four-day weekend, 56% shopped on Friday and on Thursday the number was a much lower 17.2%. "Thursday's lower shopping levels can be explained in the Walmart results," said ARG Chairman Britt Beemer. "30% of Americans checked out Walmart's website on Thursday for Black Friday specials, a huge percentage; and, of those, 27.3% made purchases. If those consumers had gone to brick and mortar retailers, the retail numbers would have been a lot higher. Online grew at the expense of retail."

In addition, fewer shopped the weekend overall. "Consumers purchased items online on Thursday and chose to pick them up at a time when stores are less crowded than they are this past weekend," said Mr. Beemer. When consumers were asked in this survey to describe their best possible shopping experience, "getting in and out quickly" was number-one at 32% beating out "getting the best deals" at 23%.

Deal fever was at an all-time high with 73.3% of consumers purchasing the early bird specials; and a much higher number of consumers reported having a chance to get these specials at 96.3% this year compared to 86.6% last year.

Results continue to show a rise in consumer optimism due to the "Trump effect." More shoppers went to five or six stores with those doing so rising from 7.4% to an unusually high 18.3%. Discount stores remained number-one but department stores surprisingly saw the biggest increase from 21.4% last year to 44.8%. More consumers reported that they will shop each weekend through the rest of the holiday season at 70% this year versus 58.2% last year when

consumers chose to “hibernate” between Thanksgiving weekend and the last weekend before Christmas. Those who did shop this weekend spent more.

For the first time ever, children/teen apparel beat out toys and electronics for the number-one category purchased overall Thursday and Friday with apparel at 45.5%; toys at 40.6%; and electronics at 39.5%. Department stores clearly benefited from the jump in children/teen apparel.

Amazon won the online shopping “war” this past weekend with 44% of Americans shopping on Amazon compared to 14.9% for Walmart’s website. There was no significant rise in those delaying purchases to Cyber Monday – with 26.5% delaying this year versus 26.9% last year. Americans definitely planning to buy on Cyber Monday was down slightly to 29.8% this year compared to 33.8% last year.

“The real story here is the explosion of shoppers buying online on Thursday reducing the need to look for deals on Cyber Monday or to brave the crowds Thanksgiving weekend,” said Mr. Beemer.

America’s Research Group has accurately predicted holiday season sales in 28 of the last 30 years within a half of one percent.

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

The ARG research consisted of 802 back-panel telephone interviews November 25-27, 2016 with adults at ARG headquarters in Charleston, SC. The error factor is plus or minus 3.8%. The next ARG shopping survey will be conducted on December 2-4, 2016. 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, marked 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.