

For Immediate Release

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**BRITT BEEMER'S AMERICA'S RESEARCH GROUP UPDATED RETAIL RESEARCH
PREDICTIONS FOR 2013 - AND BEYOND
RESEARCH SHOWS HUGE DROP IN SHOPPERS
WHO CAN SURVIVE AND WHO CAN'T?
COMPARED TO 2007 LEVELS, TEN MAJOR RETAILERS
LOSE NEARLY HALF THEIR SHOPPERS
FIND OUT WHO WILL AND WON'T MAKE IT IN 2013 - AND BEYOND**

CHARLESTON, SC - America's Research Group's Updated Retail Research released on January 1, 2013 and based on comparisons of shopping levels for the year 2007 (considered statistically identical to 2012 because Christmas and New Year's fall on a Tuesday) and 2012 levels shows that ten major U.S. retailers have the biggest declines in shopping levels with many losing nearly 50% of their customers. Many U.S. retailers are in trouble.

The Complete 2007/2013 Shopping Level Research: 1. Costco (2007 shopping levels 29.6%; 2012 Levels 12.7%; drop in shopping 57.1%); 2. Barnes & Noble (2007 shopping levels 30.1%; 2012 shopping levels 13.9%; drop in shopping levels 53.8%); 3. Toys 'R' Us (2007 shopping levels 44%; 2012 shopping levels 21.5%; drop in shopping 51.2%); 4. Best Buy (2007 shopping levels 55.1%; 2012 shopping levels 27.8%; drop in shopping 49.5%); 5. The Gap (2007 shopping levels 23.9%; 2012 shopping levels 12.1%; drop in shopping 49.4%); 6. Sam's Club (2007 shopping levels 31.8%; 2012 shopping levels 17.2%; drop in shopping 46.6%); 7. Old Navy (2007 shopping levels 40.6%; 2012 shopping levels 22.5%; drop in shopping 44.6%); 8. American Eagle (2007 shopping levels 21.5%; 2012 shopping levels 12%; drop in shopping 44.2%); 9. Lowe's (2007 shopping levels 35.1%; 2012 shopping levels 20.7%; drop in shopping 41%); 10. Home Depot (2007 shopping levels 31.5%; 2012 shopping levels 19.1%; drop in shopping 39.4%).

"If you're losing one-third or more of your shoppers, you've got serious problems," said ARG Chairman and CEO Britt Beemer. "Best Buy, near the top of the list, had 55.1% shopping levels in 2007 and now they're in the 20s. That's a huge decline. Toys 'R' Us had 44% and they're in the 20s; the same for Old Navy. Many more are in the teens including Barnes & Noble, Home Depot and The Gap.

"American retailers have lost shoppers in percentages so high that only those who have shifted sales to their business side such as Costco or Sam's Club or to contracting businesses such as Home Depot and Lowe's can have a solid chance of survival. Of the ten who had the biggest declines, four have other ways to make up the sales. The other six don't have that luxury. They can't survive unless they get more shoppers.

"While ARG can't say what else companies may have to make up for the dramatic losses such as leases and/or property, we are predicting that they certainly have troubles ahead."

Christmas retail sales should rise 1.8% to 2.8% this year.

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

The ARG research consisted of 1000 telephone interviews December 22-23, 2007 and 2012 at ARG headquarters in Charleston, SC. The error factor is plus or minus 3.8%. This concludes the most extensive study of Christmas shoppers by any research firm in America - seven national Surveys from the first of November through Christmas Day. The next ARG Christmas shopping survey will be conducted in October 2013. The surveys will continue every week through the shopping season of 2013 as they did in 2012.

America's Research Group, one of the nation's foremost consumer research and strategic marketing firms, marked its 30th 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 International Business Award for Executive of the Year - Business Services and Company of the Year - Business Services.