

For Immediate Release

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**NEW AMERICA'S RESEARCH GROUP UPDATED CHRISTMAS FORECAST
REVEALS
OVER BLACK FRIDAY WEEKEND:
MORE SHOPPERS CAME EARLY, BOUGHT FAST
AND STAYED WITHIN THEIR SPENDING PLANS
WEEKEND ABOUT DEALS, DEALS AND ONLY DEALS
RECORD NUMBER WENT TO ONLY ONE OR TWO STORES
RECORD NUMBER HAVE FINISHED MOST OF THEIR CHRISTMAS SHOPPING!!
MALL STORES BIG LOSERS
MORE ONLINE SHOPPERS BUYING MORE ITEMS
ONLINE BOOKS OVERTAKE TOYS FOR NUMBER-ONE SPOT
CYBER MONDAY SHOPPING SLIGHTLY DOWN FROM LAST YEAR**

CHARLESTON, SC - According to the America's Research Group Updated Christmas Shopping Forecast released today, of those who shopped Black Friday Weekend, more bought early bird specials (67.4% this year versus 62.4% last year); more felt that there were a greater number of early bird specials in stock this year (63.5% versus 58.5% last year); and more shoppers stayed within their budgets (63.7% this year versus 56.2% last year). Record numbers of shoppers say they have almost finished their Christmas Shopping.

"This Survey is telling us that Americans are more satisfied with their shopping experiences this year than ever," said Britt Beemer, Chairman and CEO. "They are more bargain driven than at any time on record; and the stores came through with deals and more deals and yet more deals - and they did it early and had what they promised shoppers in stock. Supporting this theme strongly is that far more shoppers bought advertised items - a whopping 82.5% this year versus 71.8% last year.

"Moreover, 29.1% of shoppers have finished 75% or more of their Christmas shopping; and 41.6% said that they can finish their shopping in just one or two days - these are the highest numbers in years," said Beemer. "Shoppers were not only deal-driven and found the deals but they planned out their shopping budget-wise in advance - a trend we noticed as of last year. They spent largely with cash - cash is still the king - and they stuck to their plans.

"Shoppers also only went to one or two stores in record numbers (46.3% this year versus 32% last year). The malls were the big losers. What shoppers are telling us is that they go to the malls to shop at a wide range of stores but for the big deals and more deals and more deals they go where the deals are, where the ads showed them the best deals were, period. And they used their phones to scan prices in advance and the people who scanned told us they would come out in droves if the deals were there - and they were.

"Cyber Monday is slightly down this year (29.2% this year versus 32.7% last year) but more online shoppers are buying more this year - nine more items to be exact (12.2% this year versus 11% last year).

What did shoppers buy? Online, books were number one this year (28.8%) while toys took that spot last year. In stores, flat panel TV sales are up (14.9% this year versus 14.6% last year); computer sales were down (9.5% this year versus 14.8% last year); and video games sales were also down (27.2% this year versus 37.6% last year).

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 interviewed November 23-25, 2012 at ARG headquarters in Charleston, SC. The error factor is plus or minus 3.8%. The next ARG shopping survey will be conducted December 1-2, 2012. 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 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 American Business Award for Executive of the Year - Business Services and Company of the Year - Business Services.