**Holiday Shoppers Approach the Finish Line…and Plan a Victory Lap**

*Most holiday shoppers (86%) still holiday shopping, 57% expected to shop on Dec 26*

NEW YORK, NY, December 13, 2012 – With just a few weeks left in the annual Holiday shop-a-thon, 86% of holiday shoppers still have more to buy (down from 91% the same time last year), according to the latest [American Express Spending & Saving Tracker](http://inr.synapticdigital.com/americanexpress/spendsave/). So far, Holiday receipts are adding up to an average of $445, accounting for just over half of their Holiday shopping budgets. For many who got a head start on Holiday shopping this year, the early start meant more time to check of their gift lists. As a result, more (14%) are reporting that they’ve finished their gift buying, up from 9% this time last year. But it’s not over until it’s over, as more than half (57%) of consumers say they won’t ignore the temptation to shop day-after-Christmas deals.

 “Holiday shopping is in full swing,” said Claire Bennett, EVP, Loyalty and Membership Benefits at American Express. “Most Americans are just over half way done with their shopping, and many have plans to spend even after the Christmas holiday.”

While those who have started tackling their Christmas list still have a ways to go, almost a third (32%) of consumers had not started shopping as of December 1, and 77% of shoppers expect to shop at the last minute, up from 73% last year.

**December 26th “Day After” Traffic**

Retailers can also anticipate that shoppers will turn around and take advantage of post-Christmas holiday savings again this year. Fifty-seven percent, the same number as last year, say they’ll shop on December 26, expecting to spend an average of $187.

Why bother? Thirty-five percent say they’ll take advantage of post-holiday sales to buy for themselves, while 21% will get a head start on next year’s present purchasing. Nine percent also admit to buying this year’s holiday gifts for others, even if they are a little late. Twenty-two percent will put gift cards they received to immediate use. In fact, 44% expect to spend the gift cards they receive within one month.

**The Re-gifting Rules Shift**

For the socks and stocking stuffers not on that wish list, chances are still good they might be re-gifted in the year to come, but re-gifting is on a downward trend. Seventy-one percent of Americans believe it’s socially acceptable to re-gift, down significantly from last year’s 79%. Yet when the same group was asked if they re-gifted any of their Holiday gifts last year, 33% admitted to re-gifting an average of five items in 2011.

**The Little Extras, Trending Up**

More Americans plan to spend more to look good this holiday season: haircut/styling (37% vs. 32% in 2011), purchasing a new outfit (30% vs. 24%), treating themselves to new shoes or accessories (23% vs. 16%) as well as spa treatments (6% vs. 4%).

***The American Express Spending & Saving Tracker*** research was completed online among a random sample of1500 adults, including the general U.S. population, an affluent demographic, defined by a minimum annual household income of $100,000. Interviewing was conducted by Echo Research between November 29 and December 2, 2012. These findings have a margin of error of ± 2.5 percentage points at the 95% level of confidence.

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