More Than One In Ten Adults Plan To Spend More On Holiday Shopping This Year

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However, Fewer Are Taking Advantage of Online Coupons and Deals than Last Year

Despite the current state of the economy, more than one in ten U.S adults (13%) plan to spend more this coming holiday season than they did last year, according to a new poll conducted by Ipsos Public Affairs on behalf of Offers.com.

Yet many adults are not taking advantage of online coupons that could help stretch their holiday dollars, with more than one third of online shoppers (36%) saying that they never look for coupons or deals when shopping online, an increase from 23% in 2011.

In addition to the 13% of adults who plan to increase their holiday budgets this year, another 46% report that they intend to spend about the same amount as they did last year on holiday shopping, while just 37% plan to spend less.

- Men are more likely than women to say that they are going to be increasing their holiday shopping budgets (17% vs. 9%), as are adults ages 18-34 compared to older adults ages 55+ (18% vs. 9%).
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- These findings largely mirror those from last yearâ€™s holiday season, when 11% of adults expected to spend more than they had the previous year, while 45% planned to spend less.

Nearly three quarters of adults (71%) say that they shop online, including 12% who do so at least weekly. One in five (21%) say that they make purchases online on a monthly basis, and 38% say do so at least a few times per year.

Among those who do shop online, 10% say that they always look for a coupon or coupon code to make their shopping dollar go farther, and an additional 14% do so most of the time. However, a majority of online shoppers are overlooking opportunities to save, looking for online coupons only once in a while (25%) or never (36%).

- Parents with children under 18 are most likely to say that they always look for coupons when shopping online or look for coupons most of the time (34% vs. 18% of those without children under 18).

- Compared with last year, usage of online coupons seems to be declining. In 2011, 16% of adults said that they always used coupons online, while just 10% say so today. Similarly, in 2011 less than a quarter (23%) reported to never use online coupons, compared with 26% who report to never do so today.

In addition to the 36% of adults who never look for online coupons or deals when shopping online, three in ten adults (30%) say they havenâ€™t used any type of online or in-store savings opportunity in the past 30 days. In general, adults most commonly use newspaper or magazine coupons, with 35% of adults saying that they have taken advantage of these savings opportunities in the past 30 days.

Nearly as many (34%) say that they have used a loyalty card or in-store promotions in the past month, though fewer have used printable coupons (17%), online coupon codes (15%), or daily deals such as Groupon (12%). Three in ten (30%) say that they have not taken advantage of any of these savings opportunities in the past month.

- Coupons are not used as much this year as they were last year, with fewer saying that they use newspaper or magazine coupons (35% in 2012 vs. 50% in 2011), loyalty cards or in-store promotions (34% vs. 47%), printable coupons (17% vs. 28%), online coupon codes (15% vs. 25%), or daily deals such as Groupon (12% vs. 27%). In 2011, only 15% said that they had not used any of these savings opportunities in the past month.

Over one in five respondents (23%) find online coupons and/or coupon codes through emails from their favorite retailer or the website that they are purchasing from. Another 19% of respondents search for coupons using a search engine like Google, Yahoo, or Bing. One in ten (10%) rely on an online coupon or daily deal website such as DailyDeals.com, Groupon, or Living Social. Almost half (49%) report that they donâ€™t use any of the main sources to find online coupons and coupon codes.

With many consumers not using coupons much themselves, itâ€™s not surprising that two thirds of respondents (66%) report that they rarely share coupons or deals with friends and family, including 46% who say that they never do so. Just 16% say that they share such coupons and deals with their family and friends at least most of the time, while an additional 17% say that they sometimes pass along these savings opportunities.

Furthermore, many consumers are not taking advantage of online coupon sites for their holiday purchases, with more than four in ten consumers (42%) saying that they are not at all likely to look for online coupons or coupon codes before they make a purchase online. An additional 16% say that they are not very likely to look for these deals, while 41% are at least somewhat likely to do so.

- A greater proportion of women than men say that they are likely to look for online coupons or coupon codes before making a purchase this holiday shopping season (44% vs. 37%). Younger adults ages 18-34 are also more likely than those who are older (55+) to say this (52% vs. 21%). Parents are also more likely to hunt for these deals than are adults without children under 18 (51% vs. 35%).
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- Adults are less likely to use coupons this holiday season than they were last year, when just 29% said that they were not at all likely to search for online coupons or coupon codes before they buy.

Even fewer (24%) say that they are likely to use a daily deal site (such as DailyDeals.com, Groupon or Living Social) to purchase a gift this holiday season. While a majority (52%) say that they are not at all likely to take advantage of these sites.

- A greater proportion of women than men say that they are likely to use a daily deal site when making a purchase this holiday shopping season (28% vs. 20%). Parents are also more likely to use deal sites than are adults without children under 18 (30% vs. 20%).

This is not just the case for the December holidays. A similar proportion (48%) say that they are not at all likely to look for sales and deals online before making purchases for other holidays, such as Valentineâ€™s Day, Motherâ€™s Day, and/or Halloween purchases. Just three in ten (29%) respondents report that they are likely to look for online coupons when shopping for these other holidays.

Likewise, few are spending much time researching the best prices for each of their holiday purchases. Six in ten (60%) consumers spend less than an hour hunting for the best prices for their holiday purchases, with 25% saying that they spend one to three hours, and just 8% reporting spending over three hours.

- Last year, a majority of adults (52%) reported that they spent at least an hour researching the best prices for each of their holiday purchases, compared to just a third (33%) who say so this holiday season.

Perhaps to make their holiday budgets go farther this holiday season, when planning for this holiday shopping season, more than one-third of consumers (36%) look for deals throughout the year and an additional 23% keep their eye on online specials and daily deals. A third plan on shopping on Black Friday this year, and 10% are waiting until Black Friday or Cyber Monday to start their shopping.

When asked if they plan to shop on Black Friday this year, one in five (18%) respondents report that they plan to shop primarily at stores, 4% plan to shop primarily online, and 10% plan to shop both online and at stores. Two thirds of respondents (66%) say that they donâ€™t plan to shop on Black Friday.

Among Black Friday shoppers, 21% usually start planning right after Halloween is over, and one-third (32%) begin planning the week before. A plurality (40%) waits until Thanksgiving to start their Black Friday planning, and seven percent were unsure.

Many start their Black Friday shopping early, with 6% starting on Thanksgiving Day, and another 21% starting around midnight. Three in ten start their shopping in the early morning hours, around 4:00 a.m. (20%) or 6:00 a.m. (9%). An additional 21% plan to head to the stores after 6 a.m. but before noon on Black Friday, while just 16% wait until the afternoon to start their shopping.

These are some of the findings of Ipsos polls conducted October 4-8, 2012 and September 8-13, 2011. For the surveys, nationally representative samples of 1,001 randomly-selected adults aged 18 and over residing in the U.S. were interviewed via Ipsosâ€™ U.S. Telephone Express omnibus. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate within Â±3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire population of adults in the U.S. been polled.

The margin of error will be larger within regions and for other sub-groupings of the survey population. These data were

weighted to ensure the sample's regional and age/gender composition reflects that of the actual U.S. population according to data from the U.S. Census Bureau.

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