



## **Americans Increase Spending for 1999 Holiday Season; National Shopping Survey by Macerich Company Studies Budgets, Trends And E-Commerce**

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### **E-Commerce**

SANTA MONICA, Calif., Dec. 2 /PRNewswire/ -- Christmas comes but once a year, but holiday shopping lasts for months. Following its inaugural year of seasonal shopping surveys, the Macerich Company (NYSE: MAC) has returned with Holiday-ology 1999 to discover shoppers have found a way to use the Internet without surrendering the comforts of mall shopping.

"The results of this survey demonstrate the continued strengths of bricks and mortar retailing as savvy consumers turn to the Internet to research holiday purchases," said Susan Valentine, senior vice president and director of marketing for Macerich Company. "This year we've learned that a majority of our shoppers are accessing the Internet for pre-mall shopping visits and those buying online are buying merchandise from the sites of retailers in our shopping centers. As an owner and operator of shopping centers, Macerich is constantly seeking ways to embrace e-tailing."

Although 89% of shoppers won't buy their gifts on the Internet this year, 38.7% will use e-commerce for researching future mall purchases. Of those buying on-line, a definite majority (79.7%) will do all or part of their Internet shopping on sites of retailers found in shopping malls.

Close to 75% of shoppers surveyed will still make the majority of their purchases at the mall. Of the shoppers not utilizing e-commerce, 54.2% believe that mall shopping is simply more fun and provides a more sensory experience. Over 55% of teenagers, 65% of adults and 49% of senior citizens surveyed agree that the mall offers entertainment and the ability to touch and see merchandise and decor. Shoppers embrace the town center atmosphere that malls provide year round, especially during the holidays with Santa visits, caroling, community outreach initiatives and festive holiday programming.

The first 1999 Holiday-ology survey, conducted over Thanksgiving weekend, asked over 4,500 shoppers nationwide how they planned on shopping for the final holiday season before the millennium. Ninety-one percent of respondents planning to shop for the holidays predict an average budget of \$903 for gifts and toys and \$501 for parties, decorations and travel. This is an increase of \$221 from last year's gift-giving budget, as most Americans (76%) admit to budgeting the same or more than they did in 1998.

Over half of the surveyed shoppers this year (56.1%) will be looking primarily for clothing and accessories. Toys, games and video games fall second on the shopping list (21.5%), but is slightly higher on the list for moms and dads.

While Thanksgiving is considered to be the kick-off of the holiday shopping season, over 40% of shoppers get a head start, with 13.6% starting even before October. Only 7.9% of shoppers admit to waiting for the week before, with more males than females waiting for the last week (13.9% : 4.6%). For those that do venture out after Thanksgiving, the big draw is holiday sales (34.1%) and a day off of work (25.2%).

Almost half of those surveyed (45.6%) have more than ten people on their shopping list and over half (55.6%) will stick with cash for their method of payment. While price is the highest driving force in gift-buying decision-making (28.3%), younger shoppers are more likely to buy the must-have for the season and older buyers are more likely to give based on needs. Over half (51.7%) of shoppers admit to being influenced by media hype during the holidays, evident by the 77.4% who say Pokemon will be the biggest toy craze this year.

Random samples of shoppers completed the survey in targeted Macerich properties by answering questions on the Max Trak system of hand held units, an electronic data gathering and analysis tool. The second 1999 Holiday-ology survey will be conducted the weekend before Christmas.

The Macerich Company, which has ownership interest in over 50 malls across the continental United States, is one of the nation's largest owner/operators of regional malls. Founded in 1965, Macerich is publicly traded on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol "MAC". For more information on Macerich, visit the Macerich web site at [www.macerich.com](http://www.macerich.com).

SOURCE Macerich Company

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