

# John Lewis Christmas Shopping Survey - Why Christmas Shopping Is Getting Later And Later.....We're A Nation Of Strategic Shoppers

Submitted by: Rain Communications UK

Wednesday, 8 December 2004

---

John Lewis Christmas Shopping Survey - Why Christmas Shopping Is Getting Later And Later.....We're A Nation Of Strategic Shoppers

- Nearly a quarter of working people plan to take annual leave to do their Christmas shopping
- 52% write lists and 46% work out budgets before hitting the shops
- The trend for "Me-Gifting" is booming - 39% of us are planning to "me-gift" this Christmas, taking two hours to find that extra special something for ourselves, costing on average £42.00
- 31% of those with a boss will be buying them a present – average amount spent around £17.00
- When he is buying for her, the average spend is £114.70; when she is buying for him, the average spend is £75.00
- 65% of pet owners buy their pet a present

Forget the idea of shoppers traipsing around for days on end to fill their Santa sacks, a national survey of Christmas present shopping habits, commissioned by John Lewis, shows that a new breed of strategic Christmas shoppers sleigh-ride through Christmas, precision present-buying with lists and budgets to-hand.

According to the John Lewis survey of 1,000 respondents, carried out by NOP, only 16% of people start their Christmas shopping before October, with the majority (58%) doing most of it in November and December. 48% of shoppers buy all their Christmas presents in just 1-4 ultra-efficient shopping trips, whilst 27% of people take a little more time - clocking up 5-10 shopping trips. To guarantee maximum elf-like efficiency, nearly a quarter of working people plan to take annual leave for their Christmas shopping – leaving weekends free to wrap, stack and decorate the tree.

Many of these expert Christmas shoppers pre-plan to the max, with over half of them (52%) writings lists before they venture onto the streets and into the stores. Many of them have also done their "Santa stats" too, with 46% of Christmas shoppers working out their budgets in advance. Planning ahead appears to save the pounds as well as the pennies, with 15% claiming to have gone £100 or more over budget if – in slacker times – they've left their Christmas shopping to the last minute.

So who will be the "under the tree" winners this year? And, if it's the thought that counts – which presents take the longest to buy?

When he is buying for her, the average spend is £114.70 – nearly half the men questioned (44%) taking under an hour to buy that extra special something for their Christmas cracker! When she is buying for him, the average spend is £75.00 – with a similar number (45%) bought in under an hour.

More money is spent on Mums than Dads, with £47.20 and £39.90 recording as the average spends respectively. 18% spend over two hours on grandchildren and the average amount being spent is £68.50. Grandparents take the least amount of the "Christmas wallet" with an average spend of £21.50.

The trend for buying for bosses appears to be booming, with 31% of those with a boss claiming to do so – the average amount spent around £17.00. Pets are almost guaranteed under-the-tree success with 65% of pet owners buying their pet a present – costing around £6.50 – 32% of shoppers taking over an hour to choose it.

Finally friends notch up an average spend of £22.60 per head, with “self-gifting” appealing to more than a few with 39% of respondents planning to buy a “me-gift” costing on average £42.00 – with 39% taking over two hours or more to look for it!

Says Simon Fowler, Customer Service Director of John Lewis, “Retailers say year after year that Christmas is starting later and later, this survey suggests the reason for it is that Christmas shoppers are only visiting stores once they’ve come up with a cunning Christmas shopping plan. But we mustn’t forget the remaining Christmas shoppers who will trawl rather than precision shop, these people will always need all the advice and help they can get!”

“Christmas trawlers” are this year planning at least 21 or more shopping expeditions (9% of respondents) - with a possible 7% last year going £200 or more over budget.

- Ends -

- For further information, please call Isabel Dexter at Rain Communications UK on 020 7222 43 45  
isabel.dexter@raincommunications.co.uk

Notes to Eds:

\* NOP World interviewed 1000 adults 15+ from Great Britain by telephone between 8th-24th October. Data has been weighed to bring it in line with national profiles.