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NEW YORK — The 2013 holiday shopping season is underway, with ICSC survey results showing some unexpected trends. As in most years, the top shopping day of the year is expected to be Black Friday. However, Cyber Monday will follow close behind across most demographic groups, overtaking Super Saturday as the second busiest holiday shopping day of the year.

Procrastinating is out this year with most consumers (62%) planning to finish their gift buying on or before December 16. Stores are likely to accommodate this trend and consumers should plan to make popular gift purchases early this holiday shopping season.

The hottest gift category this year is expected to be toys and games followed closely by consumer electronics. Gifts receiving the most specific mentions include smart phones, tablets, game consoles, digital cameras and televisions.

Other key findings include:

- 37% of women list “seasonal discounts” as their top motivating factor while only 20% cite “gift practicality.”
- Men were more evenly divided between “seasonal discounts” (30%) and “gift practicality” (27%) as the driving factor influencing their holiday shopping.
- Men are more likely to shop for consumer electronics this year while women intend to buy games and toys.

- Respondents aged 18-34 are significantly more likely to shop for consumer

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under income category, saying that making the purchase is the factor most likely to influence their holiday shopping.

With the rapid growth of online shopping, consumers planning to buy their gifts over the Internet this holiday season should be aware of their state's tax remittance policies, save all receipts from online purchases and be sure to calculate and remit the taxes at the appropriate time. This unnecessary burden on consumers would be lifted if and when Congress passes Marketplace Fairness legislation. Modernizing the sales tax system so that it aligns with the 21st Century marketplace will benefit consumers and create a level playing field for all retailers.

Opinion Research Corporation (ORC) conducted a survey among two national probability samples, which, when combined, consists of 1,021 adults, 515 men and 506 women 18 years of age and older, living in the continental United States. Interviewing for this CARAVAN® Survey was completed on October 17-20, 2013. 671 interviews were from the landline sample and 350 interviews from the cell phone sample.

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