Two in Three Americans Say they are Adjusting to Economy by Purchasing Fewer Holiday Gifts

Three-Quarters Say Current Economy Has Given Them a Chance to Focus on More Important Things Than Gifts

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Two in Three Americans Say they are Adjusting to Economy by Purchasing Fewer Holiday Gifts

Three-Quarters Say Current Economy Has Given Them a Chance to Focus on More Important Things Than Gifts

New York, NY – Two in three Americans (68%) say that one of the ways they are adjusting to the new economic conditions in the United States is by purchasing fewer holidays gifts for friends and family, according to a new Ipsos poll conducted on behalf of Strayer University.

The survey shows that parents are especially likely to say this, with nearly three-quarters of them (73%) saying they are adjusting to the economy by buying fewer holiday gifts, compared to only two-thirds of Americans without children who say they've adjusted to today's economic conditions by purchasing less gifts (65%).

In addition, Americans with a household income of less than $75,000 are more likely to agree that today's economic conditions have caused them to adjust by purchasing fewer holiday gifts (73% of Americans with a household income below $75,000 agree, compared to 59% of those with a household income above $75,000 who do).

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted November 18-21, 2010. For the survey, a nationally representative sample of 1,000 randomly-selected adults aged 18 and over residing in the U.S. was interviewed via Ipsos' U.S. Telephone Express omnibus With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate within ±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 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.

All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error.

Three-quarters of Americans Say Current Economy Has Given Them Chance to Focus on More Important Things Than Gifts

The study results show that three in four Americans (77%) agree that the current economic conditions have given them a chance to focus on what is truly important in life, rather than on gift giving.

This is particularly true of women, with four in five (80%) agreeing that the current economy has given them a chance to focus on what is important in life rather than giving gifts (compared to only 73% of men who feel this way).

Less Than Half of Americans Worry About Not Being Able to Give Gifts

According to the study, only two in five Americans (40%) say they are worried about not being able to give gifts to family and friends. However, parents are more likely to be worried than those without children (46% vs. 36%).

In addition, Hispanics are particularly likely to worry about not being able to provide gifts for family and friends compared to Caucasians or African-Americans (54% for Hispanics vs. 37% for Caucasians and 34% for African-Americans).

Perhaps one of the reasons the majority of Americans are not worried about being able to give gifts is that most say family and friends don't expect to receive as many gifts as they did in the past. Less than two in five (38%) say that family and friends still expect to receive as many gifts as before the new economic conditions set in. Less than a third of women (32%) say family and friends still expect to receive as many gifts this holiday season as they did in the past (compared to 44% of men who say this).

Despite Economy, Giving Good Presents Brings Happiness to Most Americans

While Americans may be adjusting their gift giving to the new economic conditions, there is little doubt they enjoy giving presents.

More than four in five Americans (82%) say giving good presents during the holiday season brings them happiness. This is particularly true of wealthier Americans, with more than nine in ten (91%) of those with a household income over $75,000 saying giving good gifts during the holidays brings them happiness, compared to four in five (80%) of those with a household income of less than $75,000 who agree.

Despite the pleasure they receive from giving gifts to family and friends, the study shows a majority of Americans find shopping during the holidays to be stressful. More than half (55%) say they feel stressed out from shopping during the holiday season. This is especially true of parents; with more than three in five (62%) saying shopping during the holidays causes them stress (compared to 52% of Americans without children who say this).

Few Americans Will Spend More Money on Gifts this Holiday Season Than They Did Last Year

Less than one in ten Americans (8%) say they will spend more money on gifts this holiday season than they did last year during the holidays. In contrast, nearly two in five Americans (38%) say they will spend less money on gifts compared to last year, while half (49%) say they will spend about the same amount on gifts as last holiday season.

Older Americans are more likely to say they'll spend less money on holiday gifts this year, with 42% of those over the age of 35 saying they will spend less money this year (compared to 29% of Americans age 18 to 34).

In addition, Americans with lower household incomes say they will spend less money on gifts this holiday season than last year (47% of Americans with a household income under $25,000 say they'll spend less this year compared to 34% of Americans with an income over $25,000).

While most Americans say they will spend the same or less money this holiday season than last, they are split on the effect this has. On one hand, 45% agree that the holidays are more difficult now than in the past because they don't feel like they have the money to buy gifts for all their friends and family. On the other hand, however, a nearly equal proportion (43%) agree that the holidays are less difficult now than in the past because they don't worry about buying gifts for all their friends and family. Only 11% of Americans don't agree with either of these statements.

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