Ipsos Poll Conducted for Reuters

Holiday Shopping Topline 12.24.13

These are findings from an Ipsos poll conducted for Thomson Reuters from December 21-24, 2013. For the surveys, a sample of 1,581 adults 18+ was interviewed online. The precision of the Reuters/Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll has a credibility interval of plus or minus 2.8 percentage points. For more information about credibility intervals, please see the appendix.

The data were weighted to the U.S. current population data by gender, age, education, and ethnicity. Statistical margins of error are not applicable to online polls. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error and measurement error. Figures marked by an asterisk (*) indicate a percentage value of greater than zero but less than one half of one per cent. Where figures do not sum to 100, this is due to the effects of rounding. To see more information on this and other Reuters/Ipsos polls, please visit http://polling.reuters.com/.

HOLIDAY SHOPPING

Q1. Thinking about all of the holiday shopping you will do for this holiday season (Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, etc), how much of it have you already completed?

None	11%
Less than a quarter	5%
About half	5%
More than three-quarters	20%
All of it	54%
Unsure	3%

Q2. Which of the following best applies to your plans for holiday shopping this year?

I plan to shop only online (not in stores)	6%
I plan to shop primarily online	12%
I plan to shop about equally online and at stores	33%
I plan to shop primarily at stores	22%
I plan to shop only at stores (not online)	15%
Unsure	13%

Q3. At what type of store do you plan to do most of your holiday shopping this year? (*Asked of all except those who will shop only online, n=1,493)*

Discount Store (Wal-Mart, Target, Kmart, etc)	28%
Department store (Macy's, J.C. Penney, Nordstrom, Kohl's, Sears, etc)	9%
Specialty retailer (Toys 'R' Us, Best Buy, Zale's, etc)	2%
Warehouse Club (Costco, Sam's Club, BJs, etc)	3%
Dollar store (Family dollar, Dollar Tree, etc)	3%
Apparel store (Gap, Chico's, Abercrombie & Fitch, Old Navy, etc)	1%
A mix of stores	42%
Unsure	11%

Q4. And do you plan on doing any of your holiday shopping at a department store this year? *(Asked of a subset of the sample; n=391)*

Yes – I will shop more at department stores this year than I did last year	6%
Yes – I will shop at department stores about as much as I did last year	34%
Yes – I will shop less at department stores than I did last year	33%
No - I will not shop at department stores	27%

Q5. What types of holiday purchases do you expect to make at department stores? *(Asked of those who plan to shop at department stores, n=266)*

Clothing	60%
Home items (kitchen, bedding, bath etc.)	37%
Accessories	37%
Shoes	24%
Jewelry	14%
Other	23%
None of these	9%

Q6. Thinking about your holiday spending last year compared to this year, are you planning to spend more or less on...

	Spending more this year	Spending less this year	Spending about the same	Unsure
Food	18%	20%	47%	14%
Electronics	16%	31%	36%	17%
Clothing	12%	26%	47%	15%
Toys	13%	29%	40%	18%
Jewelry	8%	35%	35%	22%

Q7. And thinking again about your holiday spending this season, how interested, if at all, are you in purchasing a...

	Very interested	Somewhat interested	Not very interested	Not at all interested	Unsure	*Very/ Somewhat interested (Net)*
Tablet	17%	15%	12%	47%	9%	*32%*
Laptop	14%	16%	12%	49%	9%	*30%*
Desktop	6%	9%	17%	59%	9%	*15%*
Ultrabook	6%	8%	16%	60%	10%	*14%*

Q8. Which tablet product are you most interested in purchasing? (*Asked of those who were very interested/ somewhat interested in purchasing a tablet, n=449)*

iPad	22%
Kindle Fire	17%
Samsung Galaxy	13%
iPad mini	10%
Microsoft Surface	7%
Google Nexus	5%
Barnes & Noble Nook	2%
Acer Iconia	1%
HP Slate	1%
Asus Transformer Pad	1%
Sony Xperia	1%
Lenovo A1000	1%
Toshiba Excite Pure	1%
Asus Memo Pad	*%
Hisense Siro	*%
Other	6%
Unsure	14%

Q9. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree...

	Agree	Disagree	Unsure
I am choosing to shop closer to home this year, to save on gas *(n=375)*	48%	40%	12%
Stores are offering much better prices online this year than they did last year	28%	29%	44%
I am buying more items on layaway this year than I did last year *(n=766)*	11%	80%	9%
I will be eating out more than usual during this holiday season *(n=391)*	16%	71%	13%
I'm more cautious about my spending this holiday season due to the recent Government shutdown and economic uncertainty	46%	38%	16%

Q10. When you shop in stores...

I do not use a mobile device while shopping	62%
I use a mobile device to call friends and family to discuss products I find in-store	17%
I use a mobile device to compare prices online while in the store	15%
I use a mobile device to research the products I find in-store	14%
I use a mobile device to photograph or note down products I intend to purchase elsewhere (online or in other stores)	12%
Unsure	6%

Q11. Now thinking overall about your holiday shopping, approximately how much TOTAL did you spend last year on your holiday shopping?

Less than $100	14%
$100-$249	20%
$250-$499	24%
$500-$999	20%
$1,000-$2,500	10%
More than $2,500	1%
Unsure	11%

Q12. And thinking overall about your holiday shopping, approximately how much TOTAL do you anticipate spending this year?

Less than $100	16%
$100-$249	24%
$250-$499	22%
$500-$999	18%
$1,000-$2,500	9%
More than $2,500	2%
Unsure	10%

How to Calculate Bayesian Credibility Intervals

The calculation of credibility intervals assumes that Y has a binomial distribution conditioned on the parameter θ\, i.e., Y|θ~Bin(n,θ), where n is the size of our sample. In this setting, Y counts the number of "yes", or "1", observed in the sample, so that the sample mean ($\bar{y}$) is a natural estimate of the true population proportion θ. This model is often called the likelihood function, and it is a standard concept in both the Bayesian and the Classical framework. The Bayesian [1] statistics combines both the prior distribution and the likelihood function to create a posterior distribution. The posterior distribution represents our opinion about which are the plausible values for θ adjusted after observing the sample data. In reality, the posterior distribution is one's knowledge base updated using the latest survey information. For the prior and likelihood functions specified here, the posterior distribution is also a beta distribution (π(θ/y)~β(y+a,n-y+b)), but with updated hyper-parameters.

Our credibility interval for ϑ is based on this posterior distribution. As mentioned above, these intervals represent our belief about which are the most plausible values for ϑ given our updated knowledge base. There are different ways to calculate these intervals based on π(θ/y). Since we want only one measure of precision for all variables in the survey, analogous to what is done within the Classical framework, we will compute the largest possible credibility interval for any observed sample. The worst case occurs when we assume that a=1 and b=1 and y=$n/2$. Using a simple approximation of the posterior by the normal distribution, the 95% credibility interval is given by, approximately:

$$\bar{y} \mp \frac{1}{\sqrt{n}}$$

For this poll, the Bayesian Credibility Interval was adjusted using standard weighting design effect 1+L=1.3 to account for complex weighting[2]

Examples of credibility intervals for different base sizes are below. Ipsos does not publish data for base sizes (sample sizes) below 100.

Sample size	Credibility intervals
2,000	2.5
1,500	2.9
1,000	3.5
750	4.1
500	5.0
350	6.0
200	7.9
100	11.2

[1] Bayesian Data Analysis, Second Edition, Andrew Gelman, John B. Carlin, Hal S. Stern, Donald B. Rubin, Chapman & Hall/CRC | ISBN: 158488388X | 2003

[2] Kish, L. (1992). Weighting for unequal Pi . Journal of Official, Statistics, 8, 2, 183200.