

'TIS THE SEASON... TO DO SOME SERIOUS GIFT GIVING

Survey Shows That Most Canadians Think Exchanging Gifts Is An Important Part Of Their Holiday

Many Canadians Have A Lot Of Holiday Gift Giving To Do, But Not A Lot Of Time To Do It



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Many Canadians Have A Lot Of Holiday Gift Giving To Do, But Not A Lot Of Time To Do It

Toronto, ON – According to a new Ipsos-Reid/MasterCard survey released today, the majority of Canadians (72%) feel exchanging gifts is an important part of their holidays this year. And, when asked to pick from a list of reasons the one they feel is the most compelling reason to exchange gifts this holiday, the majority of holiday gift givers (60%) choose “to acknowledge love and respect for friends and family”. But holiday gift giving can be a daunting and time-constrained chore for many holiday gift givers.

In fact, almost half of holiday gift givers in Canada (46%) do not start their holiday shopping until the month of December – with 5% not starting until the night before.

Most holiday gift givers (57%) have to buy a gift for at least 10 people, and one in five holiday gift givers (18%) say it takes them 10 trips or more to do all their holiday shopping.

“The mall or shopping centres” is where the majority of holiday gift givers (59%) typically do most of their holiday shopping, while 19% do most of their shopping at “big box stores such as Wal Mart or Home Depot”, and 13% do most of theirs at “small shops or boutiques”. Just 4% of Canadian Holiday gift givers say they do most of their holiday shopping either online (2%) or in catalogues (2%).

When it comes to the most difficult person on their list to shop for, “spouse/partner/boyfriend/girlfriend” tops the list with 28% of holiday gift giver saying so, while “mom” (13%), “dad” (12%), and “children” (9%) follow.



These are the findings of an Ipsos-Reid/MasterCard poll conducted from October 28th to November 1st and from November 5th to November 7th, 2004. For the survey, a representative randomly selected sample of 1000 adult Canadians were interviewed by telephone. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate to within ± 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire adult Canadian population been polled. The margin of error will be larger within regions and for other sub-groupings of the survey population. These data were weighted to ensure the sample's regional and age/sex composition reflects that of the actual Canadian population according to the 2001 Census data.

Seven In Ten Canadians (72%) Say It Is Important To Them To Exchange Gifts With Friends And Family This Year...

When asked how important it is for them to exchange gifts with friends and/or family this year, 72% of Canadians say that it is either “very important” (40%) or “somewhat important” (33%) to them. One in five Canadians say that it is not important to them (16% “not very important”, 4% “not at all important”), while 8% say they “do not plan to exchange gifts with friends or family this year”.

- Residents of Atlantic Canada (87%) are the most likely to say that exchanging gifts this year is important to them, followed by Ontario (77%), British Columbia (76%), Saskatchewan/Manitoba (74%), Alberta (73%), and Quebec (58%).
- Women are more likely than men to say exchanging gifts this year is important to them (78% vs. 67%).
- Those with an annual household income of \$30,000 or more are significantly more likely than those with an annual household income of less than \$30,000 to say that exchanging gifts this year is important to them (75% vs. 66%).



Most Gift Exchanging Canadians (60%) Feel The Most Compelling Reason To Exchange Gifts Is To Acknowledge Love And Respect For Friends And Family...

Among those Canadians who do plan on exchanging gifts this holiday season, when given a list of four possible reasons to choose from, the majority (60%) feel the most compelling reason to exchange gifts during the holidays is to “acknowledge love and respect for friends and family”. One-quarter of these respondents (25%) feel the most compelling reason is “to follow tradition”, 8% feel it is “to feel good about yourself”, and 4% feel it is to “reciprocate for gifts you have received”. Only 2% of gift-exchanging Canadians “don’t know” what the most compelling reason is to exchange gifts during the holidays.

- Residents in Ontario (67%) are the most likely to feel the most compelling reason to exchange gifts is “to acknowledge love and respect for friends and family”, followed by residents of Atlantic Canada (65%), Alberta (64%) and Saskatchewan/Manitoba (64%), British Columbia (58%), and Quebec (47%).
- Those aged 18-34 are significantly more likely than those aged 35 and older to believe that “to acknowledge love and respect for friends and family” is the most compelling reason to exchange gifts during the holidays (68% vs. 58%).



But, Many Gift Givers Are Often Rushed To Finish Their Shopping – Just Under Half (46%) Don't Start Their Shopping Until December Or Later...

It seems a good portion of holiday gift givers are rushed for time to get their holiday shopping done, as just under half (46%) do not typically start their holiday shopping until December: 22% start their holiday shopping in early December; 19% start in the middle of December; and 5% start the night before.

However, 52% of holiday shoppers do get an earlier start on their holiday shopping, as they start their shopping during or before the month of November: 25% start in November, 10% start in October; 4% start in September; and 13% start earlier than September.

The remaining 2% of holiday gift givers “don't know” when they typically start their holiday shopping.

- Men are far more likely than women to start their holiday shopping in December (61% vs. 33%)
- No other demographic trends are apparent with respect to this question.



And The Majority Of Holiday Gift Givers (57%) Have To Buy Gifts For 10 Or More People...

Holiday gift givers, on average, have holiday gifts to buy for approximately 12 people.

Broken into ranges:

- 7% have to buy gifts for 1-3 people;
- 20% have to buy gifts for 4-6 people;
- 14% have to buy gifts for 7-9 people;
- 27% have to buy gifts for 10-12 people;
- 12% have to buy gifts for 13-15 people;
- 1% have to buy gifts for 16-19 people; and
- 17% have to buy gifts for 20 people or more.

A very small proportion of gift givers (1%) have no people to buy gifts for, and 2% “don’t know” how many people they have on their gift/shopping list.

- No demographic trends are apparent with respect to this question.



One In Five Holiday Gift Givers (18%) Say It Takes Them 10 Trips Or More To Do Their Holiday Shopping...

During the survey, holiday gift givers were asked “how many trips does it take for them to do all of their holiday shopping?” Among these respondents, it takes, on average, approximately 5.4 trips to do all of their holiday shopping.

Broken down into individual ranges we see that:

- 3% say none;
- 16% say 1 trip;
- 15% say 2 trips;
- 17% say 3 trips;
- 10% say 4 trips;
- 9% say 5 trips;
- 5% say 6 trips;
- 1% say 7 trips;
- 1% say 8 trips; and
- 18% say 10 trips or more.

Only 4% of gift exchanging Canadians “don’t know” how many trips it takes for them to do all of their holiday shopping.

- There are no demographic trends apparent with respect to this question.



Six In Ten Gift Exchanging Canadians (59%) Do Most Of Their Holiday Shopping At The Mall...

The majority of gift exchanging Canadians (59%) typically do most of their holiday shopping at “the mall or shopping centres”, while 19% typically do most of their shopping at “big box stores such as Wal Mart or Home Depot”, and 13% typically do their shopping at “small shops or boutiques”. A small proportion of the Canadians who do plan to exchange gifts this holiday (4%) season say they typically do most of their holiday shopping either “online” (2%) or by “catalogue” (2%), while 5% typically do most of their holiday shopping some “other” way. The remaining 1% of holiday gift givers “don’t know” where they do most of their holiday shopping.

- Residents of Ontario (63%) and Alberta (63%) are the most likely to say they most of their holiday shopping at the “mall or shopping centres”, followed by residents of British Columbia (60%), Quebec (55%), Atlantic Canada (53%), and Saskatchewan/Manitoba (49%).
- Women are more likely than men to do most of their holiday shopping at “big box stores such as Wal Mart or Home Depot” (23% vs. 16%).
- Residents of urban regions in Canada are significantly more likely than residents of rural regions to do most of their holiday shopping at the “mall or shopping centres” (62% vs. 49%).
- Those with an annual household income of less than \$60,000 are significantly more likely than those with an annual household income of \$60,000 or more to say they typically do most of their holiday shopping at “big box stores such as Wal Mart or Home Depot (24% vs. 14%).



And It's Not Always Easy To Pick A Gift -- Three In Ten Holiday Gift Givers (28%) Find It Most Difficult To Shop For Their Partner, 25% Say A Parent Is Most Difficult...

When holiday gift givers are asked an open-end question as to whom is most difficult person on their list to shop for – the responses are broadly varied.

Three in ten (28%) say their “spouse/partner/boyfriend/girlfriend” is the most difficult person on their list to shop for, 13% say their “mother”, 12% say their “father”, and 9% say their “children”.

Other responses include:

- Friends (2%);
- Mother in law (2%);
- Sister (2%);
- Father in law (2%); and
- Brother (2%).

One in seven holiday gift givers (15%) mention some “other” person as being the most difficult to shop for, and 6% say “no one” is most difficult to shop for.

The remaining 7% of holiday gift givers “don’t know” who is the most difficult person to shop for on their list.

- There are no demographic trends apparent with respect to this question.



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