

Christmas crowds prefer shopping with value retailers

London, 5th December 2007.

- Christmas survey reveals that over 60 per cent of Brits set to shop in Argos stores for gifts
- Argos also second favourite online store
- Amazon tops online polls again

Competition to attract Christmas shoppers is fierce amongst the high street retailers but according to a national consumer survey Argos will be the most visited store over the festive period.

Beating other retail giants including Marks and Spencer, Woolworths and Tesco, Argos came top of the poll, with 66.9 per cent of consumers planning to buy Christmas presents instore. For the first year, budget store Primark enters the top ten, with 24 per cent of respondents planning to shop for presents at one of the 170 national stores. The study also reveals that books are the UK's favourite present ensuring WHSmith and Waterstones remained a top 10 retailer.

Online outlet Amazon topped the list of retail websites for the second year running. The survey by European digital marketing company eCircle revealed that 61.6 per cent of consumers are set to shop with the original online retailer. And in another boost for Argos, the retailer came in at second place, beating off online-only stores such as ebay and CD Wow, and the sites of high street rivals Tesco and Littlewoods. next.co.uk, who posted poor financial results during 2007, has dropped out of the top ten replaced by Empire Direct.

Volker, Wiewer, CEO of eCircle says: "Argos looks set to enjoy another bumper year this Christmas. Probably because the principles of old fashioned customer service and sticking with a formula that works have transferred beautifully to an online arena. The retailer has entered the digital sphere with a carefully co-ordinated splash - and as we can see, the new online site is already taking on the well-established sites such as Amazon."

Ends

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Notes to the Editors

About the Survey

A total of 7,931 people across four countries took part in the survey (2,156 in Germany, 1515 in the UK, 1,579 in France and 2,141 in Italy).

The invitation to participate took place by email and the actual survey was via an online questionnaire. Screening of individuals was based on quotation on sex and age in eCircle's online market research panel – V@lueTrend

Other Facts – FULL SURVEY AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

- In order Argos, Marks and Spencer and Woolworths have been found to be the most popular high-street retailers for Christmas Shopping. In the online sector Amazon is the most popular with 62% of market share. Interestingly Argos is the next biggest online retailer.
- The British are the most prepared for Christmas
- Fashion is the most popular gift in Italy whilst books are the most popular in Britain
- The UK will spend the most on Christmas compared to European counterparts
- Britain will send more Christmas cards than any European counterparts

About eCircle

eCircle is one of Europe's largest digital direct marketing companies, owning the most comprehensive permission marketing database for email campaigns and lead generation as well as a state-of-art technology solution for digital direct marketing. Since 1999 eCircle has stood for innovative and efficient online marketing for customer acquisition and retention. Leading companies and agencies trust our consistent customer care, our long-term experience and not least our highly motivated and committed employees.

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