

Free Shipping an Important Stimulus of E-Commerce Spending Again This Holiday Season

Most Recent Week Shows Online Consumer Spending Moderates as Consumers Prepare for Final Week of Online Discounts and Promotions

RESTON, Va., Dec 17, 2008 /PRNewswire-FirstCall via COMTEX News Network/ --

comScore (Nasdaq: SCOR), a leader in measuring the digital world, today reported its tracking of holiday season retail e-commerce spending for the first 44 days of the November - December 2008 holiday season. For the holiday season through December 14, \$20.17 billion has been spent online, essentially the same level compared to the corresponding days last year. For the fourteen days beginning December 1 (Cyber Monday), the kick-off to the heaviest part of the online shopping season, sales totaled \$9 billion, up 2 percent versus year ago. However, the most recent week (week ending December 14) saw e-commerce sales decline 2 percent, a sign that consumers have once again moderated their spending.

2008 Holiday Season To Date vs. Corresponding Days* in 2007
 Non-Travel (Retail) Spending
 Excludes Auctions and Large Corporate Purchases
 Total U.S. - Home/Work/University Locations
 Source: comScore, Inc.

Holiday Season to Date	Millions (\$)		
	2007	2008	Pct Change
November 1 - December 14	\$20,265	\$20,172	0%
Dec. 1 (Cyber Monday) - Dec. 14	\$8,781	\$8,993	2%
Dec. 8 - Dec. 14	\$4,640	\$4,544	-2%

*Corresponding days based on equivalent shopping days relative to Thanksgiving (October 27 - December 7, 2007)

"It appears that the spending surge we saw immediately following Thanksgiving has given way to more moderate buying during the most recent week," said comScore chairman Gian Fulgoni. "The current week will be particularly crucial to the overall performance of the season, as we expect to see heavy spending during the final days of online buying that qualify for guaranteed delivery by Christmas."

Free Shipping Deals Critical to Online Spending in Weak Retail Economy

With free shipping becoming an increasingly important incentive for online shoppers, comScore conducted an analysis to determine the effect of free shipping on online consumer behavior this holiday season. The results show a clear correlation between consumers' use of free shipping and both the dollars spent per order and the overall growth in online spending versus last year.

Retailers offered a flurry of free shipping deals during the weeks of Thanksgiving (week ending November 30) and then the following week (week ending December 7), which included Cyber Monday promotions. Each of these weeks saw average order values climb significantly and positive spending growth versus year ago. However, when some retailers pulled back on free shipping deals during the most recent week (week ending December 14), average order values declined and the week experienced negative growth versus year ago.

Free Shipping Analysis on Holiday E-Commerce Transactions
 Excludes Auctions and Large Corporate Purchases
 Total U.S. - Home/Work/University Locations
 Source: comScore, Inc.

Week Ending	Share of Total E-Commerce Transactions	Average Order Value on Transactions	Weekly Online Spending

	Including Free Shipping	Including Free Shipping	Growth vs. Corresponding Week in 2007
Nov. 16, 2008	36%	\$93	-7%
Nov. 23, 2008	39%	\$99	-11%
Nov. 30, 2008	42%	\$120	1%
Dec. 7, 2008	40%	\$133	7%
Dec. 14, 2008	38%	\$104	-2%

"Over the past few years, free shipping has emerged as a critically important incentive for online shoppers, and its importance has been magnified in the current retail environment," added Fulgoni. "The most recent week has shown retailers that now is not the time to pull back on the offers that are successfully persuading consumers to spend. Fortunately, the final full week of online holiday shopping will feature an array of attractive free shipping deals, including the industry's promotion of Friday, December 18 as "free shipping day", the final day for consumers to place their orders with guaranteed delivery by Christmas Eve. Consumers will hopefully respond by once again opening their wallets to help this challenging season end on a high note."

Weekly Online Retail Spending

(Photo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20081217/AQW543>)

Members of the media interested in receiving the data behind the above chart for use in a graphical representation, please contact press@comscore.com

comScore's Summary of 2008 Holiday Online Retail Spending by Key Time Period

Online Non-Travel (Retail) Holiday Consumer Spending
Excludes Auctions and Large Corporate Purchases
Total U.S. - Home/Work/University Locations
Source: comScore, Inc.

	Millions (\$)		
	2007	2008	Pct Change
January - October	\$93,551	\$102,144	9%
comScore Holiday Season			
Forecast (Nov-Dec)	\$29,169	\$29,200**	0%**
November 27 (Thanksgiving Day)*	\$273	\$288	6%
November 28 (Black Friday)*	\$531	\$534	1%
December 1 (Cyber Monday)*	\$733	\$846	15%

* Versus Corresponding Shopping Day in 2007 Relative to Thanksgiving

** Forecast

About comScore

comScore, Inc. (NASDAQ: SCOR) is a global leader in measuring the digital world and preferred source of digital marketing intelligence. For more information, please visit <http://www.comscore.com/companyinfo>.

(Logo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20080115/COMSCORELOGO>)

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