



**Press Release**

**31<sup>st</sup> January 2011**

## **Christmas 2010 – A Christmas like no other**

Efficient Consumer Response (ECR) Ireland commissioned national research on the grocery shopping behaviour of consumers during the Christmas 2010 trading period in Ireland.

Conducted by Empathy Research, this was the first dedicated qualitative and quantitative research on Christmas shopping behaviour in Ireland, covering the what, why, where and how of Christmas shopping.

It involved 3 phases conducted before (qualitative and quantitative), during (Facebook and physical diaries) and after Christmas (qualitative and quantitative) across all regions in the Republic of Ireland.

The research showed that the single biggest influencing factor was the bad weather which hampered Christmas shopping across the board. The underlying recession and financial constraints also tempered consumer spending.

Research highlights included;

- The weather forced 65% to shop more locally although there were mixed views on the value available in local stores.
- There was a concerted effort to support Irish and small businesses, as long as they offered good quality and value. Value (94%) and quality (93%) were the most important attributes in deciding where to shop.
- All saw that they could still enjoy themselves without too much needless excess, entertaining at home and planned to do the same again next Christmas.
- Impulse buying decreased as consumers focused on their needs, and did not always give in to their desires. Before Christmas, 51% of respondents expected to indulge in impulse shopping whereas only 36% admitted to having done so after Christmas.
- Most expected this year to be tough financially and would continue to look for the best value for their money, shopping around for deals, and haggling for discounts.

- Some had already started saving and planning for Christmas 2011 particularly those on lower incomes as this was the only way they could manage their finances.
- 37% continued to purchase Own Label products for Christmas, although only 29% expected to do so beforehand.
- A focus on practical useful gifts will continue to prevail, as consumers understand that we're all in this together and don't have to prove ourselves to each other.
- The Budget 2011 had a limited impact on Christmas 2010 shopping – however it is likely to have a greater impact next Christmas, when the sense of caution around excessive spending and waste at Christmas time will be even more pronounced.

The research can be purchased from ECR Ireland and includes the full research report and participation in an interactive workshop with Angela Healy of Empathy Research which will focus on expected shopper behaviour for Christmas 2011. Enquiries at [www.ecrireland.ie](http://www.ecrireland.ie)

## **Ends**

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