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### **For Clues on What to Buy Family and Friends, Online Shoppers Turn to Facebook and Other Social Networking Sites**

(OMAHA, NE) — Say goodbye to wish lists and subtle hints. When it comes to choosing gifts for family and friends, more than one quarter (27%) of those who both research products online and plan to purchase holiday gifts online this year are looking for clues on Facebook and other social networking sites. In fact, social media is emerging as a strong influence in shaping shoppers' behavior for the upcoming holiday season, according to a new joint survey conducted by [Opinion Research Corporation](#) and [Yesmail](#), members of the [infoGROUP](#) family of companies (NASDAQ: IUSA).

“Social media has become a critical part of many retailers' holiday strategy,” said John Harrison, Senior Vice President of Product Strategy and Client Services, [Yesmail](#). “With nearly half of consumers (45%) indicating that they plan to use social networks to make buying decisions or look for deals or free shipping, retailers are opening up these new channels to meet their demands.”

Eighty-seven percent of those who both look for and plan to buy items online will also use the Internet to research items, compare prices, search for discounts, coupons and free shipping offers. These savvy shoppers will be turning to retailers' websites (84%), online reviews (70%), search engines (84%) and social networks (45%). Seventeen percent say they are looking to social networks for exclusive deals and 22% are looking for free shipping offers.

“We're working closely with our clients to augment their e-mail marketing programs with social sites, branded microsites and widgets, and define the ability to gauge customer response and measure sales in real time. We expect these strategies to remain fluid well past the holiday season and into next year, as retailers test and adapt their campaigns to drive solid, measurable results,” said Harrison.

The survey also revealed that:

- Three-quarters of respondents are planning to buy the same amount or less than last year, with just 11% planning to buy more.
- Nearly three-quarters (72%) said they would find it appealing if part of their purchase contributed in some way to a non-profit or charitable organization.
- Books (64%) and apparel/accessories (58%) topped the list of product categories to purchase from online.

The study surveyed 1,000 respondents. Interviewing was conducted by phone October 1–4, 2009.

### **About Opinion Research Corporation**

Opinion Research Corporation (ORC) is a leading global market research firm with offices across the U.S., Europe and Asia Pacific region. ORC offers the unique ability to integrate primary and secondary research, competitive intelligence and expert insight to address the business challenges of its clients worldwide. The company has been a partner of CNN on the CNN/Opinion Research Corporation poll since 2006. To learn more about ORC, visit [www.opinionresearch.com](http://www.opinionresearch.com).

### **About Yesmail**

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