Affirm consumer spend report reveals Americans' top concern this holiday season is staying on budget

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Majority of Americans no longer wait for Black Friday or Cyber Monday to start shopping; Over half agree they feel pressured to overspend during the holidays

SAN FRANCISCO – September 16, 2021 – Seven in 10 Americans say they typically go over budget during the holidays, according to new research from the first Affirm Consumer Spend Report, Affirm's look at what consumers are up to—and where they're headed next. With many Americans eager to make this year's holiday season memorable, this year is no different. Affirm discovered nearly half (48%) plan to spend more money this year because they couldn't celebrate like they normally would last year.

More than half (54%) of Americans plan to spend more this year on experiences — like traveling or attending and hosting parties — over physical gifts to make this holiday season special. In fact, this year, the top gift Americans plan to give to their loved ones is a memorable experience (42%) – such as tickets to a concert or sporting event – followed by electronics (29%), clothing (25%) and a vacation (26%). The top gift Americans hope to receive is a vacation.

Amidst the holiday celebratory excitement and anticipated increase in spending, the survey revealed finances are more top-of-mind than ever, especially when it comes to the biggest holiday stressors. Staying on budget is Americans' top concern s(41%) – followed by incurring long-term debt (31%), shipping costs (28%) and being charged late or hidden fees (26%). What' more, over half of Americans say they typically have anxiety over holiday shopping.

To help ease holiday financial pressures, consumers are getting a head-start on their holiday shopping with the majority (61%) agreeing they no longer wait for Black Friday and Cyber Monday sales to start. One in five started their shopping in September, with nearly a quarter (23%) explaining that it's because they want to better budget.

"In addition to getting a head start on their holiday shopping, consumers are taking advantage of flexible payment solutions to help them spend responsibly this year. Over half of Americans are interested in using a pay-over-time solution for their holiday shopping this year and the majority (69%) will do so because they believe it helps them to better budget," said Silvija Martincevic, Chief Commercial Officer at Affirm. "With Affirm, consumers can responsibly navigate holiday spending by spreading out their purchases into simple biweekly or monthly payments."

Additional key findings include:

- Americans plan to spend the most on their significant other – nearly $400, on average, and just over $300 for each immediate family member
- The top holiday gifts Americans hope to receive include a vacation (27%), new clothing (26%), and gifts to create a memorable experience, such as tickets to a concert or sports game (24%)
- 72% of respondents plan to rely heavily on online shopping to avoid crowds, as 57% anticipate that this year's holiday shopping season will be busier than a typical year
- More than half (52%) are worried about having to make small talk with friends and family at holiday parties because they haven't been around people for so long; 46% agree that they need to brush up on small talk skills ahead of the holiday season
- 56% of Americans are interested in using a pay-over-time solution like Affirm for holiday shopping this year; of those, 69% will use pay-over-time solution to help keep them on budget (even if they could pay for the item in full)

With Affirm, eligible consumers can shop for holiday gifts and essentials, book travel and more while paying at their own pace, with budget-friendly terms that allow them to pay monthly or every other week. Shoppers can explore nearly 12,000 Affirm merchants, including:

- **Apparel:** Bonobos, Ulla Johnson, rag & bone
- **Home**: West Elm, Design Within Reach, Article, Room & Board

- **Electronics**: Target, Walmart, Dyson
- **Travel & Experiences:** StubHub, Vrbo, Delta Vacations, Expedia

About the Survey

The online survey was conducted by OnePoll for Affirm in August 2021 with a sample of 2,000 Americans.

About Affirm

Affirm's mission is to deliver honest financial products that improve lives. By building a new kind of payment network — one based on trust, transparency and putting people first — we empower millions of consumers to spend and save responsibly, and give thousands of businesses the tools to fuel growth. Unlike credit cards and other pay-over-time options, we show consumers exactly what they will pay up front, never increase that amount, and never charge any late or hidden fees. Follow Affirm on social media: LinkedIn | Instagram | Facebook | Twitter.

Payment options through Affirm are subject to an eligibility check, may not be available in all states, and are provided by these lending partners: affirm.com/lenders. CA residents: Loans by Affirm Loan Services, LLC are made or arranged pursuant to a California Finance Lender license.

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