

# NEWS RELEASE

## College of Commerce and Business Administration

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign  
414 Wohlers Hall, 1206 South Sixth Street  
Champaign IL 61820  
www.cba.uiuc.edu

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For more information contact: Ginny Hudak-David, Director, Commerce Communications  
217-244-8146; hudakdav@uiuc.edu

### **Beware the Mad Dash: Shopping the Day After Thanksgiving**

**(Champaign)** - *(November 13, 2001)* - The Friday after Thanksgiving is the biggest shopping day of the year. Making extravagant purchases and shopping the entire day are just a few of the post-Thanksgiving customs American families have adopted as tradition.

It's also the day when more shoppers buy too much. Using hidden cameras and shopper intercept studies, researchers at the University of Illinois' Food and Brand Lab have found a number of unexpected insights that can help post-Thanksgiving shoppers.

- Shopping lists actually lead most people to make more impulse purchases than they otherwise would. People with lists spend more time shopping, and this leads to unplanned purchases.
- Numerical signs such as "Two for the price of one" or "Limit three per person," cause shoppers to buy 30-90% more than they otherwise would. This happens even if the item isn't on sale.
- Optimism is the chief reason people buy products they never use. People are too optimistic about how much time they have to cook, so they buy exotic ingredients and foods. Optimism is also a reason consumers buy exercise equipment that sits idle.

These and other findings and tips will be broadcast on The Learning Channel (TLC) on Saturday, November 24<sup>th</sup>, at 9:00 p.m. EST. Produced by the BBC, "Buy-ology" is a two-hour program about how we shop and why we buy.

Shopping insights from the Food and Brand Lab will be featured throughout the program. Previews of the program, and full copies of the research that will be reported, can be found at the Food and Brand Lab website [www.ConsumerPsychology.net](http://www.ConsumerPsychology.net).

"It is fun to shop and people should enjoy searching for deals but they don't have to be walking targets either," said Dr. Brian Wansink, director of the Food and Brand Lab. "There are a lot people willing and able to take advantage of shoppers. As long as shoppers stay alert, they won't become victims."

The Food and Brand Lab, founded in 1992 by Brian Wansink, consists of 15 interdisciplinary researchers at the University of Illinois along with three test kitchens, five cooperating supermarkets, and a panel of 3,000 consumers. The Lab's research is independently funded by grants, consumer groups, and companies and focuses on better understanding consumers and how they relate to foods and packaged foods.

For more information contact Dr. Brian Wansink (217-244-0208) or Mark Reutter at the University of Illinois News Bureau (217-333-1000).

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