

Valentine's Day Alters Online Buying Habits

Reston, VA (February 10, 2000)– Two of three home Internet users expect to buy a gift for Valentine's Day, and they will spend \$3.6 billion, a study by PC Data Online disclosed today. Approximately \$730 million of this will be spent online.

Be forewarned: women expect to spend an average of \$61 less on their loved one than men.

The study was conducted by PC Data Online to gain insight into buying patterns of home Internet users for Valentine's Day. A leading Internet research and e-commerce measurement firm, PC Data Online surveyed 1,346 home-based Internet users about their anticipated buying both online and off-line.

The study showed respondents expect to spend \$100 on average for Valentine's Day gifts. Almost 69 percent said they were not likely to buy online, while 31.3 percent they were likely to buy online.

"Valentine's Day gifts are typically bought at the last minute and our review of online traffic to gifts, flowers, greeting cards and jewelry sites confirms this," said Sean Wargo, Internet analyst for PC Data Online. "Look for the spike representing Valentine's Day purchases to occur this weekend."

On average, male respondents said they expect to spend \$107 for Valentine's Day gifts, while women expect to spend \$46. Men are more likely to buy flowers (72 percent) and jewelry (28 percent), while women more likely to buy chocolates (61 percent). Sixty-five percent of respondents said they expect to send online greeting cards. By gender this was 82 percent of women respondents and 58 percent of men.

Finally, how will home Internet users spend Valentine's Day? Almost 29 percent said they plan to go out to dinner with a loved one, 27 percent they will share a night at home and 23 percent said they will do not plan to do anything special.

"Our daily tracking of online gift, flowers, greeting card and jewelry sites suggest that women strongly outnumbered men in purchasing this week," Wargo said. "I am sure we will see male buyers aptly represented in the last-minute spree expected immediately before Valentine's Day."

PC Data Online, a leading Internet market research firm that specializes in web commerce measurement and surveys, surveyed 1,346 home based Internet users earlier February 7-9. The sample was weighted by age and gender to represent the U.S. Internet population. It has a margin of error of +/- 2.7 percent.