Norton Encourages Online Shoppers to Stay Safe and Shop Smart This Holiday Season

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Experts Recommend Shoring Up Cyber Safety Best Practices Ahead of Cyber Monday

TEMPE, Ariz. and PRAGUE, Nov. 17, 2022 /PRNewswire/ -- In advance of Cyber Monday, the busiest online shopping day of the year, Norton, a consumer Cyber Safety brand of Gen™ (NASDAQ: GEN), encourages holiday shoppers to take steps to protect themselves from online fraud and identity theft – at its peak during the holidays – to bring back the joy of gifting.

Cyber Monday sales are expected to exceed $200 billion in 2022 – with online shopping volume steadily increasing year over year, so has the incidence of cybercrimes like fraud and identity theft. For many, safe online shopping concerns are rooted in real life. According to a new study from Norton conducted online in August 2022 by The Harris Poll among 1,000 U.S. adults, 1 in 4 U.S. adults (25%) reveal that they have been targeted by a scam while shopping online with nearly 40 percent of shoppers reporting that they have fallen victim to a scam during the holiday shopping season.

Holiday shopping and last-minute purchases can leave consumers stressed and vulnerable, creating a bounty of opportunities for cybercriminals and identity thieves to take advantage. Now is the time to take steps to protect yourself ahead of the holiday shopping frenzy.

"We want to help bring back the joy of the holiday season and empower everyone with the resources they need to shop online safely," said Kevin Roundy, Researcher and Technical Director at Norton Labs. "From inflation to supply chain issues, there are so many things out of our control this holiday season. Taking the time to pause and take proactive steps to protect your digital and financial life before Cyber Monday is one way everyone can take back control."

While the majority of Americans (89%) feel confident they can shop safely online, nearly 43 percent admit they are not sure of the best ways to shop online this holiday season. With rising costs and limited inventories of the hottest gifts, consumers appear to be taking more risks than ever before while filing up their carts. In fact, more than 2 in 5 consumers report risking their personal information in some way during the holiday season, leaving them vulnerable to identity theft and fraud.

The holidays can be a hectic time for shoppers even without the risks of cybercriminals. Before online shoppers start checking off their lists of holiday gifts, they should prepare for a safe and secure shopping experience. Some advice from Norton experts includes:

- **Always shop on secured sites you trust** – Before you buy, look for the little lock icon in the corner of your URL bar which tells you that the web page you are on has privacy protection. The URL of a secure site will start with "https." These websites mask any data you share, typically on pages that ask for passwords or financial information. Norton helps consumers shop safely online with products like

Norton Safe Web, which enables users to check for unsafe hyperlinks with the Link Guard Feature. Play it safe – consider only doing online business with retailers you trust and have shopped with before.

- **Watch out for 'too good to be true' deals** – Black Friday and Cyber Monday deals have become a tradition of holiday shopping. But if a website offers a deal that seems too good to be true, then it probably is. "Special offers" and "rock bottom deals" can link back to phishing scams and fraud. Be careful not to click on ads or suspicious emails. Compare prices and pictures of the merchandise at similar websites to confirm.

- **Be cautious about saving your credit card information on your accounts** – Keeping your credit card information on a retailer's website could leave you vulnerable to future data breaches. And if a hacker accesses your favorite shopping account, they could make purchases with your card. To avoid credit card fraud woes, be selective about saving your credit card information on accounts if it's not required, and consider using a password manager, such as Norton Password Manager, to save your information in an encrypted vault rather than with online retailers, or a digital wallet or app like Apple Pay or Google Pay to increase your transaction security by shielding your account numbers from view of the merchant and potential hackers.

- **Research charities before donating** – Before you give to any charity, verify that the organization is legitimate. A good place to start is by checking the lists run by watchdog groups such as CharityWatch, CharityNavigator, and the Wise Giving Alliance. If you can, donate directly rather than through websites and unsolicited emails. Charity Scams take advantage of the generosity of others, especially during the holidays, resulting in people falling victim to phishing scams, identity theft, and credit card fraud.

To learn more about how to stay safe this holiday season, please visit the Norton Internet Security Center. Additional safe online shopping tips and other useful Cyber Safety information can be found on the Norton Internet Security Center.

About the Survey
The research was conducted online in the United States by The Harris Poll on behalf of Norton among 1,000 adults aged 18+. The survey was conducted August 15 – September 1, 2022. Data are weighted where necessary by age, gender, race/ethnicity, region, education, marital status, household size, household income, and propensity to be online to bring them in line with their actual proportions in the population.

Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in our surveys. The sampling precision of Harris online polls is measured by using a Bayesian credible interval. For this study, the sample data is accurate to within + 3.8 percentage points using a 95% confidence level. This credible interval will be wider among subsets of the surveyed population of interest.

About Norton
Norton is a leading Cyber Safety brand of Gen™ (NASDAQ: GEN), a global company dedicated to powering Digital Freedom through its family of trusted consumer brands including Norton, Avast, LifeLock, Avira, AVG, ReputationDefender and CCleaner. Gen empowers people to live their digital lives safely, privately, and confidently today and for generations to come. Gen brings award-winning products and services in cybersecurity, online privacy and identity protection to more than 500 million users in more than 150 countries. Learn more at Norton.com and GenDigital.com.

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