PRESS RELEASE

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Fleece Navidad: A third of Brits admit they would risk spending money on a dodgy site if the deal looks good enough

- *New research from Norton finds that 39% have landed on a scam-looking website or seller while trying to buy a trending item, such as a Jellycat, Labubu or Stanley Cup*
- *Meanwhile 28% admit they take more risks when shopping online at this time of year than any other, and of those who lost money to a holiday shopping scam, the average amount lost was more than £500*
- *AI is Santa's Little Helper with 79% saying they would use an AI shopping assistant or agent, but only 40% of them are confident that an AI assistant would recognise and avoid a fraudulent website when shopping for them*

LONDON, UK, November 5, 2026 – New research from Norton, a Gen™ (NASDAQ: GEN) brand, shows that 50% of people in the UK are suspicious of the deals they find during the festive shopping season. While nearly half (44%) of shoppers say the amount of scam or AI-generated content online has made them more hesitant to shop online this festive season, over a third (34%) would risk some amount of money on a purchase from a website or seller they think might be a scam, if the deal seems too good to pass up.

Norton's Holiday Insights Report has found that 63% of UK consumers say good deals sway them during the holiday shopping season and 84% of UK consumers say they buy from online sellers they have never heard of. Some go even further, with nearly three in ten (29%) having bought from a website or seller they thought might be a scam because the deal was too good to pass up.

One in ten (11%) UK consumers have been the victim of a scam while shopping online during the holiday season. For many, the risk has turned into real loss – of those who were a victim to a holiday shopping scam, 85% lost money as a result. The average amount lost was £521.86, with the highest reported being £15,000.

Regarded as the most digitally active generation, Gen Z report to be the most exposed to holiday shopping scams. UK Gen Z shoppers are twice as likely (22%) than the average UK consumer (11%) to have been scammed while shopping online during the holidays. 42% have been targeted by a holiday shopping scam, compared with 26% of UK consumers overall. Their appetite for risk seems to be driving much of their increased exposure. Half (50%) of UK Gen Z respondents have bought from a website or seller they suspected might be a scam because the deal was too good to pass up, compared with the UK average of only 29%.

Looking back at last year's holiday season, Gen's security products, including Norton, stopped visits to fake online stores more than 46.7 million times from October through December 2025, about six

blocks every second. Over those three months, Gen blocked more than half a million web domains tied to fake shops and protected more than 16.6 million people worldwide.

Leyla Bilge, Global Head of Scam Research and Senior Director of AI & Innovation at Norton, said, "The festive season provides ideal conditions for scammers, with shoppers looking hard for bargains and being more willing than usual to take a chance. When everyone wants the season's must-have item and stock is scarce, fake shops and copycat sellers spring up to fill the gap. Younger shoppers especially need to stay vigilant this season – they're more likely to find deals through social media, act on impulse and buy from small or unfamiliar sellers, which is exactly where scammers set their traps. If a hard-to-find item suddenly turns up cheap from a seller you've never heard of, treat that as a warning sign rather than a stroke of luck."

AI is also changing how we shop for our loved ones this Christmas. More than half (54%) of UK consumers have already used an AI shopping assistant or agent, 79% say they would use an AI assistant to shop, and over a third (37%) say using AI will help them feel less stressed this holiday season.

But trust in these tools to keep shoppers safe is much lower. Of those who would use an AI assistant, only two in five (40%) are confident it would recognise and avoid a fraudulent website when shopping on their behalf. Among UK consumers who have used an AI shopping assistant or agent, more than half (55%) say that last holiday season it recommended or completed a purchase from a retailer they did not recognise.

Bilge adds, "AI assistants can take a lot of the legwork out of holiday shopping, but they aren't a substitute for your own judgement. An assistant chasing the lowest price can just as easily lead you to an unfamiliar or fake store. If AI points you towards a seller you don't recognise, lean into the festive spirit and tap into your community of friends and family to check if something looks legitimate before you hand over your payment details."

To find out more about how you can protect yourself during this festive period, click here.

ENDS

About the Norton Insights Report

The survey was conducted online by Dynata in the United Kingdom from September 10, 2026 to September 23, 2026, among 2,000 adults ages 18 and older. Data are weighted by age, gender, and region to be nationally representative.

About Norton

Norton is a leader in Cyber Safety, and part of Gen (NASDAQ: GEN), a global company dedicated to powering Digital Freedom with a family of trusted consumer brands. Norton empowers millions of individuals and families with award-winning protection for their devices, online privacy, and identity. Norton products and services are certified by independent testing organizations including AV-TEST, AV Comparatives, and SE Labs. Norton is a founding member of the Coalition Against Stalkerware. Learn more at https://us.norton.com.

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