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By Eva Velasquez, CEO and President, [Identity Theft Resource Center](#) (ITRC)

The holiday season is upon us and with it comes, decorating, baking and of course, the frenzy of getting our gifts together. Some may [choose to brave the crowds](#) but [196 million will end up](#) making purchases straight from the comfort of their couch. Be careful though, [unless you know what to look for](#), you might give up a piece of your identity while grabbing that sweet deal. Let's talk about safe holiday shopping online.

### **Threat:** Holiday Shopping Online

**Do You Need to Worry:** Definitely. As noted in our Data Breach Report, [51.7 percent of the 1,127 breaches](#) in 2017 are categorized as business incidents. This includes some of your most beloved shops like [Forever 21](#). We know these numbers can put a damper on your holiday spirit but it's important to remember, cybersecurity isn't just for businesses. [Ninety-two percent of Americans](#) have sent their personal info, including logging into their bank accounts, over unsecure public Wi-Fi connections. That means you might be leaving a door wide open for a grinch to steal *your* Christmas.

**What Can You Do About It:** Always [look for the S](#) (stands for Secure) in HTTPS and never make a purchase [over public Wi-Fi](#). If your favorite retailer is breached, take action and [follow these steps](#). And lastly, you can always call the ITRC's toll-free call center for assistance at: 888-400-5530.

*The ITRC is a nationally recognized nonprofit organization established to support victims of identity theft in resolving their cases, and to broaden public education and awareness in the understanding of identity theft, data breaches, cybersecurity, scams/fraud, and privacy issues.*