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Media Statement

SPREADING CHRISTMAS CHEER – WITHOUT BREAKING THE BANK

Spreading Christmas cheer without blowing the budget is possible if people keep a few key tips in mind according to a Perth finance broker who says festive season financial hangovers can last for months.

Maria Amos, Director of Image Financial Group in Stirling, said many people approached Christmas with no plan – and that could cause headaches that hung around well past the new year.

“The best way to approach Christmas spending is to get started on your shopping early, set a budget that is within your means and, most importantly, stick to your plan,” she said.

“Without any self-imposed guidelines, it is easy to get carried away by the hype of pre-Christmas deals, so the critical factor in avoiding spending too much is to spend a little time planning.

“Think outside the box when you buying presents for others – creative gifts and a family ‘Secret Santa’ can keep the cost of Christmas down, without compromising on the quality or fun.”

Ms Amos said buying gifts early and slowly paying them off could take stress away in the lead up to Christmas.

“There are plenty of bargains available before the festive season really kicks in, so take advantage of store lay-by and start slowly paying off gifts well before the Christmas rush,” she said.

Ms Amos said while credit cards were a convenient way to buy over the holiday season, they should be treated with extra care and attention.

“A simple way to make sure you aren’t tempted to overspend on your credit card is to lower the limit before you set out Christmas shopping,” she said.

“If you intend to use your card often, look for a card that offers a cheap rate and take extra care over this period to make the repayments on time.

“Most people are out of routine during the holiday season and repayment deadlines can slip by unnoticed, so make sure payment dates are not forgotten amongst the fun by pencilling them in to your schedule.”

Ms Amos also warned buyers to be cautious of in-store credit offers, advising them to read the fine print carefully.

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Media contact: Sarah Hayward, Capture Media, O: 9388 9280, M: 0411 404 415