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The gift of regifting **Whatever the reason is for rewrapping unwanted presents, more are doing it**

Sara Ganus / The Oklahoman

No one knows exactly when it began, but it's among one of the oldest gift-giving practices known to mankind.

You receive. You rewrap. And then? You regift.

But what was once taboo about the regifting ritual is changing, at least according to a recent survey by eBay. The online survey conducted in October included more than 2,700 adults. Nearly 65 percent of U.S. adults believe regifting or reselling gifts is more "socially acceptable" than it was several years ago, and about a quarter of them say they are more likely to regift or resell than they were last year, the survey stated.

Regifting has become so frequent that Money Management International, a Houston-based credit counseling agency, has created a Website, regiftable.com, to encourage the practice. "The growth in regifting has just become huge over the years," said Marsha Collier, a Los Angeles-based author.

Collier said people are getting more comfortable with regifting because they lead such busy lives and don't have the time to handpick their loved ones' gifts.

"As we grow as a society, we still have our human emotions where we care for people; we care for family; we care for friends," she said. "But we have so much less time these days, we really tend to miss when we're looking for that perfect gift or maybe we don't have the time to look for or think about that perfect gift."

Although time is often an excuse for frequent regifters, etiquette expert Rachel Wagner said there's nothing wrong with regifting something that fits someone else better.

"It's perfectly fine -- and the reason it's perfectly fine is if we have a gift that doesn't suit us or we already have one and we know we can't use it, it's fine to regift it to someone if you know that they will enjoy it and they will use it," said Wagner, owner of Rachel Wagner Etiquette and Protocol in Broken Arrow, Okla.

That matches up with the study findings, which said 70 percent of adults who have regifted a "misfit gift" have done so because they feel the item is a better match for someone else. Eight percent have regifted because they were "too lazy" to purchase something else.

"Regifting doesn't fall into just one demographic," Wagner said. "Even people who have incomes of over \$75,000 regift. I think people regift if they are creative. It's not necessarily because it's a financial need."

Women, however, are more likely to regift than men, Wagner added.

"Women are the ones who buy gifts," she said. "For example, if your husband has an office party and he needs gifts, it's the wife that's sent out to get them or it might be the administrative assistant who's sent out to get the gifts."

"Men don't shop as much as women, so I think that's why women tend to regift -- they tend to

know another person's interests."

Another trend is that as more people regift, that feeling of regifting remorse is beginning to fade. Almost half of the people who responded to the survey said they feel satisfied after they have regifted or resold unwanted gifts online, and 36 percent actually feel relieved after reselling.

"Don't feel guilty," said Collier, who admits to reselling her unwanted Christmas gifts since 2000.

"Why not get something for something you don't want, and you can either apply the money to bills you've racked up over the holidays or even better, buy yourself something you really want."

The most important thing, Wagner said, is it's still the thought that counts.

"Sometimes we have to go out and get something that maybe doesn't have as much thought in it as we would have liked to have put into it, but still, it's the fact that we did a little something for somebody," she said.