

COVID-19 CONSUMER RESEARCH WAVE 68 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

July 16 - 18, 2021

MDC and **The Harris Poll** have partnered to conduct research to monitor the pulse of the American Consumer.

The executive summaries on the pages that follow provide insight into current consumer attitudes and behavior and can be used to help navigate the changing industry landscape. We hope this information proves useful to you and your team as you address these changes in real time and strategize for your next moves.

As always, we are here to help. Please don't hesitate to contact us with any questions you may have.

Positively,

Ryan Linder + The MDC Family
Global Chief Marketing Officer, EVP



WAVE 68

WAVE 68 INTRODUCTION

The following research was conducted between **July 16 - 18, 2021** by The Harris Poll. Fielded among a nationally representative sample of **2,022** U.S. adults, the newest research demonstrates how consumers' perceptions are rapidly shifting as new developments emerge.

Section:

01

Topic:

COVID PULSE: SHOULD THE U.S. MANDATE VACCINES FOR HEALTHCARE WORKERS?

Introduction:

Last week, French President Macron announced that those who work with medically vulnerable people must be fully vaccinated against COVID by September or they risk not being paid. With cases on the rise in the U.S., we checked in to see how Americans feel about such a mandate happening here:

- Seven in ten (71%) Americans **support** the idea of the U.S. implementing **vaccine requirements for healthcare workers** - this includes any and all staff in hospitals, rehab centers, nursing homes, and the like.
- However, 73% think that **it's selfish to not get vaccinated if you work with vulnerable people**; 86% of those vaccinated and 79% of Boomers say the same.
- **My body, my choice:** Those who oppose such a mandate (29%) in the U.S. say that getting vaccinated is a personal choice (60%), while half (50%) say that the government cannot tell people what to do with their bodies.
- **American freedoms:** Three-quarters (75%) say that a person's right to choose to get vaccinated exemplifies freedom in America, but 65% also agree that organizations like hospitals and nursing homes have the right to fire employees if they refuse vaccination.

- [Houston Methodist](#) was the first health system in the U.S. to require vaccines for its staff. While nearly 25,000 employees complied, **153 resigned or were fired for refusing inoculation.**

Implication:

Although the U.S. has not implemented this kind of mandate on a nation-wide scale, it is clear that a decision of this magnitude will not come without ruffling feathers (just look at the [backlash](#) in [Europe](#)); Americans want to protect the vulnerable but also want the freedom to make their own choice.

Section:

02

Topic:

‘SERIOUS RAMIFICATIONS’: WHY UNSHAKEABLE GENDER STEREOTYPES PREVENT MEN FROM TAKING PATERNITY LEAVE: VOLVO CARS USA- HARRIS POLL

Introduction:

Two weeks of paternity leave has long been the average amount offered in the U.S. for new fathers and while that’s changed a lot over the last few years, the stigma around men taking paternity leave hasn’t. [DigiDay](#) writes more about our study with [Volvo Cars USA](#):

- Two-thirds (62%) of working American fathers believe there is an **unspoken rule** that men shouldn’t take full paternity leave. Perhaps that is why six in ten (59%) said that **no one at their company takes their full leave**.
- Another two-thirds (67%) believe it is a **“badge of honor” to return as quickly as possible**.
- On top of the stigma, nearly three-fifths (58%) are afraid that taking six weeks of paternity leave **will set their career back**.
- [The Atlantic looks at](#) how paid paternity leave may actually be a feminist issue when it comes to considering the gender wage gap.

Implication:

Harris Poll CEO John Gerzema talks about his personal experience taking paternity leave: “To the new or almost-new dads out there, take your leave, support your family but most of all, do it for yourself: As a Dad of an amazing daughter (now 18-year-old and going to Syracuse University in the Fall), I had no choice but to be on leave as we traveled to China for her adoption. It is a time I cherish and so grateful I had! Change the stigma guys!”

Section:

03

Topic:

THE GENERATION GAP ON CANNABIS AT THE OLYMPICS

Introduction:

Earlier this summer, U.S. sprinter Sha'Carri Richardson became ineligible for the Tokyo Olympics after testing positive for marijuana use. We asked Americans what they think about marijuana being a banned substance amidst growing acceptance:

- **Rules are the rules:** most Americans (80%) say Richardson knew that marijuana is an illegal substance according to the Olympics and should face the consequences, with 88% of Boomers and 77% of Millennials agreeing.
- But most Americans (69%) - including 78% of Millennials - **think the rules should be re-evaluated** to remove non-performance enhancing drugs like marijuana.
- **Millennials are leading the way:** two-thirds 65% of Americans support the nationwide legalization of marijuana for recreational use, with a 23-pt gap between Millennials (77%) and Boomers (54%) in support of legalization.
- As legal marijuana expands across the country, [NBC News looks at the fastest-growing consumer](#): Gen Z women.

Implication:

As younger Americans become more accepting of marijuana use than their parents' generations, expectations from these generations will challenge outdated norms such as athletes using the drug.

Section:

04

Topic:

THE RENOVATION GENERATION NEEDS HELP UPDATING THEIR HOMES BEFORE THEY SELL: COLDWELL BANKER-HARRIS POLL

Introduction:

Raised on a consistent diet of DIY and designer lifestyle television, today's Renovation Generation of home sellers and buyers have varying wants and expectations when selling and buying a home. Our survey with [Coldwell Banker](#) breaks down what buyers want and what sellers need to do.

- About one quarter (24%) say they will be **looking to purchase a home within the next 12 months** but 24% of people in the market for buying a home **do not have money for a down payment**.

- **Must-dos according to sellers:** Just over one-third (34%) of homeowners say updated interior or exterior paint would be must-dos if they were looking to sell their home.
- **But what do buyers really want?** Despite a shared desire for kitchen upgrades (46% homeowners, 45% of homebuyers) other features that would be must-haves for potential buyers include bathroom upgrades (44%) and updated HVAC, plumbing and electrical (43%).
- **Real estate agents can help sellers better manage the process.** Recent sellers said an important factor for choosing a real estate agent to sell their home includes if their agent could help them decide which renovations to make to help sell at or above listing price (28%).

Implication:

Although the hot real estate market poses both incentives and challenges for sellers, it's still a sellers' market with one in five homeowners (21%) saying that they plan to sell their current home in the next 12 months.

Section:

05

Topic:

GEN Z FINDS DIGITAL LIFE MORE IMPORTANT AND MEMORABLE THAN IN-PERSON LIFE: SQUARESPACE- HARRIS POLL

Introduction:

The Harris Poll partnered with [Squarespace](#), an all-in-one website building and ecommerce platform, to conduct a survey to dissect the roles of websites in daily life and how memorable they are. Here's what we found:

- On average, Americans estimate they visit 8.4 websites per day, or over **3,000 per year**.
- Half of Americans 49% say **they can remember the color of a website better than someone's eye color** – and 71% of Millennials agree.
- **Virtual first impressions:** 44% of Gen Z and 39% of Millennials think they make a better impression online than they do in person, compared to 21% of Gen X and 8% of Boomers.
- What's more, Gen Zers are more likely to remember off the top of their head **the last website they visited** (43%) than their partner's birthday (38%) or their social security number (31%).

Implication:

This is a leading factor to why young people are so savvy when it comes to digital branding and marketing, because they've been doing it for themselves since the beginning.

Questions?

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