

COVID-19 CONSUMER RESEARCH WAVE 108 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

MAY 13 - 15, 2022

Stagwell 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 Stagwell Family

Global Chief Marketing Officer, EVP



WAVE 108

WAVE 108 INTRODUCTION

The following research was conducted between **May 13 - 15, 2022** by The Harris Poll. Fielded among a nationally representative sample of **2,000** U.S. adults, the newest research demonstrates how consumers' perceptions are rapidly shifting as new developments emerge.

Section:

01

Topic:

MILLENNIALS, MEN, & MUSK FOR TRUMP'S TWITTER RETURN

Introduction:

While [Musk's official purchase of Twitter still hangs in limbo](#), his announcement of reinstating former President Trump's Twitter account has made headlines and our weekend polling reveals the debate is still going strong:

- In mid-April, we [found](#) that Republicans, Millennials, and men were Musk's strongest supporters in his announcement to purchase Twitter, and this weekend's polling found that they are also the most supportive of Musk's plan to reinstate former President Trump's Twitter account (88%, 64%, 60%, respectively).
- **Of those in support of Trump's reinstatement:** (70%) of gen pop claim he should be allowed back due to freedom of speech and (39%) believe banning politicians creates a dangerous precedent.
- **On the other side:** Democrats (67%), Black Americans (58%), and women (50%) were more likely to oppose the potential reversal of Trump's Twitter ban.
- **Among those in opposition:** (67%) of gen pop believe that any account, even public officials, should be banned if they are spreading **misinformation**.
- **What's more is that IF Trump's account were to be reinstated, Twitters' user demographics will likely shift:** Republicans (45%), Millennials (42%), and men (35%) say they **are more likely to use Twitter** if Trump's account is reinstated, meanwhile, (51%) of Democrats and (36%) of Gen X and Boomers are **less likely to use Twitter**.

Implication:

Tech companies will have to be cognizant and transparent in their social media policies when engaging with their consumer bases as we found back in October 2021 that over half of Americans (57%) say it's difficult for media companies to know where to draw the line when it comes to someone practicing their first amendment right or spreading hate speech.

Section:

02

Topic:

NOT YOUR PARENTS' RETIREMENT-BOOMERS & GEN X REDEFINE THEIR GOLDEN YEARS: EDWARD JONES-AGE WAVE-HARRIS POLL

Introduction:

Baby boomers and Gen X are reimagining retirement, according to our new study in partnership with Edward Jones and Age Wave, as covered by [Yahoo! Finance](#) and [CNBC](#).

- Only a quarter (27%) of pre-retirees and retirees view retirement similarly to their parents' vision of "rest and relaxation" and instead, more than half (55%) view today's retirement as "**a new chapter in life.**"

- **Retirement isn't a number anymore:** Pre-retirees and retirees say their "new chapter of life" will start after they stop working full-time (34%), begin receiving Social Security and/or a pension (22%), leave their career or job (17%), or when they achieve financial independence (17%) – only (10%) said retirement starts at a specific age.
- However, for almost 3 in 5 surveyed, **retirement may even include working** in some capacity: (22%) part-time, (19%) cycle between work and leisure, and (18%) full-time.

Implication:

Implication: Ken Dychtwald, psychologist, gerontologist, and founder and chief executive of Age Wave and Mona Mahajan suggests that "we have to remove this belief that everyone should stop working at 65 for three reasons: we can't afford to, a bit of work is good for us, and work keeps us modern and socially connect with people of all ages."

Section:

03

Topic:

AMERICANS ARE STEPPING OFF THE “HAMSTER WHEEL” & REDEFINING WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE: FORTUNE-HARRIS POLL

Introduction:

After two years of a life-altering pandemic, Americans are reevaluating their priorities when it comes to work and how it impacts their overall satisfaction according to our latest survey as [covered by Fortune](#).

- Nearly two-thirds of Americans said their idea of a happy life shifted during the pandemic and the shift among younger workers was even more dramatic: (74%) of millennials and (68%) of Gen Z are reassessing their lives and goals.
- Over half of Americans (55%) feel they've been sold false promises about what would make them happy and about (70%) of millennials feel deceived.

- **Willing to take big swings in their life:** About (69%) of millennials surveyed reported that they're actively seeking alternative lifestyles (e.g., moving cross-country, switching jobs, etc.) to create a happier life than they envisioned for themselves pre-pandemic.

Implication:

“We started to see a [new] set of expectations about how people want to work, and how they're willing to work now,” Libby Rodney, Chief Strategy Officer at The Harris Poll, says. “It's really shifting the way that we think about energy, our personal wellbeing—and managing that energy over money.”

Section:

04

Topic:

FANS DIVIDED ON MLB'S NEW SPONSORED PATCH PROGRAM: FRONT OFFICE SPORTS-HARRIS POLL

Introduction:

Following the announcement that MLB would allow its teams to place a sponsored 4-by-4 patch on jersey sleeves starting in 2023, reception to the addition of on-uniform advertising is mixed according to our new polling data [with Front Office Sports](#).

- (39%) of Americans polled at least somewhat support MLB's decision to **permit advertisers on uniforms**, with over half (51%) of MLB fans supporting the decision.
- **Americans understand the economics of the situation:** (83%) at least somewhat agree that sponsorships are a good source of revenue for the teams, and (81%) see it as a good source of publicity for the brands.
- Yet, (56%) of adults at least somewhat see the ad placements on jerseys as **"tacky"** (56% of MLB fans, 54% of non-fans).

Implication:

The MLB will need to be tactful with their use of on-uniform advertising as back in August 2021 we found that a quarter of NFL fans said they would enjoy watching games less if they added sponsorships to the jerseys.

Section:

05

Topic:

TECHNOLOGY & TELECOMS: AN INDUSTRY SNAPSHOT

Introduction:

Our [recent report](#) on the state of the technology & telecoms industry explores consumer sentiment towards 5G, smart devices, and navigation app Waze's growth. [Using Harris Brand Platform data](#), we rank the leading technology brands by equity and growth. Here's what we found:

- An almost equal number of U.S. adults describe **smart devices as essential (51%)** as those **who do not (49%)**.
- While consumers attribute many positive attributes to smart devices, **helpful (85%), convenient (83%), and informative (78%)**, almost half consider them to be **invasive (48%) and overused (43%)**.
- Many consumers express uncertainty as to whether **5G technology is harmful to people's health (41%) or the environment (40%)** but despite concerns about 5G, more than half of U.S. adults expect **5G access will help people (62%) or businesses (65%)** be more productive.
- **TikTok (+3.0%)** and **Instagram (+2.8%)** topped the list of **highest growth brands** in brand equity from Q4 2021 to Q1 2022.

Implication:

The only thing that remains consistent with technology is that it is always evolving. Companies must remain aware of which advancements excite consumers and what brings apprehension, so they can appropriately tailor their messaging and consumer education.

Questions?

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