

# COVID-19 CONSUMER RESEARCH WAVE 126 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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NOVEMBER 4 - 6, 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 126

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## WAVE 126 INTRODUCTION

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The following research was conducted between **November 4 - 6, 2022** by The Harris Poll. Fielded among a nationally representative sample of **2,007** U.S. adults, the newest research demonstrates how consumers' perceptions are rapidly shifting as new developments emerge.

Section:

# 01

Topic:

## JOB SWITCHING FOMO: BLOOMBERG- HARRIS POLL

Introduction:

In a new Harris Poll study [with Bloomberg](#), American job seekers regret not starting their job searches sooner as layoffs and freezes in tech threaten to spill out into other sectors.

- More than 7 in 10 (71%) of those looking to switch jobs say **the job search is more complicated** than anticipated.
- Close to two-thirds (63%) say they've **searched for a new job for over six months**, and nearly half (48%) report **applying to more than fifty positions**
- Frustration mounts as nearly three-quarters (72%) of job seekers say that **companies are acting like they don't want to hire** anyone (e.g., ignoring applications, failing to schedule interviews, etc.).
- This leaves two-thirds (66%) to say they **regret not starting the search sooner**, while (63%) believe it would have been **easier to switch jobs a year or two ago**.
- **They'll take anything**: Half (51%) of job seekers agree that, at this point, they **would take any job offer**.

Implication:

"As the Federal Reserve raises interest rates to combat inflation, the U.S. economy is showing mixed signals. Businesses reported strong hiring and wage increases last month, but unemployment is ticking higher, and firms including Twitter Inc., Intel Corp., and Lyft Inc. are cutting staff. For those on the ground, the current economic conditions are surprisingly challenging – a big change from last year when workers had all the leverage" (Bloomberg).



Section:

# 02

Topic:

## CHEERING (AND JEERING) MUSK'S TAKEOVER: USA TODAY-HARRIS POLL, THE HILL, AND WSJ

Introduction:

In light of Elon Musk's Twitter takeover, we find both critics and fans, something advertisers need to keep in mind as they consider pausing spending on the platform. In [a new Harris Poll with USA Today](#) and also covered in [The Hill](#) and the [Wall Street Journal](#), we delve into both sides of the debate.

- First, the critics start with female Twitter users, who are **less likely to support Musk's ownership** (63% v. men: 70%). Gen Z users are also more likely to believe Musk will hurt Twitter's **product quality** (53%), **freedom of the press** (44%), and **free speech on the internet** (37%) compared to older users.
- **And both women and Gen Z users are less willing to pay a monthly subscription** compared to men (28% v. 44%) and Millennials (35% v. 53%).
- However, there are also fans of Musk's takeover: **Two-thirds (67%) of Twitter users support Musk owning Twitter**, especially Republicans (79%), parents with minor children (74%), urban residents (72%), men (70%), and Millennials (70%).

- Additionally, Twitter users believe **Musk will positively impact increasing free speech on the internet** (70%) and **freedom of the press** (65%).
- And while over 8 in 10 (84%) Americans **find free speech on social media important**, the majority of Republicans (57%), men (56%), rural (55%), and white Americans (53%) find it **"very important."**
- Lastly, more of these frequent Twitter users, such as Republicans (42% v. Dems 32%), Millennials (40% v. Gen Z: 26%), Men (36% v. Women: 26%), and Black Americans (36% v. White: 32%) say they'll **now spend more time on the platform** that Musk owns it (v. all Twitter users: 31%).

Implication:

While a paywall looks challenging (in people's stated opinions), when we look at the Twitter advertising pause, it's important to listen to both narratives. Despite critics, many Twitter users are excited about Musk's ownership and the prospects of greater freedom of speech. As a result, the overall profile might move to more male, older, and slightly more conservative. But whether brand safety (bots, trolling, misinformation) assures advertisers is another story.



Section:

# 03

Topic:

## NOT WHAT YOU THINK: FORBES CMO SUMMIT

Introduction:

Harris Poll CSO Libby Rodney and I gave a talk at [the 2022 Forbes CMO Summit](#) on how human values and needs matter when looking at trends like quiet quitting, cryptocurrencies, and social media. ([Watch the video.](#))



- Three-quarters (76%) of business leaders believe that **changing generational values** will impact their **business operations** in the coming year. Yet, these same leaders paid less attention to NFTs, cryptocurrencies, and the metaverse despite these movements garnering greater interest among younger Americans.
- **TikTok's undercover learning:** (81%) of Gen Z and Millennials think **ongoing education is core to their ability for financial stability**, which points to TikTok as a driver of information: "**TikTok is an undercover learning channel**" with over 6 in 10 (63%) Gen Z users regularly visiting the app to learn something.

- **Making money in the metaverse:** Three-quarters (73%) of Millennials **think the metaverse will provide lucrative career paths and money-making opportunities** – and as a result, companies are investing in metaverse expansions and research.
- **Web3 is about access and ownership:** (87%) of Americans want increased control of personal data, decentralized social media platforms (77%), and an open web free from walled gardens (77%) in the next iteration of the internet.

Implication:

"It's important to understand these generational values," Harris CSO Libby Rodney said. Values drive how leaders operate – and thus their marketing strategies. Catch up on the whole discussion here.



Section:

# 04

Topic:

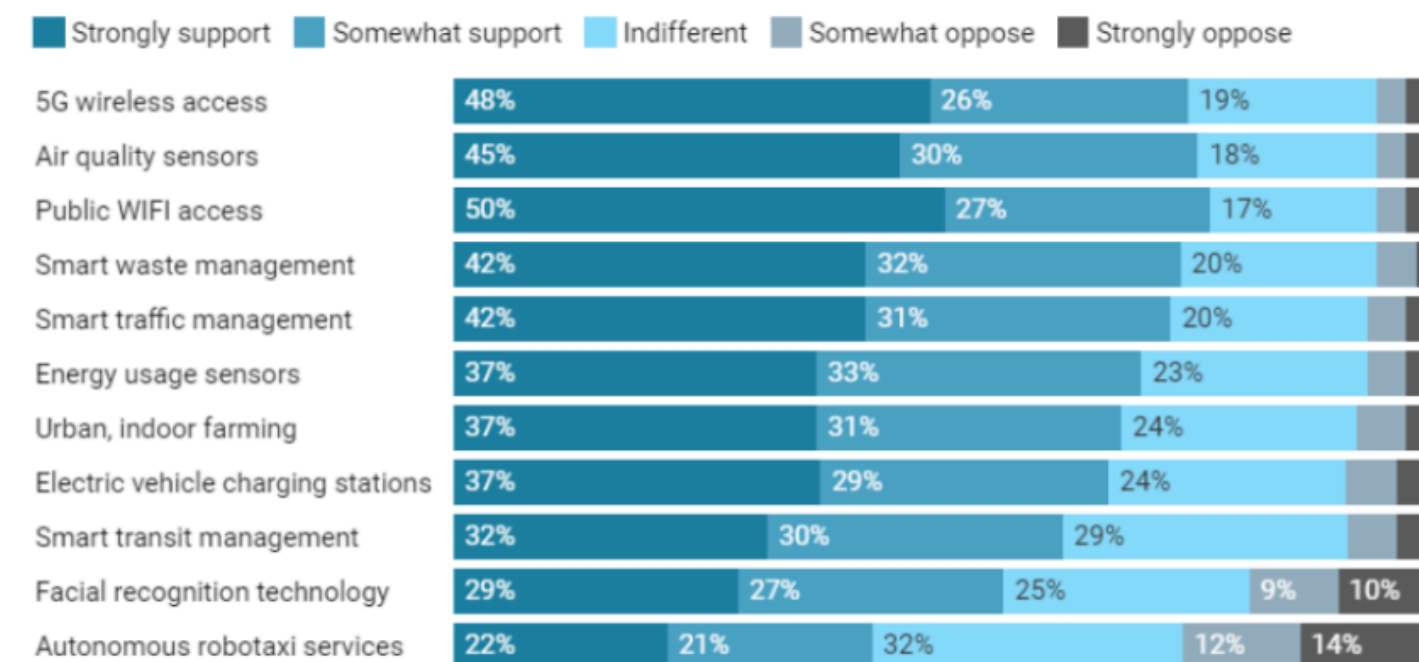
## CITIES GET SMART: EMERGING TECH BREW-HARRIS POLL

Introduction:

In [partnership with Emerging Tech Brew](#), we asked what the average city resident thinks about intelligent city tech. We found that most (87%) of city residents found it essential for their city to invest in emerging technologies – but not every resident supports each initiative equally.

- Most intelligent city technologies had **solid support from city residents** – except for **autonomous robotaxi services**, with less than half in support (42%):

Support for different types of smart city technology



Source: Emerging Tech Brew-Harris Poll survey, July 2022, n=3,185 US city residents • [Get the data](#) • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

- Overall, Gen Z and Millennial city residents reported being more aware of smart city tech, as well as much more likely to use the tech weekly compared to older residents (Gen Z: 44%, Millennials: 51% v. Gen X: 37%, Boomers: 16%).
- When it comes to smart city preferences, city size seems to play a role: Those in cities with metro areas of under 1 million tend to view such tech as less critical than their larger-city counterparts, and they were also less engaged with or aware of smart city tech in their cities.
- Perhaps unsurprisingly, smaller-city residents were **also less likely to view their cities as particularly innovative**, with just (16%) saying they find their city **very innovative**, compared to (43%) for larger cities.

Implication:

"These days, a smart city professional is more likely to talk your ear off not about cutting-edge technology but something much more analog: the average city resident's wants and needs. That's because some experts say there's been a shift in posture recently from flashy to functional. Gone are the days when would-be smart cities dream only of electric sheep, the new conventional wisdom goes" (Emerging Tech Brew).



# Questions?

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**KNOWLEDGE IS POWER**

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