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## **Large Majorities of Heterosexuals and Gays Likely to Consider a Corporate Brand that Provides Equal Workplace Benefits to All Employees, Including Gay and Lesbian Employees**

*New national survey by Harris Interactive and Witeck-Combs Communications examines purchasing habits among heterosexual, gay, and lesbian adults*

**ROCHESTER, N.Y. – February 6, 2007** – A recent national survey conducted online found that 70 percent of heterosexuals and 88 percent of gay and lesbian adults polled are likely to consider a brand that is known to provide equal workplace benefits for all of their employees, including gays and lesbians. Additionally, 77 percent of gay and lesbian adults say they are likely to consider brands that support nonprofits and/or causes that are important to them as a gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender person.

These are a few of the highlights of a nationwide survey of 2,571 U.S. adults (ages 18 and over), of whom 368 self-identified as gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender. The survey was conducted online between January 11 and 17, 2007, by Harris Interactive®, a global market research and consulting firm, in conjunction with Witeck-Combs Communications, Inc., a strategic public relations and marketing communications firm with special expertise in the GLBT market.

Regarding purchasing habits, the study found that 58 percent of gays and lesbians say they are “more likely”, 41 percent say they are “no more or less likely”, and only one percent say they are “less likely” to purchase everyday household products and services from companies that market directly to them compared to other competing companies.

Gays and lesbians also are more likely to ask for a specific brand when ordering alcoholic beverages (60%) compared to 42 percent of heterosexuals.

“Brand connections are certainly influenced by strong corporate reputations, we find again and again,” said Wes Combs, President of Witeck-Combs Communications. “This survey shows strong brand connections apparent within gay households, and among non-gay consumers too. This signals that a majority of Americans today are fair-minded and believe that equal treatment in the workplace is deserved by all.”

The survey also suggests that gays and lesbians are trendsetters. About four in ten gay and lesbian respondents reported they tend to upgrade to the latest model or version of a product (39%) and tend to keep up with the latest styles and trends (38%) compared with one-third of heterosexuals surveyed (32% respectively) – tendencies we have seen corroborated in similar studies on consumer behavior.

**TABLE 1**  
**BRANDS THAT PROVIDE EQUAL WORKPLACE BENEFITS**

*“How likely are you to consider a brand that is known to provide equal workplace benefits for all of their employees, including gay and lesbian employees?”*

Base: All gay, lesbian and heterosexual adults

	Gay/ Lesbian (n = 303)	Heterosexual (n = 2,144)
	%	%
<b>LIKELY (NET)</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>70</b>
Extremely likely	38	18
Very likely	30	16
Likely	20	36
<b>NOT LIKELY (NET)</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>30</b>
Somewhat likely	9	16
Not at all likely	3	14

**TABLE 2**  
**BRANDS THAT SUPPORT NONPROFITS**

*“How likely are you to consider brands that support nonprofits and/or causes that are important to you as a gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender person?”*

Base: All gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender (GLBT) adults

	GLBT (n = 368)	Gay/ Lesbian (n = 303)
	%	%
<b>LIKELY (NET)</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>77</b>
Extremely likely	19	28
Very likely	15	22
Likely	28	28
<b>NOT LIKELY (NET)</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>23</b>
Somewhat likely	23	20
Not at all likely	15	3

**TABLE 3**  
**PURCHASES OF EVERYDAY HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTS**

*“Compared to other competing companies, are you more or less likely to purchase everyday household products and services from companies that market directly to gays and lesbians?”*

Base: All gay, lesbian and heterosexual adults

	Gay/ Lesbian (n = 303)	Heterosexual (n = 2144)
	%	%
<b>MORE LIKELY (NET)</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>6</b>
Much more likely	19	2
Somewhat more likely	39	4
No more or less likely	41	62
<b>LESS LIKELY (NET)</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>32</b>
Somewhat less likely	1	12
Much less likely	0	20

**TABLE 4**  
**SPECIFIC BRAND WHEN ORDERING ALCOHOL**

*“How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?”*

*When I order alcoholic beverages (including beer, wine, and spirits), I ask for a specific brand.”*

Base: All gay, lesbian and heterosexual adults

	Gay/ Lesbian (n = 303)	Heterosexual (n = 2,144)
	%	%
<b>AGREE (NET)</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>42</b>
Strongly agree	34	23
Somewhat agree	26	19
Neither agree nor disagree	14	12
<b>DISAGREE (NET)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>19</b>
Somewhat disagree	7	10
Strongly disagree	3	9
Not applicable	17	27

**TABLE 5**  
**UPGRADE TO LATEST MODEL OF PRODUCT**

*“How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?  
I tend to upgrade to the latest model or version of a product.”*

Base: All gay, lesbian and heterosexual adults

	Gay/ Lesbian (n = 303)	Heterosexual (n = 2144)
	%	%
<b>AGREE (NET)</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>32</b>
Strongly agree	11	6
Somewhat agree	28	26
Neither agree nor disagree	29	26
<b>DISAGREE (NET)</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>38</b>
Somewhat disagree	15	22
Strongly disagree	17	15
Not applicable	1	4

**TABLE 6**  
**KEEP UP WITH LATEST STYLES**

*“How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?  
I like to keep up with the latest styles and trends.”*

Base: All gay, lesbian and heterosexual adults

	Gay/ Lesbian (n = 303)	Heterosexual (n = 2144)
	%	%
<b>AGREE (NET)</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>32</b>
Strongly agree	13	8
Somewhat agree	25	24
Neither agree nor disagree	27	29
<b>DISAGREE (NET)</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>36</b>
Somewhat disagree	22	19
Strongly disagree	13	17
Not applicable	1	4

## Methodology

This survey was conducted online within the United States between January 11 and 17, 2006 among 2,571 adults (aged 18 and over) of whom 2,144 indicated they are heterosexual and 368 self-identified as gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender (this includes an over-sample of gays and lesbians). Please note that the data released, except for table 2, did not include responses from transgender individuals. The survey included 17 transgender respondents -- a total that is not statistically significant to draw any conclusions. Figures for age, sex, race, education, region and income were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. In addition, the results for the gay and lesbian sample were weighted separately based on profiles of the gay and lesbian populations that Harris Interactive has compiled through many different online surveys. Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

All surveys are subject to several sources of error. These include: sampling error (because only a sample of a population is interviewed); measurement error due to question wording and/or question order, deliberately or unintentionally inaccurate responses, nonresponse (including refusals), interviewer effects (when live interviewers are used) and weighting.

With one exception (sampling error) the magnitude of the errors that result cannot be estimated. There is, therefore, no way to calculate a finite "margin of error" for any survey and the use of these words should be avoided.

With pure probability samples, with 100 percent response rates, it is possible to calculate the probability that the sampling error (but not other sources of error) is not greater than some number. With a pure probability sample of 2,571 one could say with a ninety-five percent probability that the overall results would have a sampling error of +/-2 percentage points. Sampling error for the sub-sample of 368 GLBT adults would be +/-5 percentage points. However, that does not take other sources of error into account. This online survey is not based on a probability sample and therefore no theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

## About Witeck-Combs Communications, Inc.

Witeck-Combs Communications, Inc. ([www.witeckcombs.com](http://www.witeckcombs.com)) is the nation's premier strategic marketing communications firm, specializing in reaching the gay and lesbian consumer market. With over nine years experience in this unique market, Witeck-Combs Communications has developed respected relationships throughout the community and serves as a bridge between corporate America and gay and lesbian consumers. In April 2003, American Demographics magazine identified Bob Witeck and Wes Combs as two of 25 experts over the last 25 years who have made significant contributions to the fields of demographics, market research, media and trend-spotting for their path-breaking work on the gay and lesbian market. Combs and Witeck are also the authors of "***Business Inside Out: Tapping Millions of Brand Loyal Gay Consumers***" (Kaplan Publishing, September 2006).

## About Harris Interactive®

Harris Interactive is the 12<sup>th</sup> largest and fastest-growing market research firm in the world. The company provides innovative research, insights and strategic advice to help its clients make more confident decisions which lead to measurable and enduring improvements in performance. Harris Interactive is widely known for *The Harris Poll*, one of the longest running, independent opinion polls and for pioneering online market research methods. The company has built what it believes to be the world's largest panel of survey respondents, the Harris Poll Online. Harris Interactive serves clients worldwide through its United States, Europe and Asia offices, its wholly-owned subsidiary Novatris in France and through a global network of independent market research firms. The service bureau, HISB, provides its market research industry clients with mixed-mode data collection, panel development services as well as syndicated and tracking research consultation. More information about Harris Interactive may be obtained at [www.harrisinteractive.com](http://www.harrisinteractive.com).

To become a member of the Harris Poll Online and be invited to participate in online surveys, register at <http://go.hpolsurveys.com/PR>.

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