

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**One in Four Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Adults  
Switched over Past Year to Companies that Support the GLBT Community**

*Seven in ten gay men and lesbians have switched products or service providers because they learned the company engaged in negative actions toward the GLBT community*

**ROCHESTER, NY – September 24, 2007** – According to a recent national survey, approximately one in four (24%) gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender (GLBT) adults say they have switched products or service providers because they found a competing company that supports causes that benefit the GLBT community in the past 12 months, assuming that other factors such as price, quality, and convenience were not considerations. This includes fully one-third (32%) of gay men who say they have switched products or services within the last 12 months because they found a competing company that supports GLBT causes.

These are a few highlights taken from a nationwide survey of 2,868 U.S. adults, (ages 18 and over) of whom 350 self identified as gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender. The study was conducted online between August 7 and 13, 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.

The survey also found that a high proportion of gay men and lesbians (70%) had switched products or service providers because they learned the company engaged in actions that are perceived as harmful to the GLBT community.

In terms of their brand loyalty behavior, about two-thirds (66%) of all GLBT adults reported that they would be very or somewhat likely to remain loyal to a brand they believed to be very friendly and supportive to the gay, lesbian and transgender community – *even when* less friendly companies may offer lower prices or be more convenient. Three out of four (75%) gay men and lesbians also said they would remain loyal to the gay-friendlier brand.

“For nearly a decade, we have tested customer loyalty benchmarks, to better understand the connection between GLBT consumers and brand reputations. Consistently, no matter how we frame the questions, we find GLBT consumers place a high value on brands that earn and grow respect within the community,” said Wes Combs, President of Witeck-Combs Communications. “They remain loyal to companies that support causes that are important to them, and are highly motivated to learn about corporate social responsibility in all its forms. They are among consumers most motivated to vote with their dollars.”

**TABLE 1****SWITCHED PRODUCTS OR SERVICE PROVIDERS TO SUPPORT GLBT COMMUNITY**

“In the last 12 months, have you switched products or service providers because you found a competing company that supports causes that benefit the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community – assuming that other factors like price, quality and convenience were not considerations?”

Base: GLBT Adults

	<b>GLBT</b>	<b>Gay Men</b>	<b>Lesbians</b>
	%	%	%
Yes	24	32	25
No	76	68	75

Note: Percentages may not add up exactly to 100% due to rounding.

**TABLE 2****SWITCHED PRODUCTS OR SERVICE PROVIDERS BECAUSE OF HARMFUL ACTIONS**

“Have you ever switched products or service providers because you found out the company engaged in actions that are perceived as harmful to the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community?”

Base: GLBT Adults

	<b>GLBT</b>	<b>Gay Men and Lesbians</b>
	%	%
<b>YES (NET)</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>70</b>
Yes in the last 12 months	12	18
Yes, in the last year or two	13	16
Yes, but cannot remember when	30	36
No	45	30

Note: Percentages may not add up exactly to 100% due to rounding.

**TABLE 3****LOYALTY TO GLBT FRIENDLY BRANDS**

“How likely are you to remain loyal to a brand you believe to be very friendly and supportive to the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community even when less friendly companies may offer lower prices or be more convenient?”

Base: GLBT Adults

	<b>GLBT</b>	<b>Gay Men and Lesbians</b>
	%	%
<b>LIKELY (NET)</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>75</b>
Very likely	40	47
Somewhat likely	25	28
Neither likely nor unlikely	27	21
<b>UNLIKELY (NET)</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>
Somewhat unlikely	6	3
Very unlikely	2	1

Note: Percentages may not add up exactly to 100% due to rounding.

## Methodology

Harris Interactive® conducted the study online within the United States between August 7 and 13, 2007, among 2,868 adults (ages 18 and over), of whom 2,518 indicated they are heterosexual and 350 self-identified as gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender (this includes an oversample of GLBT adults). 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 population that Harris Interactive has compiled through many different online surveys. Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online. Please note also that we distinguish sexual orientation from gender identity in querying respondent characteristics -- we are interested in the attitudes and characteristics of the transgender population, however given the consistently low incidence of response from transgender individuals, it is extremely difficult to draw specific conclusions from this population data taken separately.

All sample surveys and polls, whether or not they use probability sampling, are subject to multiple sources of error which are most often not possible to quantify or estimate, including sampling error, coverage error, error associated with nonresponse, error associated with question wording and response options, and post-survey weighting and adjustments. Therefore, Harris Interactive avoids the words "margin of error" as they are misleading. All that can be calculated are different possible sampling errors with different probabilities for pure, unweighted, random samples with 100% response rates. These are only theoretical because no published polls come close to this ideal.

Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in Harris Interactive surveys. The data have been weighted to reflect the composition of the adult population. Because the sample is based on those who agreed to participate in the Harris Interactive panel, no estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated. These statements conform to the principles of disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.

## About Witeck-Combs Communications, Inc.

Witeck-Combs Communications, Inc. is the nation's premier marketing communications and public relations firm, specializing in developing and implementing effective strategies reaching the gay and lesbian consumer market. With over fourteen years experience in this unique market, Witeck-Combs Communications serves as a bridge between corporate America and gay and lesbian consumers. In 2006 Bob Witeck and Wes Combs co-authored Business Inside Out: Capturing Millions of Brand Loyal Gay Consumers (Kaplan Publishing), considered the first-ever book on marketing insights, practical tips and strategies targeting the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender market. They have appeared in worldwide media outlets including Fortune, CNBC, CNN, Reuters, Associated Press, Ad Age, New York Times and Washington Post. For more information visit [www.witeckcombs.com](http://www.witeckcombs.com).

## About Harris Interactive

Harris Interactive is the 13th largest and one of the fastest-growing market research firms 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 North American, European and Asian offices, and through a global network of independent market research firms. 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 [www.harrispollonline.com](http://www.harrispollonline.com).

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