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Contacts: Frank Kenna, The Marlin Company (203-640-0458 or fkenna@themarlincompany.com)
Jude Carter, The Marlin Company (203-858-2916 or jcarter@themarlincompany.com)

Attitudes in the American Workplace XV

Polling for The Marlin Company by Zogby Analytics®

Use of social media during the workday is taking up *how much time*?

Given the popularity of cell phones and other devices, you'd figure that many workers spend a good part of their day glued to them, calling or texting friends and family and going into withdrawal if they're in situations where they have to part, however briefly, with their digital appendages. Right?

Well, the typical American worker reports that he or she spends an average of a mere 15.5 minutes a day using smart phones, tablets and other computer devices in the workplace for personal or social purposes. But their co-workers? Workers estimate that *those* folks spend an average of 37.5 minutes a day doing those things, according to a national telephone survey of 751 American workers for The Marlin Company, a workplace communications company in Wallingford, CT, by Zogby Analytics in June and July 2013. The poll has a margin of error of +/- 3.7 percentage points.

Yet 45% of workers said that they sometimes (22%), often (15%) or all the time (8%) get annoyed by people because they are using phones, tablets or computers for social personal purposes "when they are supposed to be paying attention to you or to their work." Another 26% said 'rarely' and 24% said 'never.' And 59% said that co-workers often go into private areas, including the bathroom, to use their phone or other device.

"Are people playing dumb about using smart phones at work?" asked Frank Kenna III, president of the Marlin Company. "I think part of the answer is that technology and social networking have become such a part of our existence that we don't even recognize the extent to which we check these devices. What's the employer to do? Wishy-washy policies leave workers skittish about being seen checking their mobile devices, and skulking off to the bathroom for privacy. Yet increasingly workers are using mobile devices to do their jobs more effectively. With smartphones now accounting for the

majority of phone sales, companies have to get a handle on how – not if – they’re going to integrate these devices into their workplace.”

Only 4 percent of workers said that they could use such devices at any time during the workday, but nearly 11 percent said they cannot use them anywhere on the property for personal purposes. In the middle, though, 43% said that such usage was permitted only during breaks, but 40% said they can use them during the workday for any purpose so long as they don’t abuse the privilege.

Other results:

- Among the 59% who said that co-workers often go into private areas, including the bathroom, to use their smart phone or other devices, were 70% of those in the East, 62% of those in the South, 53% of those in the West, and 52% of those in the Central/Great Lakes region – as well as 72% of those in the largest companies (more than 1,000 employees, 64% of those with 101 to 1,000 employees, and 53% of those with 1 to 100 employees).
- Despite media hype about addiction to smart phones, just 11 percent said they get anxious at work in situations where they can’t use their phones; this varied by age, with younger workers much more likely to report such anxiety (ranging from 26% of those 19 to 29 years old to 2% of those 65 and older). Anxiety also was higher among single people than among those who are either married, divorced, widowed or separated.
- 18% said that in terms of quality thinking time, they feel they are losing the ability to concentrate at work because of interruptions from a constant flow of information. The numbers were highest among managers/executives and highest in the West.
- 14% say they are deluged by a sea of information, getting so much of it that they miss important internal workplace communications. This varied by company size, with 27% of those working for companies with more than 1,000 employees agreeing, as opposed to 14% of those in companies with 101 to 1000 employees and 11% of those with 1 to 100 employees.
- Regarding the adoption of new technologies in their workplaces, who is leading the way? 17% of respondents said employees, 34% said the company, 34% said both and 14% said neither. Workers in the West were the most likely to say that employees were leading the way – twice as likely as those in the East, who were the least likely.
- 18% said their company is using social media like Facebook as a way to communicate with employees; 81% said their company is not.

About The Marlin Company

The Marlin Company, a workplace communications company, helps managers reach employees wherever they work, using the latest SaaS-based technology solutions,

including flat screens and mobile devices. Designed specifically for the workplace, Marlin's patented digital signage products are known for their ease of use, robust content options and flexibility. For 100 years Marlin has developed and delivered visual communication programs that engage, inform and motivate employees. Learn more about Marlin's digital signage products and services at www.themarlincompany.com.

About this Survey

This survey was done for The Marlin Company, a Wallingford, CT workplace communications company, by Zogby Analytics, based on 751 interviews among a nationally representative sample of full and part-time US workers. The margin of error is +/-3.7 percentage points. Zogby Analytics conducted live operator telephone interviews in June and July of 2013.