

U.S. ADULTS REPORT THERE'S *NOT* A LOVE AFFAIR GOING ON WITH THEIR OFFICE CHAIR

New National Survey Indicates They're Also Not Taking This Sitting Down

Muscatine, Iowa – *May 2008* – U.S. adults spend a lot of time in their office chairs...and they report it's not exactly quality-time, either.

A new study on the comfort and style of office chairs in the U.S. workplace by market research company Harris Interactive® found that only 17 percent of U.S. office chair users¹ feel their office chair is very comfortable.

The results are from a recent nationwide online survey - conducted for contract furniture designer and manufacturer Allsteel Inc. – that found 32 percent of office chair users say their office chair is actually uncomfortable, and more than half, 57 percent, would love to replace their current chair.

This latest study uncovered more seating sadness as well, with 60 percent of office chair users admitting they have some type of complaint about their office chair. About half (51 percent) complain about various comfort and ergonomics issues, another 25 percent cite concerns about adjustability and 12 percent indicate they were unhappy with their chair's style – or lack thereof.

¹ U.S. adults ages 18+ who spend at least one hour in an office chair per week (n= 1,987).

OFFICE CHAIR SEATING SURVEY ADD ONE

Choosing the right office chair is imperative, according to Scott Openshaw, Human Factors and Ergonomics Manager for Allsteel. He notes that comfort is the key to anyone who sits in a chair for long periods of time. “When we’re comfortable, the absence of the chair’s awareness lets people concentrate on the task at hand; in essence, comfort equals productivity. But some chairs don’t provide that comfort because their design may not properly support the back, neck and shoulders,” Openshaw says.

The survey’s findings seem to confirm this assessment. Because when it comes to comfort issues, 34 percent of office chair users report inadequate lumbar (lower back) support, 19 percent said their chair is generally not comfortable, 12 percent noted their chairs’ arms prevent them from getting close to their desk and another 10 percent said their chairs’ arms location doesn’t provide adequate support.

But what was the reaction from the 77 percent of office chair users who have chairs with ergonomic or adjustable features built into or available to them? There is still a significant degree of displeasure, according to the study. Even with ergonomic features, 23 percent note that their chair does not fit their individual body size or type, another 24 percent say their chairs’ controls or adjustments are difficult to find and 29 percent complain that once found, the controls are difficult to adjust.

Openshaw notes that the principles of ergonomics (a science focused on human fit and decreased fatigue and discomfort through product design) are often available, and even promoted, for advanced seating but can be difficult or non-intuitive to use. As a result, they do not provide their users the comfort they need.

“A number of today’s advanced chairs have so many knobs and levers that users are intimidated by their apparent complexity. Because of this perceived difficulty, many workers don’t even bother using them any more and end up sitting in an unadjusted chair that makes them uncomfortable throughout the day,” he continues.

OFFICE CHAIR SEATING SURVEY ADD TWO

So, what to do if you're unhappy with your office chair? Comfortable workers seem to be more productive workers – as nearly half of the survey respondent office chair users (47 percent) agree they would be more productive if their chair was more comfortable. As a result, Allsteel recommends picking a new office chair that provides comfort as a priority and that means healthy movement, proper support and adjustments that are not only easy to find, but also easy to use.

For complete survey results, more information on ergonomic seating or Allsteel's new Acuity seating, visit www.allsteeloffice.com.

About Allsteel Inc.

Allsteel Inc. designs, builds and delivers progressive and relevant workplace furniture solutions. The company has Resource Centers in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, New York, San Francisco, Santa Monica, Washington, D.C., and Toronto, ON.

About Harris Interactive

Harris Interactive is a global leader in custom market research. With a long and rich history in multimodal research, powered by our science and technology, it assists clients in achieving business results. Harris Interactive serves clients globally through our North American, European and Asian offices and a network of independent market research firms. For more information, please visit www.harrisinteractive.com.

###

Editors note: About the survey:

This Office Chairs survey was conducted online within the United States by Harris Interactive on behalf of Allsteel Inc. between February 8 and February 12, 2008, among 2,075 adults ages 18+, of whom, 1,987 sit in an office chair for at least one hour per week. Results were weighted, as needed, on the basis of region, age within gender, education, household income and race/ethnicity. Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

**OFFICE CHAIR SEATING SURVEY
ADD THREE**

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 U.S. adult population.

Because the sample is based on those who agreed to be invited to participate in the Harris Interactive online research panel, no estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

For additional information contact:

Mary Palmer
Allsteel
(563) 272-3876
palmerm@allsteeloffice.com