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## Consumers' High Hopes for a High Tech Future

*Consumers see advanced technology as stimulus to recovery and prosperity*

**ROCHESTER, N.Y. – April 20, 2009** – When it comes to many of the challenges the U.S. faces today, whether it is a stalled automobile industry, an ailing education system or expensive medical costs, a majority of consumers believe advanced technology could be the answer. Consumers are looking to technology to improve their lives and want very practical applications to solve their current problems.

These are some of the results of *The Harris Poll* of 2,355 U.S. adults surveyed online between March 9 and 16, 2009 by Harris Interactive.

With regard to the advanced technology, more specifically:

- Almost three-quarters of Americans (73%) believe that investing in innovation and advanced technology sciences in education is the key to the country's long term success;
- Consumers also send a strong message to the U.S. automobile industry to invest in hybrids and alternative fuels, as seven in ten Americans (71%) said not only an investment but a leadership role in these technologies could mean survival for our auto industry;
- Seven in ten adults (71%) believe that travel costs for businesses could be cut if technology such as video conferencing were better utilized; and,
- Other ideas that are widely supported are the use of technology to produce "green products and services" (67%) and to manage medical records and patient care (67%).

### Some practical applications of high tech

Advanced technology is particularly valuable when it is practical. Looking at several advanced wireless, mobile device applications that are just entering the marketplace or will be introduced in the near future one area explored was traffic and transportation usage. Over a quarter of consumers (28%) strongly or very strongly liked the idea of using GPS technology to balance and monitor traffic to determine the most effective routes in real time for an effective transportation system.

About one-third of consumers (31%) indicated they would be highly interested in purchasing mobile, wireless devices to monitor their car in real time, advising them of developing problems and even updating engine software to keep their car running at peak performance - essentially a mobile tune up.

Considering the importance of the cell phone in many people's lives, it is no surprise that 27% of consumers very strongly or strongly like the idea of controlling home systems or appliances from a mobile device and it should be encouraging to many wireless service providers that are in the process of or poised to roll out their next generation networks

that 26% of consumers very strongly or strongly like a 4G wireless network that could provide seamless voice, Internet, and entertainment to their homes and mobile devices. On the other side of the equation, seemingly unable to put privacy aside, two in five (40%) of Americans say they would not like it at all if their doctor could monitor their vital signs in real time using a mobile device.

### **Many people have reservations about high tech**

Looking at the other side of the coin, many Americans have reservations about the impact of high technology on our lives. Three in five Americans (61%) do not believe technology enables people to be more mobile or makes people more productive. Also, two-thirds of Americans (65%) agree that society is too dependent on electronics and electronic gadgets. Surprisingly perhaps, there is also no age divide. Fully 58% of Echo Boomers (those aged 18-32) say mobile technology does not make Americans more productive while almost three-quarters (72%) of Echo Boomers believe that society is too dependent of electronics and electronic gadgets.

### **So What?**

While many Americans indicate they do not believe mobile technology enables people to be more productive, the solution may be to make the devices easier to use. Under half of Americans (46%) say they only use about half of the features and functionality of their technology devices. It might be that the productivity gains people are seeking are offered by an application or function they have never used or considered.

According to Joe Porus, Vice president, Harris Interactive Technology group, "In a study we completed a few weeks ago and released at this year's CTIA conference, business decision makers were much more bullish on technology, especially wireless technology, than consumers. Businesses large and small are increasing their investments in wireless applications and believe a 15% benefit is going right to their bottom line. The good news is they feel the wireless industry has a very bright future despite the recent economic turndown as long as they can continue to deliver on a value proposition that resonates with both consumers and business decision makers."

**TABLE 1**  
**MOBILE TECHNOLOGY AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY**  
 “Mobile Technology could play a big part in our economic recovery. Using the scale below indicate how you feel about each of the following.”

Base: All adults

	<b>Top 2 Box (NET)</b>	Very strongly like idea	Strongly like idea	Like idea	<b>Bottom 2 Box (NET)</b>	Somewhat like idea	Do not like idea at all
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
Change the level of heating, cooling and lighting at your home or business from your mobile phone and control appliances, your kitchen stove and DVD from anyplace.	<b>27</b>	14	13	24	<b>49</b>	24	26
Balance the load of traffic on major highways, bridges and inner cities by monitoring all vehicles via GPS and directing traffic to the most efficient routes in real time.	<b>28</b>	14	14	24	<b>47</b>	24	23
Advanced 4G Wireless networks could provide seamless voice, Internet and entertainment services to your mobile <u>and</u> your home.	<b>26</b>	15	11	26	<b>48</b>	27	21
Your doctor could monitor your health via sensors in your mobile device.	<b>19</b>	9	10	16	<b>65</b>	25	40

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

**TABLE 2**  
**INTEREST IN NEW CONCEPTS**

“Here are some new concepts that could be coming your way soon. How interested would you be in purchasing them?”

Base: All adults

	<b>Top 2 (NET)</b>	Extremely interested	Very interested	Interested	<b>Bottom 2 (NET)</b>	Somewhat interested	Not at all interested
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
Mobile technology which would monitor your car in real time, advising you of developing problems and even updating engine software to keep your car running at peak performance (mobile tune ups).	<b>31</b>	14	17	28	<b>41</b>	25	16
Advanced Mobile video conferencing which could create a virtual meeting environment from your mobile device so working at home or from remote locations could be a reality for many more individuals.	<b>19</b>	9	9	18	<b>63</b>	23	40
Being able to keep critical medical records about yourself on your mobile device.	<b>14</b>	8	7	19	<b>67</b>	26	41
Artificial intelligence which would provide a personal assistant that lives in your cell phone. This assistant could monitor your investments in real time, make recommendations, monitor your commitments for the calendar year and provide reminders and set schedules.	<b>14</b>	7	7	15	<b>70</b>	24	46

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

**TABLE 3**  
**BENEFITS OF APPLYING ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY**

“We are facing many challenges. Could applying advanced technology help us? Please rate your agreements with each of the following statements using the scale below.”

Base: All adults

	<b>AGREE (NET)</b>	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	<b>DISAGREE (NET)</b>	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
Investing in our education system, especially in teaching innovation and high technology sciences is a key to our long term success.	<b>73</b>	42	31	19	<b>8</b>	5	3
Our automotive industry needs to capture the lead in hybrid and alternative fuel in order to survive.	<b>71</b>	41	31	19	<b>10</b>	6	4
Business could cut travel costs with the adoption of advanced video conferencing technology.	<b>71</b>	34	37	23	<b>7</b>	4	3
Technology could be applied to producing "Green products and Services" that would improve our environment and help preserve our future.	<b>67</b>	34	33	22	<b>11</b>	5	6
Our healthcare networks need an infrastructure rebuild. Medical records, patient scheduling and care could be greatly enhanced with investments in technology.	<b>67</b>	31	36	25	<b>8</b>	4	4
Our energy grids (electric, natural gas and petroleum distribution networks) could be better managed using mobile technology to assure load balancing and more efficient pricing.	<b>57</b>	24	32	33	<b>10</b>	6	4

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**TABLE 4**  
**MOBILE TECHNOLOGY AND PRODUCTIVITY**

“Do you believe technologies that enable us to be more mobile (mobile phones, Wi-Fi networks, GPS, etc.) are making us more productive?”

Base: All adults

	Total	Generation			
		Echo Boomers (18-32)	Gen X (33-44)	Baby Boomers (45-63)	Matures (64+)
		%	%	%	%
<b>No (NET)</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>65</b>
No, just toys and gadgets to play with	11	11	9	14	7
No, just changing lifestyle to make us more mobile	50	47	51	48	58
Yes, more productive	39	42	40	38	65

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

**TABLE 5**  
**DEPENDENCE ON ELECTRONICS/GADGETS**

“Please rate your agreement with the following statement.  
“Our society is too dependent on electronics and electronic gadgets.””

Base: All adults

	Total	Generation			
		Echo Boomers (18-32)	Gen X (33-44)	Baby Boomers (45-63)	Matures (64+)
		%	%	%	%
<b>AGREE (NET)</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>61</b>
Strongly agree	26	31	30	22	19
Somewhat agree	40	41	37	40	42
Neither agree nor disagree	17	15	19	17	22
<b>DISAGREE (NET)</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>18</b>
Somewhat disagree	11	10	12	13	10
Strongly disagree	6	3	2	9	7

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

**TABLE 6**  
**USAGE OF MOBILE DEVICES**

“Thinking about all the technology products you use (mobile devices, computers, GPS, portable media devices, etc.) in general, which would you say best describes you?”

Base: All adults

	Total	Generation			
		Echo Boomers (18-32)	Gen X (33-44)	Baby Boomers (45-63)	Matures (64+)
		%	%	%	%
I probably use about half the features and functionality of my technology devices	46	51	47	45	37
I just use the basics	40	23	38	46	58
I use all or most of the features and functionality of my technology products	15	26	16	9	5

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

## Methodology

This Harris Poll was conducted online within the United States March 9 and 16, among 2,355 adults (aged 18 and over). Figures for age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, region and household income were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

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.***

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## About Harris Interactive

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## Press Contact:

Harris Interactive  
Corporate Communications  
585-272-8400  
[press@harrisinteractive.net](mailto:press@harrisinteractive.net)

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