

# WorkPlaceMedia®

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## Can Big Brands Crash The Social Networking Party?

### *New Survey among Office Workers Finds Roadblocks*

**CLEVELAND, OH (July 1, 2009)**—There are no velvet ropes, and no giant-sized bouncers, yet many large brands are still struggling to become the life of any social networking party. A new study released today by WorkPlace Media, outlines some of the hurdles facing major brands as they attempt to harness the worlds of Facebook, Twitter and MySpace, to create an impact with consumers.

In the study, which polled office Internet users, 55% maintained at least one social networking account (Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc.). However, of those respondents only 43% reported accessing their social networking accounts at work, and even for those with access, 78% reported spending less than 30 minutes per day on their site(s).

Furthermore, the overall impact of a brand's presence on social networking sites was shown to be minimal in terms of impact and perception. A whopping 96% of respondents said their opinion of a product brand did not change if that brand had no presence on a social networking site, only 11% of social networking users reported following any major brand through a social networking site, and just 12% of respondents said their opinion of a brand changes if that brand maintains a social networking presence.

“When it comes to influencing brand perception and purchase decisions, the data shows that social networking still has a long way to go.” says Stephanie Molnar, CEO of WorkPlace Media, a marketing solutions firm that specializes in targeting people in their

cubicles. “Most of our meaningful recommendations continue to be old-fashioned, word of mouth recommendations from friends, co-workers, and/or family.”

A recent Harris poll also supported this assertion, showing that word of mouth is a much stronger influencer than social networking. When a group of adults were asked about their information-gathering process for the most recent purchase they made, 21% of Harris poll respondents cited “face-to-face with a person not associated with the company, such as a family member, business colleague or friend.” Another 12% cited a phone call with someone similar. Meanwhile, just 4% mentioned using “public online social-networking sites, such as Facebook, LinkedIn or MySpace.” Another 4% mentioned “private social networking sites, such as customer communities.”

Additional findings from the WorkPlace Media survey:

- Facebook was the clear winner in terms of users. 89% of respondents reported having a Facebook account (40%: MySpace; 31%: LinkedIn; 18% Twitter).
- When asked what appeals about social networking, the leading response (89%) was that it “allows me to stay connected to friends/family.”
- Of the 18% who reported acting upon a business or product recommendation social networking sites, the leading categories were: Entertainment (53%), Dining Out (50%), Groceries (23%), Beauty Care/Cosmetics (21%), Apparel (20%), Electronics (15%), Pet Care (15%).

The Brand Impact Social Networking Survey was conducted by WorkPlace Media in May 2009 among 753 American workers who have access to the Internet at work. For more information and complimentary research and charts, visit [www.workplacemedia.com](http://www.workplacemedia.com) and click on “Complimentary Research.”

**To interview a representative of WorkPlace Media, please contact Mark Ballard at 212.255.8455 or [mark@rosengrouppr.com](mailto:mark@rosengrouppr.com).**

**About WORKPLACE MEDIA:**

WorkPlace Media is an award-winning media company that delivers superior ROI for the world’s most prestigious brands by helping them reach consumers at work. As the leading expert on the American workplace, WorkPlace Media works with its proprietary permission-based network of over 920,000 U.S. companies to deliver advertiser offers and samples directly into the hands of over 64 million working Americans. Additionally, the company conducts ongoing research into the attitudes and purchase behavior of this valuable, largely untapped consumer channel through regular polls and surveys. ([www.workplacemedia.com](http://www.workplacemedia.com))