

Two-thirds of Americans Likely to Decrease Spending on Eating Out and Entertainment in the Next Six Months

Just one-quarter of adults say they are likely to have more money to spend in the next six months

New York, N.Y. — September 23, 2009 — While economists are saying the economic tide is turning, people are still not willing to open their wallets and spend money. Two-thirds of Americans (67%) say they will decrease spending on eating out at restaurants and reduce spending on entertainment (67%), almost the same number who said so in May (66% and 64% respectively).

These are some of the results of The Harris Poll of 2,334 adults surveyed online between September 8 and 15, 2009 by Harris Interactive.

Half of Americans (50%) say they will be saving or investing more money in the next six months, slightly down from 53% who said so in May of this year. In terms of general spending, just one-quarter of U.S. adults (25%) say they anticipate having more money to spend the way they want, again unchanged from the beginning of summer in May when 26% said so.

In May, as people were planning their summer vacations over one-third of Americans (36%) said they would be taking a vacation away from home lasting longer than a week in the next six months. The end of summer tends to mean less travel and now only 28% of Americans say it is likely they will take a week-long vacation in the next six months.

Almost unchanged from May, one in five Americans (19%) say they will be likely to buy a new computer in the next six months compared to 21% at the beginning of the summer. Also unchanged is that 7% of Americans would be starting a new business in the next six months compared to 8% who said so in May.

Besides the economy heating up, there is also talk of the residential housing market starting to see some rebound. However, just 14% of Americans say they are likely to move to a different residence and less than one in ten (8%) say they will be likely to purchase a house or condo in the next six months. In May, one in five U.S. adults (19%) said they were likely to move in the next six months and 9% were likely to purchase a house or condo.

Looking at bigger ticket items, people are still not quite ready for these types of purchases. Just one in ten Americans (10%) say they are going to buy or lease a newly manufactured car, truck or van in the next six months, almost the same as in May, when 12% said the same. When it comes to buying a boat or recreational vehicle in the next six months, just 4% say they will do so compared to 5% in May who said they would.

So what?

The economy is still a major issue of concern for people and with the worries surrounding the job market that is probably one of the reasons that people are not ready to start spending yet. When the job market begins to turn around, people would be more secure that they will not lose their jobs or, if they already have, are closer to

finding a new job. And, once they have that security they may be willing to eat out more and go to the movies more frequently.

**TABLE 1
SPENDING/SAVINGS OVER NEXT SIX MONTHS**

“How likely will you be to do the following within the next 6 months?”

Base: All adults

		LIKELY (NET)	Very likely	Somewhat Likely	NOT LIKELY (NET)	Not that likely	Not at all likely
Decrease spending on eating out at restaurants	%	67	31	36	33	20	12
Reduce spending on entertainment	%	67	30	37	33	20	13
Save or invest more money	%	50	17	33	50	22	27
Take a vacation away from home lasting longer than a week	%	28	11	17	72	18	54
Have more money to spend the way you want	%	25	5	20	75	31	44
Buy a new computer	%	19	5	14	81	21	60
Move to a different residence	%	14	5	9	86	12	74
Buy or lease a newly manufactured car, truck or van	%	10	3	8	90	14	76
Purchase a house or condo	%	8	3	5	92	7	85
Start a new business	%	7	2	5	93	7	86
Buy a boat or recreational vehicle (e.g. trailer, motor home)	%	4	2	2	96	5	91

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

**TABLE 2
SPENDING/SAVINGS OVER NEXT SIX MONTHS - TREND**

“How likely will you be to do the following within the next 6 months?”

Percent saying “Very/Somewhat Likely”

Base: All adults

		Nov. 2008	March 2009	May 2009	Sept. 2009
Decrease spending on eating out at restaurants	%	65	74	66	67
Reduce spending on entertainment	%	64	74	64	67
Save or invest more money	%	49	50	53	50
Take a vacation away from home lasting longer than a week	%	29	35	36	28
Have more money to spend the way you want	%	25	21	26	25
Buy a new computer	%	22	22	21	19
Move to a different residence	%	18	20	19	14
Buy or lease a newly manufactured car, truck or van	%	12	11	12	10
Purchase a house or condo	%	10	10	9	8
Start a new business	%	9	10	8	7
Buy a boat or recreational vehicle (e.g. trailer, motor home)	%	5	5	5	4

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

Methodology

This Harris Poll was conducted online within the United States September 8 and 15, 2009 among 2,334 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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