

Survey: Fewer Than Half of Americans Would Give Up iPod If They Thought It Harmed the Environment; Even Fewer Would Give Up TV or Computer

Americans Want to Go Green -- But Not If It Means Being Uncomfortable or Inconvenienced

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. -- A new national survey released today finds most Americans are trying to buy more green products, but not at the expense of convenience or comfort. And most Americans wouldn't give up their iPod, microwave oven, air conditioning, cell phone or computer, even if they thought it harmed the environment.

The survey, which polled 1,006 consumers across the country, found 60 percent of Americans are looking for greener products. However, given a choice between their comfort, convenience or the environment, 38 percent of respondents said they'd choose their convenience, 35 percent said they'd choose comfort and 26 percent said they'd choose the environment, the survey found.

"Consumers don't want to give up the modern conveniences of life," said Suzanne Shelton, whose firm conducted the survey. "We're all basically saying, 'I'll be green as long it doesn't make me uncomfortable or inconvenienced.'"

The survey, one of four annual surveys conducted by The Shelton Group, found consumers were reluctant to give up their favorite modern conveniences, even if they were to learn that one of them hurt the environment. Asked, "If you thought these things were harming the environment, which of the following would you be willing to give up?" less than half of those polled were willing to give up a variety of things:

- iPod – 42 percent would be willing to do without it
- Dishwasher – 38 percent
- Microwave – 28 percent
- Cellular phone – 23 percent
- Air conditioning – 16 percent
- TV – 14 percent
- Computer – 8 percent
- Car – 7 percent
- None of the above – 24 percent
- All of the above – 6 percent

"For most Americans, what once were considered conveniences have become necessities," Shelton said. "That means the green movement has its work cut out for it: Convenience and comfort are big barriers for consumers going green."

“It means a lot of people simply won’t take on green projects, or buy a green product if they have to go to a different store to find it or if it somehow takes away from their personal comfort,” Shelton added.

Makers of green products must make green products just as simple to buy and use as regular products, and to show upfront how it helps to save money. Here are a few examples:

- Clorox Greenworks: A prime example of overcoming the convenience obstacle. The cleaners are easy to find in grocery stores, and they’re as simple to use as regular cleaning products.
- Programmable thermostat: People are more likely to reduce their electric consumption if they have programmable thermostats. Once programmed, it can be forgotten, so there is no hassle involved.
- ENERGY STAR® appliance: Buying an energy efficient washing machine saves a quantifiable amount of energy – and money -- which the consumer can see every month in their utility bill. And the ENERGY STAR® label makes it easy for consumers to see how much they’ll save. Thus, it’s easy for a consumer to make the decision to go green.

ABOUT THE ECO PULSE® SURVEY

The survey, called Eco Pulse®, was geographically stratified to mirror the geographic distribution of the population (111,617,402 households in the contiguous United States). Survey sample data was also weighted slightly to closely match U.S. age ethnicity. The survey yielded 1,006 complete responses, for a 3.09 percent margin of error.

ABOUT SHELTON GROUP

Founded in 1991 by Suzanne Shelton, Shelton Group is an advertising agency located in Knoxville, Tennessee, focused exclusively on motivating mainstream consumers to make sustainable choices. To continuously track shifting consumer perceptions on energy efficiency and sustainability, the agency conducts four proprietary consumer opinion studies annually—Eco Pulse, Energy Pulse®, Utility Pulse and Green Living Pulse. Shelton Group uses those insights to create targeted consumer advertising campaigns for clients ranging from investor-owned utilities and energy-efficient building product manufacturers to consumer products and services companies with a viable green story to tell. Shelton Group has focused in this niche since 1997. Clients include the American Institute of Architects, Black Hills Energy, BP Solar, Cree LED Lighting, e3bank, Johnson & Johnson, Knauf Insulation, South Carolina Electric and Gas, and Vectren Energy.

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