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## Mobile Mindset Study

June 2012

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# INTRODUCTION

Many people experience phantom smartphone twitches: the perception that your phone is ringing, buzzing or bleeping even when it's nowhere in sight. It's like a nervous tic triggered by your phone! Some might say that Americans are fixated and emotionally connected to our mobile devices. And they might be right. Our phones are often the first thing we reach for when we wake up, and some of us put more time and TLC into our phones than we invest in our person-to-person relationships.

Lookout's Mobile Mindset Study analyzes and explores data-based trends about our relationships, emotions and behavior driven by our phones. We engaged Harris Interactive to survey American smartphone owners to explore what we call the new 'mobile mindset': the way we think about our phones, and the habits and behavior they drive.

The findings confirmed our suspicions that a new mobile mindset has emerged: our thoughts, emotions and behavior are impacted by smartphones.

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# HIGHLIGHTS

## Smartphones are essential to our lives.

- o We constantly connect. Nearly 60% said they don't go an hour without checking their phone. Younger folks were the most addicted: 63% of women and 73% of men ages 18-34 say they don't go an hour without checking their phones.
- o Our connection never sleeps. 54% said they check their phones while lying in bed: before they go to sleep, after they wake up, even in the middle of the night.
- o We need access everywhere. Nearly 40% admit to checking their phone while on the toilet.

## We sometimes break rules of etiquette to stay connected.

- o We act rudely. 30% admitted that they check their phones during a meal with others.
- o We take risks. 24% said they check their phones while driving.
- o We behave inappropriately. 9% said they check their phones during religious services at a house of worship.

We have emotional reactions and concerns when we do not have our phones.

- o 94% are concerned about losing their phone.
- o 73% say they felt panicked when they lost their phone.
- o 38% are most concerned about the cost & hassle of replacing a lost phone.

## I. MOBILE ATTACHMENT

Often emotion plays a role in driving action, so we dug in to try and understand the emotional connection between people and their smartphones. By quantifying the most fundamental indicator of phone activity - how often people check their phones - and cataloguing their emotional reactions when they have misplaced their phones, we have clues into understanding individuals' mobile attachment.

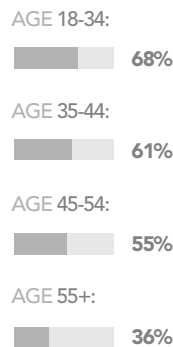
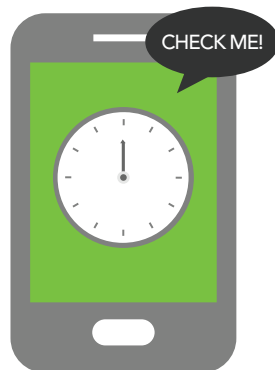
### Findings

The majority of Americans with smartphones (58 percent) said they typically don't go an hour without checking their phones. Unsurprisingly, this hourly phone-checking fixation was significantly greater among the youngest age group (18-34 year olds), and declined markedly as age went up.

## WE'RE ADDICTED TO CHECKING OUR PHONES

**58%**  
OF SMARTPHONE USERS

**DON'T GO  
1 HOUR  
WITHOUT CHECKING  
THEIR PHONES**



The data confirms what you have probably noticed in restaurants, parks, on the bus and in any other public setting: habitual phone-checking is widespread with more than half the smartphone-owning population checking their phone at least once an hour.

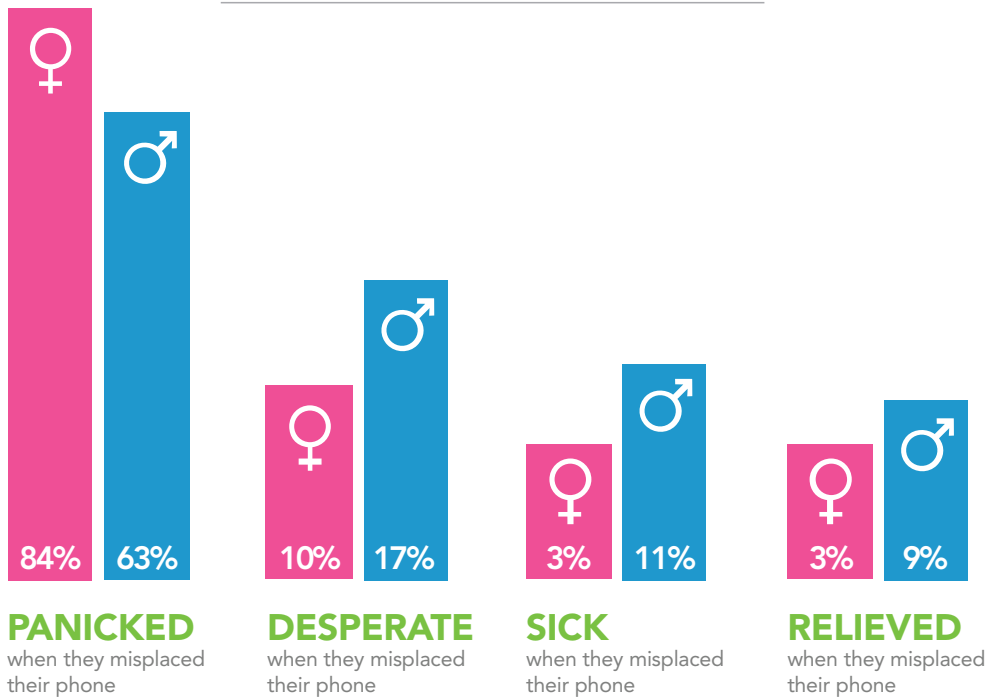
We grouped smartphone owners by whether or not they had actually lost their phone at one time or another, and nearly 7 in 10 (69 percent) said that they had. Then, we took an inventory of emotions by asking those who had lost their phones how they felt when this happened. Here's what we found:

## HOW DID YOU FEEL WHEN YOU MISPLACED YOUR PHONE?



Age and gender also matter when it comes to our feelings about our phones. For instance, smartphone owners age 55+ who misplaced their phone were more than twice as likely (18 percent) to report having felt "sick" when they lost their phones compared with those ages 18-34 who had the same experience (7 percent). Men and women also expressed different emotions around losing their phones:

### WHO SAYS MEN AREN'T EMOTIONAL?



Interestingly enough, a small but striking minority of men, in particular, experience their smartphones as both a burden and a blessing. Accordingly, 9 percent of men who've misplaced their smartphone professed feeling "relieved." On the other hand, most women didn't consider being "disconnected" a cause for relief, with only 3 percent saying they felt that way.

Americans rely on their phones, and when they go missing, our emotional reactions run the gamut from that gut-level panic of wondering "Where's my phone?! I just had it!" to the stomach-sinking sickness at the mere thought that it's escaped us.

## II. BAD [PHONE] BEHAVIOR

As universally important as smartphones are to our lives, there are still some basic social norms and rules of etiquette that most of us can agree on. When someone texts during a meal, others may roll their eyes and utter one word: "rude." And experts have told us time and time again that electronics in the bedroom - mobile phones included - infringe on the soundness of both our sleep and our relationships. But is Americans' emotional connection to their phones strong enough to override what most of us consider good etiquette? Or is what we consider good etiquette changing as we become more attached?

### Findings

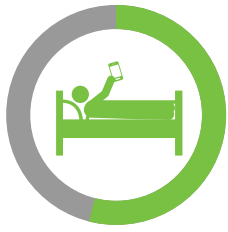
There's no question about it, Miss Manners (and our grandmothers) would be disappointed in us.

- o 30% admitted that they check their phones during a meal with others.
- o 24% said they check their phones while driving.
- o Nearly 10% said they check their phones during religious services at a house of worship.

Beyond bad phone etiquette, there were indications that Americans are obsessed with checking their phones; a whopping 54 percent - over half - of smartphone owners said they check their phones while lying in bed: before they go to sleep, after they wake up, even in the middle of the night. And while no one says you can or cannot use your phone on the toilet, nearly 4 out of 10 (39 percent) confessed to checking their phones while using the bathroom.

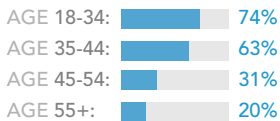
Americans rely on their phones, and when they go missing, our emotional reactions run the gamut from that gut-level panic of wondering "Where's my phone?! I just had it!" to the stomach-sinking sickness at the mere thought that it's escaped us.

# WHERE DO PEOPLE CHECK THEIR PHONES?



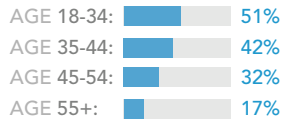
54%

While lying in bed  
(i.e., before sleeping, after waking, in the middle of the night)



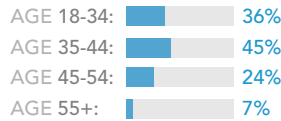
39%

While using the bathroom



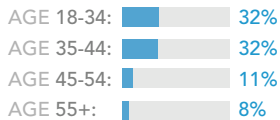
30%

During a meal with others



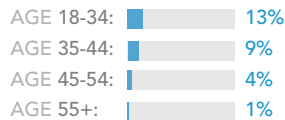
24%

While driving



9%

During services at a house of worship  
(e.g., church, synagogue, mosque)



The worst actors in terms of bad phone behavior? Young adults. Nearly 90 percent (88 percent) of adults aged 18 to 34 admitted to some smartphone rule-breaking.

The worst actors in terms of bad phone behavior? Young adults. Nearly 90 percent (88 percent) of adults aged 18 to 34 admitted to some smartphone rule-breaking. This group over indexed on almost every one of the behaviors listed to a statistically significant level, when compared to the other age brackets. The two exceptions: adults aged 35 to 44 were as bad about using their smartphone while driving and during a meal with others as their younger counterparts vs. older smartphone owners.

Whether or not you think Americans are rule-breakers in general, it seems that our phone have become so essential to us that it prompts us to check our phones and use them at any time regardless if it could be perceived as rude or dangerous.

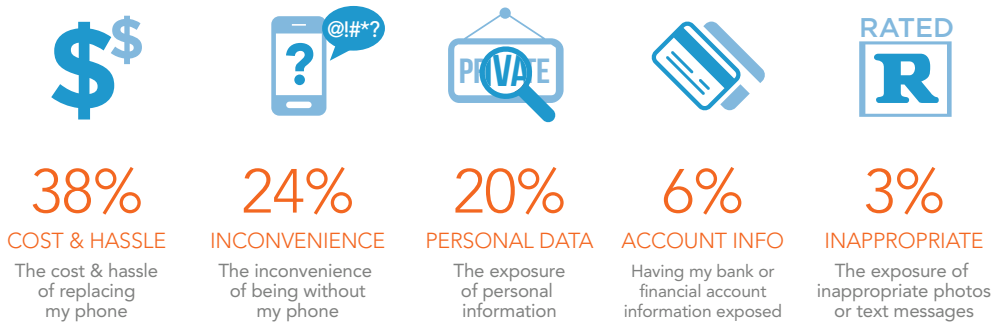
### III. OUR MOBILE FEARS

It's a universal truth - you don't know what you've got until it's gone. As part of our effort to understand our attachment to smartphones, we asked respondents about their biggest concern when it comes to losing their phone.

#### Findings

Ninety-four percent of American smartphone owners expressed concern about losing their phones. That didn't surprise us. However, the reasons and priorities which surfaced to explain these concerns did:

### WHICH REPRESENTS YOUR BIGGEST CONCERN ABOUT LOSING YOUR PHONE?



A recent Federal Reserve study revealed that 21 percent of smartphone users are already using mobile banking; as such, we expected to see a much higher percent of users state that their financial data was driving their fears of phone loss, or their "nomophobia," the fear of being without a phone.

Similarly, 26 percent of American smartphone owners told us they had used their phones to take and/or receive explicit photos, and 18 percent confessed to sexting. So why, we wondered, do so few cite the exposure of such photos and messages as their top phone loss fear factor?



We suspect that smartphone users out there banking, sexting and explicit picture-taking are, in fact, concerned about their financials and unmentionables being revealed, but our data reveals that they are more concerned with the time they would have to spend without their device and the money it would cost to get it back.

Given respondents' confessions about habitual phone-checking, it appears misplacing a phone would be like going cold turkey - and, that fear trumps the embarrassment and financial fraud potential a lost phone could create.

## IV. CONCLUSION

The results of the Mobile Mindset Study sketch out the contours of a new set of behavior and emotional attachment driven by smartphones. The data surfaced the new place phones have in our values and social norms and showed that a trauma such as losing a phone can trigger strong emotional reactions. The study unveiled a new mobile mindset in our society: social behavior shifts and an emerging school-of-thought in what's now consider appropriate phone etiquette - such as checking a phone while eating.

With smartphones being essential to everyday life, there are a few basic steps Lookout recommends to avoid losing your phone and the important personal info on it:

- o Don't lose it: Keep your smartphone in a zipped pocket or bag when you're on the move and scan your area when leaving public places to make sure you don't leave it behind
- o Keep your power: Make sure you charge your battery before you leave the house or keep a charger in the car – not only will it keep your phone alive, but it will help to track it down if you misplace it
- o Keep it safe: Download an app like Lookout so you can find your phone if you lose it, lock & wipe your data if it cannot be recovered and backup your personal information

## V. SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The survey was conducted online within the United States by Harris Interactive via its QuickQuery omnibus product on behalf of Lookout from May 8-10, 2012, among 2,097 adults ages 18 and older. This online survey is not based on a probability sample and therefore no estimate of theoretical sampling error can be calculated. For complete survey methodology, please contact Colleen White.

1 <http://www.securevoy.com/blog/2012/02/16/66-of-the-population-suffer-from-nomophobia-the-fear-of-being-without-their-phone/>