



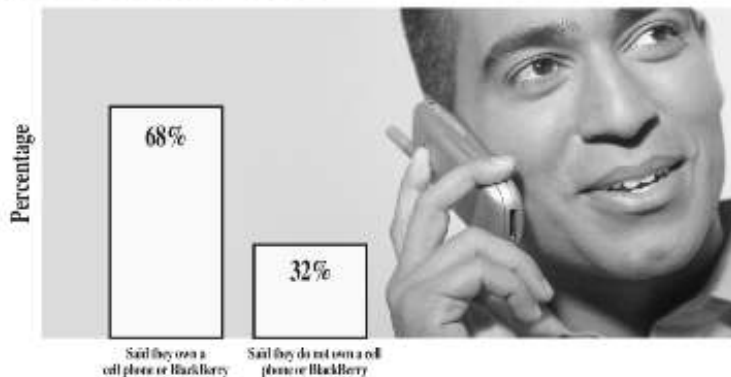
Poll STATION

With Linda Banister



While mobile phones have been available in North America since the 1980s, personal communication devices such as BlackBerrys and cell phones are becoming more widely utilized. This month's *Poll Station* asked Edmontonians about their usage of such personal communication devices, as well as cell phone and BlackBerry etiquette.

DO YOU OWN A CELL PHONE OR BLACKBERRY? WHY?



To begin, participants were asked if they owned a cell phone or a BlackBerry device. A total of 68 percent of those surveyed said they did, while 32 percent said they did not. Those who did own a personal communication device were asked to name the biggest benefit of owning one. Nearly half (49 percent) referred to use in emergencies or for personal security. Other respondents emphasized the ease and convenience of communicating (31 percent), with some specifically mentioning communication with family (12 percent) and work connections (six percent). Finally, 13 percent of mobile owners surveyed felt accessibility anywhere/any time was the most valuable benefit of owning a cell phone or BlackBerry.

WHERE DON'T YOU USE YOUR CELL PHONE OR BLACKBERRY?



Next, participants were asked about their own etiquette while using their personal communication devices. When asked about talking on their cell phones or BlackBerrys while driving, 41 percent said that they never do, 31 percent rarely do, 25 percent sometimes do, two

percent often do, and another two percent declared that they always do. Sixty-six percent said that they never talk on their cell phones or BlackBerrys while in quiet places such as restaurants, museums, movie theatres or elevators, and 19 percent stated that they rarely do. Thirteen percent mentioned that they sometimes talk in quiet places, and two percent revealed that they often do.

With regards to text messaging or e-mailing while in meetings or talking with someone, 82 percent of participants indicated they never do so, 12 percent rarely do, four percent sometimes do, and two percent often do. Finally, participants were asked about "multi-tasking" by talking or texting while shopping, banking, waiting in line or conducting other personal business. Forty-nine percent said they never do, 16 percent rarely do, 24 percent sometimes do, nine percent often do, and three percent always do.

WHAT IS YOUR PET PEEVE AND SHOULD USE BE REGULATED?

The final topic of the survey referred to the etiquette of other Edmontonians that use personal communication devices. Participants were asked their biggest "pet peeve" with the use of cell phones or BlackBerrys. Forty-eight percent emphasized talking while driving, 15 percent mentioned talking in quiet places, six percent highlighted talking loudly in public places, and a three percent cited "multi-tasking."

When asked if cell phone and BlackBerry etiquette has become an issue in our city, 76 percent of participants felt it has, while 13 percent felt it has not, and 11 percent were unsure. Furthermore, 74 percent felt that bylaws or regulations for cell phone and BlackBerry use should be implemented, while 23 percent felt bylaws were unnecessary, and three percent were unsure. The most commonly suggested bylaws included: banning use while driving (80 percent), prohibiting talking in quiet places such as theaters or museums (14 percent), and restricting talking in public places in general (eight percent). Four percent of respondents, however, spoke to the difficulty of enforcing such bylaws.

The *Poll Station* surveyed 100 City of Edmonton residents on the topic and, while the results of the research are not statistically reliable, they do provide a qualitative indication of what Edmontonians are thinking.

Want a question included in the Edmontonians Poll?

Contact Linda at 780.451.4444 or e-mail at lbanner@edmontonians.com.

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