

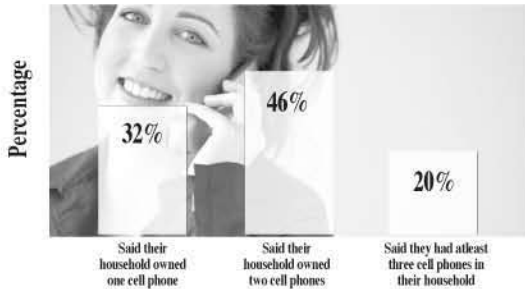


Poll STATION

With Linda Banister

While commonplace today, cell phone usage was a novelty a generation ago. This is due, in part, to the drastic change in technology since their inception in the 1970s. From large, cumbersome phones in the early days to sleek, camera phones of today, cell phones have become a staple of many people's lives. In fact, it is not uncommon to see children through to seniors communicating with cell phones. In this month's *Poll Station* we asked people about cell phones, their usage and other related issues.

HOW MANY CELL PHONES DOES YOUR HOUSEHOLD OWN?



First, respondents were asked if they own a cell phone. Perhaps not surprisingly, almost three-quarters (73 percent) of respondents said they have a cell phone. Fifty-nine percent indicated that someone other than themselves in the household owns a cell phone.

Only those respondents who said their household owns at least one cell phone were asked how many cell phones they have. Almost one-third (32 percent) own a single cell phone, with 46 percent owning two cell phones. Twenty percent said their household owns at least three cell phones. On average, households with cell phones have two phones.

While it is not uncommon to see teens using a cell phone, only seven percent indicated that someone under 18 years old in the household actually owns a cell phone. The average age of cell phone owner is 38 years. People over 55 make up almost one fifth (18 percent) of cell phone owners.

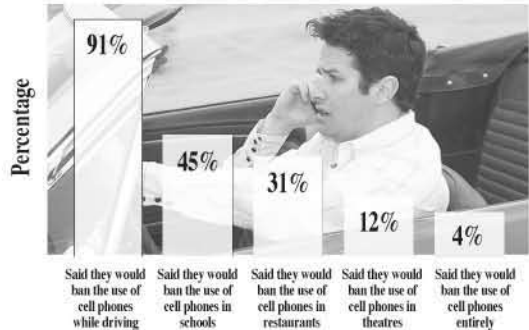
WHAT ABOUT PUBLISHING A CELL PHONE DIRECTORY?

Respondents were asked for their opinions about the publishing of a directory of cell phone numbers. Only 20 percent agreed with the idea. Three-quarters of those who liked the idea of a cell phone directory indicated that it would be handy. Considering those who disagreed with the idea of the cell phone directory, the most commonly cited reason was privacy (70 percent). These respondents wanted to keep their numbers private,

limited to people of their choosing. Some mentioned the changing nature of cell phone numbers would make a directory difficult to keep current.

SHOULD THERE BE RESTRICTIONS ON CELL PHONE USE?

Finally, respondents were asked if there should be



restrictions placed on the use of cell phones. A sizeable majority (85 percent) felt restrictions should be in place. Restricting the use of cell phones while driving was cited by 91 percent. Restricting cell phone use in schools (45 percent) and in restaurants (31 percent) were other comments; 12 percent suggested banning cell phone in theatres, and four percent wanted cell phones banned entirely.

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. ✓

Linda Banister is a certified management consultant and the owner of Banister Research and Consulting Inc., a full service provider of market research and program evaluation services. Want a question included in the Edmontonians Poll? Contact Linda at 780.451.4444 or e-mail at lbanister@edmontonians.com. Visit www.banister.ab.ca.