More than 4 in 10 U.S. Adults Typically Wait Until Their Contract Is Eligible to Upgrade Their Cell Phone

AUSTIN, Texas, Sept. 10, 2012 /PRNewswire/ -- RetailMeNot.com (www.retailmenot.com), the largest online coupon website in the United States, today announced the findings of a survey conducted by Ipsos Public Affairs (www.ipsos.com) that reviewed consumer cell phone usage trends. The survey also queried consumers about their views on Apple's iPhone only days before the release of the iPhone 5.

(Logo: http://photos.prnewswire.com/prnh/20120308/DA66724LOGO-b)

Among those familiar with the iPhone, about 4 in 10 (39%) adults choose the battery life as the feature they most dislike, followed by the keyboard (21%), phone reception (20%), Siri limitations (11%) and volume controls (11%). However, nearly 4 in 10 (38%) report that they do not have an issue with any of these iPhone features.

As such, those familiar with the iPhone are most hoping that the iPhone 5 will address many of these complaints.

- The most wished for enhancements[1] for the iPhone 5 include an improved battery life (63%), improved phone reliability/reception (46%), faster processing speed (44%) and a larger screen (43%).
- Other desired improvements include keyboard improvement for typing emails and text messages (36%), a thinner/slimmer body (30%), Siri improvements (25%) and presentation projection capabilities (15%).
- Men are more likely than women to want a faster processing speed (49% vs. 39%), whereas women are more likely to want keyboard improvements (42% vs. 31%).
- 20% would like the new iPhone to have digital payment technology, with parents (27%) and those with college degrees (25%) among the most interested in digital payment technology.

When to Upgrade? Consumers Wait for Contract to Expire
Over 4 in 10 (42%) adults say that if they were to upgrade their mobile phone, it would be because their contract is over and they are eligible for an upgrade, according to a new poll of more than 1,000 adults conducted by Ipsos Public Affairs on behalf of RetailMeNot.com.

- 1 in 8 (13%) say they upgrade because they want to switch from their existing device—from an Android (7%), an iPhone (4%) or a BlackBerry (2%)—to another type of phone.
  - Adults under 35 (22%) are more likely to switch out their cell phone because they want another type of phone, such as an Android or iPhone, compared with those who are 35 to 54 (12%) or 55 and older (5%).
- The same percentage (13%) reports that they typically upgrade because they just like having the latest and greatest technology.
- Fewer than 1 in 10 (7%) switch because they dislike the service provided by their carriers.
- Women are more likely than men to upgrade their phone because they are eligible (46% vs. 38%), while men are more likely than women to do so because they want the latest technology (16% vs. 10%).
  - Adults under 35 (22%) and parents (17%) are also more likely than others to upgrade their phone because they just like having the latest and greatest technology.

Few Adults Trash Their Old Mobile Phones
Nearly three-quarters (74%) of adults find some other use for their old mobile phone(s) besides sending it to a landfill. One-quarter (25%) say they typically recycle their old phone(s), 17% donate them and 13% trade them in for a new model. Nearly 1 in 5 (19%) pass their old phones onto others, including 12% who give them to the kids to play with, and 7% who typically give them to their spouse, friends or kids to use on their plan. Only 10% say that they trash them.

- Men are almost twice as likely as women to trash their cell phones (13% vs. 7%), while women are more likely than men to either donate them (20% vs. 14%) or give them to the kids to play with (15% vs. 9%).
- Those aged 55 and over are also more likely to donate their phones, compared with younger adults (25% vs. 13%).

Six in 10 Adults Say Kids Should Be Allowed to Have a Mobile Phone Before 10th Grade
Six in 10 adults (60%) say that they would let a child have a mobile phone before 10th grade, while 42% feel that kids should at least be in middle school (6th grade) before getting their own phone. Far fewer believe that a child should have their own phone in 4th or 5th grade (13%), in 1st to 3rd grade (4%) or in kindergarten (1%).

Almost a third (32%) say kids should have to wait until 10th to 12th grade, and nearly 1 in 10 (9%) believe a child should be college-aged (18 and up) before getting their own phone.

- Parents are more likely to let a child in a younger age range have a mobile phone. Nearly 7 in 10 (68%) would let a child in 4th through 9th grade have one, compared with only half (50%) of those without children. On the other hand, those without children are almost twice as likely as parents to say a child should be in at least 10th grade before getting a cell phone (46% vs. 24%).
- Men and women also differ when it comes to what they feel is age appropriate: Men are more likely to say kids should be at least college-aged before getting their own cell phone (11% vs. 6%), while women are more likely than men to say they would let a 4th or 5th grader have a phone (15% vs. 11%).

Opinion Split on Whether Children Should Pay for Their Mobile Phone Usage
Adults are almost evenly split on whether they, as parents, would require their child to contribute financially to the phone plan. Just under half (49%) say that their child should pay for their usage, including 15% who believe their child should pay for *all* of it, while just over half (51%) say that they would pay for their child's phone usage until the child is 18 or leaves home.

- A majority of those aged 55 and over (54%) say that they would require their child to pay for at least part of their usage, compared with only 46% of those under 55.
- On the other hand, parents (60%) and those without a college degree (54%) tend to be more likely to say that they would pay for their child's usage.

Methodology: These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted August 22–24, 2012. For the survey, a national sample of 1,006 adults aged 18 and older from Ipsos' U.S. online panel were interviewed online. Weighting was then employed to balance demographics and ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the U.S. adult population according to Census data and to provide results intended to approximate the sample universe. A survey with an unweighted probability sample of 1,006 and a 100% response rate would have an estimated margin of error of +/- 3.1 percentage points. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error.

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[1] Respondents of the survey could pick more than one feature they wanted to see improved on the new iPhone 5.

Media Contact:

RetailMeNot PR Department
+1 512 777 2957

media@rmn.com

Allison+Partners Public Relations (for RetailMeNot.com)

retailmenot@allisonpr.com

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