



Battling Digital Overload, Over Half of US Remote Workers Report Increased Reliance on Analog Tools

MCLEAN, VA (September 22, 2020) — Released today, the second annual Workplace Productivity Report finds that 73% of U.S. workers who currently work from home are experiencing an increasing sense of digital overload. As offices have moved online, the findings reveal a surprising trend: the more digital-first the workplace, the more workers rely on analog tools - like paper and printers - to mitigate screen fatigue and digital overload. The Paper & Packaging – How Life Unfolds® campaign surveyed 2,000 U.S. adults who work from home to learn about the impact of their new work environment on productivity and mental wellness.

The report contributes to research on the long-term impact of remote work and helps companies understand their workforce’s evolving needs. It turns out that Gen Z copes better than millennials, with 53% of 18-23 year olds reporting increased digital overload at home, compared to 77% of 24-39 year olds. Overall, respondents also note the difficulty in stepping away from the screen, with 74% saying they now spend most of the day looking at a computer, tablet or phone.

To give their eyes a break from the screen, 40% report turning to paper and over half (51%) of respondents agree that they reach for paper and pen while working from home more often than at the office. Even more important, workers pair analog and digital tools to help stay focused. 43% said they use paper to prioritize tasks and 41% organize their work on paper through flowcharts and graphics. Also, 61% of respondents agree that they miss printing and redlining essential documents as they would freely in the office.

Commenting on the study, productivity and digital detox expert Holland Haiis noted, “Analog tools allow the brain to relax, have the white space for problem-solving and think about new ideas differently, whether writing or sketching them out. It’s easy to look at meeting notes taken on paper and immediately become clear about the plan of action or any unanswered questions that require follow-up.”

With the sense that working from home is here to stay, many workers have outfitted their home office. Seven in 10 respondents purchased a printer since the pandemic began. But what about other office supplies?

- 72% bought a desk since the transition to work from home, and 62% have even invested in a standing desk.
- Men spend over a third more (36%) than women to create their home offices. Men reported an average of \$132, while women only spent \$84 on average.
- Typical office supplies remain essential at home. Popular items workers stock include pens (76%), notebooks (74%), sticky notes (74%), printer paper (74%) and paper clips (73%).

Click [here](#) to read the full report and follow @HowLifeUnfolds on Instagram for more insights on how paper can make you more productive.

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About the Paper and Packaging Board

The Paper and Packaging Board promotes the use of paper products and paper-based packaging by highlighting the value they bring to our daily lives. More than 40 U.S. manufacturers and importers collectively fund the national marketing campaign, Paper & Packaging – How Life Unfolds®.

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