

First-Ever National “Golden Ears” Survey Reveals America’s 50-Year Love Affair with Disneyland and Walt Disney World Resorts

ANAHEIM, Calif., July 11, 2005 – On the eve of the actual 50th anniversary of Disneyland (July 17, 2005), Disney celebrates 50 years of theme park magic by announcing the results of a national consumer survey, conducted by independent research firm, Directive Analytics, that reveals what America loves most about Disneyland in California and Walt Disney World Resort in Florida.

The “Golden Ears Survey” polled more than 8,000 consumers from all 50 states to gauge opinions about entertainment, attractions, characters, events and occupations featured at Disney’s flagship parks.

According to the survey, Disney theme parks bring out the kid in all of us with nearly half of respondents (46 percent) admitting to wearing the park’s iconic Mickey Mouse Club “Ears.” Nearly 3 out of 4 Americans (72 percent) can sing a chorus of “It’s a Small World (After All).”

At the “summit” of America’s list of favorite Disney theme park attractions was Space Mountain (63 percent), followed closely by Pirates of the Caribbean (62 percent) and the Haunted Mansion (49 percent). Parents most appreciate the family focus of attractions such as Mad Tea Party (Tea Cups), and the perennial Fantasyland favorite, Dumbo the Flying Elephant.

When it comes to Disney’s beloved characters, Mickey Mouse is “Top Cheese” for character we’d most like to spend a day in the parks with (18 percent). Goofy (17 percent) and Mary Poppins (15 percent) round out the top three. Goofy takes the lead with 15 percent of Americans identifying most with the clumsy every-man. Belle from Disney’s animated feature “Beauty and the Beast” is next in line, followed by Minnie Mouse and Grumpy.

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Golden Ears Survey...add one

And, if America could choose a celebrity to tour the parks with, Oprah Winfrey tops the list (16 percent). Clint Eastwood (11 percent) and Mary Poppins herself, Julie Andrews (8 percent) round out the top three. The survey revealed that Brad Pitt (7 percent) edged out Jennifer Aniston (6 percent).

The unique profession of Walt Disney Imagineer ties Disney Tour Guide as the most sought-after Disney theme park role, according to the survey. Next in line is Jungle Cruise Skipper (14 percent), followed by Monorail Pilot (13 percent).

Respondents identified “sharing the experience with family and friends” (48 percent) as the most endearing aspect of Disney theme parks. What they remember most about their first visit is the “adventures and attractions” (46 percent), followed by “the castle” (25 percent) and “meeting the characters” (12 percent).

Highlights from the national “Golden Ears Survey” include:

SPACE TOPS SWASHBUCKLERS AND SPIRITS

- Space Mountain raced at the speed of light to the top of the popularity list (63 percent) to narrowly surpass Pirates of the Caribbean (62 percent) as the most popular Disney theme parks attraction among survey respondents, while the 999 “happy haunts” of the Haunted Mansion placed third (49 percent).

WHEN YOU WISH UPON A “STAR” . . .

- Celebrities most identify with Goofy
 - Tyra Banks feels at ease with Pocahontas
- The favorite attraction of celebrities is Pirates of the Caribbean
 - James Denton is “Desperate” to discover the secrets behind the Haunted Mansion.
- Two-thirds of celebrities can sing a chorus of “It’s a Small World (After All)”
 - Boyz II Men sang their own rendition with sound effects of “It’s a Small World”
 - NSYNC’s Joey Fatone also lent his vocals to the widely-known lyrics
- 80 percent of celebrities admit to wearing Mouse Ears
 - How often does David Arquette wear his Mouse Ears? “Almost Daily!”
 - Paige Davis is transformed back to childhood when she wears Mouse Ears
- What do America’s favorite “Housewife” and “Friend” have in common? Tinker Bell! The precocious pixie was chosen by Terri Hatcher and Courtney Cox-Arquette as their favorite character. Husband, David Arquette chose Donald Duck, while Hatcher’s on-screen hunk, James Denton chose Pluto.
- Who did Julie Andrews see eye-to-eye with? Mary Poppins, of course!

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Golden Ears Survey...add two

- British billionaire Sir Richard Branson identifies most with Peter Pan.
- Where does Magic find the Magic? It's a "Zip-a-Dee-Doo-Dah" kind of day when NBA great Magic Johnson enjoys Splash Mountain, just like rock star Avril Lavigne and John Stamos.
- Is it a sports thing? Football superstar Peyton Manning, soccer legend Mia Hamm and WNBA star Lisa Leslie all go for out-of-this world thrills on Space Mountain.

CHARACTER COUNTS WHEN YOU'RE A GOOFY NATION

- Feeling a little "Goofy" today? If so, then you most likely live in one of the 36 states that chose Goofy as the character they most identify with...that makes us a "Goofy" nation with 72 percent of Americans relating most to the loveable Goof.
- Not to be outdone, Americans chose Mickey Mouse (15 percent) as the character they'd most like to spend a day at the parks with.

DISNEY MAGIC SPLITS ALONG PARTY LINES

- Democrats choose to build the future as Walt Disney Imagineers, while their Republican counterparts would like to lead the way as a Disney Tour Guide.
- Republicans would prefer to visit the parks with Clint Eastwood, while Democrats would prefer a stroll through the parks with Oprah Winfrey.
- Ironically, both parties identify most with Goofy and both practice international diplomacy by being able to easily sing a chorus of "It's a Small World (After All)."
- Democrats and Republicans alike would like to spend a day at the parks with Mickey Mouse, while more Democrats than Republicans have worn "Mouse Ears."

HEIGH-HO, HEIGH-HO, IT'S OFF TO WORK WE GO...

- America's Finest Choose Chills Over Thrills on Vacation ... as policemen chose the mayhem of the Haunted Mansion as their favorite adventure.
- Attorneys Favor Criminal Types ... choosing the mischief of Pirates of the Caribbean as their attraction of choice.
- Homemakers choose a spin on the teacups of the Mad Tea Party more than any other occupation.

MIRROR, MIRROR ON THE WALL, WHO DO YOU IDENTIFY WITH MOST OF ALL?

- American executives identify most with Mickey Mouse's leadership ability (after all, he is the leader of the club made for you and me!).
- U.S. Military personnel admit to be a bit "Grumpy" which could be explained by cots and early wake-up calls!

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Golden Ears Survey...add three

- Teachers put Minnie Mouse at the head of the class.
- Doctors were most likely to call themselves Dopey, while Nurses chose Cinderella.

BIBBIDI BOBBIDI BOOMERS VS. GEN X & Y

- Gen X's* perfect park companion is Brad Pitt, while Gen Y** would rather stroll with Oprah. Baby Boomers*** prefer both Oprah Winfrey and Clint Eastwood.
- Gen X and Gen Y's preferred Disney theme park occupation job is Walt Disney Imagineer, while Baby Boomers would prefer the role of Disney Tour Guide.
- Gen X's identifies most with "Beauty and the Beast" heroine Belle. However, both Gen Y and the Baby Boomers relate most with Goofy.
- Gen X's would most like to spend a day in the parks with Mickey and Cinderella (Gen Y also prefers Mickey). But, the Baby Boomers would rather spend a "Jolly Holiday" in the parks with Mary Poppins.
- Both Gen X and Gen Y prefer the thrills of Space Mountain. The Baby Boomers prefer the dangerous waters of Pirates of the Caribbean.
- Baby Boomers, more than any other generation, appreciate the timeless classic "It's a Small World."
- All generational groups surveyed can sing a chorus of "It's a Small World (After All)."

*Generation X= 25 – 44, **Generation Y= under 25, ***Baby boomers = 45 +

A JOB EVEN CINDERELLA WOULD APPLY FOR!

- What's the most desired Disney theme park jobs? Walt Disney Imagineer (21 percent) and Disney Tour Guide (21 percent) shared the top spot as most coveted career path... topping Jungle Cruise Skipper (14 percent), Monorail Pilot (13 percent) and Character Escort (10 percent).
- Aye, Aye Skipper! ...While most chose Walt Disney Imagineer and Disney Tour Guide as the ideal Disney job, residents of South Carolina (22 percent), Philadelphia (21 percent) and Sacramento (24 percent) yearned to brave hippo-infested waters as Skipper of the world-famous Jungle Cruise.
- Strolling Arm in Arm...Residents of Maine and Delaware chose Character Escort as the top park job.

About Directive Analytics

Directive Analytics is an independent, full-service research consultancy with in-house field, data processing, and analytical-statistical-modeling service and a diverse base of over 40 active clients.

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