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Clutter leads to emotional distress for large majority of Canadians

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New survey also reveals some Canadians believe the value of their clutter exceeds \$1,000

TORONTO, June 21 /CNW/ - Canadians experience a range of emotions, from frustration to depression, knowing that they have household clutter to clear. According to a recent survey commissioned by Kijiji Canada, more than two-thirds (71 per cent) of Canadians are bothered by their clutter.

The survey also reveals the majority (77 per cent) of Canadians are able to put a price tag on their clutter. How much are Canadians holding on to? One-in-10 Canadians recognize that they are storing clutter with a collective value of more than \$1,000.

So, why aren't Canadians turning their clutter into cash? The survey, conducted by Ipsos-Reid on behalf of Kijiji, reveals that some Canadians are holding on to items simply because they don't know how to reclaim some of the item's value.

"I spent a lot of money on an item," is an excuse that Kijiji Canada's Clutter Wrangler, Jaclyn Ray, hears frequently. As a professional organizer, she cautions clutter collectors "that it is not a good reason to hold on to the unwanted item."

"Our research reveals that one-third of Canadians are so overwhelmed by their clutter that they're storing it anywhere there is space," she adds. "There's no reason to hold on to these unwanted items when it's simple to turn clutter into cash using a classifieds site like Kijiji.ca. It's easy and free to post an ad for the unwanted item and give it a second home, while recouping some of the cost."

Turning clutter into cash

The survey reveals that turning clutter into cash is also emotionally rewarding. The majority (66 per cent) of Canadians feel a sense of satisfaction when it comes to being clutter-free. A clutter-free home can also lead to feeling refreshed (35 per cent) and energized (24 per cent).

In order to de-clutter and achieve that sense of satisfaction, Kijiji's Clutter Wrangler, Jaclyn Ray suggests the following tips:

<< 1. Detach in order to de-clutter. Really ask yourself: what is the worst possible thing that would happen if I didn't have this item. 2. Group things together. Organize similar items together to help get rid of duplicates. For example, sort clothing by type - t-shirts, jeans, socks, etc. - and take an inventory of the items. Most people don't need more than a couple white t-shirts so think about donating or selling any extras. 3. Stick to the 'use it or lose it' rule. Only keep what is useful now, not in the future or at some point in the past. Remember, unused items can be sold on Kijiji.ca. 4. Make sure everything is in its place. Sometimes clutter is just stuff that belongs someplace else. 5. Donate what you don't need. Almost anything can be used by someone else. Not sure who to give it to? Post the item to the Free Stuff category on Kijiji.ca. >>

Wray also suggests de-cluttering daily. The longer someone holds on to an item, the harder it is to get rid of it.

Signs of a clutter collector

One-third of Canadians consider themselves to be a clutter collector and the survey reveals that there are some tell-tale signs of the bad habit:

<< - An overflowing basement or garage. Eighty per cent of Canadians store their unwanted items in these two rooms and the basement is the room that survey respondents are most likely to want to make better use of. - More family arguments. Only four-in-10 Canadians say that clutter never causes arguments with other family members. - Closet-content mysteries. Almost one-third of Canadians indicate that they forget about an item once it is put away. >>

The survey also reveals that clutter collectors have a variety of reasons for holding on to unwanted items. Approximately 40 per cent of Canadians use at least one of the following excuses:

<< - They would get rid of unwanted items if there were a free and easy way to do it. - They're holding on to unwanted items longer than they want to because of the hassle or amount of time it takes to get rid of the item. - They've held on to an item because they simply don't know how to get rid of it. - They would get rid of clutter if it were easy to find someone who needed the item. - They are more likely to get rid of unwanted items if they didn't have to transport it. >>

"Approximately 13.6-million Canadians are out of excuses for holding on to their clutter," said Zachary Candelario, general manager, Kijiji Canada. "With 99 community sites across the country and no posting fees, Kijiji is a free and easy way for Canadians to connect with someone in their neighbourhood, reducing the amount of time it takes to get rid of an unwanted item and often eliminating the need to transport it."

To start turning their clutter into cash, Canadians should visit www.kijiji.ca.

Methodology

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos Reid online poll conducted April 5-12, 2010, on behalf of Kijiji. For this survey, a national sample of 1,041 adults from Ipsos' Canadian online panel was interviewed online. Weighting was then employed to balance demographics and ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the adult population according to Census data and to provide results intended to approximate the sample universe. A survey with an unweighted probability sample of this size and a 100% response rate would have an estimated margin of error of +/-3.0 percentage points 19 times out of 20 of what the results would have been had the entire population of adults in Canada been polled. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error.

About Kijiji

Kijiji, which means "village" in Swahili, is a group of classifieds-style web sites that offer a convenient, fun, and easy way for people in the same city to meet, trade, share ideas, and help each other out in areas such as housing, jobs, goods, services, cars, and personals. The entire Kijiji family includes the Kijiji, Gumtree, LoQUo, Intoko, and Marktplaats brands. Kijiji sites are currently available in over 1500 cities in more than 20 markets around the world; it is the most visited classified site in Canada with more than 8 million unique visitors per month.

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