

Double-Duty Domains: Recession Redefines The Roles of Rooms

CSN Stores Poll Suggests That Traditional Living Spaces Are Breaking Traditions

BOSTON, Mass., June 4, 2009 - A CSN Stores/Harris Interactive Survey of some 2,500 adults suggests that nearly half of all homeowners and renters (45 percent) have made a room in their home multifunctional in the past two years.

Multifunctional rooms most often double as a home office or gym, according to 53 percent of those who have made such a change in their homes. About 1 in 5 of those who have introduced a new function into a room reveal that the living room, bedroom, or family room have shed their identities as 'one-function' living spaces.

CSN Stores, (www.csnstores.com), the third-largest online retailer of home goods in the U.S. with over 200 niche sites, commissioned Harris Interactive to survey adults 18+ to analyze the multifunctional trend. Results indicate that traditionally larger rooms in the home are being made to feel smaller by recently added functions. For example, some living rooms are becoming both the place to lounge and the place to exercise with fitness equipment.

"Major home renovations are not as popular as they were a few years ago," says CSN's Consumer Trend Tracker Chuck Casto. "But as changes in lifestyle call for additional furniture and space, families are incorporating these new 'functions' into the existing living room, bedroom, or family room, even if that means putting the new laptop cart or treadmill next to the television, couch, or bed."

The survey specified that a new function is defined by the addition of one or more pieces of furniture to a room for a shared purpose, e.g., a filing cabinet or desk being brought into a bedroom.

"Because the economic climate has required more people to work from home, it's no surprise that more homeowners and renters are making room for a home office," says Casto. "And as families continue to look for ways to cut costs, spending on one or two affordable pieces of workout equipment is winning out over pricey, long-term gym memberships. Plus, it's much more convenient to work out at home."

The survey also showed that the multifunctional trend is most popular in households with at least one child under six (63 percent), compared to 51 percent with children age 6-12 and 49 percent with kids age 13-17. Finally, over a quarter of the students age 18+ who have introduced a new function into a room have instituted a craft or hobby space into their living quarters.

To accommodate the new trends, CSN Stores has recently added line after line of furniture that serves many functions, from armoires with collapsible ironing boards to folding stationary bikes, so that all people can make the most of their living space. The new Ty Pennington collection, in particular, features a number of multifunctional pieces, including a game table with multiple storage compartments that converts into an elegant dining table. Also, CSN is continually expanding its strong selection of hundreds of home office and home gym offerings.

For more information or to set up an interview with our experts, please contact Will Flanagan or Dave Ladetto at PR@csnstores.com.

About CSN Stores: CSN Stores LLC, an Inc. 500 company, is ranked among the Top 3 leading online retailers in the housewares and home furnishings category by Internet Retailer. CSN maintains over 200 Web sites in niche market segments, selling over 1 million different products. CSN offers consumers the largest selection of leading brands available online, great customer service, and low prices. Stores include: AllModern.com, Cookware.com, Luggage.com, CSNOfficeFurniture.com, and FitnessEquipmentAndMore.com. CSN now serves customers in the U.S., Canada, and the U.K. Shop easy at CSN.

This survey was conducted online within the United States by Harris Interactive on behalf of CSN Stores between April 13-15, 2009 among 2,495 respondents age 18+. No estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated; a full methodology is available.