



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Seven out of Ten LGBT Adults, Given the Choice,  
Prefer Jobs in States That Recognize Same-Sex Marriages**

*One in five LGBT adults also say the economy has influenced their  
openness about sexual orientation with co-workers and colleagues*

**SAN FRANCISCO, CA, WASHINGTON, DC and ROCHESTER, NY– October 5, 2009** – According to the 2009 Out & Equal Workplace Survey, other factors being equal, 71 percent of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) adults would prefer a job with an employer based in a state where marriage equality is recognized over an employer based in a state that does not yet recognize marriage equality for same-sex couples. When asked specifically of lesbian and gay adults, 79% or eight out of ten agree.

When asked hypothetically, if they lived in a state where marriage equality is recognized by law, 42 percent of LGBT adults say they would consider changing jobs if their employer required them to transfer to a state where same-sex marriages are not recognized. Four out of ten – or 39% - LGBT adults also would consider declining a job promotion if it required them to transfer to a state where same-sex marriages are not recognized, while nearly half – or 47% – of gay and lesbian adults, counted specifically, concur.

“As marriage equality reaches more states and touches more lives, more families and more workplaces, employers based in states that deny this right will begin to face increasing challenges in trying to recruit and retain top LGBT talent,” said Out & Equal Founding Executive Director Selisse Berry. “Marriage equality is a real business issue for all of America’s business leaders as they strive to achieve a diverse, well-qualified and loyal workforce.”

The 2009 Out & Equal Workplace Survey was conducted online by Harris Interactive® in conjunction with Out & Equal and Witeck-Combs Communications, among 2,709 U.S. adults, of whom 378 self-identified as, lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT). Beginning in 2002, this survey has become a trusted annual barometer of attitudes surrounding LGBT issues in the workplace and is the longest-running national survey of its kind.

The survey also highlights ways today's economy is changing attitudes and openness among LGBT workers. For instance, one in five – 21% - LGBT adults report the current economy has had an impact on their willingness to be open about their sexual orientation with co-workers or colleagues, and 22% percent of LGBT adults added today's economy has had an impact on their willingness to be open about their sexual orientation with their boss or manager. The survey showed only 41 percent of LGBT adults declare they are "out" to their co-workers/colleagues, which represents a modest decrease from the same survey question asked in September 2008 when 49 percent of LGBT adults reported being "out" in the workplace.

When it comes to seeking a diverse work environment, a majority – with 55% – of LGBT respondents said that is important that they work for a company known to recruit employees from a variety of diverse backgrounds, compared with 34 percent of heterosexual respondents. This is an increase from June 2008, by contrast, when 42 percent of LGBT adults said that is important that they work for a company known to recruit employees from a variety of diverse backgrounds.

"We don't promote diversity in the workplace just because it's morally right. We promote diversity because it's essential to the success of any organization that aspires to reach a broad cross-section of Americans," said John Berry, Director of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management and keynote presenter for this year's Out & Equal Workplace Summit, held Oct. 6-9 in Orlando, Fla. "Only a workforce that reflects our country's wide variety of backgrounds and perspectives will fully serve the American people."

How comfortable do employees feel expressing their identities at work? Nearly half (47%) of LGBT adults say they are comfortable introducing their spouse, partner or significant other to their co-workers in their current or their most recent job, compared to larger majority a of heterosexual adults (58%). This represents an increase since the same question was asked in June 2008 when only 37 percent of LGBT respondents said they were comfortable introducing their spouse, partner or significant other to their co-workers. Also, only 3 percent of LGBT adults say they are not at all comfortable introducing their spouse, partner or significant other to their co-worker, compared with 11 percent in June 2008.

In contrast, when it comes to employees being open to their boss or manager, 47 percent of LGBT adults said they were comfortable introducing their spouse, partner or significant other to their boss or management in their current or most recent job, compared to more than half of heterosexual adults (56%). This is an increase in confidence, since this question was asked in a similar survey in June 2008 when only 39 percent of LGBT respondents said they were comfortable introducing their spouse, partner or significant other to their boss or management. However, only 39 percent of LGBT adults say they are comfortable having a photo of their spouse, partner or a significant other on their desk or in their office in their current or their most recent job, compared with a majority (52%) of heterosexual adults.

Fears of discrimination continue to explain why some employees are not comfortable being open at work. The new survey shows that 44 percent of LGBT adults have faced some form of discrimination on the job

because of their sexual orientation, a decrease measured since this question was asked in June 2008 when 56 percent LGBT of adults reported they had faced some form of discrimination. In the last 24 months, 18 percent of all LGBT adults surveyed said they faced anti-gay comments in the workplace because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

What do heterosexual Americans believe about fair workplace treatment for all? The survey reports that more and more heterosexual adults think their LGBT colleagues deserve fair and equal treatment in the workplace. When asked, 86 percent of all heterosexual adults agree that how an employee performs at his or her job should be the standard for judging an employee, not their sexual orientation, compared with 79 percent in a similar survey conducted in June 2008. In comparison, 52 percent of heterosexual adults and 57 percent of LGBT adults agree lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people are treated fairly and equally in their workplace, which represents a modest increase from last June's survey when 42 percent of heterosexual adults and 48 percent of LGBT adults agreed they were treated fairly.

More than half (56%) of heterosexual adults disagree that they would be uncomfortable if their boss were openly lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender, compared to 48 percent in June 2008, and nine of ten (93 %) heterosexual adults say they would have a positive or neutral reaction if someone with whom they had been working with told them that he or she is gay or lesbian.

The survey also shines a spotlight on the need for more public education about the lack of protections today in the workplace for LGBT employees. Nearly half (45%) of LGBT adults say they do not know that under federal law it is legal for an employer to fire someone because they are lesbian, gay or transgender. This is an increase from June 2008 when, in a similar survey, 37 percent of LGBT adults said they did not know that under federal law it is legal for an employer to fire someone because they are lesbian, gay or transgender. In comparison, 61 percent of heterosexual adults did not realize no such federal law exists today.

Considering on the job protections for transgender workers, the survey showed 77 percent of heterosexual adults agree that how an employee performs at their job should be the standard for judging an employee, not whether or not they are transgender, compared to 67 percent of heterosexuals when asked the same question in August 2007. Also, 57 percent of heterosexual adults agree a person who is transgender is entitled to equal benefits on the job, such as health insurance for their partner or spouse, compared to 50 percent in August 2007.

More than half (55%) of heterosexual adults agree if a person is transgender, and has made the physical transition from a man to a woman, this person should be able to use the women's restroom, compared to 48 percent in an August 2007 survey. Fifty-eight percent of heterosexual adults agree if a person was born female, but now identifies as male, this person should be allowed to wear appropriate clothing for men to work, provided it conforms with dress code policies for men's apparel, compared with 47 percent of respondents asked in August 2007.

The release of this new workplace study comes as Out & Equal kicks off its annual Workplace Summit, considered the world's premier conference on LGBT workplace equality and attracting thousands of participants. The Out & Equal Workplace Summit will be held October 6-9 at Disney's Coronado Springs Resort, Florida. LGBT employees and straight allies, along with human resources and diversity professionals, representing some of the nation's most prominent companies—a majority from the Fortune 500—are set to participate in this year's summit, focused on achieving workplace equality.

For more information about the Summit or to register, please visit [www.outandequal.org](http://www.outandequal.org).

### **About Out & Equal Workplace Advocates**

Out & Equal Workplace Summit is the largest national nonprofit organization devoted exclusively to LGBT workplace Equality. Every year, the organization hosts the annual Out & Equal Workplace Summit that is devoted to furthering workplace equality. This year's Summit will bring together nearly 2,000 LGBT employees, allies, human resources professionals, LGBT workplace advocates and other committed to achieving equality in the workplace. This year's speaker lineup is impressive, including Sharon L. Allen, Deloitte's Board Chair, John Berry, the highest-ranking LGBT official in President Barack Obama's administration as the Director of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, Kevin Brockman, Executive Vice President of Global Communications for Disney-ABC, and Kenji Yoshino, author of "Covering: The Hidden Assault on Our Civil Rights."

In addition to the annual Workplace Summit, Out & Equal offers: Building Bridges Diversity Training specific to LGBT workplace issues; a growing network of regional affiliates that includes New York City, Dallas/Fort Worth, San Francisco, Chicago, Rocky Mountain, Arizona, Washington, DC, Southern California, Philadelphia, Kansas City, Portland, and Seattle; provides support to LGBT employee resource groups; offers the monthly Town Call speaker series webinars; a national quarterly newsletter; its unique career development website LBGTCareerLink; and the annual Executive Forum.

Out & Equal is headquartered in San Francisco, Calif. Out & Equal champions safe and equitable workplaces for LGBT. The organization advocates building and strengthening successful organizations that value all employees, customers and communities.

**For more information, including how to register for the Summit, visit [www.outandequal.org](http://www.outandequal.org).**

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### **Methodology**

Harris Interactive conducted the study online within the United States between August 10 and 18, 2009, among 2,709 adults (ages 18 and over), of whom 2,274 indicated they are heterosexual and 378 self-identified as gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (including an over-sample of lesbian and gay adults). Figures for age, sex, race, education, region and income were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. In addition, the results for the gay and lesbian sample were weighted separately based on profiles of the gay and lesbian population that Harris Interactive has compiled through many different online surveys. Propensity score weighting also was used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

All sample surveys and polls, whether or not they use probability sampling, are subject to multiple sources of error which are most often not possible to quantify or estimate, including sampling error, coverage error, error associated with nonresponse, error associated with question wording and response options, and post-survey weighting and adjustments. Therefore, Harris Interactive avoids the words "margin of error" as they are misleading. All that can be calculated are different possible sampling errors

with different probabilities for pure, unweighted, random samples with 100% response rates. These are only theoretical because no published polls come close to this ideal.

Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in Harris Interactive surveys. The data have been weighted to reflect the composition of the adult population. Because the sample is based on those who agreed to participate in the Harris Interactive panel, no estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

#### **About Witeck-Combs Communications, Inc.**

Witeck-Combs Communications, Inc. is the nation's premier marketing communications and consulting firm, specializing in developing and implementing effective strategies reaching the gay and lesbian consumer market. With over 15 years experience in this unique market, Witeck-Combs Communications not only serves as a bridge between corporate America and gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender consumers (LGBT), but also provides counsel to countless non-profit organizations that aim to educate the public on gay and lesbian issues or to better reach their LGBT membership.

In April 2003, American Demographics magazine identified Bob Witeck and Wes Combs as two of 25 experts over the last 25 years who have made significant contributions to the fields of demographics, market research, media and trendspotting for their path breaking work on the gay and lesbian market, and in 2006 Bob Witeck and Wes Combs co-authored **Business Inside Out: Capturing Millions of Brand Loyal Gay Consumers** (Kaplan Publishing), considered the first-ever book on marketing insights, practical tips and strategies targeting the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender market. They have appeared in worldwide media outlets including Fortune, CNBC, CNN, Reuters, Associated Press, Ad Age, New York Times and Washington Post. For more information, visit [www.witeckcombs.com](http://www.witeckcombs.com).

#### **About Harris Interactive**

Harris Interactive is a global leader in custom market research. With a long and rich history in multimodal research, powered by our science and technology, we assist clients in achieving business results. Harris Interactive serves clients globally through our North American, European and Asian offices and a network of independent market research firms. For more information, please visit [www.harrisinteractive.com](http://www.harrisinteractive.com).

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## APPENDIX TABLES

### TABLE 1

#### ATTITUDES TOWARD WORKING IN STATES THAT RECOGNIZE SAME SEX MARRIAGE

“In several states same sex couples are able or will be able to legally marry by January 2010. In those states, same sex couples have the same rights and benefits that are given to heterosexual married couples.

Let's assume you live in one of those states (regardless where you live now or your current marital status). How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?”

Base: LGBT Adults

	I would consider changing jobs if my employer required me to transfer to a state where same sex marriages were not recognized		I would consider declining a job promotion if it required me to transfer to a state where same sex marriages were not recognized.		Other factors being equal, I would prefer a job with an employer in a state where same sex marriages are recognized over an employer in a state that does not recognize same sex marriages	
	LGBT	LG	LGBT	LG	LGBT	LG
<b>AGREE (NET)</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>79</b>
Strongly agree	21	30	19	29	46	63
Somewhat agree	22	19	20	18	25	16
<i>Neither agree nor disagree</i>	26	25	26	22	12	11
Somewhat disagree	9	6	11	12	4	1
Strongly disagree	16	17	19	18	8	7
<b>DISAGREE (NET)</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>8</b>
Decline to answer	6	3	5	2	5	2

### TABLE 2

#### IMPACT OF ECONOMY ON WILLINGNESS TO BE OPEN ABOUT SEXUAL ORIENTATION

“How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement? The current economy has had an impact on my willingness to be open about my sexual orientation with:

Base: LGBT Adults

	Co-workers/Colleagues	Boss/Managers
<b>AGREE (NET)</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>
Strongly agree	9	11
Somewhat agree	12	10
<i>Neither agree nor disagree</i>	15	15
Somewhat disagree	7	7
Strongly disagree	32	31
<b>DISAGREE (NET)</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>38</b>
Not applicable	22	24
Decline to answer	2	2

**TABLE 3  
BEING OPEN ABOUT SEXUAL ORIENTATION WITH OTHERS**

“In general, do you consider yourself open about your sexual orientation with the following people?”

Base: LGBT Adults

	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>
Close Friends	79	73
Acquaintances/casual friends	61	49
Brothers and sisters	57	50
Parents	56	46
Other relatives (such as grandparents, cousins)	50	42
Co-workers/Colleagues	49	41
Boss/Managers	37	34
Church, synagogues or other place of worship (if attend regularly)	18	17
Another person not mentioned	39	30
None	15	21

**TABLE 4  
IMPORTANCE OF RECRUITING EMPLOYEES FROM DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS**

“All other things being equal, when making decisions about your own career, how important is it for you to work for a company that is known to recruit employees from a variety of diverse backgrounds?”

Base: LGBT Adults

	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>
<b>EXTREMELY/VERY IMPORTANT (NET)</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>55</b>
Extremely important	26	31
Very important	16	24
<i>Important</i>	27	15
Somewhat important	13	12
Not at all important	11	8
<b>NOT AT ALL/SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT (NET)</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>20</b>
Not applicable	6	10

**TABLE 5**  
**COMFORT LEVEL IN SHARING PERSONAL INFORMATION AT WORK**  
 “In your current or your most recent job, how comfortable are you or were you ...?”

Base: All Adults

	<b>Extremely/Very Comfortable (NET)</b>	<b>Comfortable</b>	<b>Somewhat/Not at All Comfortable (NET)</b>	<b>Not applicable</b>
<b>Having a photo of your spouse, partners or a significant other on your desk or in your office</b>				
LGBT 2009	39	20	12	29
LGBT 2008	32	20	18	31
Heterosexual 2009	52	14	8	26
Heterosexual 2008	49	16	7	28
<b>Introducing your spouse, partner, or significant others to your co-workers</b>				
LGBT 2009	47	16	13	24
LGBT 2008	37	20	18	25
Heterosexual 2009	58	15	7	20
Heterosexual 2008	55	17	6	21
<b>Introducing your spouse, partner, or significant other to your boss or management</b>				
LGBT 2009	47	18	12	24
LGBT 2008	39	18	17	26
Heterosexual 2009	56	16	7	21
Heterosexual 2008	53	17	8	22

**TABLE 6**  
**EVER DISCRIMINATED IN THE WORKPLACE**

“Have you ever faced any of these forms of discrimination in the workplace because of your sexual orientation or gender identity?”

Base: LGBT adults

	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Faced Discrimination (NET)</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>44</b>
Closeted (can't talk freely with others, take dates to functions)	24	19
Harassed on the job by co-workers	13	16
Anti-gay comments	31	26
Denied a promotion or job advance	10	10
Fired or dismissed unfairly	8	8
Partner not considered as such (for social functions, insurance)	22	25
Pressured to quit job because of harassment or hostility	3	5
Other form of discrimination	18	9
Never faced any form of discrimination in the workplace because of my sexual orientation or gender identity	43	53
Decline to answer	11	3

Note: Responses may not add up to 100% due to rounding

**TABLE 7**

**IN LAST 24 MONTHS DISCRIMINATION IN THE WORKPLACE**

“In the last 24 months, have you ever faced any of these forms of discrimination in the workplaces because of your sexual orientation or gender identity?”

Base: LGBT adults

	<b>In Last 24 Months</b>
I have never faced any form of discrimination in the workplace because of my sexual orientation or gender identity	60
Anti-gay comments	18
Closeted (can't talk freely with others, take dates to functions)	14
Partner not considered as such (for social functions, insurance)	6
I was pressured to quit job because of harassment or hostility	6
I was harassed on the job by co-workers	4
I was fired or dismissed unfairly	3
I was denied a promotion or job advance	2
Other form of discrimination	5
Decline to answer	10

Note: Responses may not add up to 100% due to rounding

**TABLE 8  
EMPLOYMENT AND SEXUAL ORIENTATION**

“How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement? –.”

Base: Heterosexual adults

	<b>How an employee does his or her job should be the standard for judging an employee, not their sexual orientation</b>		<b>Gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people are treated fairly and equally in my workplace</b>		<b>I would be uncomfortable if my boss were openly gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender</b>	
	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>
	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b>AGREE (NET)</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>18</b>
Strongly agree	68	75	27	35	11	9
Somewhat agree	11	11	15	17	11	9
<i>Neither agree nor disagree</i>	8	5	21	15	17	15
<b>DISAGREE (NET)</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>56</b>
Somewhat disagree	2	1	5	5	10	13
Strongly disagree	2	2	3	3	38	43
Not applicable	5	4	24	21	8	8
Decline to answer	3	3	4	4	4	3

Note: Responses may not add up to 100% due to rounding

**TABLE 9  
COWORKER REACTIONS**

“If someone with whom I had been working with told me that he or she is gay or lesbian, my reaction would be....”

Base: Heterosexual adults

	2008	2009
	%	%
<b>Positive/Neutral (NET)</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>93</b>
Positive	38	37
Neutral	52	56
Negative	11	8

Note: Responses may not add up to 100% due to rounding

**TABLE 10  
EMPLOYMENT AND SEXUAL ORIENTATION**

“Federal law – specifically the Civil Rights Act of 1964 – was adopted to prohibit employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex and national origin. The law does not include any protections for people on the basis of sexual orientation (gays and lesbians) and also does not protect transgender individuals. Therefore, under federal law, it is legal for an employer to fire someone because they are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender. Did you know that under federal law it is legal for an employer to fire someone because they are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender?”

Base: All adults

	2008		2009	
	Hetero- sexuals	LGBT	Hetero- sexuals	LGBT
	%	%	%	%
Yes	26	55	28	47
No	61	37	61	45
Not sure	13	8	11	7

Note: Responses may not add up to 100% due to rounding

**TABLE 11  
JUDGING TRANSGENDER EMPLOYEES**

“Transgender is a broad term that applies to people who live all or much of their lives expressing a different gender from their sex at birth. In other words, transgender people simply feel like their assigned sex at birth fails to reflect their true gender. Or said another way, a person that is born female feels that they really should have been born a male and wishes to live openly as a man (or vice versa). How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement?”

Base: Heterosexual adults

	<b>How an employee performs at their job should be the standard for judging an employee, not whether or not they are transgender</b>		<b>A person who is transgender is entitled to equal benefits on the job, such as health insurance for their partner or spouse</b>	
	2007	2009	2007	2009
	%	%	%	%
<b>AGREE (NET)</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>57</b>
Strongly agree	51	65	35	42
Somewhat agree	16	12	15	15
<i>Neither agree nor disagree</i>	12	8	19	16
<b>DISAGREE (NET)</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>19</b>
Somewhat disagree	4	1	8	7
Strongly disagree	10	7	14	12
Not applicable	2	4	3	4
Decline to answer	5	3	6	4

Note: Responses may not add up to 100% due to rounding

Base: Heterosexual adults

	<b>If a person is transgender, and has made the physical transition from a man to a woman, this person should be able to use the women’s restroom</b>		<b>If a person was born female, but now identifies as male, this person should be allowed to wear appropriate clothing for men to work, provided it conforms with dress code policies for men’s apparel</b>	
	2007	2009	2007	2009
	%	%	%	%
<b>AGREE (NET)</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>58</b>
Strongly agree	28	37	29	39
Somewhat agree	20	18	18	19
<i>Neither agree nor disagree</i>	22	20	21	20
<b>DISAGREE (NET)</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>14</b>
Somewhat disagree	6	5	8	5
Strongly disagree	13	10	15	9
Not applicable	3	4	3	4
Decline to answer	7	5	6	4

Note: Responses may not add up to 100% due to rounding