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AMERICA AT HOME STUDY RELEASES FIRST POST-PANDEMIC SURVEY OF MOTIVATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR HOW AMERICANS VIEW AND WANT TO LIVE IN THEIR HOMES

Third wave of national consumer survey reinforces earlier findings and uncovers new insights about how homes can better accommodate current and future generations

SAN DIEGO, CALIF. (January 19, 2023) – The first and most comprehensive national consumer survey of its kind, The America at Home Study today released results from its third survey, with hard data about changing consumer perceptions of home in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. With the findings from the first two waves released in June 2020 and December 2020 respectively, the third wave is the Study's first post-pandemic survey that uncovers how living behaviors and needs have shifted over the past two years. Kantar, the world's leading market data and insights company, collaborated with study founders on waves two and three to apply their consumer generational analysis to the data. The latest results solidify numerous trends identified in the first two waves and identify new findings and consumer motivations that reinforce an imminent need for new living solutions.

Among the new insights, the America at Home Study accurately predicted how many Americans would purchase a new home from 2020 to 2022. In 2020, 16% of renters and owners surveyed said they were more inclined to purchase a new home due to COVID-19. Wave three confirmed 16% of homeowners purchased in the last two years, creating the recent real estate boom. Looking ahead, results from wave three forecast an optimistic look for new home demand, with 51% of renters across all generations noting their intent to purchase a home in the next three years.

Another notable finding, "home" evokes more positive emotions than at the start of the pandemic and is more important than ever. When asked, "What does home mean?" the top answers grew in importance. Americans associate home as a safe space first (93%, up from 89%), followed by comfort (91%, up from 86%) and relaxation (87%, up from 82%).

Post-Pandemic Wellness Drives New Motivations Across All Generations

Wave three uncovered new understandings about the well-being of Americans and how personal wellness influences lifestyle and home preferences. Coming out of the pandemic, Americans are more attuned to the different dimensions of health and wellness, but they feel less well overall.

People are significantly less satisfied with their well-being across multiple dimensions, suggesting there's a more critical role for homes to help improve this. In October 2020 (wave two), there was a 17% gap between the importance of physical wellness and the stated satisfaction respondents felt with it, with that gap jumping to 34% in October 2022 (wave three). Similarly, the same gap grew for both financial wellness (from 21% to 32%) and emotional wellness (from 16% to 24%). For all generations, all areas of well-being increased in importance since 2020. Emotional well-being is now the most important area



overall (89%, up from 83%), followed by financial well-being (86%, up from 83%), mental health (85%, up from 80%), and physical health/fitness (83%, up from 76%).

“Up to 80% of our health outcomes are related to our physical environment, and the rising importance of all elements of well-being are driving new motivations for the physical spaces we want in our homes and communities,” said Teri Slavik-Tsuyuki, Co-Founder of America at Home Study, Principal at tsk ink LLC, and Co-Chair of the Global Wellness Institute’s Wellness Communities & Real Estate Initiative. “Saving money used to be the top reason Americans were interested in wellness features in a home, but wave three shows that now it’s just as important these features improve our health and wellness. Financial wellness still matters, but Americans value wellness in a more holistic way today.”

The importance of emotional well-being is reflected in people’s hopes for their futures as well. When asked what they were most hopeful for, respondents selected “immediate family” (62%), followed by “a better, healthier me” (39%) and “my home” (34%). Furthermore, when respondents ranked the most important rooms in their homes, they identified the family room (46%), primary bedroom (19%), and kitchen (18%) as most important.

In contrast, respondents stated their biggest concerns were inflation (62%), the economy/jobs (36%) and climate change (31%). Despite those worries, it’s interesting that only 15% of respondents said they are putting off big purchase decisions like buying a new home or car. Additionally, with climate change as a top three concern, it’s notable that there was a predominance of eco-friendly home features selected when respondents expressed the attributes in a home that were important to their wellness. A private outdoor space or garden (67%) and energy conservation (65%) were top priorities for wellness, followed by water conservation (54%), eliminating chemicals and VOCs (54%), low energy windows (52%) and a home that minimizes impact on the environment (46%).

These features – in addition to the most important rooms – embody what home really means to consumers: a place that provides comfort, security, relaxation, and a gathering space for family, which is also linked to their feelings about improving their personal health and wellness.

“We’ve already shown that Americans have strong opinions about what they want in a new home, but the insights from wave three brought underlying wellness considerations to the surface, helping us see the strong relationship between personal well-being and what we want from our physical environments,” said Nancy Keenan, Co-Founder of the America at Home Study and President of DAHLIN Architecture | Planning | Interiors. “With the overarching desire for better wellness, the lasting reality of lifestyle changes including hybrid work, and the stated importance of home, this creates an abundance of new home design opportunities. The struggle for both shared and individual spaces that work for multiple purposes should guide builders, architects, developers, and other home professionals as we plan new ways of living in the future.”

Changes in Behavior Spur Changes in Surroundings

Even though the importance of home is expanding, the physical home may not need to. Data between waves two and three showed a 20% increase in renters who would be at least “somewhat willing” to accept a smaller yard. Additionally, 50% of people are “somewhat willing” to accept a “smaller than



ideal” home. To better understand this, it’s important to recognize the in-home and community features Americans desire.

Different generations showed varied interests and priorities, but when asked about home features that were missing in their homes today, three specific features took the top spots across the board. Millennials favored expanded and better designed storage above all (62%), while storage came in second for Gen X and Baby Boomers (54% and 49%, respectively). The most important home feature for Gen X and Baby Boomers was greater technology and energy efficiency (58% and 50%, respectively), which was second most important for Millennials (59%). For every generation, the third most important home feature was a better equipped kitchen for cooking (Millennials at 58%, Gen X at 47%, and Baby Boomers at 38%).

Beyond the home, community features are also important for post-pandemic American lifestyles. Wave three revealed new data indicating a large portion of respondents want a new home with walkable access to coffee shops and casual eateries (43%). This was previously unidentified as an important community feature, yet now it outranks quintessential community features like small parks with seating (40%), farmers markets (38%), gym/fitness facilities (37%) and outdoor fitness spaces (36%).

“There is a robust consumer mindset for homes and communities that support how people want to live today, and that doesn’t have to mean a big home or a big yard. It means a home that works for different family formations and helps people live better, healthier lives,” said Belinda Sward, Co-Founder of the America at Home Study and Founder of Strategic Solutions Alliance. “Home means so much more since the COVID-19 pandemic. It is a place of refuge and reflection, an extension of who we are, as individuals and as families.”

From Speculation to Confirmation: How the Need for Data Became a Growing Commitment

The third wave of the Study aligns with the first two waves as a nationally representative survey of 3,000 U.S. adults between the ages of 25-74 with an annual household income of \$50,000 per year or more. The Study was hosted by Gazelle Global Research in October 2022, then appended with Kantar’s MindBase™ syndicated consumer attitudinal segmentation. Altogether, the America at Home Study has collected insights from nearly 10,000 people across all three waves.

“Kantar is excited to bring a generational lens to the America at Home Study. Digging into generational differences is at the core of what we do, and we’re eager to see the impact these findings will have on product and service designers,” said J. Walker Smith, Knowledge Lead at Kantar. “This data shows consumer needs are changing in fundamental ways. Home is the center of life and increasingly part of what we see in the wellness space. How we live and what we want from our homes is evolving in very specific ways, and homebuilders who heed this knowledge will have a competitive edge and understand how to create the value people are looking for in homes in the coming years.”

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About the America at Home Study

The America at Home Study (americaathomestudy.com) was hosted online in three waves, revealing Americans' desire for home purchases, how they feel about and live in their homes, and what changes they'd like to see as a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The first wave took place April 23-30, 2020 with a nationally representative sample of 3,001 consumers 25-74 years of age with household incomes of \$50,000+. The second wave took place September 24 – November 6, 2020, with a nationally representative sample of 3,935 consumers in the same age and income brackets. The third wave took place October 6-31, 2022, with a nationally representative sample of 3,000 consumers in the same age and income brackets. The America at Home Study was spearheaded by marketing expert Teri Slavik-Tsuyuki of tst ink, consumer strategist Belinda Sward of Strategic Solutions Alliance, and architect Nancy Keenan, president of DAHLIN. The second and third waves were further enhanced with Kantar's MindBase™ consumer attitudinal and generational segmentation, providing deeper insights across twelve unique consumer targets, and enabling potential for direct/digital activation and enhanced messaging.