

SURVEY SAYS: NOTHING NORMAL ABOUT “THE NEW NORMAL” IN NORTHEAST OHIO

Local Survey Reveals Shopping, Travel and Work Habits Have Changed During COVID-19; Majority Expect Changes to Become “The New Normal” (And We Hate That Phrase)

CLEVELAND, Ohio (June 30, 2020) – The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way of life of many Northeast Ohioans, and those changes may be lasting. A survey of more than 200 Northeast Ohio residents and employees, conducted by integrated marketing communications company [Fahlgren Mortine](#), found that 73% of the region are working from home at least several days a week and 53% expect that to continue once the pandemic is behind us. By contrast, 75% worked from home no more than once a week before the pandemic. Fahlgren Mortine shared the results of the survey, which Northeast Ohioans took between May 23 and June 4, 2020, in an infographic released today.

Shopping habits have changed as well. Consumers are planning on shopping less in-person and more online and local: 68% say they will shop less in-store at national chain stores over the next six months, while 42% plan to shop online more at Northeast Ohio businesses over the same time frame.

Northeast Ohioans are also feeling fatigue surrounding some of the pandemic-related words and phrases. When asked what phrase they never wanted to hear again, 61% said “the new normal,” 49% said “social distancing” and 42% said “flatten the curve.”

“While changes to the lifestyles and work habits of fellow Northeast Ohioans are consistent with national trends and not surprising, the belief that those changes may be long lasting is notable,” said Melissa Carney, Fahlgren Mortine vice president and Cleveland managing director. “As communicators, this will present new challenges and opportunities in reaching our audiences and drive new thinking for ourselves and our clients.”

More than 65% of survey respondents say they receive COVID-19 updates directly from the Ohio Department of Health or from national news outlets, and 45% get their news from The Plain Dealer or Cleveland.com. Social websites are also a top news source, as 45% say they’re getting COVID-19 news from social media.

[View the infographic.](#) Additional survey results follow this release.

About Fahlgren Mortine

Fahlgren Mortine is an integrated marketing and communications company with 2019 revenue of \$33 million. The company is headquartered in Columbus, Ohio with locations in Cleveland and Dayton, Ohio; Charleston, W. Va.; Boise, Idaho; Denver, Colo.; Myrtle Beach, S.C.; Chicago, Miami and New York City. Fahlgren Mortine provides an integrated offering to clients around the world with industry specializations in business-to-business, consumer and retail, education, healthcare, logistics, technology, tourism/economic development and lifestyle brands. Capabilities include social media, digital services, advertising, public relations, research, branding, media planning/buying, creative and design. TURNER, a subsidiary of Fahlgren Mortine, delivers industry-leading public relations, content development, influencer programming and social media services and represents some of the world’s best resorts, destinations and

lifestyle brands. Fahlgren Mortine is a top 20 ranked firm in the U.S. by O'Dwyers and was named a 2020 Best Agency to Work for by PRovoke Media, a 2019 Holmes Report Corporate/B2B Agency of the Year, a 2019 PRWeek Midsize Agency of the Year finalist, a 2018 PR News Top Place to Work and 2018 Bulldog Reporter Global Agency of the Year. For more information, visit www.fahlgrenmortine.com and www.turnerpr.com.

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Survey Highlights

Survey of more than 200 Northeast Ohioans from May 23 through June 4, 2020

When asked what phrase they never want to hear again

- 61% said "the new normal"
- 49% said "social distancing"
- 42% said "flatten the curve"

When asked about shopping plans (over the next 6 months)

- 58% plan to shop in-store for groceries less or much less over the next 6 months
- 37% plan to shop online for groceries more or much more over the next 6 months
- 68% plan to shop in-store at national chain businesses less over the next six months
- 42% plan to shop online at Northeast Ohio businesses more over the next six months

When asked about travel plans

- 53% feel comfortable traveling around Ohio
- 44% feel comfortable traveling domestically (driving)
- 77% feel uncomfortable traveling domestically (flying)
- 75% feel uncomfortable traveling internationally (driving)
- 84% feel uncomfortable traveling internationally (flying)

When asked about where receiving news about COVID-19, the top sources included:

- 68% said national news
- 66% said Ohio Department of Health
- 45% said The Plain Dealer or Cleveland.com
- 45% said social media

When asked about remote work habits

- 73% expect to work remotely at least several days a week after COVID-19
- 23% were working remotely at least several days a week before COVID-19

When asked about confidence in remote work habits

- 73% said they feel confident they can work remotely

When asked about business travel plans in the next 6 months

- 73% expect to be traveling less for business
- 27% expect to be traveling the same for business

When asked about how their organization has adapted to reach its primary audiences

- 45% said developing online tools
- 65% said hosting more virtual events
- 27% said donating services or product
- 20% said changing investment in marketing tactics