

In a Digital Age First, Teens Choose Texting Over Instant Messaging as Preferred Method of Communication

--The Number of Texting Teens Has Increased 50% Since 2007--

NEW YORK, NY, February 22, 2010—For the first time in the digital age, more teens are choosing texting over instant messaging as their preferred method of communication, according to the latest *TeenMark* study from Mediamark Research & Intelligence (MRI).

Some 57% of teenagers report they text messaged on their cell phones in the last 30 days, compared to 42% who instant messaged on a computer in the same time frame, according to the *TeenMark* study.

<u>Teen Texting vs. Instant Messaging</u>				
Percentage of Teens Who Used Either Method In the Past 30 Days.				
	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2009 vs. 2007</u>
Texting	38%	46%	57%	+50%
Instant Messaging on computer	48%	46%	42%	-13%

With affordable unlimited texting plans available from most cell phone carriers, it's easier than ever for teenagers to use their thumbs to communicate. The number of teens who text has increased 50% since 2007, vs. a 13% decline in the number of teens using instant messaging. Texting is now the #1 feature teens use on mobile cell phones, aside from making phone calls.

Not only are more teens texting, there is ample evidence that texting holds an important place in teens' lives. For instance, 78% of teens who text agree that "text messaging is an important part of my daily life." And, 75% of texting teens report they text while watching TV. The most common reason teens text is to communicate with friends and family. However, 1 in 5 texting teens also use texting to vote in contests, and 1 in 7 texting teens report they looked at an advertisement sent with a text message.

"These findings from MRI's *TeenMark* study provide insight into the shifting digital socializing habits of teenagers," said Anne Marie Kelly, SVP, Marketing & Strategic Planning at MRI. "Texting via cell phone is a growing form of communication among teens and, therefore, a growing platform for advertisers. Many marketers now offer coupons, promotions and other marketing messages through texting. And TV shows like *American Idol* and *So You Think You Can Dance* have recognized the influence of teen texting by incorporating texting into their voting and communication methods."

MRI's *TeenMark* study captures data from more than 3,600 12-19 year old participants from households included in MRI's *Survey of the American Consumer*. The *TeenMark* 2009 study comprises data that were collected from April to August 2008 and from April to August 2009. In addition to product, media and demographic data, MRI's *TeenMark* offers a wealth of psychographic data covering topics such as beauty, finance, food, leisure, technology & lifestyles.

CONTACTS: Anne Marie Kelly, SVP, Marketing and Strategic Planning, MRI: 212-884-9204, annemarie.kelly@mediamark.com; Steve Ellwanger, Press Counsel Group: 203-856-8303, steve@presscounselonline.com.

About MRI...

Founded in 1979, MRI interviews approximately 26,000 U.S. adults in their homes each year, asking about their use of media, their consumption of products and their lifestyles and attitudes. Because these interviews are structured as an area probability study, the results are projectable to the entire U.S. adult population.

MRI is the country's leading provider of magazine audience and multimedia research data. The company releases data from its *Survey of the American Consumer* (adults 18+) twice yearly, in the spring and fall. MRI data have become the basic media-planning currency for the majority of the media plans that are created each year by national advertisers and their agencies.

MRI Starch, a leader in providing marketing intelligence of print advertising effectiveness, is a division of MRI.

MRI is part of GfK Group AG, Nuremberg, Germany. The GfK Group is the No. 4 market research organization worldwide. Its activities cover the three business sectors of Custom Research, Retail and Technology and Media. The Group has 115 companies covering more than 100 countries. Of a total of approximately 10,000 employees, more than 80% are based outside Germany.

For more information, please visit <http://www.mediemark.com/>.