



# Email Time Suck Survey

Survey prepared and fielded by **Kelton**

February 2015

# Is Email Taking Over Our Lives?

Email has become so ingrained in our daily lives that it follows us everywhere.



In this digital age, online communication has overtaken in-person interactions. A new study by FewClix shows that, on average, Americans spend more time on email than in face-to-face meetings. What's more, time spent on email trumps other forms of communication, such as social media and texting. It's so ingrained in Americans' daily lives that thoughts of their inbox follow them on vacation, when spending time with their children, when in the shower and even while in bed with someone.

Americans admit that this form of technology is taking them away from other things that are important to them. The constant distraction leaves them feeling disconnected from the people in their lives. If they could avoid the stress of an overloaded and disorganized inbox and spend less time with email, they would spend more time living fuller lives.

# The Inconspicuous Time Thief!

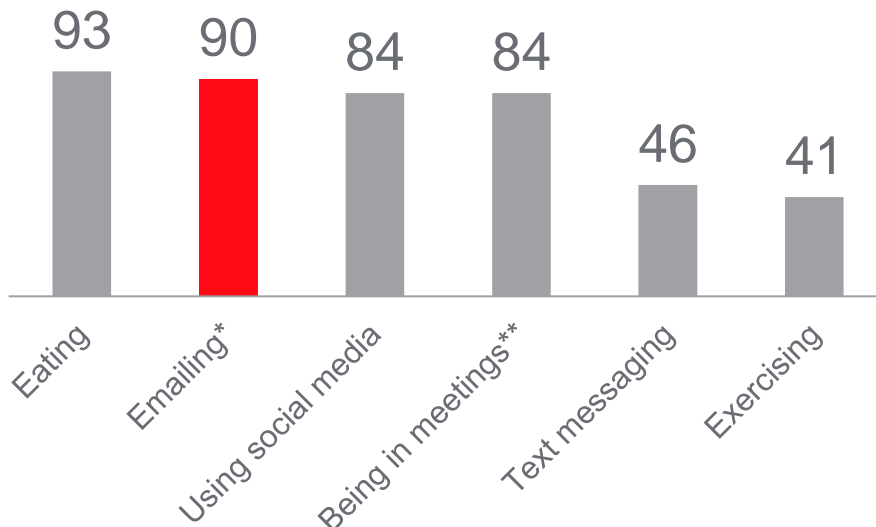
1

**Widespread Routine.** On average, over nine in 10 (92%) of Americans **spend time with their email every day.**

**Daily Drain.** What's more, doing so typically takes them **one and a half hours.** To put this in perspective, we take about the same amount of time to **eat (one hour and 33 minutes).** Less time is typically spent **on social media (one hour and 24 minutes), text messaging (46 minutes) and exercising (41 minutes)** every a day.

2

**How much time do you spend doing the following in a typical day?**  
(average, in minutes)



\*among those who email in a typical day

\*\*among those who are in meetings in a typical day

- Of those who use email in a typical day, **over 15% spend MORE THAN 2 hours every day.**
- On average, women spend more time than men (98 min vs. 81 min), and those 35+ spend more time than those 18-34 (91 min vs. 87 min) on email in a typical day.
- Those in the South spend on average 100 minutes on email per day, compared to those in other regions of the country, who spend on average 84 minutes.

**The Moment I Wake Up.** Email has so permeated our daily lives that we're thinking about it even when we're not in front of our computer or device. Two in five (40%) Americans admit email is the **first thing they think about in the morning**.

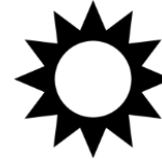
**That Awkward Moment.** Thoughts of email have even interrupted our "quality time", such as when we're **on vacation (35%)** or spending time with children (21%). Email even follows us **to the bathroom (26%)**, and while **in the shower (18%)**. Nearly one in ten (9%) even admit email has popped into their heads **while in bed with someone**.

- 18-34 year-olds are more likely than those 35+ to think about email in the shower (24% vs. 15%) or in bed with someone (13% vs. 7%).
- More parents than non-parents have thought about email while going to the bathroom (31% vs. 24%), in the shower (22% vs. 16%) or in bed with someone (12% vs. 7%).

**Multitasking Moms and Dads.** What's more, over one in five (21%) parents admit their email inbox has stolen their attention when they're **spending time with their child**.



I have thought about email while...



First waking up in the morning  
40%



On vacation  
35%



Going to the bathroom  
26%



Spending time with my child\*  
21%



In the shower  
18%



In bed with someone  
9%

# Email Distracts & Disconnects

Time devoted to email diminishes the personal connections many crave.

1

**Pulled Focus.** With their inboxes cluttering their personal time, **36 million (15%)** Americans admit that **email distracts them from other things that are important to them.**

Email distracts me from other things that are important to me



**36 million**

2

**Together, Detached.** Personal interactions could be the priority that's suffering. Nearly one in five (**19%**) Americans say that **the more they use technology, the more disconnected they feel** from the people in their life. And **31 million (13%)** would go as far as to say that **technology destroys work/life balance.**

- *One-quarter (25%) of Americans 18-34 feel the more they use technology, the more disconnected they feel from the people in their lives, compared to fewer (17%) of those 35 and over.*
- *More parents than non-parents (23% vs. 17%) feel using technology leaves them feeling disconnected from the people in their lives.*

3

The more I use technology, the more disconnected I feel from the people in my life



**19%**



**31 million**

Technology destroys work/life balance

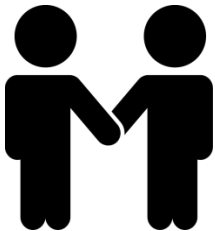
4

**Personal Possibilities.** Americans imagine if they could spend one hour less on email per day, they would most want to use that time to **be with loved ones**, such as family, their significant other or friends (33%), **relax** (28%), **sleep** (10%) or actually **get work done** (9%).

- *Women are more likely than men (38% vs. 28%) to most want to spend time with loved ones, such as family, their significant other or friends.*
- *More Americans 18-44 than 45+ (15% vs. 6%) would most want to catch a few z's.*
- *Parents are more likely than non-parents to most want to spend time with loved ones (38% vs. 31%) or get work done (13% vs. 8%).*

5

If I could spend one hour less on email per day, I would **most** want to use that time to...



Be with loved ones  
33%



Relax  
28%



Sleep  
10%



Get work done  
9%

# More Email = More Stress

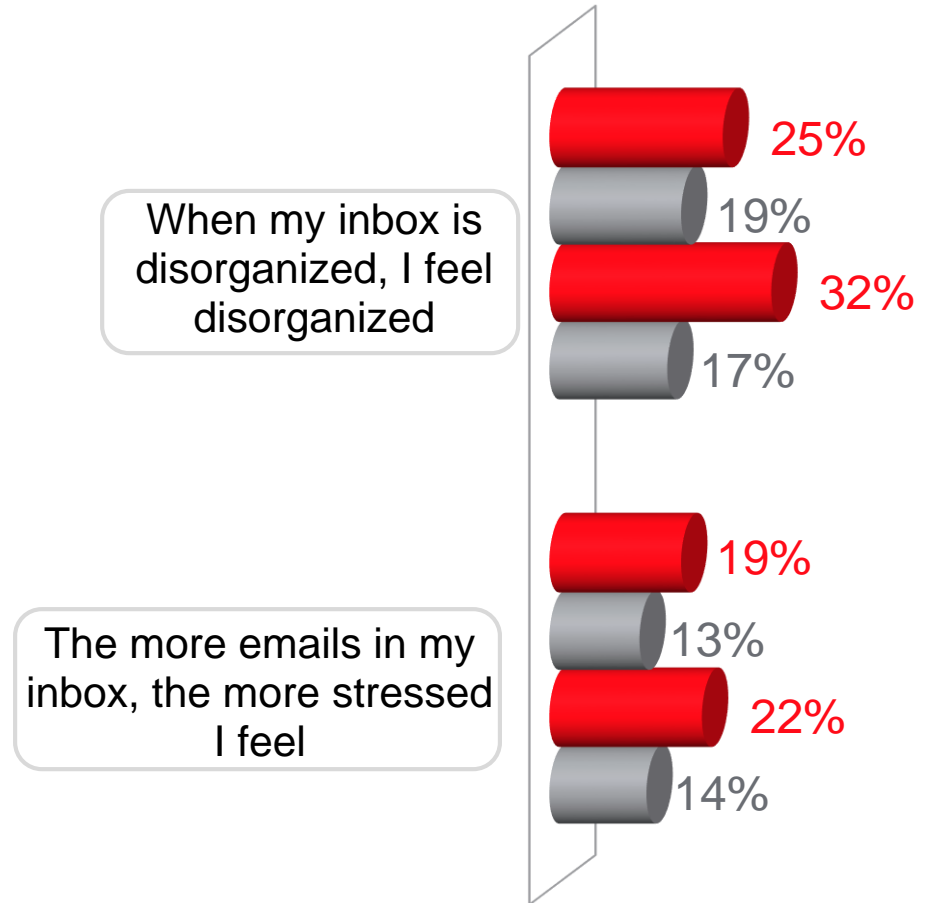
An organized inbox is desired, but sorting emails manually is far from a solution.

**1** **Email High Tide.** Tension rises when emails come flooding. According to **38 million (16%)** Americans, **the more emails that are in their inbox, the more stressed they feel.** After all, a full inbox means more to tackle, and over one in five (**22%**) admit that **when their inbox is disorganized, they feel disorganized.**

- *More emails in their inbox increases stress for more women than men (19% vs. 13%) and more 18-34 year-olds than those 35+ (22% vs. 14%).*
- *Women are more likely than men (25% vs. 19%) and those 18-34 are more likely than those 35+ (32% vs. 17%) to feel disorganized when their inbox is disorganized.*

2

■ Women ■ Men ■ 18-34 ■ 35+



3

**“Sort” of Ineffective.** Sorting emails into the appropriate folders or the trash bin is necessary to keeping this resource in shape. However, the time spent making their inbox more manageable doesn’t necessarily make Americans more efficient. Nearly one in six (16%) say **sorting through emails actually decreases their productivity.**

4



**16%** “Sorting through emails decreases my productivity”

5

**Task They’d Rather Not Tackle.** In fact, this is such a frustrating process that many Americans would even choose other mundane or stressful tasks to avoid organizing their inbox, such as **doing laundry (38%)** or **paying their bills (23%)**. Close to one in ten (9%) would even rather **take a math test.**

- *More women than men would rather do laundry (42% vs. 33%), and more men than women would rather take a math test (12% vs. 7%).*
- *Parents are more likely than non-parents to trade organizing their inbox for doing laundry (43% vs 36%) or paying their bills (28% vs. 21%).*



**23% would rather pay their bills than organize their email inbox**



**Margin of Error** = +/- 3.1 Percent

**Sample** = 1,018 Nationally Representative Americans Ages 18 and Over

**About The Survey** The **FewClix Email Time Suck Survey** was conducted between February 3<sup>rd</sup> and February 10<sup>th</sup> among 1,018 nationally representative Americans ages 18 and over, using an e-mail invitation and an online survey. Quotas are set to ensure reliable and accurate representation of the entire U.S. population ages 18 and over.

Results of any sample are subject to sampling variation. The magnitude of the variation is measurable and is affected by the number of interviews and the level of the percentages expressing the results.

In this particular study, the chances are 95 in 100 that a survey result does not vary, plus or minus, by more than 3.1 percentage points from the result that would be obtained if interviews had been conducted with all personas in the universe represented by the sample. The margin of error for any subgroups will be slightly higher.

**Kelton** is a leading global insights firm serving as a partner to more than 100 of the Fortune 500 and thousands of smaller companies and organizations. Utilizing a wide range of customized, innovative research techniques and staff expertise in marketing, branding, PR, media, and business strategy, Kelton helps drive our clients' businesses forward.

For more information about **Kelton** please call 1.888.8.KELTON or visit [www.keltonglobal.com](http://www.keltonglobal.com).

For more information about **FewClix for Outlook**, please visit [www.fewclix.com](http://www.fewclix.com)