

**EMBARGOED UNTIL: 11.00am on 16 December 2012**

## **British workers say “give me the gossip but hands off my mug”**

Vodafone UK and YouGov survey investigates what Britain’s workers are happy to share – and what they’re not

- Treats and office gossip are the most common things shared by British workers with colleagues, but when it comes to more personal items, such as lunch and coffee mugs, it’s hands off
- Just 16% say the festive season makes them more likely to share things with colleagues
- Tough economic times highlight the need to encourage the ‘right kind’ of sharing in the workplace, says relationship psychologist Corinne Sweet

Gossip and the occasional treat are the most commonly shared items across British workplaces, but more personal items such as coffee mugs are off limits, according to a new survey of the nation’s sharing habits at work. And while the end of year festive season is traditionally seen as a time for goodwill, many British workers say it has no effect on their willingness to share.

The survey was conducted by YouGov on behalf of Vodafone to support [Vodafone Data Sharer](#), which enables businesses to save money by sharing their mobile internet allowance across employees and devices. Over 1,000 workers were questioned in the survey and almost half (46%) said the things they most share with colleagues was treats such as sweets. Gossip is a close second with 45% saying they like to engage in a quick chat. Workers in Scotland and the East of England are the top gossipers with 61% and 52% of workers surveyed, respectively, saying they like to share a good gossip.

Food is the most contentious item, with 31% saying their lunch would be one of the top three things they would least like to share, closely followed by an equal aversion to sharing a favourite coffee mug (30%). People in Scotland (41%) said they have the biggest gripe when it comes to other people borrowing their mug.

Christmas is traditionally seen as a time for sharing, but across Britain’s workplace the Christmas spirit has yet to take hold, according to the survey. Of the 1,153 workers polled, 75% said they wouldn’t be more likely to share just because it was Christmas. Workers in London, perhaps surprisingly, were most likely to share more things over the festive period (23%), compared with any other region. In Scotland, for example, 82% of workers said Christmas did not make them more likely to do it.

## **Vodafone UK**

Vodafone House, The Connection, Newbury, Berkshire RG14 2FN, England  
[www.vodafone.com](http://www.vodafone.com)

### **Vodafone UK Media Relations**

Telephone: +44 (0) 1635 666777

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Page 2 of 3

Chocolates (62%) were the most likely item distributed by those workers who would be more likely to share things over Christmas, followed by mince pies on 39%. Less than one-fifth (17%) of Christmas sharers, however, would split a bottle of champagne at their work Christmas party.

Relationship psychologist and self-help author Corinne Sweet, best known for her work on Big Brother comments: *"During tough economic times people are a bit more wary about sharing things of monetary value (food, wine), or sharing due to health implications (like mugs, earphones, even kisses), as they need to stay healthy to keep working. The economic gloom and doom has dampened our generosity somewhat as a nation. However, increased prudence has also meant we are aware of sharing things which are precious, and stretch resources more thoughtfully today."*

Peter Boucher, Enterprise Marketing Director at Vodafone UK adds: *"We know from working with British businesses every day that people are actually becoming increasingly open to sharing in the workplace, demonstrated by their willingness to adopt new working styles, including sharing a desk. Using tools like Vodafone Data Sharer, workers can collaborate even more and businesses can make the most of their resources by pooling data allowances amongst employees and devices. But Britain's workers shouldn't be worried: introducing more flexible ways of working through tools such as Vodafone Data Sharer shouldn't mean they have to share personal things like their mug if they don't want to!"*

## Ends/

For further information:  
Vodafone UK Media Relations  
Telephone: 01635 666777  
<http://mediacentre.vodafone.co.uk>

## Notes for editors:

All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 2037 adults, of which 1153 were working adults with one or more colleagues. Fieldwork was undertaken between 30th November - 3rd December 2012. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all GB adults (aged 18+).

Further regional statistics are available on request.

## About Vodafone Data Sharer:

- Vodafone Data Sharer is a mobile internet plan designed to make using data easy. Businesses only need one plan for all employees, and there are no individual limits. There is one large allowance that everyone can tap into and share from
- This different approach to buying and using data means employees can use the internet freely without worrying about individual data allowances, resulting in more productivity, more flexibility and better customer services

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Page 3 of 3

- Employers choose the amount of data they want and are notified by text when they reach 80% and then 100% of their usage levels. They can also monitor their usage by texting 'datashare' to 40560 to get a real time free text update to see how many MBs have been used. And of course employers can choose to buy more data if they need to

For more information visit [vodafone.co.uk/datasharer](http://vodafone.co.uk/datasharer) Or if your business has 1-5 employees, call 08080 996778, and if your business has more than five employees, call 08080 044496