

Headlines



COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS IN

March 10, 2008

Every two years, the Community Marketing program of Renaissance Rock Island conducts a telephone survey to determine statistically valid perceptions about Rock Island. Personal Marketing Research, Inc. (PMR) was contracted to administer the survey October 20 to November 25, 2007.

The sample for the study was comprised of 801 respondents, allowing for an overall margin of error of +/- 3.5 percentage points at 95% level of confidence. 400 residents and 401 non-residents were questioned.

The top three findings from the survey are:

- 1. Rock Island residents feel safe where they live; Quad Citizens feel safe downtown**
80% of Rock Island residents feel very safe or safe in the neighborhoods where they live. The majority of all respondents (48%) felt very safe or safe in downtown Rock Island.
- 2. City and school services above average; property taxes appropriate**
Almost all city services and all school services had above average ratings by residents. 56% of residents say the property taxes they pay for city services are appropriate for the services they receive. 47% of residents say the property taxes they pay are appropriate for the services they receive from the school district.
- 3. "Rock Solid, Rock Island" ads seen; image changed**
Over one-third (36%) of all respondents stated they had specifically seen the "Rock Solid, Rock Island" advertisements. 15% of the respondents who had seen the "Rock Solid, Rock Island" ads indicated they had changed their image of Rock Island (or 6% of all respondents). 8% of those that saw the "Rock Solid, Rock Island" ads say they are doing something differently because of the ads (or 5% of all respondents).

Following are some of the highlights from the 2007 study.

Overall Perceptions of Rock Island

- One sentence perception: 28% of all respondents think that Rock Island is a good place or city overall, with 37% of residents thinking so.
- 65% of residents indicated their perception of Rock Island was positive, 25% said neutral, and 10% indicated their perception was negative. 24% of non-residents have a positive perception, 47% have a neutral perception, and 27% have a negative perception. The older the respondents, the more positive their perception of Rock Island.
- 44% of residents in Rock Island felt very safe in the neighborhoods where they live, 36% of residents felt safe, 17% felt somewhat safe, and only 3% did not feel safe.
- Rock Island residents say the best thing about Rock Island is good city government and services (11%). Non-residents say the best thing about Rock Island is the downtown / The District (28%).

- Residents stated their best experience in Rock Island was quality of life (14%) and non-residents said downtown / The District (20%).
- Looking at characteristics of Rock Island, diversity of people had the most positive ratings with a median rating of 1.84 for residents (1 is best).

Comparing the Quad Cities

- 24% of all respondents thought Rock Island's services were better than the other Quad Cities, 46% thought they were the same, 13% thought they were worse, and 17% were unsure how Rock Island city services compared. 42% of residents thought they were better, 41% the same, and 10% worse.
- 15% of all respondents thought Rock Island schools were better than the other Quad Cities, 45% thought they were the same, 23% thought they were worse, and 17% didn't know. 26% of residents thought they were better, 41% the same, and 18% worse.

Reasons to Live in Rock Island

- 28% of residents indicated they have lived in Rock Island their whole life, and 26% have lived there over 25 years.
- 20% of residents lived in Moline before moving to Rock Island, 19% moved from out of state, 17% moved from Illinois cities surrounding the Quad Cities, and 13% moved from Davenport.
- Rock Island residents chose to live and move to Rock Island for 1) family reasons 2) housing and 3) close to work.
- If non-residents moved from Rock Island it was because of 1) housing reasons 2) family reasons and 3) job reasons.
- The majority of Rock Island residents work in Rock Island (44%).

The Future

- Looking ahead 10 years, 43% of all respondents thought Rock Island would stay the same, 40% thought it would be better, and 12% thought it would be worse.

City Services

- Almost all city services have above average ratings by residents.
- 56% of Rock Island residents said the property taxes they pay are appropriate for the city services they receive, representing a 13% increase from the 2005 study. The older the respondents were the more they thought the amount of taxes paid were appropriate.
- 50% of residents are in favor of leaf burning; this is down from 56% in 2005. 45% of residents are not in favor of leaf burning.
- 33% of residents said they would pay city bills online or register for programs on the city's web site. 29% of residents indicated they use the city website to get information about Rock Island. Younger residents use the city's web site more and would pay bills or register online.
- 40% of residents indicated they use the city's public access channel 9 to get information about Rock Island.
- A large majority (73%) of residents indicated they would participate in recycling if the city picked up recyclables curbside. Over half (55%) of those who said they would participate would be willing to pay a monthly charge of \$3 to \$4 a month for the service.

Schools

- 9% of all respondents surveyed have children attending school in Rock Island. Of those who are attending school in Rock Island, 75% attend public schools. 16% of residents have children attending Rock Island public schools.
- All school services have above average ratings by residents.

- 29% of residents thought Rock Island schools were better or much better than 5 years ago, and 28% of non-residents felt they were better or much better. Residents with children in Rock Island public schools were more positive with 48% stating schools were better or much better.
- Significant changes were seen from 2005 when asking residents about test scores. 28% of all respondents believe test scores have increased, up from 15% in 2005. 33% don't know about the test scores, as opposed to 57% who didn't know in 2005. There was a large increase in the number of non-residents who believe test scores have increased with 21% in 2007 compared to 4% in 2005.
- 48% of residents agree while 42% do not agree they support the closing of more schools in an effort to save taxpayers money and to provide a higher quality education for students.
- 46% of Rock Island residents support and 46% don't support raising property taxes to maintain the quality of education.
- 47% of Rock Island residents said the property taxes they pay are appropriate for the services they receive from the school district, a 9% increase from the 2005 study.

Downtown / The District

- 36% of respondents indicated Rock Island has the best downtown.
- 36% of respondents indicated that they had been downtown 1-3 times in the past month, and 25% indicated they had been downtown 4 to more than 10 times in the past month. The most frequent users are 18-24 year olds and 45-54 year olds.
- The main reasons to go downtown were dining (25%) and entertainment / bars (20%). The number one reason residents go downtown is for dining (28%) and for non-residents it is entertainment / bars (26%).
- The majority of respondents felt very safe or safe downtown (48%), while 41% felt somewhat safe.
- 17% of residents and 15% on non-residents indicated they attended Gumbo Ya Ya and Ya Maka My Weekend.

Riverfront Development

- 38% of all respondents thought it was an excellent idea to redevelop the riverfront (compared to 25% in 2005), and 40% thought it was a good idea. 35-44 year olds had the highest percentage of respondents that said redeveloping the riverfront was an excellent idea (47%).

Rock Solid Advertisements

- Over half (58%) the respondents indicated they had seen advertisements for the city of Rock Island. Over one-third (36%) stated they had specifically seen the "Rock Solid, Rock Island" advertisements.
- 15% of the respondents who had seen the "Rock Solid, Rock Island" ads indicated they had changed their image of Rock Island (or 6% of all respondents). The largest age group that said their image had changed was 25-34 year olds (24%).
- 8% of those that saw the "Rock Solid, Rock Island" ads say they are doing something differently because of the ads (or 5% of all respondents).

For questions or more information, please contact Jennifer Fowler, Community Marketing Director at 309.788.6311. To view the 30-page Executive Summary of the survey [click here](#).