

# Are You an 'e-mailaholic' ?

Are you a slave to email? Do you find it hard to turn your back on your inbox for more than a few minutes?

If so, you could be one of the UK's fast-growing band of 'emailaholics' according to a recent study.

The Inbox/Outbox 2007 survey by the Mesmo Consultancy found that around 50% of business users find it almost impossible to turn their back on their email, even whilst away on holiday or off sick. Around 12% of those surveyed said they checked their email at least 5 times a day when away from the office – and not because they were required to do so by their employers.

The report concludes that many UK business users are self-inflicted emailaholics. Indeed 67% of those surveyed admitted they kept in touch with work because they choose to do so, with just 20% saying they were expected to do so.

The figures fly in the face of the much-hyped 'work life balance' many companies are keen to promote. And just last month the International Labour Organisation announced that 25% of UK workers exceeded 48 hours per week.

Part of the problem has been attributed to today's 'always contactable' society where most users expect a reply to a business email within hours. The widespread rise in email addiction seems to be fuelling this trend – and vice versa.

A spokesperson for Mesmo Consultancy who ran the survey commented: "the majority of users are expecting to receive a reply to a business email in less than 24 hours. And if a reply is sent immediately, that sets the expectation for the next round of communications, fostering a very reactive and rather unproductive way of working."

Even the research itself – carried out by email - highlighted the fact that most business users are prepared to interrupt their work flow in order to respond to email. Almost half the respondents replied to the emailed survey request within an hour of it being sent.



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