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SERVICE VS. SUSTENENCE: POLITE WAITERS TRUMP GOOD CUISINE WHEN AMERICANS DINE OUT, OPINION RESEARCH CORPORATION “OUCH POINT” STUDY FINDS

PRINCETON, NJ – June 28, 2007 — Rude waiters have the most negative impact on both the dining experience and hence a restaurant’s reputation, according to one quarter of respondents who participated in Opinion Research Corporation’s latest “Ouch Point” study.

Following closely behind an impolite wait staff were hosts and maître d’s who underestimate the waiting time for a table (20 percent). Issues related to the food itself were considered much less bothersome, with only 12% of respondents citing ill-prepared meals and 10% identifying cold food as their greatest dining out dissatisfaction.

“Eating out is one of America’s favorite pastimes and is increasingly a necessity for today’s time-pressured consumers,” said Jeffrey T. Resnick, President of Opinion Research USA. “The smart restaurateur will make certain that great service is part of the customer experience. It will win loyalty and build profits.”

The study also revealed a gap in tolerance thresholds between older and younger age groups. Those in the 18-24 year old bracket cite rude wait staff as their chief complaint (55 percent), compared with only 32 percent of respondents over the age of 65. Said Resnick, “Perhaps patience comes with age, but it’s no excuse for poor service.”

Differences in household income also have an impact on tolerance thresholds. Respondents with an annual household income of over \$75,000 are more likely to take issue with rude waiters than those in the \$25K-and-under income bracket (29 percent versus 24 percent) or confront hosts who underestimate waiting times (24 percent versus 15 percent).

The survey yielded the following list of top dining out Ouch Points:

Rude waiters	25%
Hosts/Maître d’s who underestimate waiting time for a table	20%
Slow service	15%
Poorly prepared food	12%
Cold food	10%
Being ushered out of the restaurant after paying the check	3%
Dirty menus	2%
Fast service	1%

Opinion Research Corporation’s “Ouch Point” series is a monthly survey examining tolerance thresholds in a variety of common scenarios facing Americans in both their professional and personal lives every day.

About Opinion Research Corporation

Founded in 1938, Opinion Research Corporation, an infoUSA company, helps its clients grow their business by leveraging the insights of market research. The firm has been conducting national, speech reaction, state and flash/overnight polls for CNN since April 2006. To learn more, visit www.opinionresearch.com.

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