



## Media Release

November 2017

### **\$59.4 BILLION WORTH OF CLUTTER STORED IN AUSTRALIAN HOMES IMPACTS AUSSIE LIVES**

*New research reveals Australian's love affair with clutter*

A study released today by Choosi has revealed that on average, Australians estimate the total financial value of the clutter currently in their homes at approximately \$6,623 equating to \$59.4 billion worth of clutter across the nation.

Examining Australia's habits and attitudes towards clutter, the *Choosi Clutter Report* is the sixth instalment in a research series that aims to explore the key barriers and drivers behind the financial and social behaviours in today's modern society.

One in two (54%) Aussies estimate they can fill half of a room or more in their house with clutter and a quarter (25.6%) of Australians admit their home is more cluttered now compared to five years ago.

Choosi spokesperson Katrina Foster said, "What is interesting to note is the financial value this clutter has and the enormous physical space it occupies in the home. In fact, as a nation, if we put all our boxes of clutter in a line it would go around Australia's coastline almost six times.

"With new products constantly being marketed at us it can be hard to say no and easy to justify a need for new products, yet this can lead to mass build-up of clutter."

The clutter in our homes is also impacting upon Australian's health, wellbeing and relationships according to the data. A quarter (25.4%) of Australians admit that clutter creates stress or anxiety in their lives, with almost one in five Aussies even admitting that clutter discourages them from inviting friends or family to their home (17.5%) and that it impacts their happiness in a negative way (16.5%).

The stress that clutter has on relationships is significant according to the data, and Aussies admit to having arguments with their significant other about clutter in their home. Remarkably, one in nine (11.9%) claim that clutter-related issues have even led to separation or divorce. Adding to this, almost two in five (37.1%) Aussies say having excess clutter in their household leads to disagreements. Household arguments also break out over clearing the clutter and discarding existing possessions (33.4%) and about adding to the clutter by making new purchases (23.6%).

Kirsty Farrugia, Professional Organiser said, "The value of clutter is not only financial but sentimental. Items that are tied to emotionally significant memories may represent a piece of an individual's identity, hence the difficulty in throwing it out. Australians with a lot of clutter in their home may not be holding onto the clutter itself, but the memories it represents."

While decluttering their homes, Aussies on average estimate that they get rid of approximately 6.8 large bin bags each year. Key reasons for decluttering include feeling refreshed (49.0%), with a further two in five saying that decluttering their home makes them happier (44.3%).

“Australians upgrade their items but do not throw away the older versions, thus creating clutter. In efforts to avoid a build-up of clutter people can be thoughtful about whether these items continue to be of use to them or whether someone else can get better use from them or they should be recycled” said Mrs Farrugia.

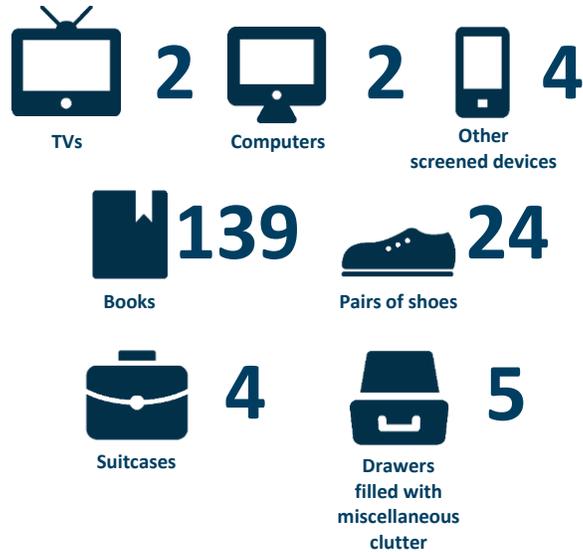
Decluttering is a charitable exercise as well as a cathartic one, with close to a third (32.0%) of Australians saying that giving items to charity is the most effective way of decluttering their home, whilst more than a quarter (26.3%) point to simply throwing things away. Aussies are also making use of the convenience of the second-hand economy, with close to half (45.2%) using online services to sell or trade unwanted items.

“Australians enjoy a sense of achievement and satisfaction from decluttering their homes, and the convenience of the second-hand economy means that they can cash in on their old items for extra spending money.”

“An overwhelming number of Australians are more than happy to save time and substitute extra cash for an altruistic feeling that donating to charity can bring, showing the Aussie characteristic of generosity remains within our contemporary society,” Mrs Foster concluded.

#### **Additional findings:**

- Close to three in ten (29.2%) say their home is more cluttered now compared to ten years ago.
- Close to one in five (19.5%) Aussies say old appliances and electronics are the most ridiculous items they store. Other items listed include clothing and accessories (12.8%).
- Close to three in ten (27.6%) Australians say they or other members of the household complain about the clutter in their home daily or weekly, whilst a further one in five (20.8%) say these complaints come on a monthly basis.
- When it comes to holding onto possessions, Aussies most commonly say household items with emotional/sentimental value are most prized (47.7%) followed by items that are considered irreplaceable (39.6%). They also consider how much it would cost to replace (30.5%), as well as its practical/functional value (25.4%).
- More than one in five (21.9%) Aussies say photo albums are the most valued household item they have, whilst one in six cite jewellery (17.9%) or sentimental collectibles (16.9%).
- Interestingly, close to one in six (15.7%) Australians claim the clutter in their homes have little to no emotional or sentimental value.



Source: Choosi Clutter Report (October 2017)  
 Question: Including all members of your household, how many of the following items do you have?

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**About Choosi**

Choosi provides information to help customers compare, choose and apply for a range of insurance products online and over the phone. Choosi’s free comparison service lets you compare the benefits and prices of a range of popular insurance products, so you can confidently choose cover that suits your needs, your budget and lifestyle.

**About the Choosi Clutter Report**

In order to explore the financial value of clutter in Australian homes, CoreData surveyed 1,000 typical Australians across the nation in October 2017.

The sample collection employed soft quotas to monitor representativeness of the Australian population. Hard quotas by state were also engaged to ensure all the main states were represented with sufficiently robust samples (NSW = 200, VIC = 200, QLD = 200, WA = 200, Remaining states/territories = 200).