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Topical Survey 2015

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Topical Survey 2015

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The Center for the Digital Future

Topical Survey 2015

Welcome to the Topical Survey conducted by the Center for the Digital Future.

The Center for the Digital Future was among the earliest research organizations to devote its primary efforts to exploring the views and behavior of Internet users and non-users in the United States, and was the first to develop a longitudinal panel study of these issues. The annual report we produce, “Surveying the Digital Future,” now approaching its thirteenth edition, is the longest continuing study of its kind.

Because many of the questions in our main annual study continue from year to year, we recognized the need to create a second study that explores a broad range of issues that emerge quickly as technology evolves. Our questions in this Topical Survey examine social media use, technology in schools, privacy while online, the effects of technology on stress, mobile devices and driving, and personal norms regarding the presence of technology in social settings. The Topical Survey was initiated in 2012-13; this is our first full report of findings.

Overall, the goal of both of our studies is the same: to explore the ongoing evolution of digital technology and how Americans accept and adapt to these developments.

This work is part of the World Internet Project, which is organized and coordinated by the Center for the Digital Future in the USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism. Included in the World Internet Project are the Center’s work and partner studies in countries in North America, Europe, South America, Asia, the Middle East, Australasia, and Africa.

We hope the Topical Survey will provide you with a constantly-evolving snapshot of the views and behavior of Americans, as we continue to develop our understanding of how the digital technology is transforming our world.

Jeffrey I. Cole, Ph.D.
Director, USC Annenberg School Center for the Digital Future
Founder and Organizer, World Internet Project

The Center for the Digital Future
Topical Survey 2015

Each Topical Survey explores a broad range of issues involving the digital experience.

This report explores only a sampling of the findings from the survey. For more detailed data, contact the Center for the Digital Future at info@digitalcenter.org.

For research methods, see page 57.

Screen sizes for work, gaming, and watching video

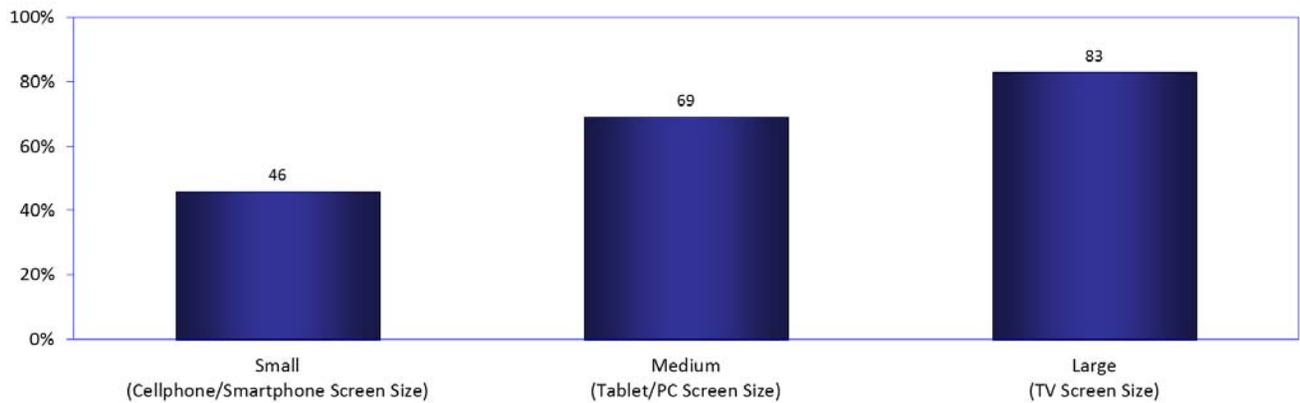
How comfortable are television viewers and users of mobile devices with the sizes of their screens for work, or gaming, or watching videos?

1. Comfort with screen sizes for work

Overall, generally high percentages of users are comfortable with all three screen sizes for work – whether small (phone size), medium (tablet or PC screen), or large (TV screen size).

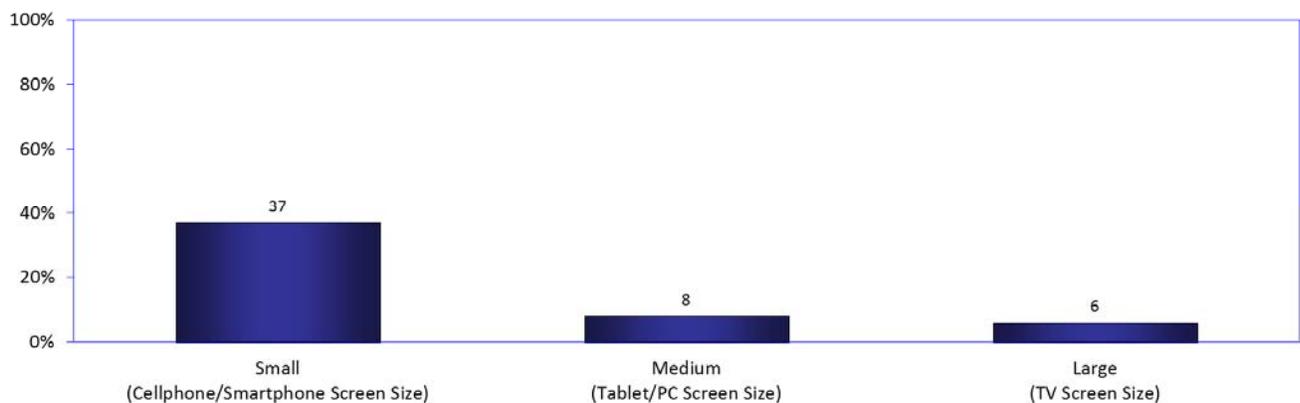
Nearly half of employed respondents – 46 percent – said they were comfortable or very comfortable with working on a small screen, while 69 percent reporting the same response for tablet or PC screens, and 83 percent for television-size screens.

How comfortable are you with the following screen sizes while working?
(Employed respondents – comfortable/very comfortable)



Q1A (Y-1)

How comfortable are you with the following screen sizes while working?
(Employed respondents – not comfortable/not comfortable at all)



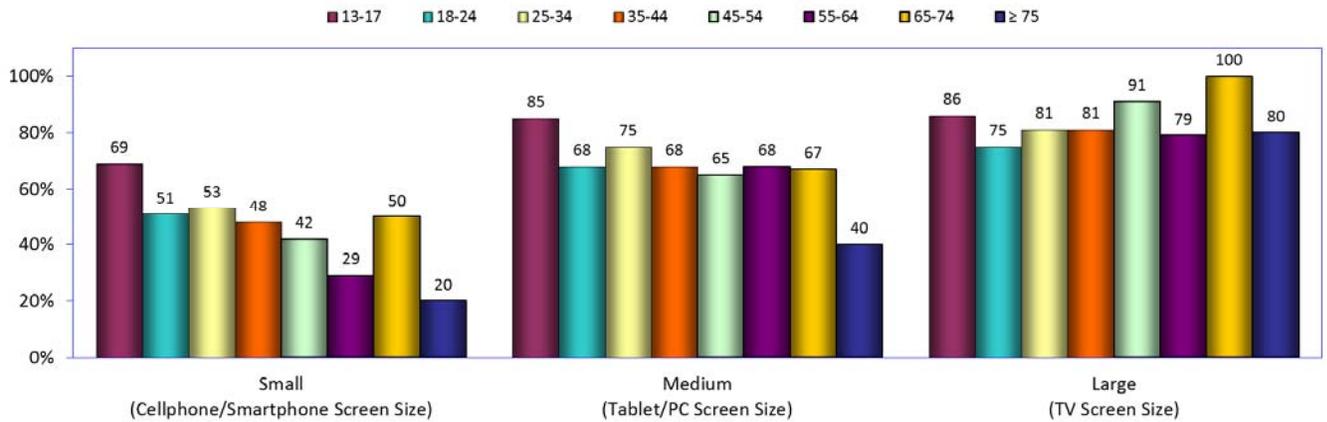
Q1A (Y-2)

2. Comfort with screen sizes for work: by age

For all age ranges in general, the larger the screen the more comfortable people are with it.

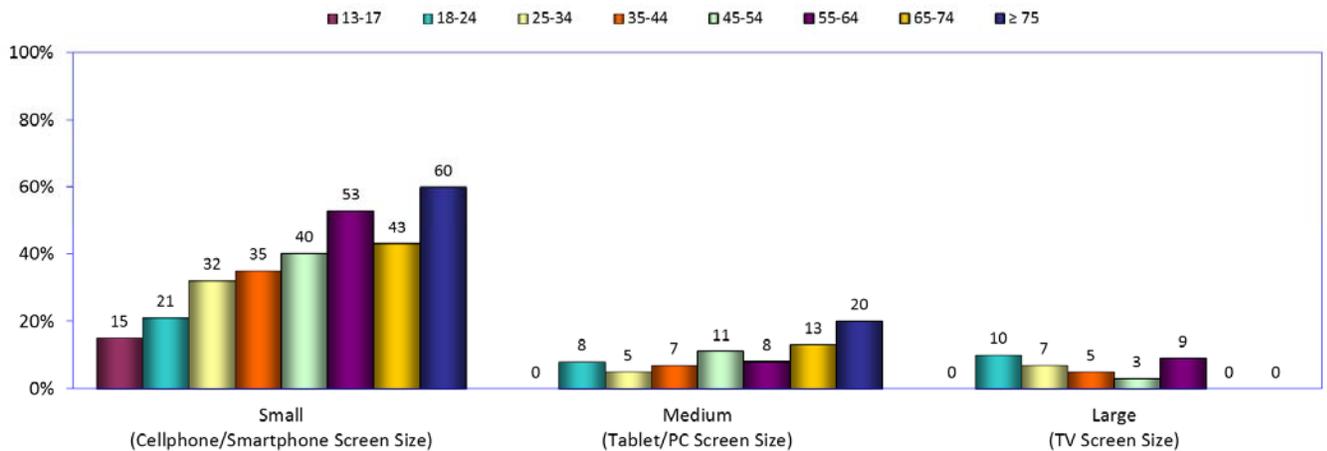
At least 65 percent of employed respondents in all age ranges except age 75 and older are comfortable or very comfortable working with a medium-size screen, while three-quarters or more of respondents in all ages are comfortable or very comfortable working with a large screen.

**How comfortable are you with the following screen sizes while working?
(Employed respondents – comfortable/very comfortable)**



Q1A (M-1)

**How comfortable are you with the following screen sizes while working?
(Employed respondents – not comfortable)**



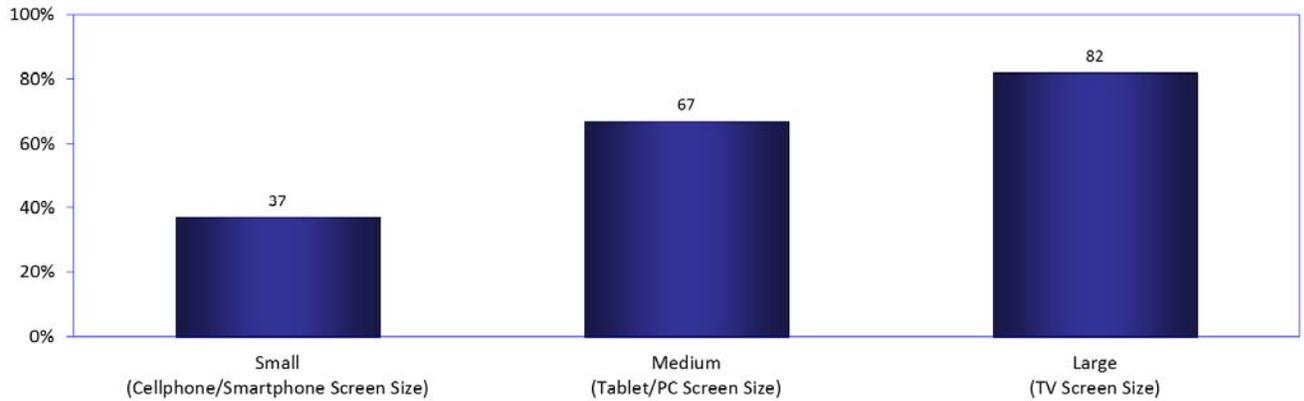
Q1A (M-2)

3. Comfort with screen sizes: for gaming

Compared to views about screen sizes for work, slightly lower percentages of respondents are comfortable with each of the screen sizes they use for gaming.

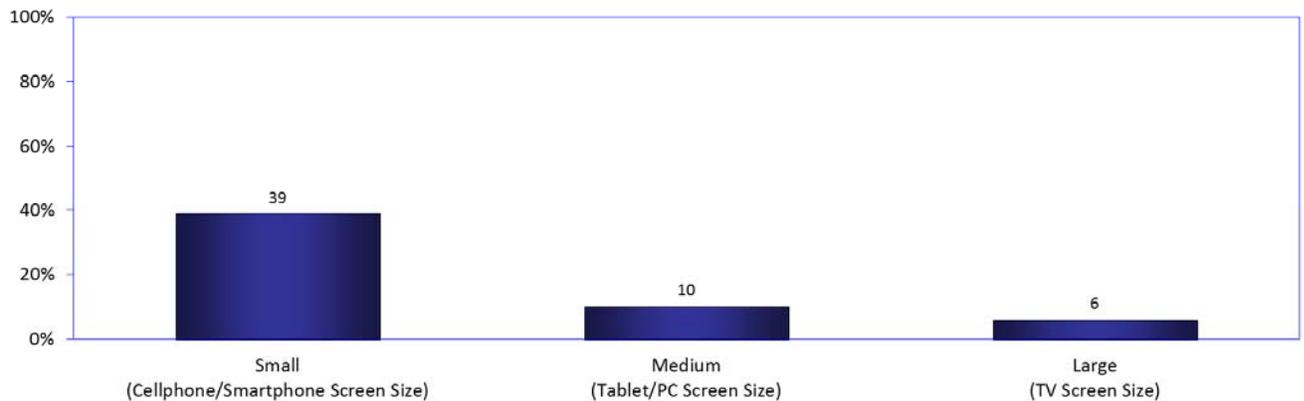
Overall, 37 percent of all respondents said they were comfortable or very comfortable with small screens for gaming, compared to 67 percent who were comfortable with medium screens, and 82 percent who were comfortable with television-size screens.

**How comfortable are you with the following screen sizes while gaming?
(Respondents – comfortable/very comfortable)**



Q1A (Y-3)

**How comfortable are you with the following screen sizes while gaming?
(Respondents – not comfortable/not comfortable at all)**



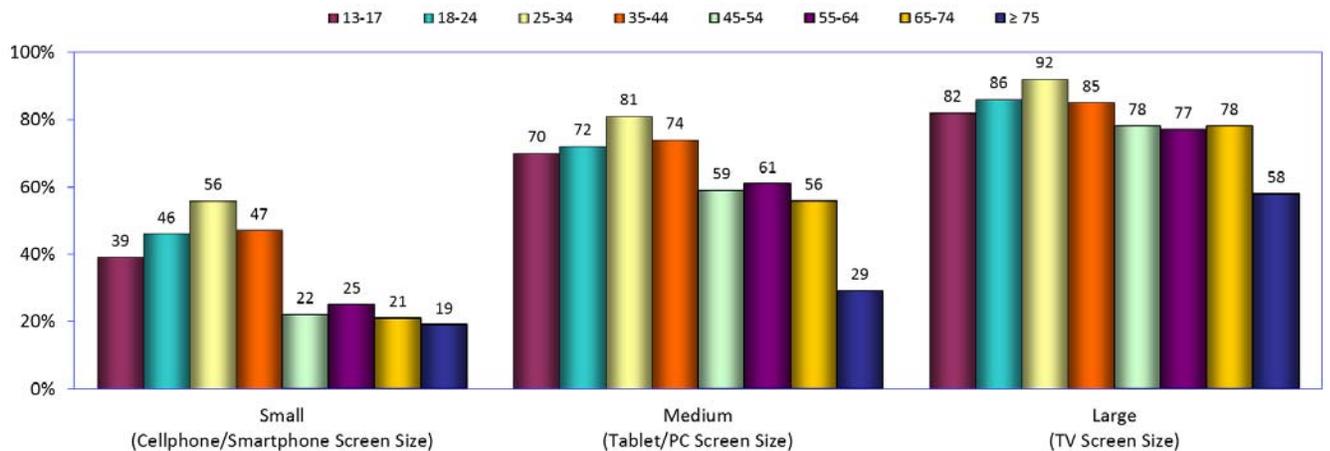
Q1A (Y-4)

4. Comfort with screen sizes for gaming: by age

Compared to responses regarding work, lower percentages of respondents in most age ranges were comfortable or very comfortable with small screens for gaming; the only age group reporting more than 50 percent who were comfortable or very comfortable with small screens for gaming were respondents age 25-34.

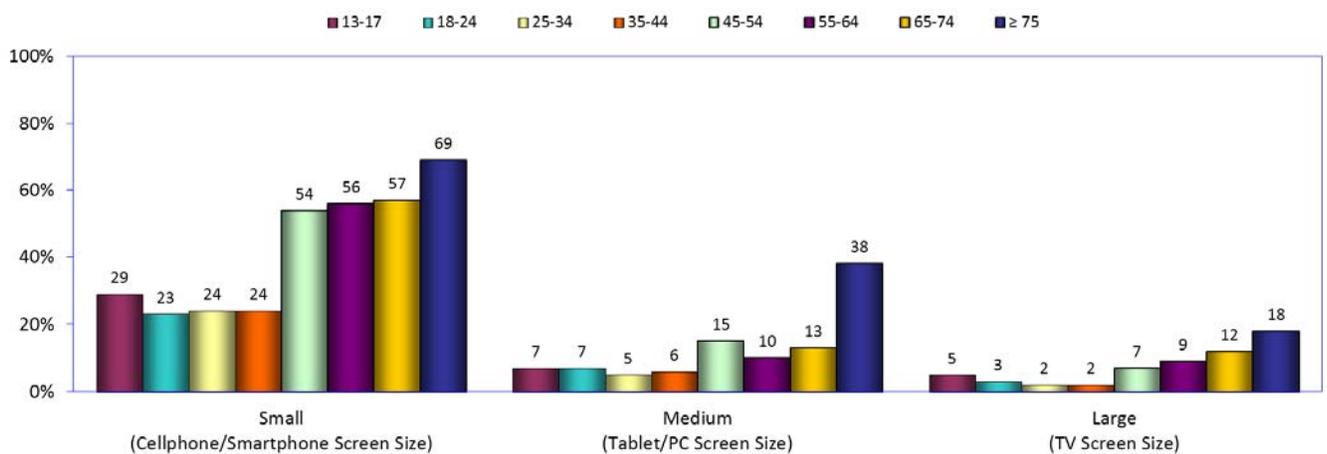
However, much higher percentages of respondents expressed some level of comfort with medium-size screens – more than half of users in all age ranges except age 75 or older, and even higher percentages – 77 percent or more in all age ranges except age 75 and older – were comfortable or very comfortable with large screens for gaming.

**How comfortable are you with the following screen sizes while gaming?
(Respondents – comfortable/very comfortable)**



Q1A (M-3)

**How comfortable are you with the following screen sizes while gaming?
(Respondents – not comfortable/not comfortable at all)**



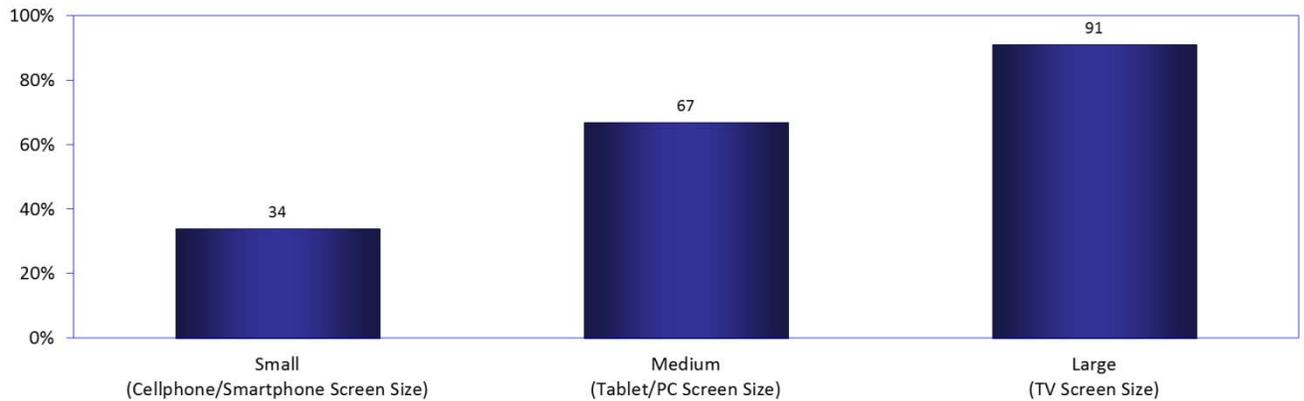
Q1A (M-4)

5. Screen sizes: comfort while watching video

As viewing video on mobile devices increases, are video viewers comfortable with every screen size for viewing video? For the smallest screens, the answer is no.

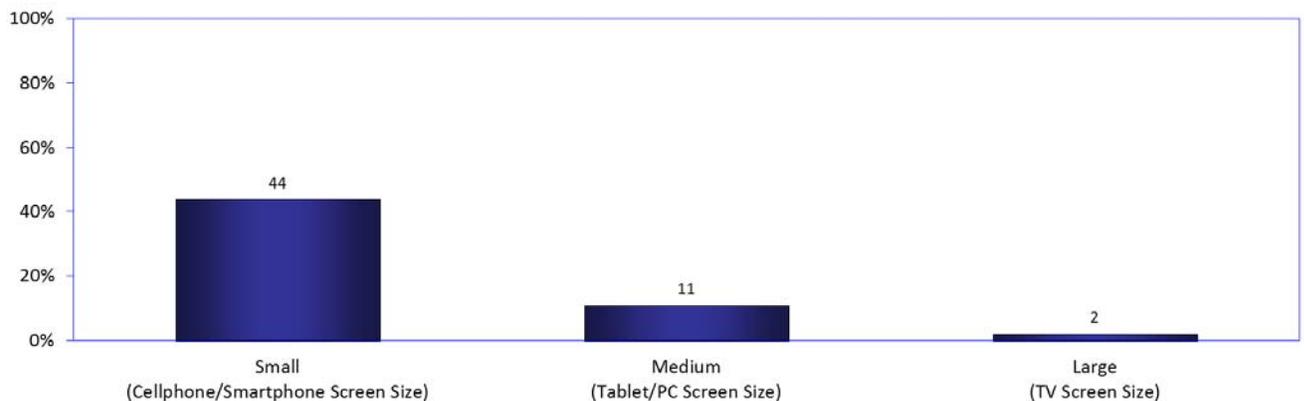
When compared to comfort with screen size for work or gaming, the Topical Survey found the lowest level of comfort with the use of small screens for watching video: only 34 percent of respondents overall said they were comfortable or very comfortable with small screens for watching video – this compared to 67 percent who are comfortable watching video on a tablet or PC screen, and 91 percent who expressed some level of comfort with watching video on a television screen.

**How comfortable are you with the following screen sizes while watching video?
(Respondents – comfortable/very comfortable)**



Q1A (Y-5)

**How comfortable are you with the following screen sizes while watching video?
(Respondents – not comfortable/not comfortable at all)**



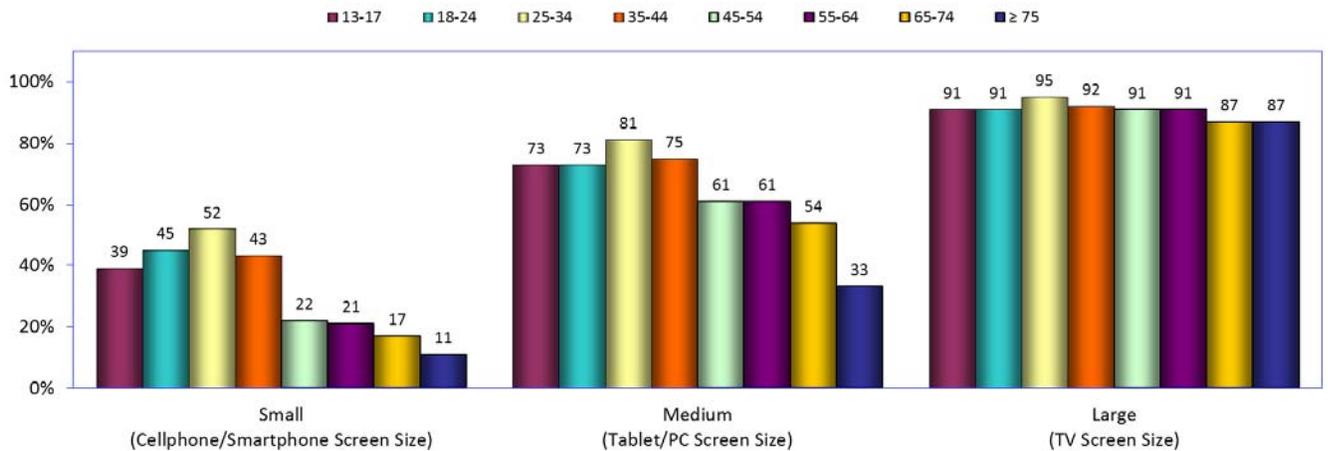
Q1A (Y-6)

6. Comfort with screen sizes for watching video (by age)

Only in the 25-34 age group did more than half of respondents say they were comfortable or very comfortable watching video on a small screen, while less than one-quarter of all groups age 45 and older expressed some level of comfort with viewing video on a small screen.

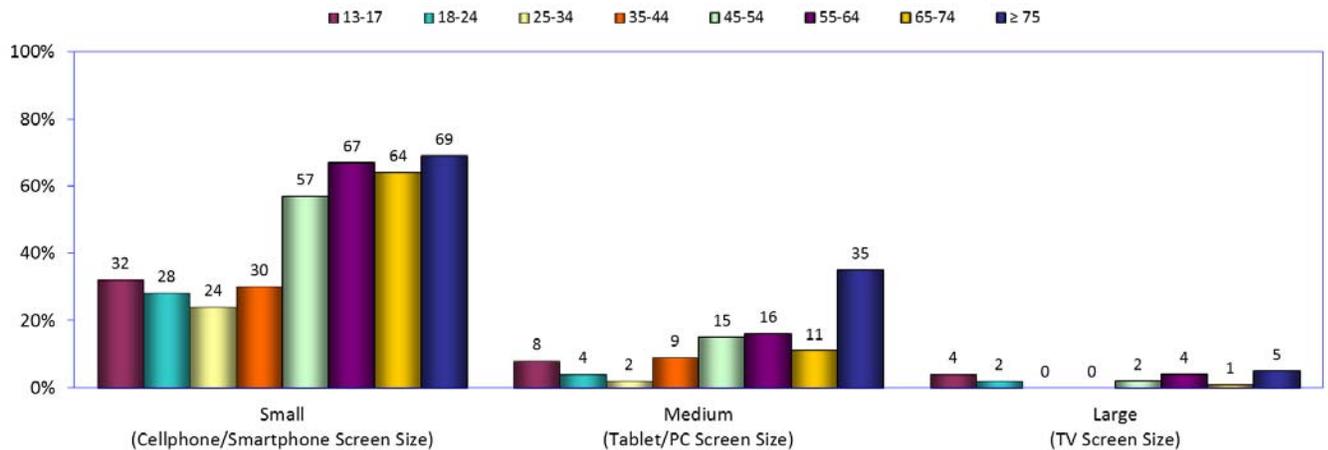
Much higher percentages – 54 percent or more – in every age range other than age 75 and older said they were comfortable or very comfortable with viewing video on a medium-size screen (tablet or PC), while 87 percent or more of users in all age ranges expressed some level of comfort with watching video on a large screen (television).

**How comfortable are you with the following screen sizes while watching video?
(Respondents – comfortable/very comfortable)**



Q1A (M-5)

**How comfortable are you with the following screen sizes while watching video?
(Respondents – not comfortable/not comfortable at all)**

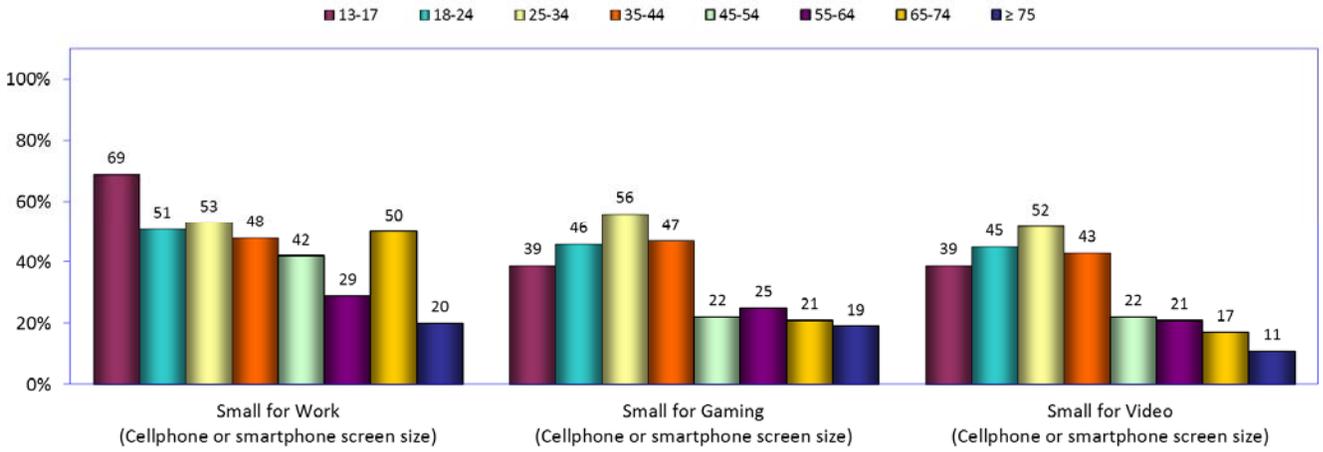


Q1A (M-6)

7. Screen sizes at-a-glance

For details about screen sizes and work, gaming, and watching videos, see pages 3-8.

**How comfortable are you with the following screen sizes for each of the following activities?
(Respondents – comfortable/very comfortable)**



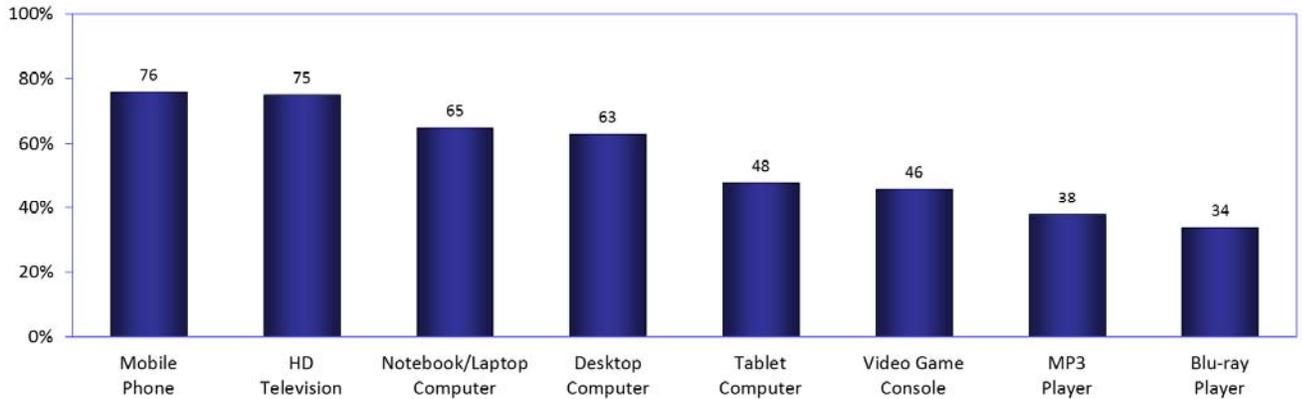
Q1A (M-7)

8. Ownership of electronic devices

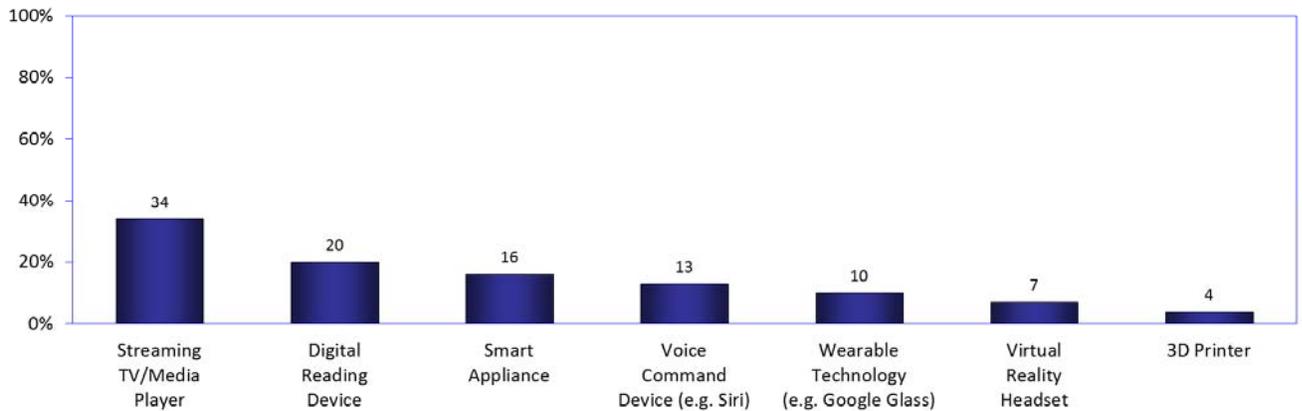
What consumer electronics do respondents own? Overall, the largest percentage report owning a mobile phone (76 percent), followed closely by a high-definition television (75 percent).

More than 60 percent of respondents own a computer. Of that group, 65 percent own a laptop and 63 percent own a desktop. About half of respondents own a video game console (48 percent), 38 percent have an MP3 player, and 34 percent own a Blu-ray player.

**Which of the consumer electronics listed below do you currently own?
(Respondents)**



Q1 (Y-1a)



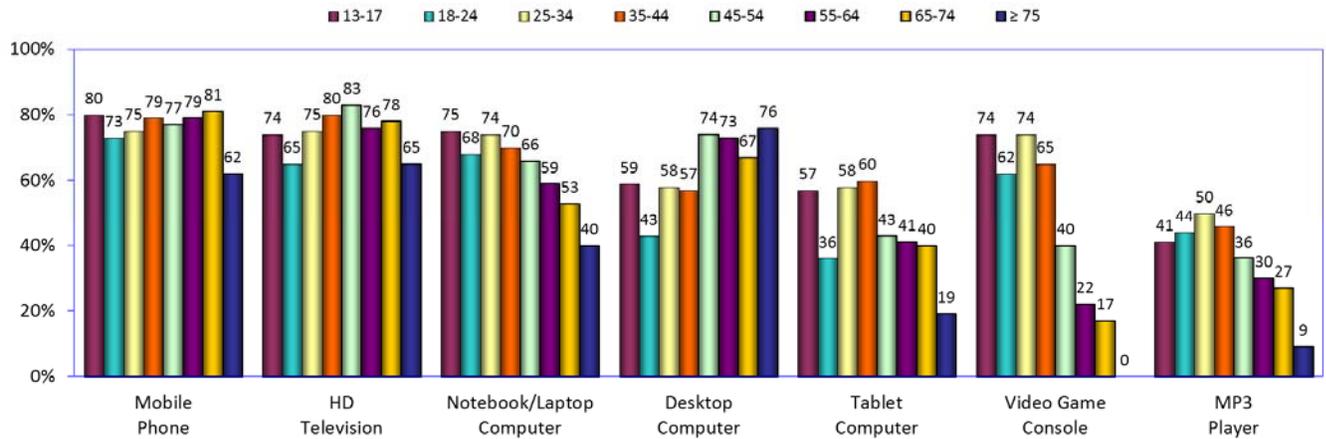
Q1 (Y-1b)

9. Ownership of electronic devices (by age)

Most age groups report similar levels of ownership of the most popular electronic devices, with some lower rates in older age ranges.

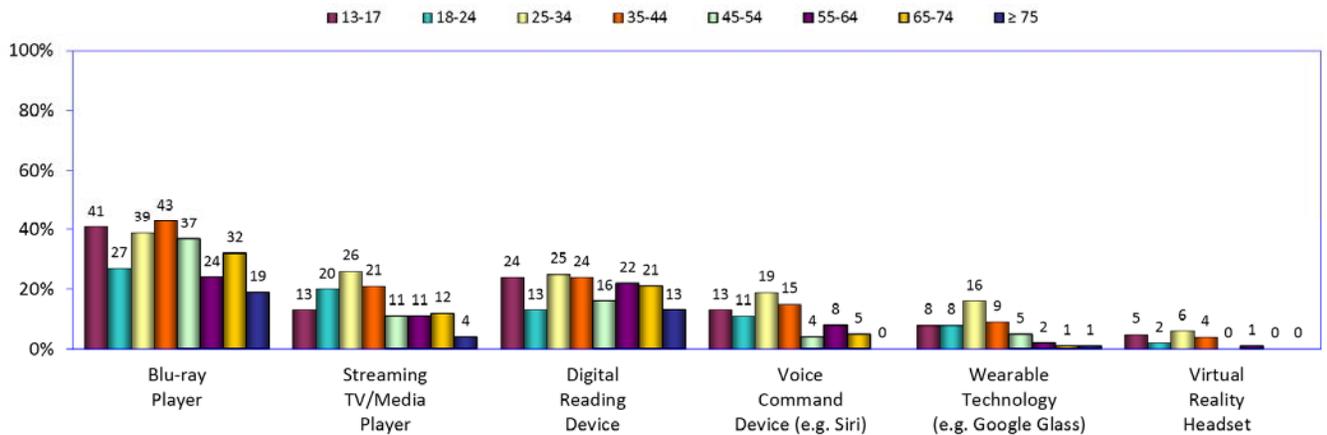
Of particular note, however, are the low levels of ownership of desktop computers, laptops, or tablets among respondents age 18-24 – a possible result of many respondents in this age group being responsible for their finances for the first time, and as a result avoiding major purchases.

**Which of the consumer electronics listed below do you currently own?
(Respondents)**



Q1 (M-1a)

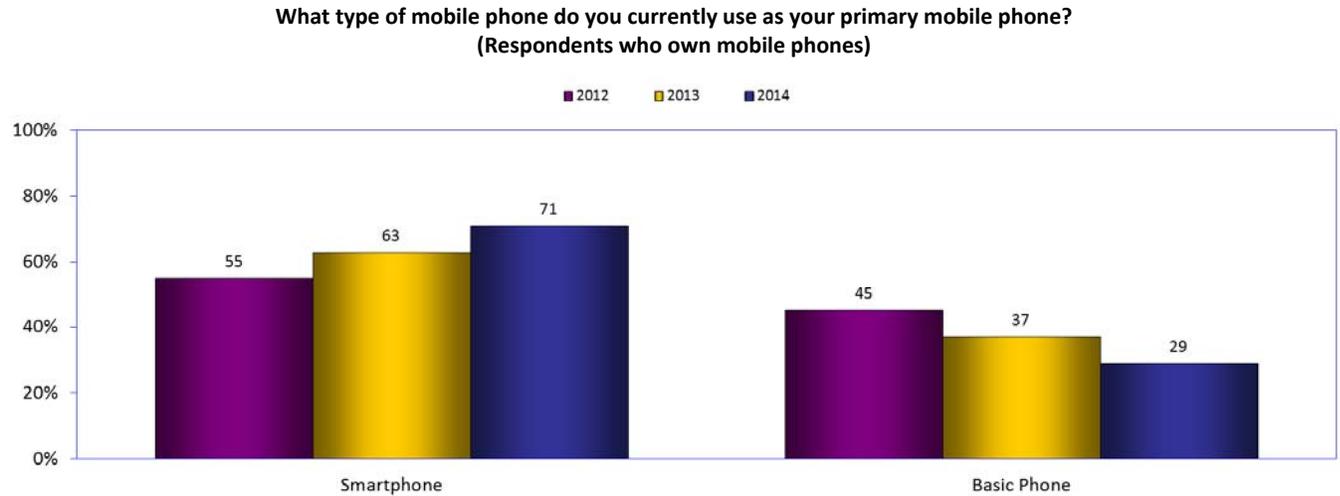
**Which of the consumer electronics listed below do you currently own?
(Respondents)**



Q1 (M-1)

10. Mobile devices: smartphones vs. basic phones

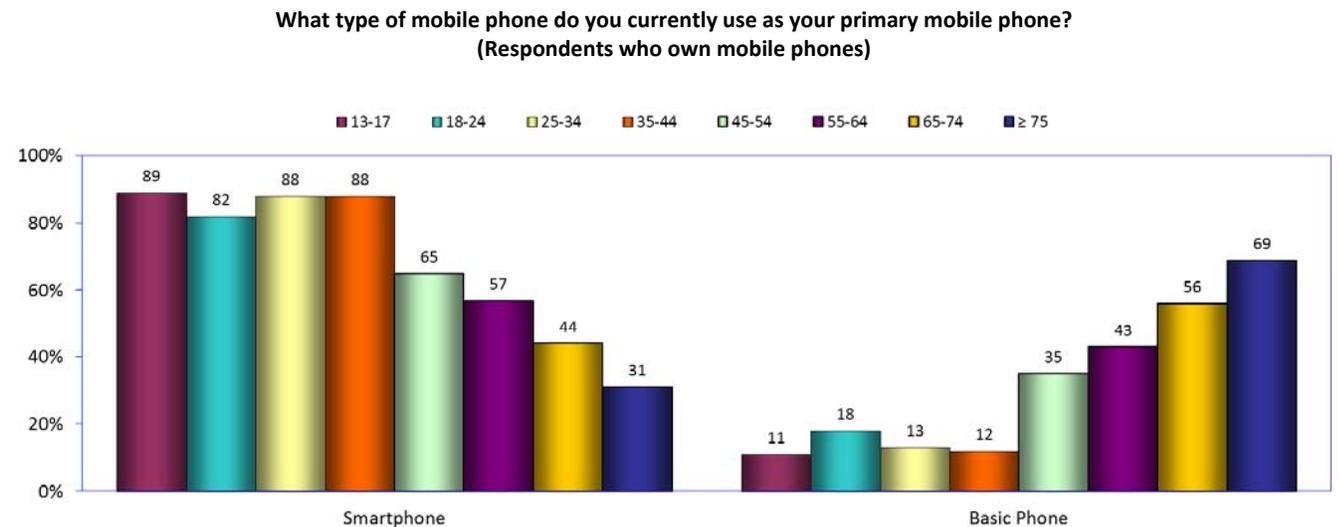
What type of mobile phone do respondents in the Topical Survey use? An overwhelming majority – 71 percent – said they use a smartphone – a significant increase from 55 percent in 2012.



Q2 (M-2)

11. Mobile devices: by age

Very large percentages of mobile phone users age 44 or younger – 82 percent or more – own smartphones, with ownership of basic phones correspondingly lower.



Q2 (M-1)

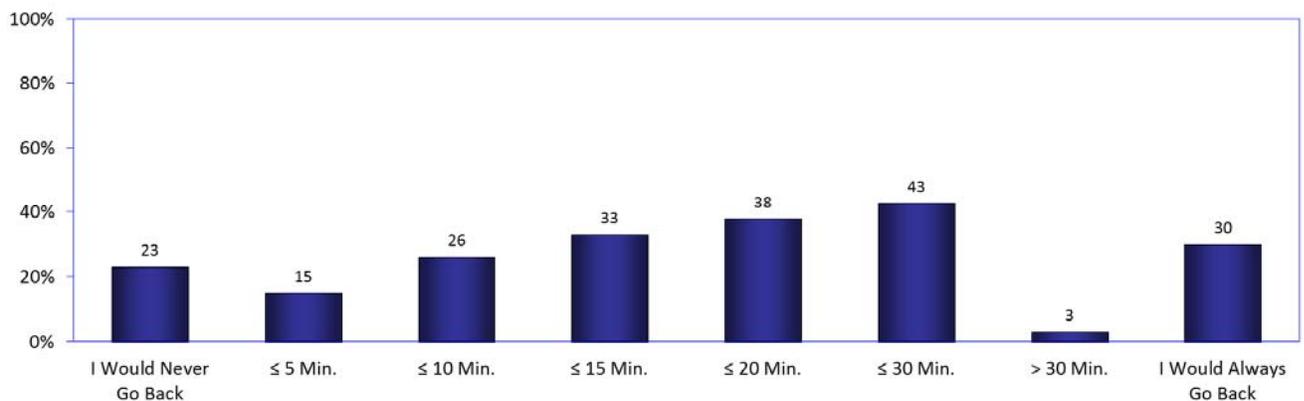
12. How important is your mobile device?

If you left home for the day without your cell phone, would you return to get it?

More than 70 percent of respondents said they would either always return home no matter how far they had travelled, or return if they were a half-hour or less from home: specifically, 30 percent said they would always go back for their mobile device, while 43 percent said they would return if they were 30 minutes or less from home.

At the other extreme, 23 percent of respondents who own mobile phones said they would never return for it once they left home for the day.

**If you left home for the day and forgot your mobile device, how many minutes away would you have to be before you would not turn around and go back to get it?
(Respondents who own mobile phone)**



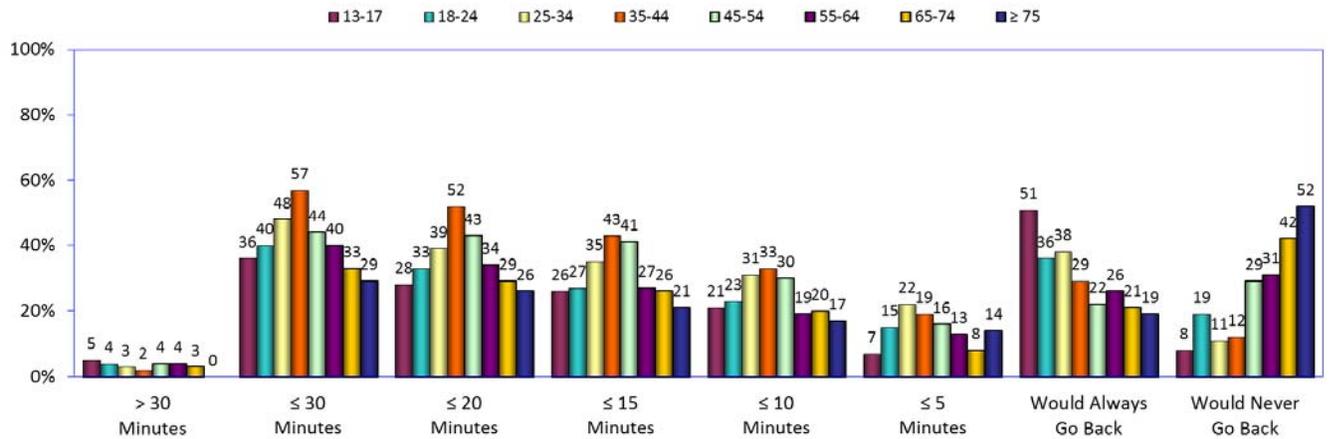
Q3 (Y-1)

13. How important is your mobile device? (by age)

Mobile phone users age 13-17 are by far the most dedicated to their devices; more than half – 51 percent – would always return home for their mobile phone. At the other extreme, the largest group that would never go back is mobile phone owners age 75 or older; 52 percent would never return home if they forgot their mobile phone.

The percentage that would go back for their mobile device if within 30 minutes, 20 minutes, 15 minutes, or 10 minutes of home all peaked with the percentage reported by those age 35-44.

**If you left home for the day and forgot your mobile device, how many minutes away would you have to be before you would not turn around and go back to get it?
(Respondents who own mobile phones)**



Q3 (M-1)

14. Benefits and consequences of personal technology

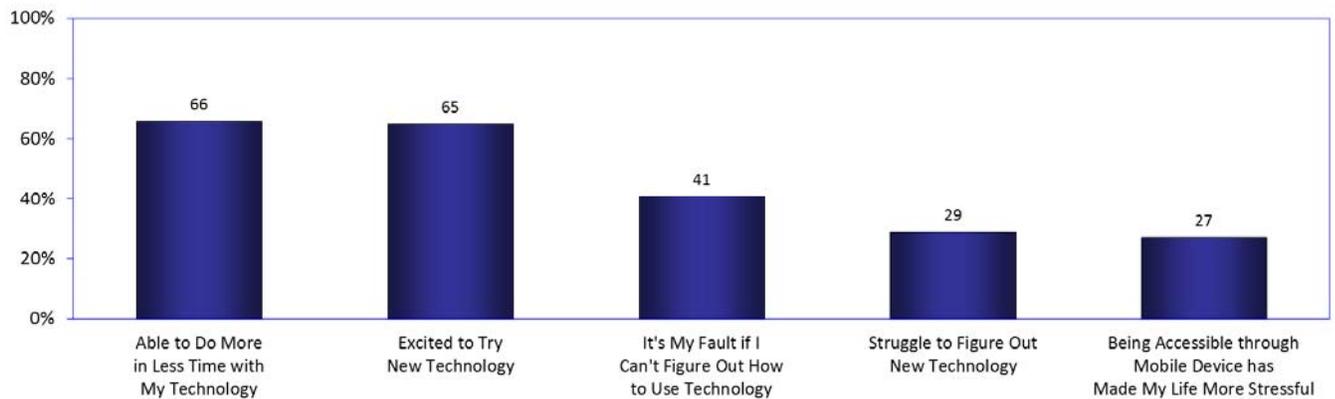
Personal technology – it is both a blessing and a curse.

The Topical Survey found that personal technology – mobile phones, laptops, tablets, and other mobile devices – can produce benefits for users, but not without personal and professional costs, including increased stress, struggles to learn new technology, and difficulty separating careers from personal lives.

The survey found that 66 percent of respondents said they are able to do more in less time with their technology, and 65 percent are excited to try new technology.

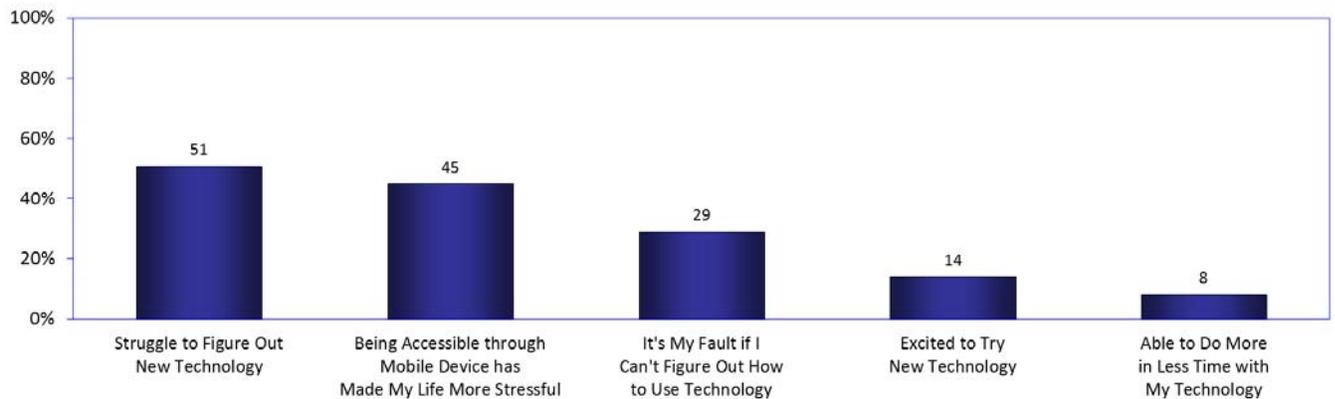
However, 29 percent report they struggle to figure out new technology, and 27 percent said being accessible through a mobile device has made their lives more stressful.

**How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?
(Respondents – somewhat/strongly agree)**



Q4 (Y-1a)

**How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?
(Respondents – somewhat/strongly disagree)**



Q4 (Y-2a)

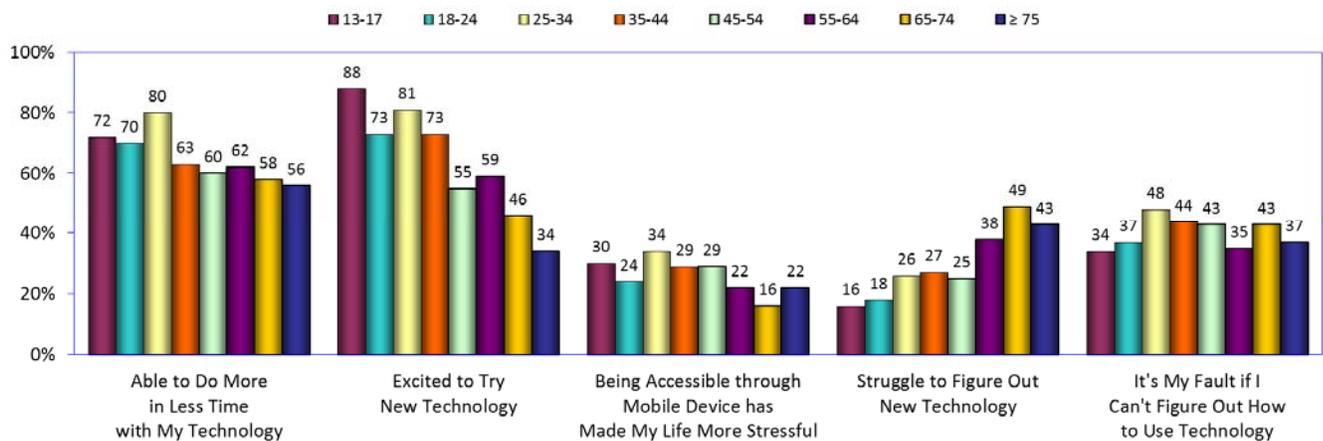
15. Benefits and consequences of personal technology (by age)

Looking at how technology affects users by age shows that in general, enthusiasm over trying new technology increases as age decreases, while struggles to figure out new technology increase with age.

For example, 81 percent of respondents age 25-34 agree or strongly agree that they are excited to try new technology, compared to 59 percent of those age 55-64. Conversely, 18 percent of respondents age 18-24 agree or strongly agree that they struggle to figure out new technology, compared to 49 percent of those age 65-74.

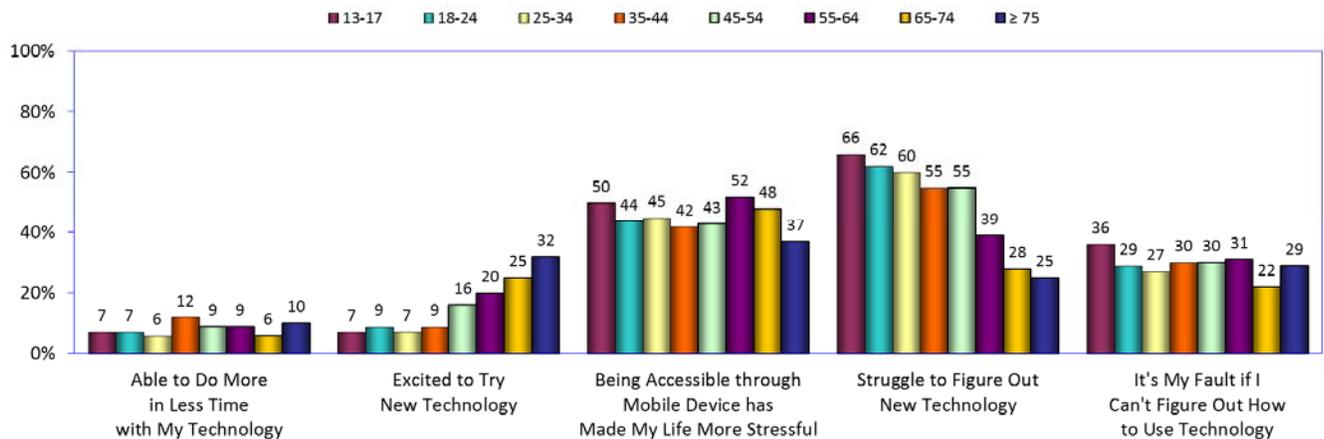
Perhaps surprisingly, age is also a factor in views about the impact of technology on time-saving. For instance, 80 percent of respondents age 25-34 said that they are able to do more in less time with their technology, compared to 63 percent of those only slightly older (age 35-44).

**How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?
(Respondents – somewhat/strongly agree)**



Q4 (M-1)

**How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?
(Respondents – somewhat/strongly disagree)**



Q4 (M-3)

16. Views about the impact of personal technology on work

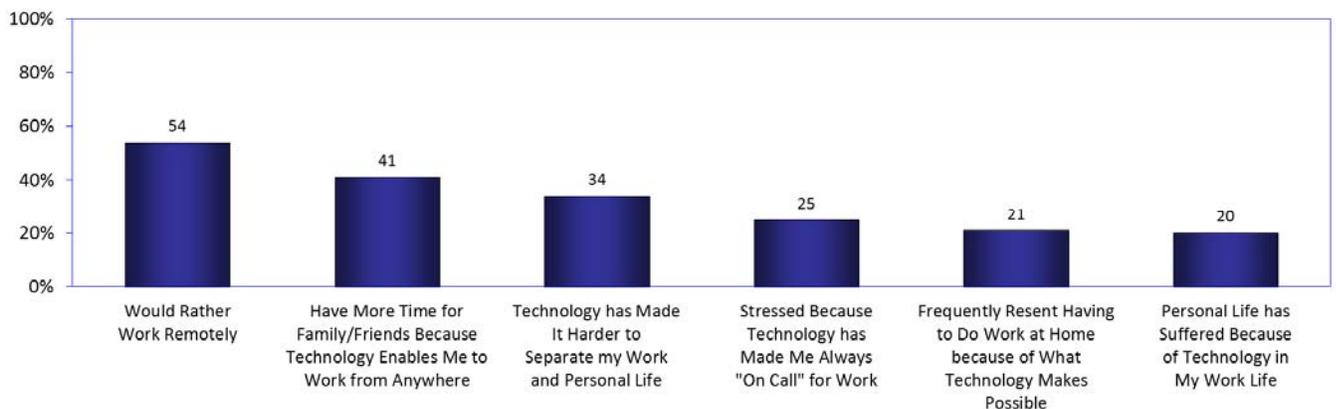
The Topical Survey also produced data showing a range of benefits and consequences produced by personal technology at work.

For example, among employed respondents, 41 percent said they have more time for family and friends because technology allows them to work anywhere. And more than half of employed respondents are enthusiastic about technology allowing them to work away from the office; 54 percent said they would rather work remotely.

In spite of high levels of interest in remote working, smaller but notable percentages of employed respondents cite negative effects of personal technology that allows them to work outside the traditional office setting.

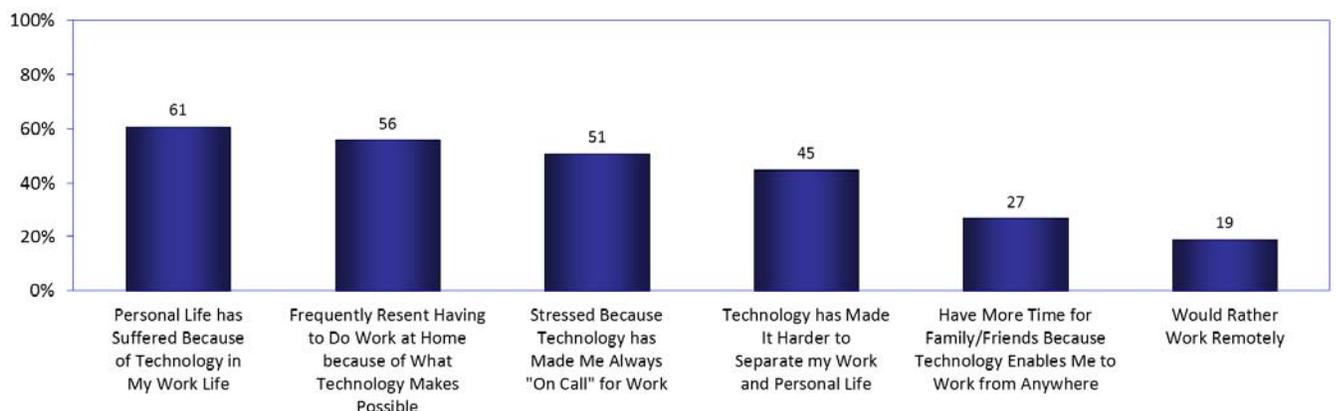
With multiple responses possible, 25 percent said that they are stressed because technology makes them always “on call” for work, while 21 percent said they resent having to work at home because technology makes it possible. Another 34 percent said that technology has created problems separating work from personal life, and – perhaps most significantly – 20 percent said that their personal lives have suffered because of the technology in their work lives.

**How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?
(Employed respondents – somewhat/strongly agree)**



Q4 (Y-1b)

**How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?
(Employed Respondents – strongly/somewhat disagree)**



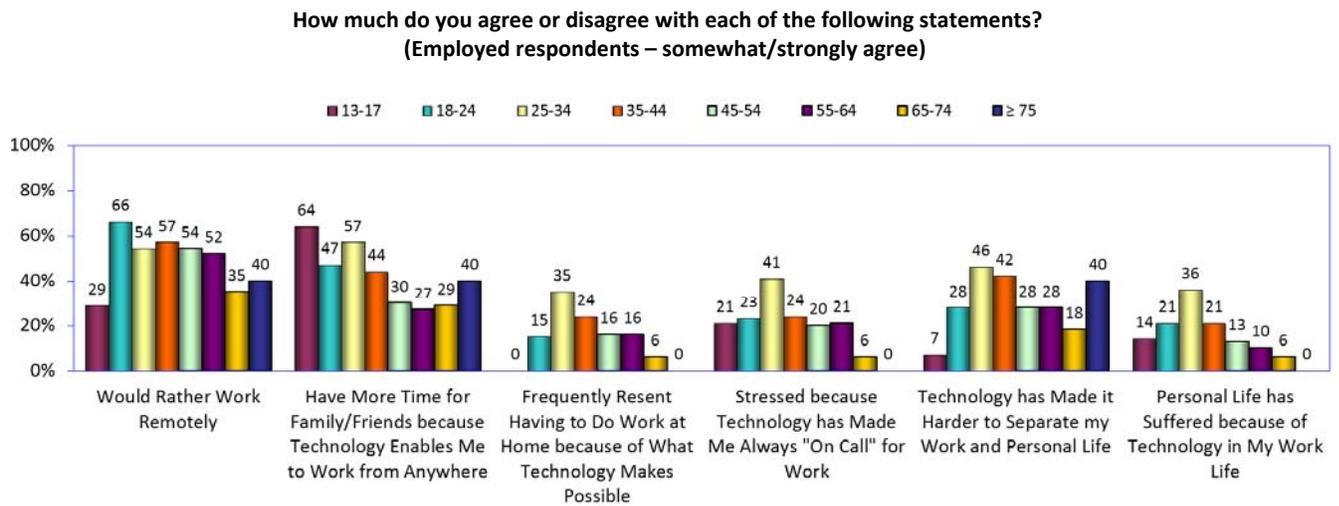
Q4 (Y-2b)

17. Views about the impact of personal technology on work (by age)

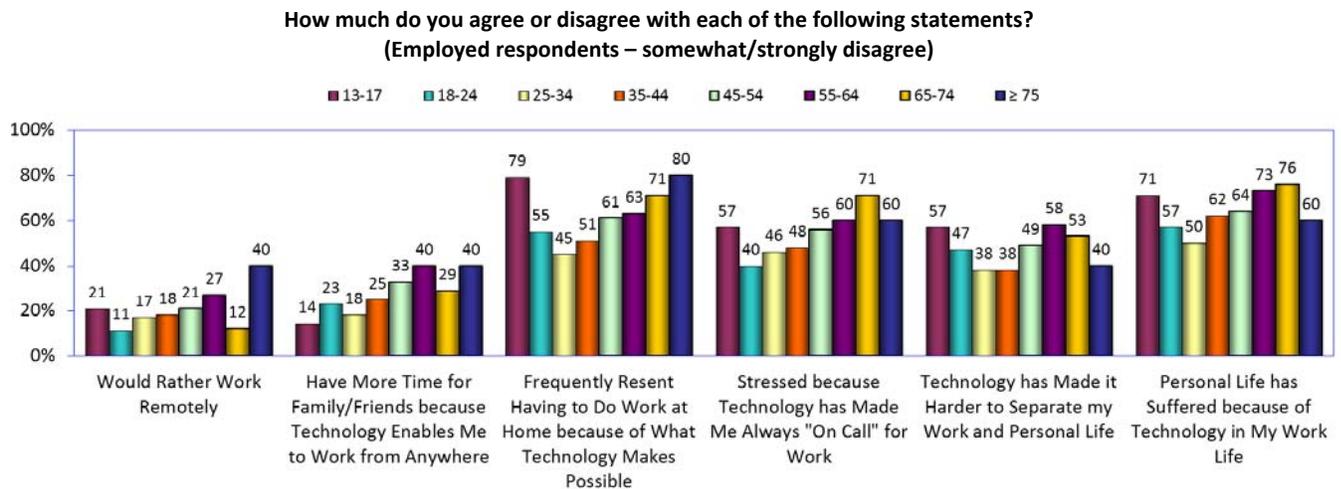
The Topical Survey found that as age decreases, employed respondents report generally higher levels of agreement about the impact of personal technology on work – both positive and negative.

For example, a large percentage of employed respondents age 18-24 – the next generation of American workers – agree or strongly agree that they would rather work remotely, compared to lower percentages in all other age ranges.

However, the age 25-34 group includes the highest percentage of employed respondents who report the negative effects from personal technology at work, including resentment to work at home because technology allows it (35 percent), increased stress from being on call for work (41 percent), more difficulty separating work and personal life (46 percent), and reports of personal life suffering because of technology in their work lives (36 percent).



Q4 (M-2)



Q4 (M-4)

18. Personal privacy and information access by companies

Are users of online technology concerned about their personal data being shared with private companies? Respondents to the Topical Survey report a wide range of views.

Seventy-two percent of respondents somewhat or strongly agree with the statement, “no one should ever be allowed access to my personal data or web behavior.” And 59 percent of respondents said that websites and apps purposely try to hide how much information they have about users.

However, a significant percentage of respondents also said that they would be willing to share personal information about their location to receive coupons or deals for local businesses (38 percent), while 35 percent agreed that they are OK sharing information with companies “as long as I get something in return.”

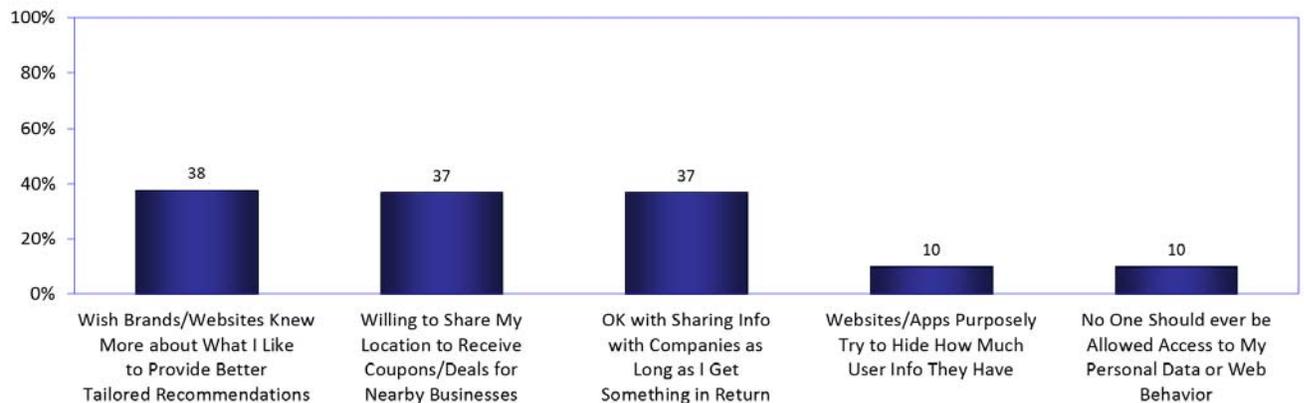
For findings about the security of personal information, see page 52-53.

**How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about your personal data being shared with outside organizations?
(Respondents – somewhat/strongly agree)**



Q5 (Y-1a)

**How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about your personal data being shared with outside organizations?
(Respondents – somewhat/strongly disagree)**



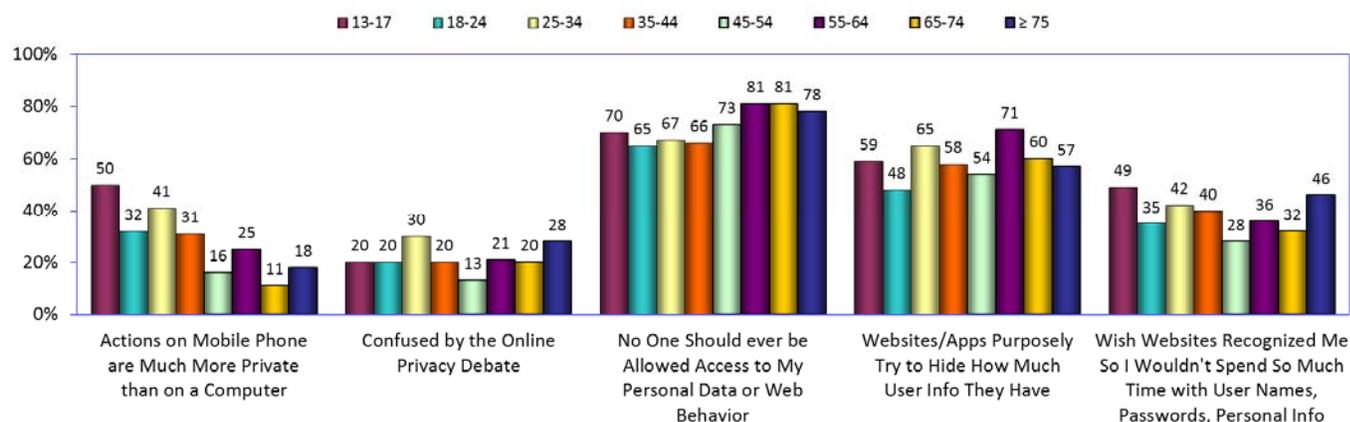
Q5 (Y-2b)

19. Personal privacy and information access by companies (by age)

Comparing views about privacy and corporate access to personal information shows similar levels of agreement with the overall statement, “no one should ever be allowed access to my personal data or web behavior,” with 70 to 81 percent somewhat or strongly agreeing across all age ranges.

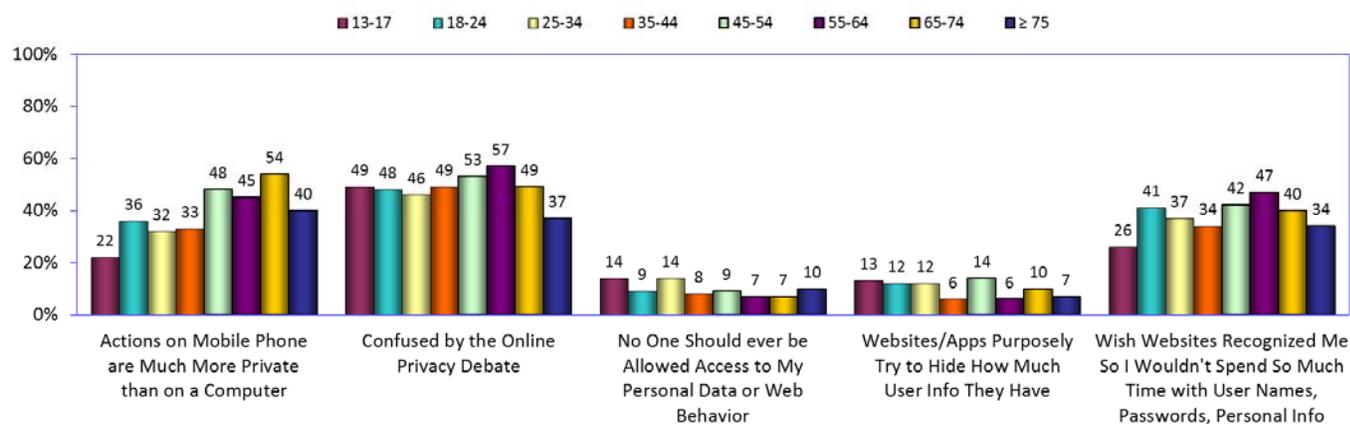
However, the percentages who agreed with other statements varied widely across ages ranges. For instance, differences in views are especially pronounced when respondents are asked if actions on mobile phones are more private than on a computer: half of users age 13-17 agree or strongly agree with the statement that actions on mobile phones are more private than on a computer, compared to 41 percent or less in all other age ranges, and under 20 percent among those age 45-54 (16 percent) and age 65-74 (11 percent).

How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about your personal data being shared with outside organizations? (Respondents – strongly/somewhat agree)



Q5 (M-3)

How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about your personal data being shared with outside organizations? (Respondents – strongly/somewhat disagree)



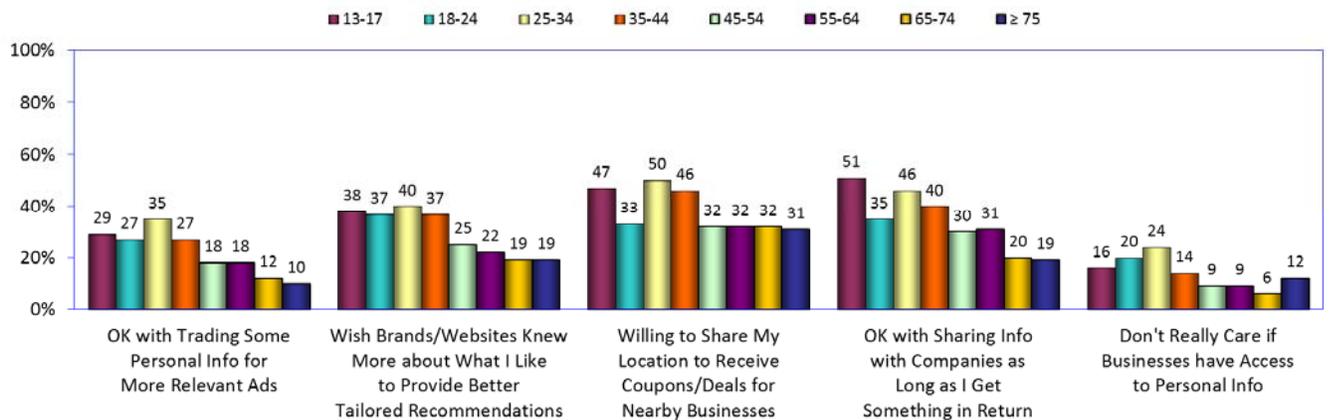
Q5 (M-5)

20. Personal privacy and sharing information (by age)

In general, younger respondents to the Topical Survey are more receptive to the idea of sharing personal information in exchange for other benefits. For example, 35 percent of respondents age 25-34 are OK with trading some personal information for more relevant ads on websites, compared to less than 30 percent in all other age ranges. And between 37 and 40 percent of respondents age 44 or under said they wished that brands or websites knew more about their interests so they could provide tailored information – this compared with one-quarter or less of those age 45 or older who agree with this idea.

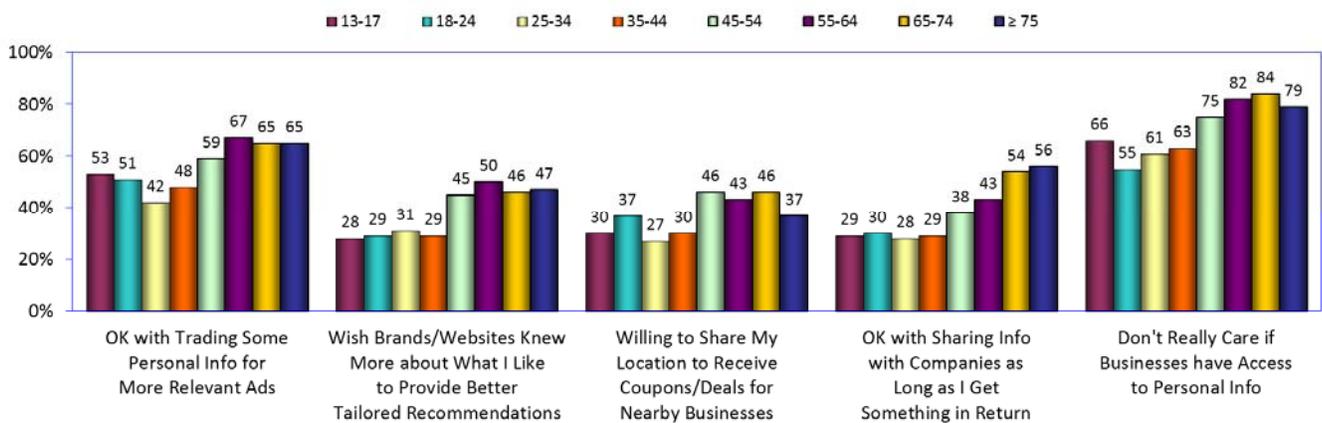
However, most users are concerned about corporate involvement in their personal privacy; less than one-quarter of users in all age ranges agree or strongly agree with the statement, “I don’t care if businesses have access to my personal information.”

How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about your personal data being shared with outside organizations? (Respondents – strongly/somewhat agree)



Q5 (M-4)

How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about your personal data being shared with outside organizations? (Respondents – strongly/somewhat disagree)



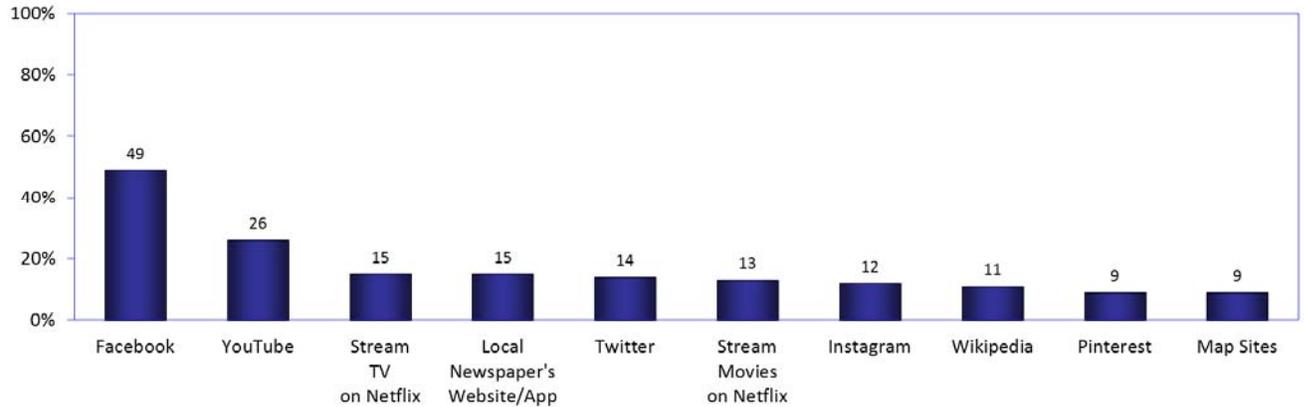
Q5 (M-6)

21. Daily use of social media and information websites

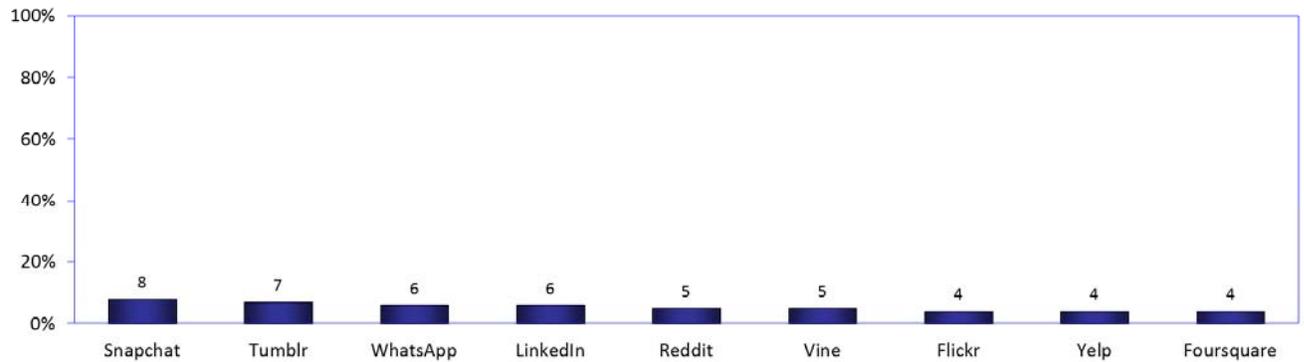
What forms of social media do respondents to the Topical Survey access at least daily (defined as daily or several times a day)? Facebook receives the most attention from users, with almost half of respondents – 49 percent – saying that they check Facebook at least daily.

YouTube is viewed at least daily by 26 percent of respondents, followed by lower percentages that stream television on Netflix, visit a local newspaper's website or app, or use Twitter.

**How often do you use these services?
(Respondents – daily or more)**



Q6 (Y-1a)



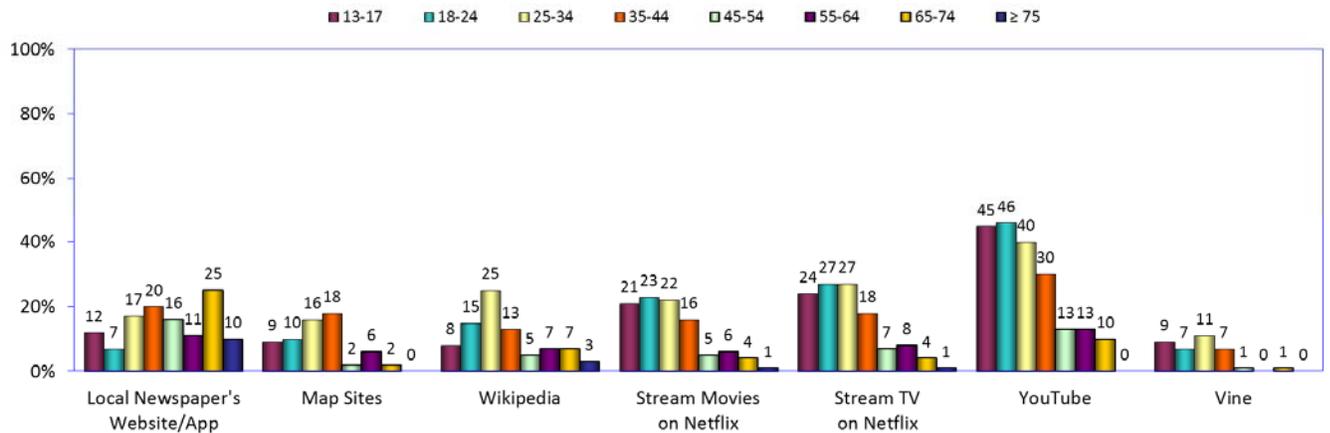
Q6 (Y-1b)

22. Daily use of social media and information websites (by age)

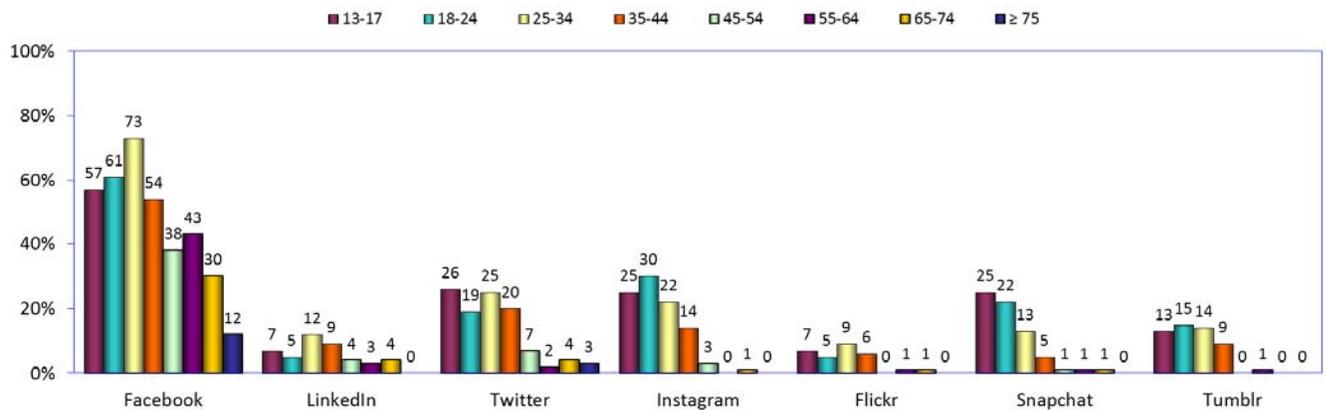
Who is going online at least daily to use social media and information websites? Thirty percent or more of respondents age 74 or under use Facebook at least daily, and 30 percent or more of respondents age 44 or under use YouTube at least daily

Users age 54 or younger are generally more like to use all other online social media and information websites, with the exception of the online presence of local newspapers.

On average, how often, if at all, do you use each of the following services?
(Respondents – daily or more)



Q6A (M-1b)

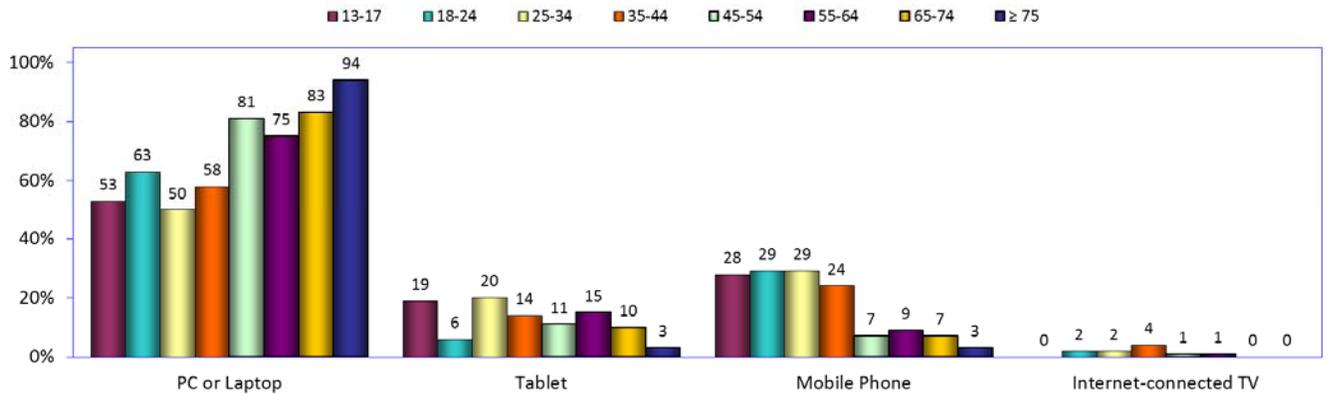


Q6A (M-1c)

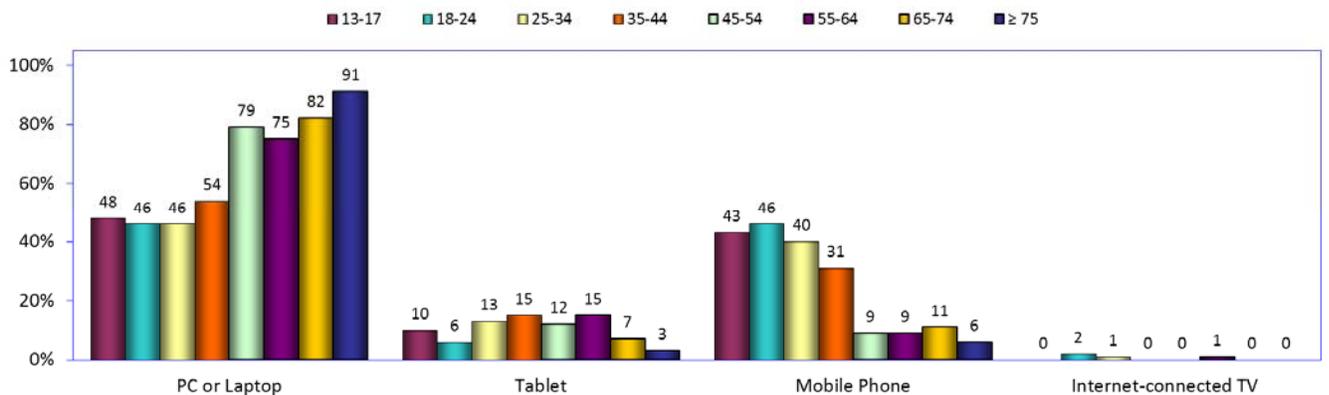
23. Devices used to access YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter

Although mobile devices are the preferred device of choice to access Facebook and Twitter among large percentages of younger respondents, all age ranges report significant use of PCs or laptops to access YouTube, Facebook, or Twitter.

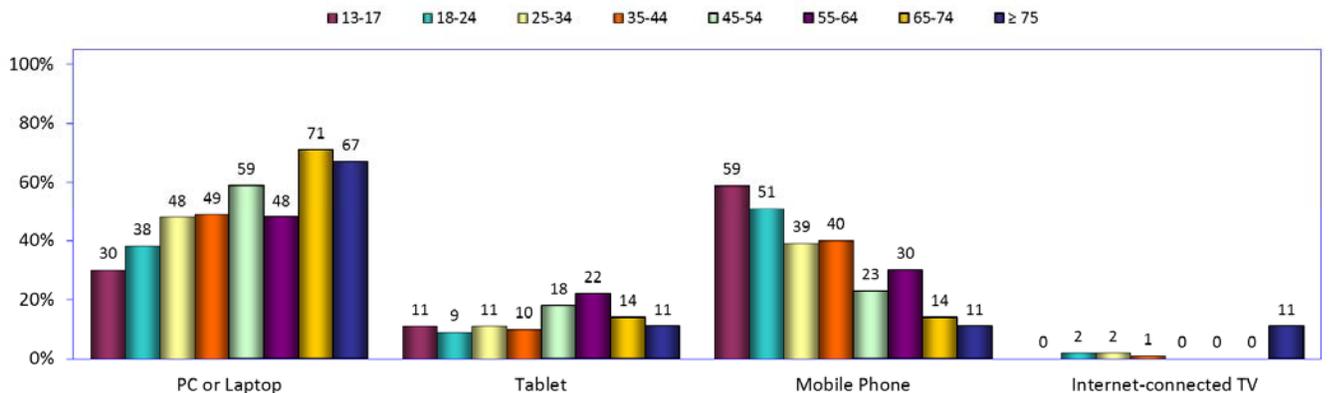
**Which device do you use most often to access YouTube?
(YouTube users)**



**Which device you use most often to access Facebook?
(Facebook users)**



**Which device do you use most often to access Twitter?
(Twitter users)**

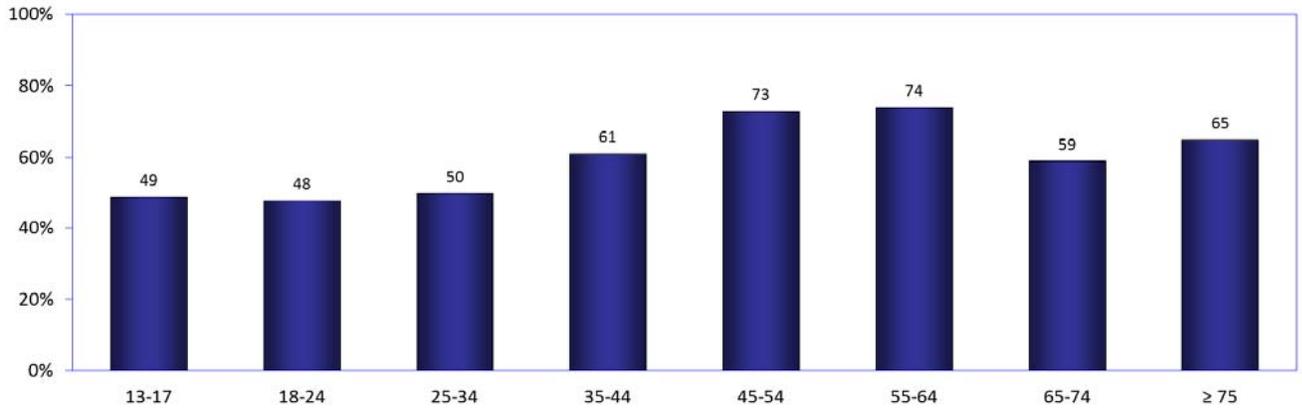


Q6A

24. YouTube: how long are the videos you watch? (by age)

Who is watching short videos on YouTube? On average, users between the ages of 45 and 64 are most likely to report viewing videos on YouTube that are under five minutes long

**What percentage of the videos that you watch on YouTube are under five minutes long?
(YouTube users who reported that 75 percent were under five minutes)**



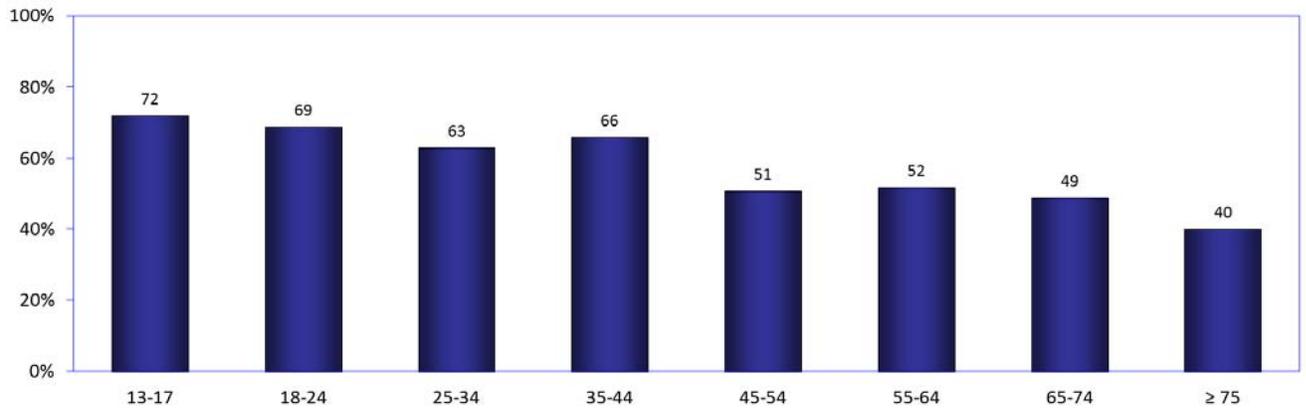
Q6B (M-1)

25. Use of search engines

Who is using search engines, such as Google, Yahoo, and Bing, at least daily?

While 40 percent of all age ranges report at least daily access to a search engine, in most cases this usage is directly related to age; the younger the user, the higher the percentage of daily use.

**On average, how often, if at all, do you use each of the following services?
(Respondents – daily or more)**



Q6A (M-1a)

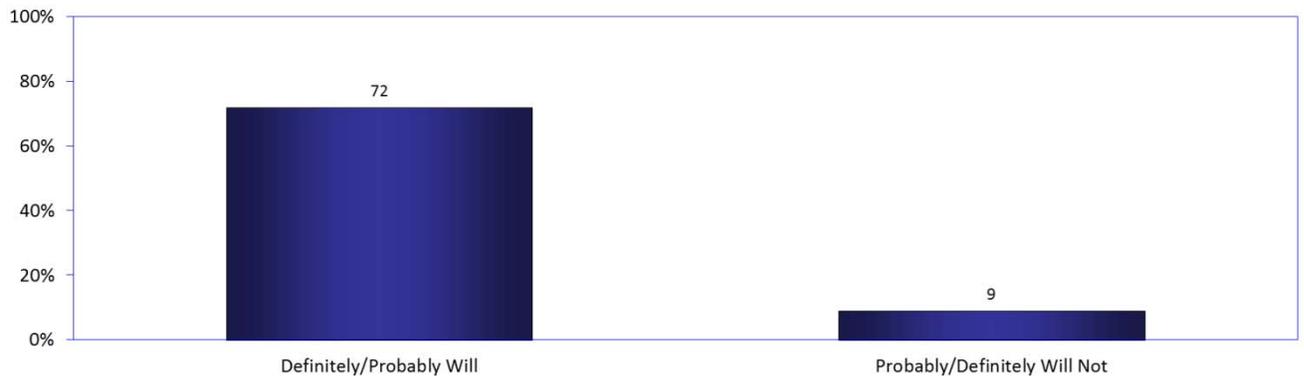
26. Will your next computing device be a PC?

For a small percentage of Americans, their current PC may be their last.

Nine percent of respondents said that when their current computer becomes unusable, they would definitely or probably not replace it with another PC.

However, very large percentages of those who own a computer will continue using a PC and not an alternative device; 72 percent of respondents who own a computer said that when their current personal computer becomes unusable, they will probably or definitely replace it with another computer.

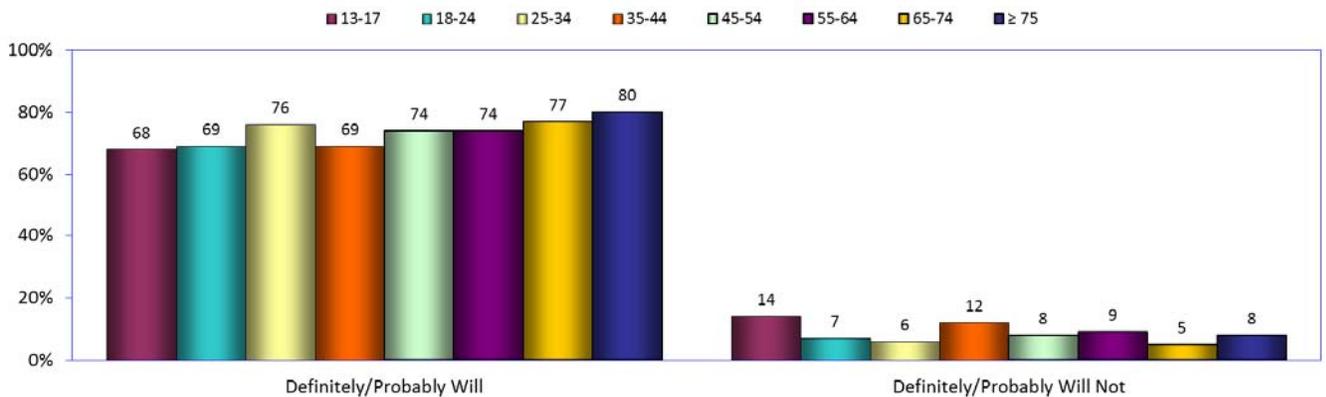
**When your current personal computer becomes unusable,
how likely are you to replace it with another personal computer
as opposed to replacing it with a smartphone, tablet, or some other device?**



Q9 (Y-1)

These responses are generally consistent across all age ranges; for example, 68 percent or more of users in all age range said they will probably or definitely continue to use a personal computer.

**When your current personal computer becomes unusable,
how likely are you to replace it with another personal computer
as opposed to replacing it with a smartphone, tablet, or some other device (respondents by age)**

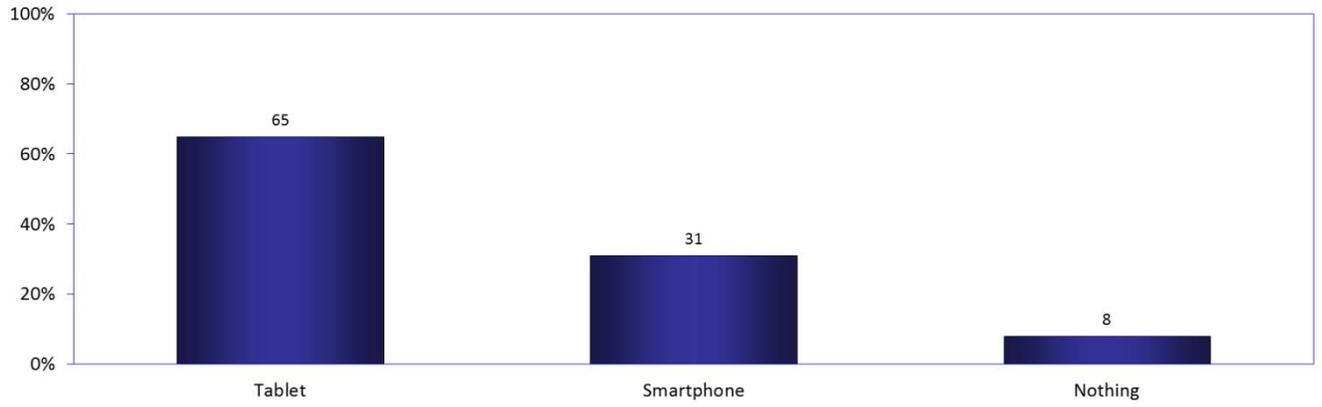


Q9B (M-1)

27. Alternatives to PCs

What device will users turn to instead of a PC? Of those who said they will switch, 65 percent said they will use a tablet, and 31 percent will use a smartphone.

Of note are eight percent of those who would switch who said they will not use an alternative.



Q9 (Y-2)

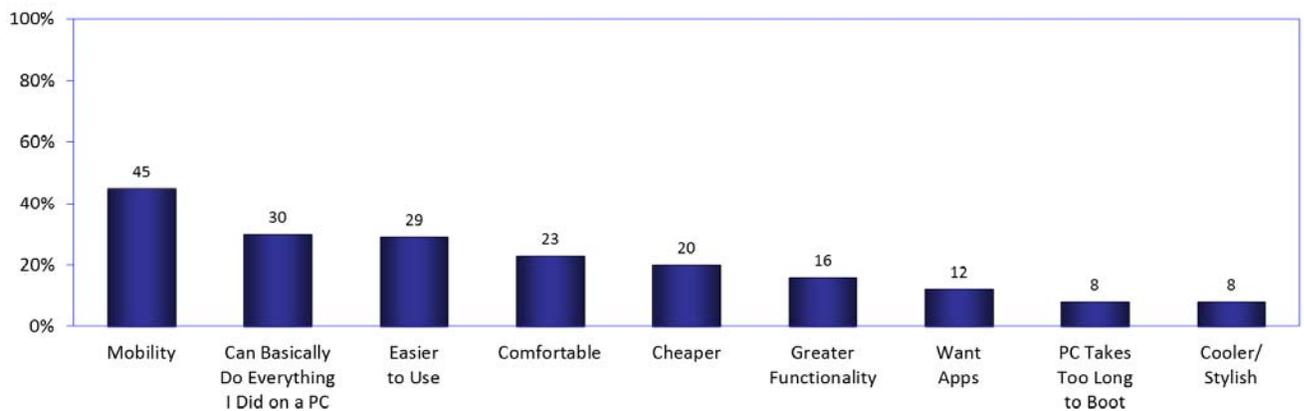
28. Why use an alternative to a PC?

Why would PC users switch to another computing device, such as a tablet or mobile phone? Of respondents who said they will not replace their PC with another one when their current computer becomes unusable, 45 percent cite mobility as a reason they will change.

With multiple responses possible, 30 percent of those who would switch said that with another device they “can do everything I did on a personal computer,” while 29 percent said another device would be easier to use than a PC.

Other reasons cited for adopting a non-PC lifestyle are: comfort (23 percent), cost (20 percent), increased functionality (16 percent), and want apps (12 percent).

**Why would you use a tablet or some other device in place of a personal computer?
(Respondents who will use an alternative to a computer)**

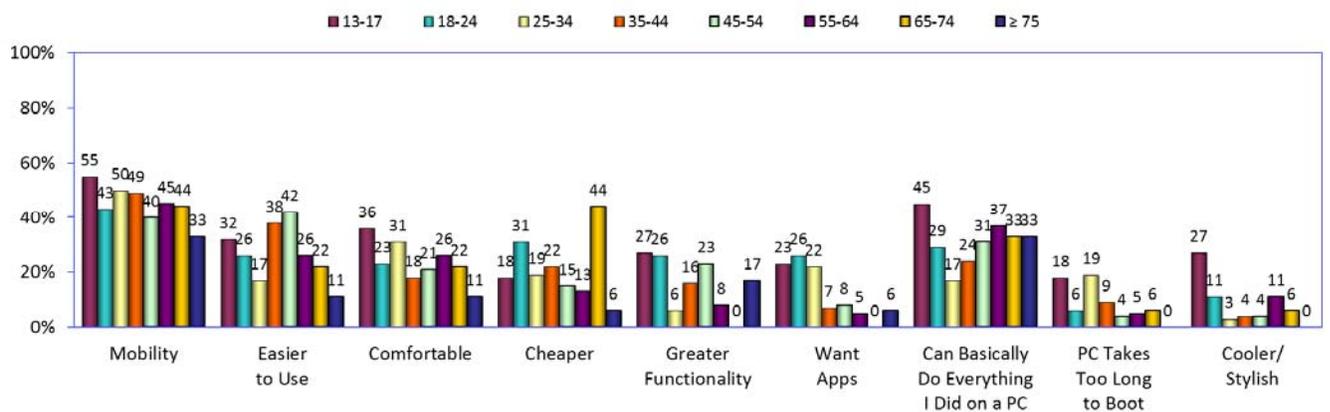


Q11 (Y-1)

29. Why use an alternative to a PC? (by age)

Of those who would switch to a PC alternative, more than one-third of respondents in all age ranges cite mobility as a reason for change. Higher percentages of respondents age 35 to 54 cite ease of use, and respondents age 65-74 report lower cost.

**Why would you move to a tablet or some other device in place of a personal computer?
(Responded “will not replace with PC”)**

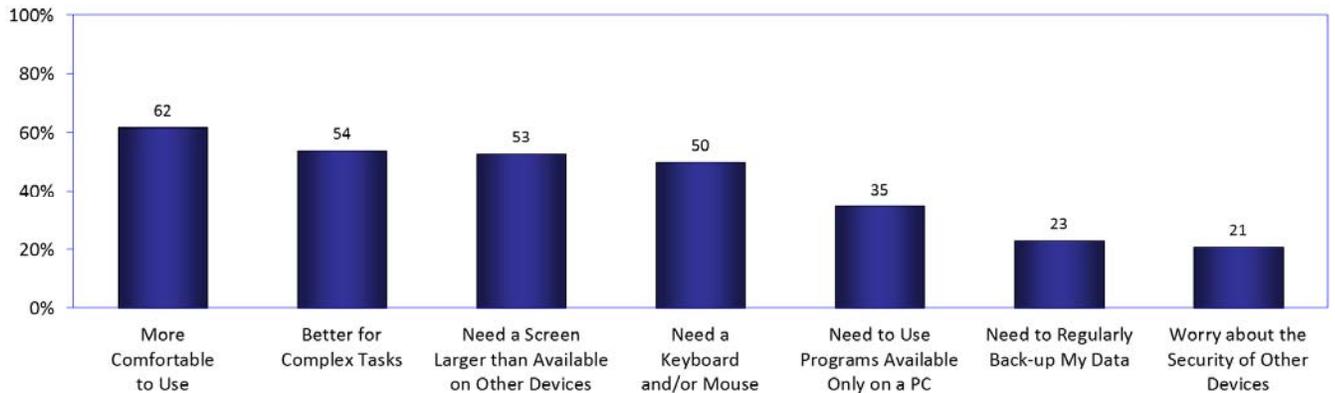


Q11 (M-1)

30. Why continue to use a PC?

The large majority of respondents who said they would continue to use a PC when their current computer becomes unusable reported several reasons for their decision, with one-half or more citing that a personal computer is more comfortable to use, is better for complex tasks, includes a larger screen than those available on other devices, or has a physical keyboard or mouse.

**Why would you use a tablet or some other device in place of a personal computer?
(Respondents who will replace their computer with another PC)**

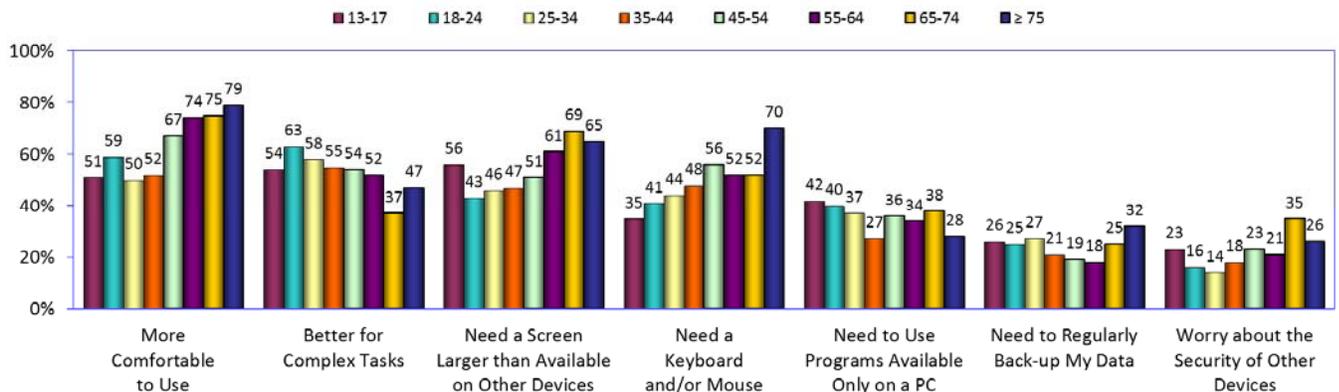


Q10 (Y-1)

31. Why continue to use a PC? (by age)

The Topical Survey found large differences in responses based on age; in general, interest in comfort and the need for a larger screen increases as age increases, while interest in a computer's use for complex tasks or specific programs available only on a PC increases as age decreases.

**Why would you buy another personal computer instead of using a tablet or some other device?
("Will buy another PC" responses)**



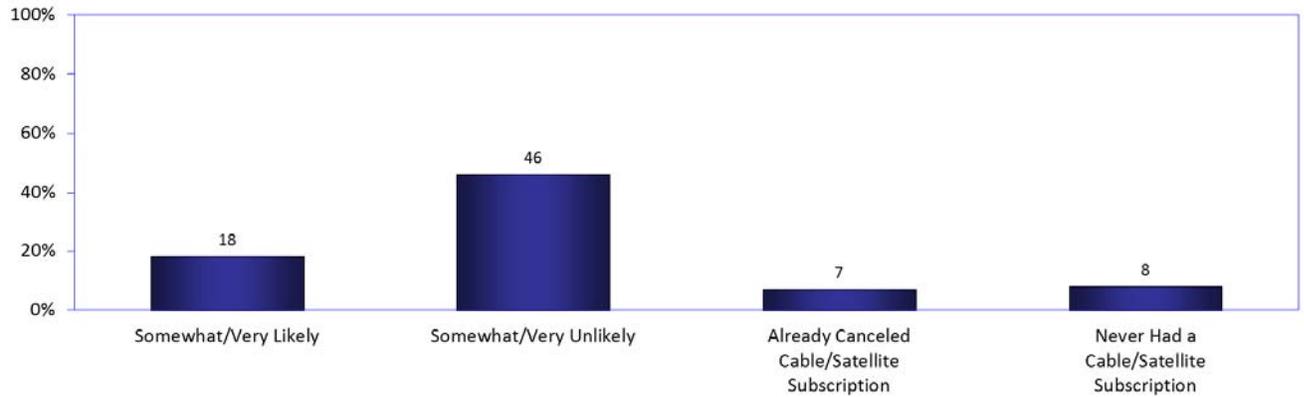
Q10 (M-1)

32. Will you stop paying for cable or satellite TV?

As fees for cable and satellite service continue to increase and more alternatives emerge, will viewers stop paying for monthly service?

A small but notable percentage of respondents – 18 percent – said they are somewhat likely or very likely to stop paying for cable or satellite service in the next 12 months. Forty-six percent said they are somewhat or very unlikely to stop paying for service.

How likely are you to stop paying for cable or satellite in the next 12 months, and watch your favorite programs online instead?

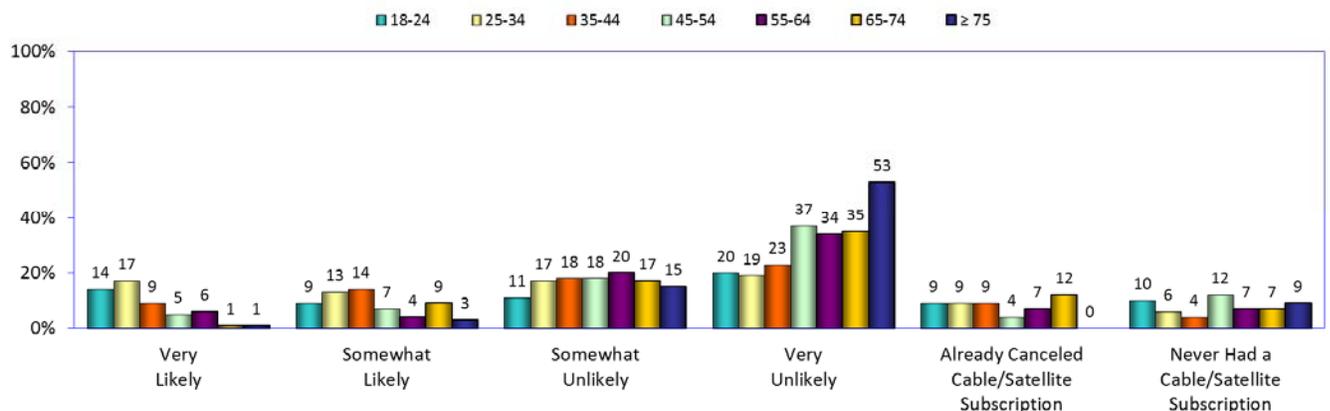


Q13 (Y-1)

33. Will you stop paying for cable or satellite TV? (by age)

Looking at decisions about cutting cable or satellite use by age shows generally similar levels of agreement about keeping or eliminating their service, with the exception of a higher percentage of respondents age 45 or older reporting they were very unlikely to cancel.

How likely are you to stop paying for cable or satellite in the next 12 months, and watch your favorite shows online instead? (Respondents)



Q13 (M-1)

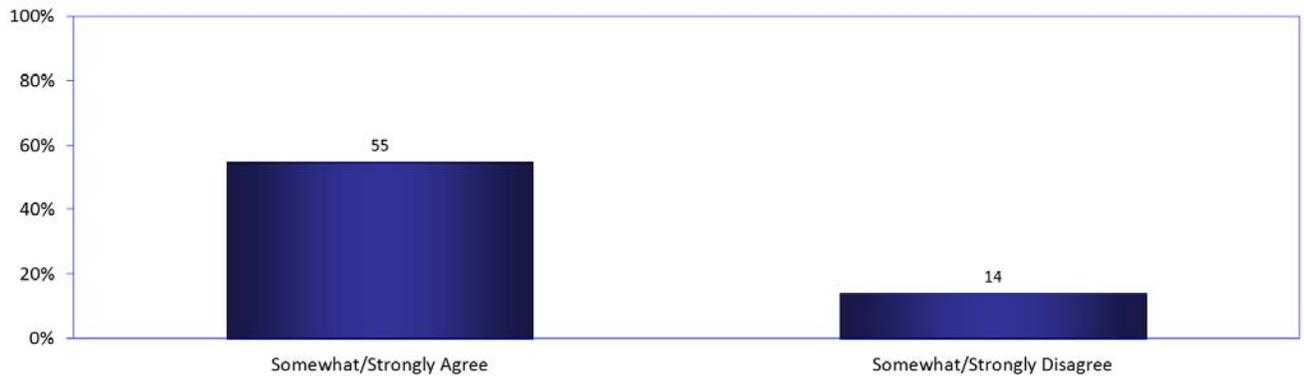
34. Are teachers instructing students to use new technologies? (The adult view)

Do teachers do a good job of preparing students to use new technologies? Only about half of parents agree.

Overall, about half of adults with children in their households – 55 percent – agree or strongly agree that the teachers in their children’s schools are adequately preparing students to use new technologies.

Fourteen percent disagree or strongly disagree that teachers provide adequate preparation for students to use new technologies.

**The teachers in my child's school are adequately preparing him/her to use new technologies
(Children in household)**



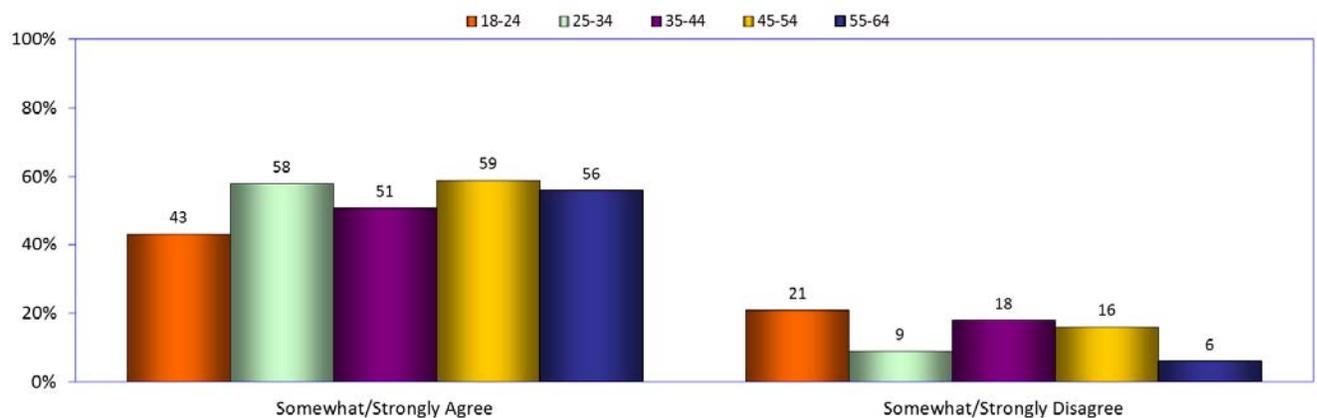
Q16 (Y-1)

35. Are teachers preparing students to use new technologies? (the adult view by age)

Less than 60 percent of adults in all age ranges agree that teachers are adequately preparing their children to use new technologies.

The youngest adult age range in the Topical Survey – those 18-24 – reported the highest level of disagreement with this statement: 21 percent.

**The teachers in my child's school are adequately preparing him/her to use new technologies
(Children in household)**



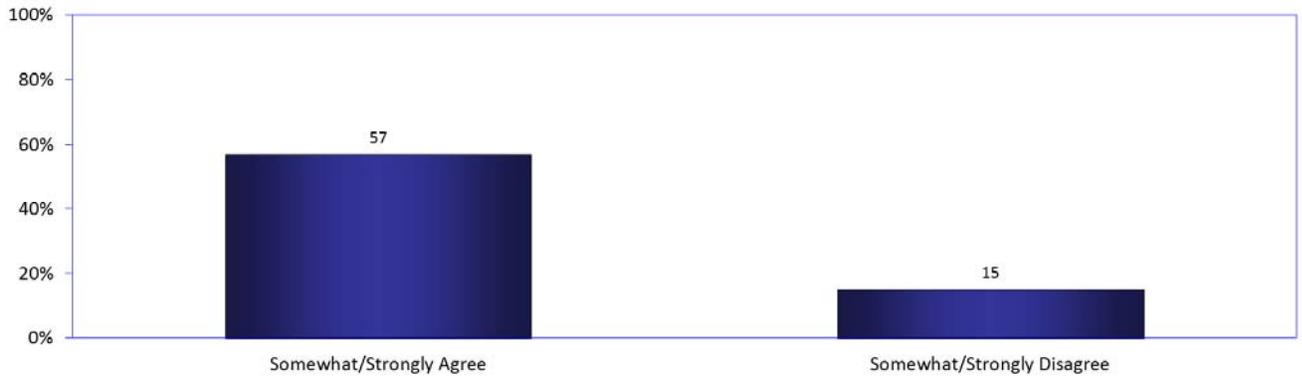
Q16 (M-1b)

36. Is technology in our schools adequate for students?

Compared to views about teaching of technology (see page 32), a slightly higher percentage of adults said that the technology in schools were adequate for their children.

Fifty-seven percent of adults with children in their households said that the technological facilities in their children’s schools were adequate, while 15 percent disagreed.

**The technological facilities in my child's school are adequate
(Children in household)**

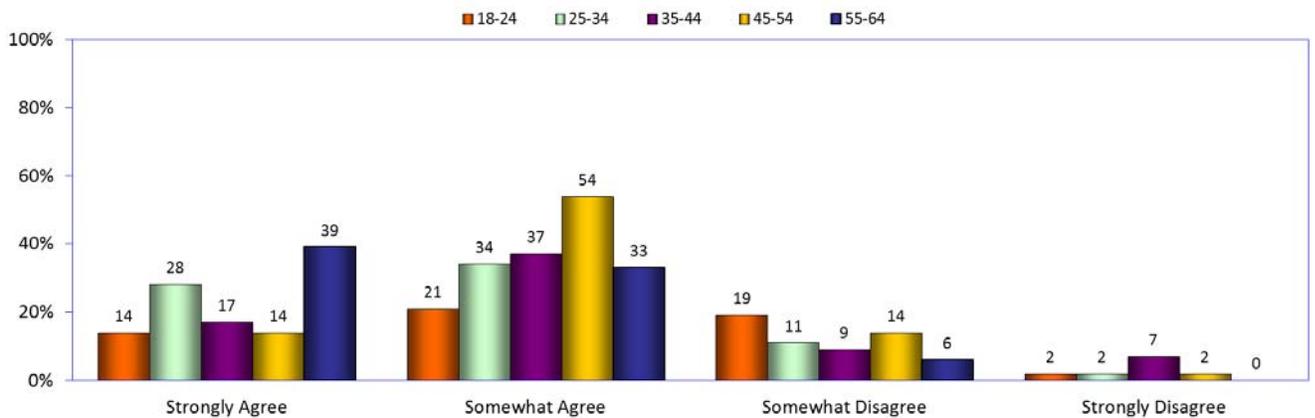


Q16 (Y-2)

37. Is technology in our schools adequate for students? (by age)

Larger percentages of older respondents (age 45 or older) believe that technological facilities in their children’s school were adequate. For example, 68 percent of respondents age 45-54 with children in their households somewhat or strongly agree, compared to 35 percent of respondents age 18-24 with the same response.

**The technological facilities in my child's school are adequate
(Children in household)**



Q16 (M-2)

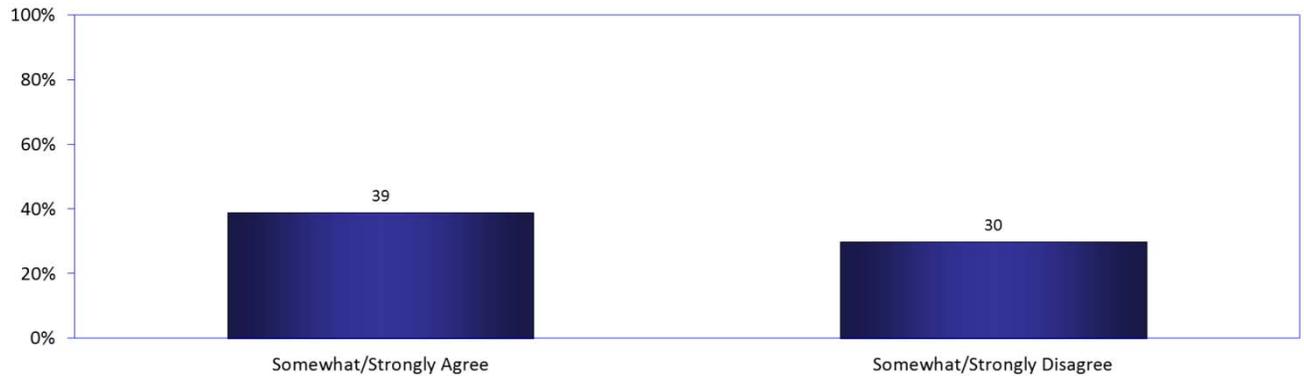
38. Student views about teachers and technology

Students are not as enthusiastic as adults about the abilities of teachers to prepare those in their classes to use new technologies.

While 55 percent of adults say that teachers are adequately preparing students to use new technologies (see page 32), only 39 percent of students agree.

Thirty percent of students do not think that teachers are adequately preparing them to use new technologies – more than twice the percentage of adults with the same view (see page 32).

The teachers in my school are adequately preparing me to use new technologies (Students)



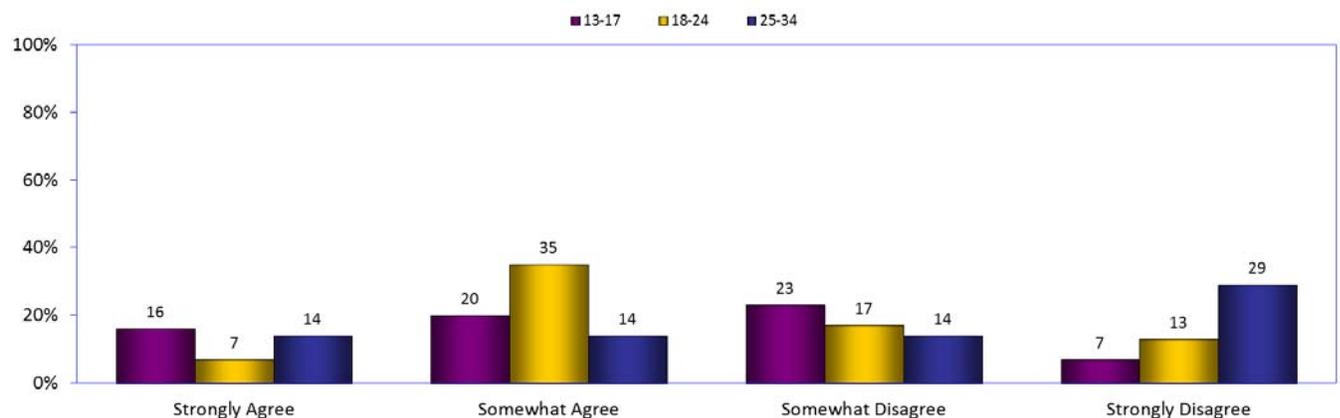
Q17 (Y-1)

39. Student views about teachers and technology (by age)

Less than half of students in all age ranges agree that teachers prepare them adequately to use new technologies. The highest level of agreement was among students 18-24 (42 percent), while only 36 percent of high school students age 17 or lower somewhat or strongly agree.

Conversely, at least 30 percent of students in all age ranges said that their teachers do not adequately prepare them to use new technologies: 30 percent of students under 24, and 43 percent of students age 25 to 34.

The teachers in my school are adequately preparing me to use new technologies (Students)



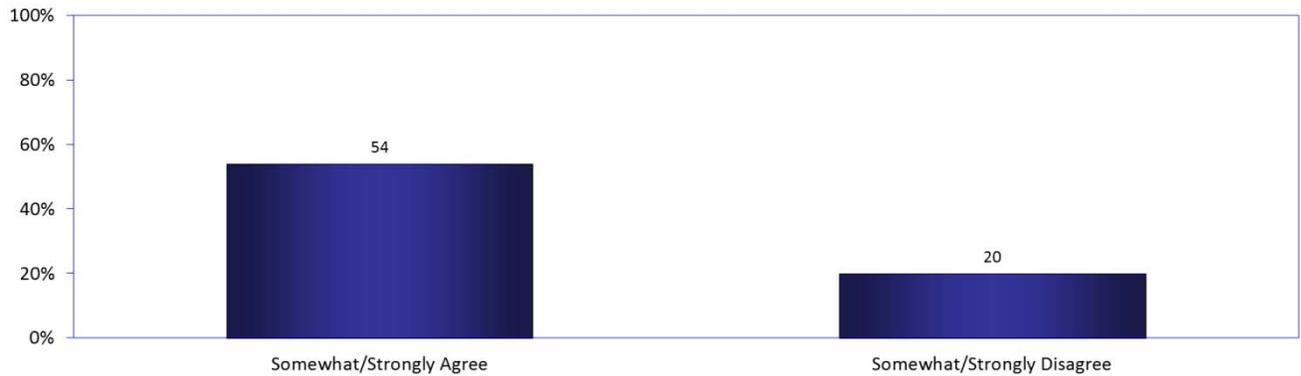
Q17 (M-1)

40. Student views about technology in schools

Are schools well-equipped with technology? More than half of student agree.

Fifty-four percent of students somewhat or strongly agree that the technology in their schools is adequate, while only 20 percent somewhat or strongly disagree.

The technological facilities in my school are adequate
(Students)

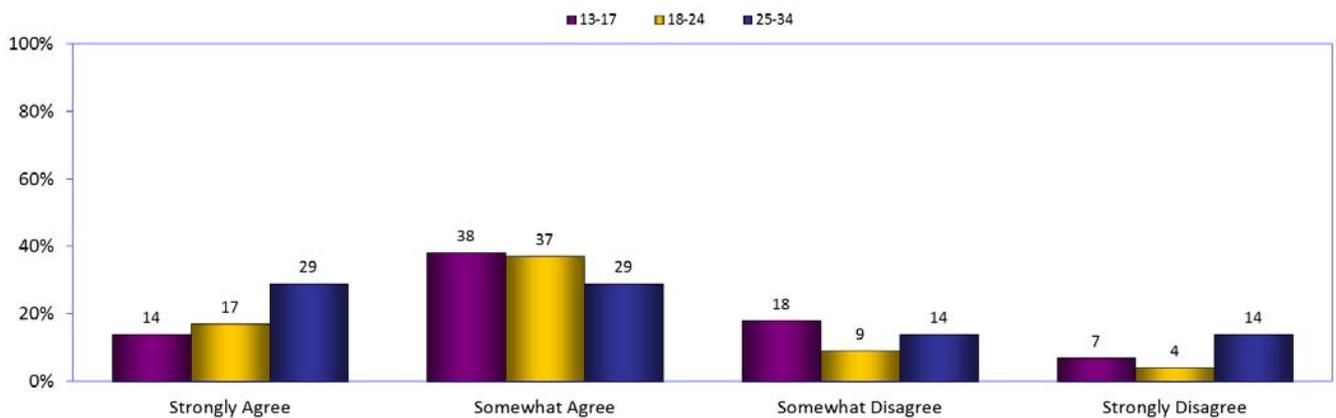


Q17 (Y-1)

41. Student views about technology in schools (by age)

More than half of students in all age ranges somewhat or strongly agree that the technology in their schools is adequate. Much smaller percentages – less than 30 percent in all age ranges – disagree with this statement.

The technological facilities in my school are adequate
(Students)



Q17 (M-2)

42. Is a mobile device appropriate during a meal?

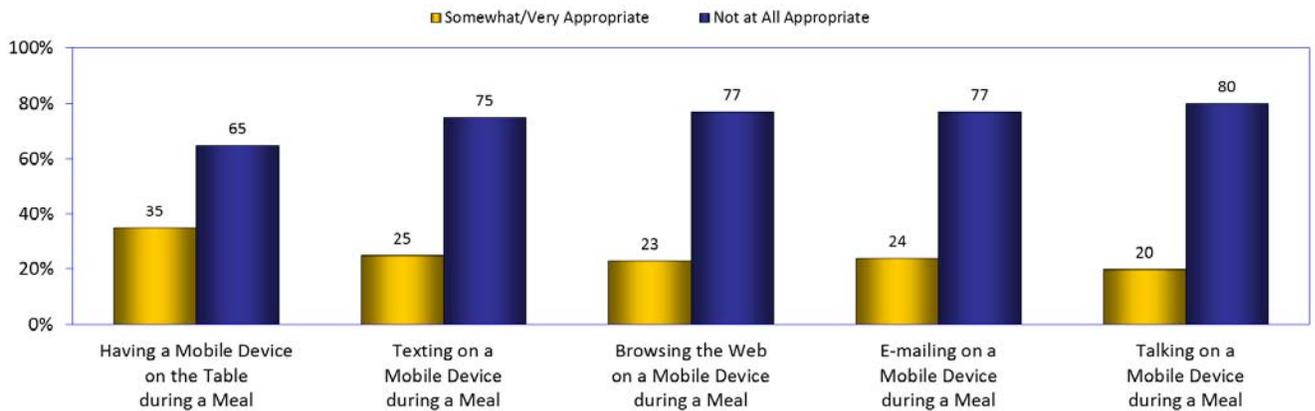
The Topical Survey findings about behavior involving mobile devices confirm what frustrated parents, supervisors, and teachers already believe: many Americans say that using a cell phone – or even its presence – during a meal, a meeting, or in the classroom is not appropriate.

Yet those beliefs can vary dramatically by age or by the type of technology that respondents use.

Overall, the survey found large percentages of respondents said the presence of a mobile device during a meal is not at all appropriate – whether or not that mobile device is being used. For example, almost two-thirds of respondents said that having a mobile device on the table during a meal is not appropriate; even larger percentages reported the same view about texting, browsing online, emailing, or talking on the device during a meal.

These results are generally consistent during the three years this question has been asked in the Topical Survey (see the second chart below).

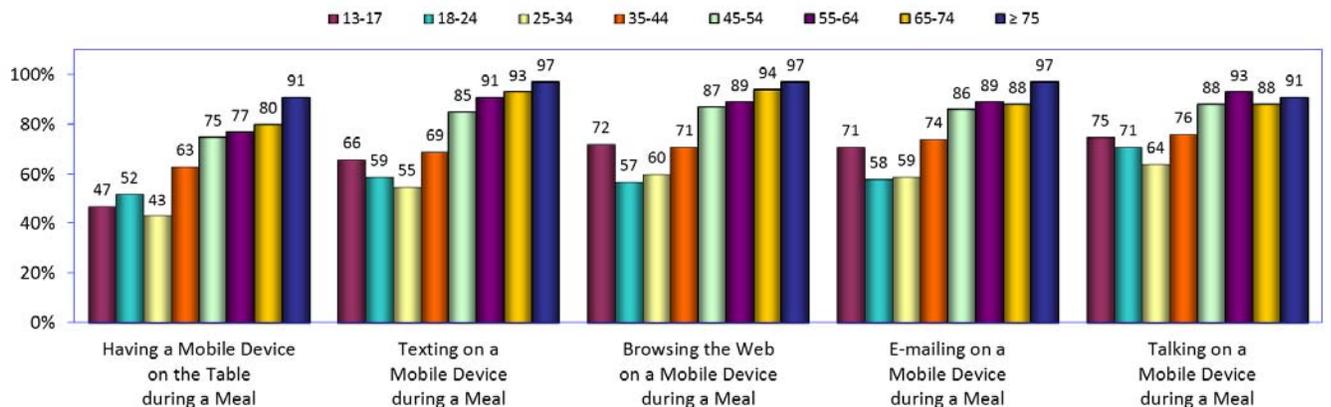
**How appropriate is this behavior during a meal?
(Respondents)**



Q18 (Y-1a)

However, these results vary considerably when explored by age; much lower percentages of young respondents said that the presence of a mobile device during a meal is inappropriate. For example, 57 percent of respondents age 18-24 said it is inappropriate to browse online during a meal, compared to 87 percent or more of all respondents age 45 or older.

**How appropriate is this behavior during a meal?
(Respondents – not at all appropriate)**

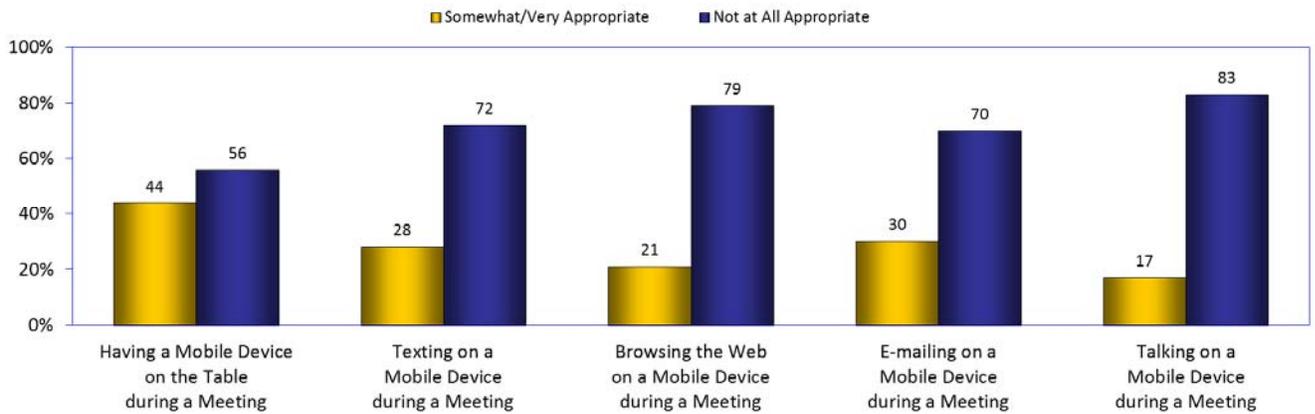


Q18 (M-2c)

43. Is a mobile device appropriate during a meeting?

The Topical Survey also found large percentages of employed respondents who disapproved of the presence or use of a mobile device during a meeting. Even the common practice of putting a mobile device on the table during a meeting is viewed as inappropriate by more than half of respondents (56 percent).

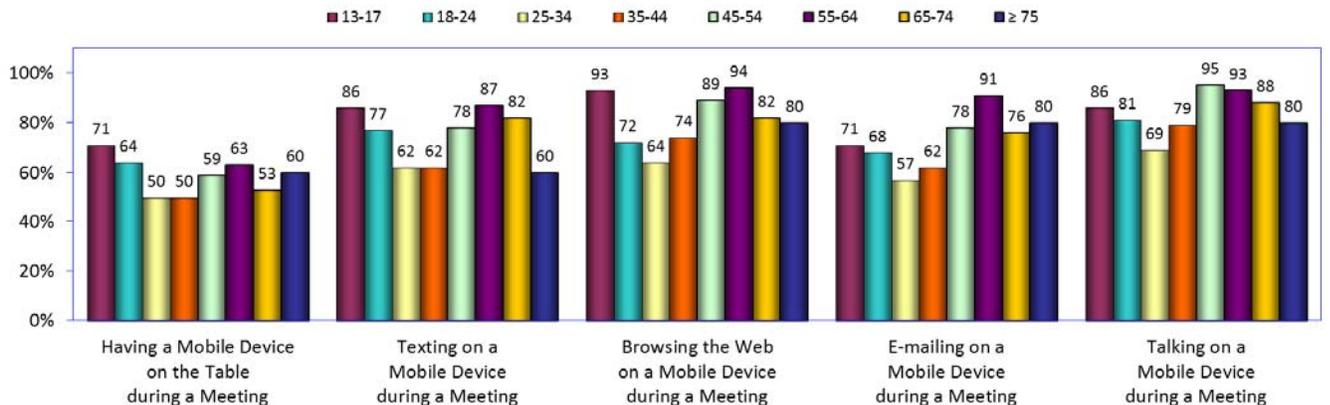
**How appropriate is this behavior during a meeting?
(Employed respondents – not at all appropriate)**



Q18 (Y-1b)

Perhaps surprisingly, these views do not vary by age as in the previous question about the presence of mobile devices during a meal. Large percentages of respondents in all age ranges said that the presence or use of a mobile device during a meeting was not appropriate.

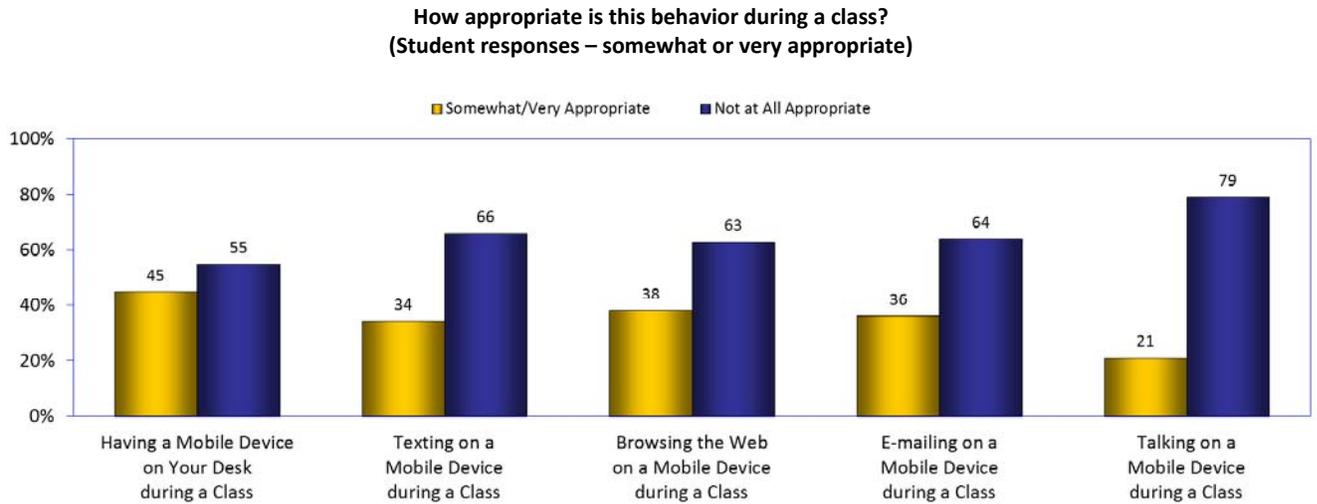
**How appropriate is this behavior during a meeting?
(Employed respondents – not at all appropriate)**



Q18 (M-4c)

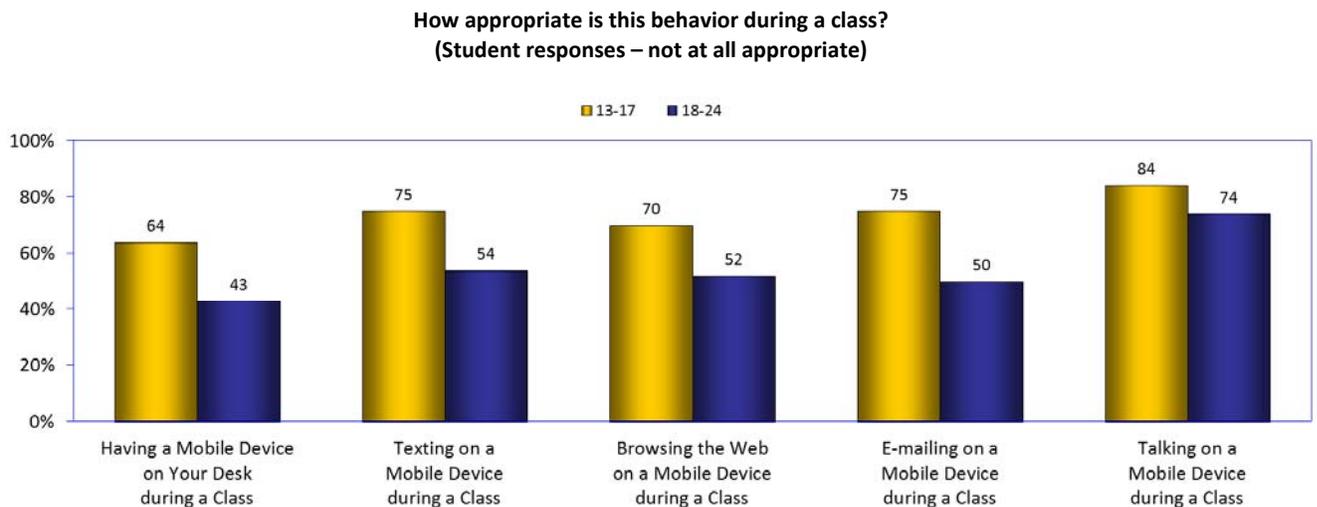
44. Is a mobile device appropriate during a class?

Consistent with the previous two questions about a mobile device in social settings, large percentages of respondents said that the presence or use of a mobile device during a class is inappropriate.



Q18 (Y-1c)

However, for this question responses vary by age, with the largest percentages of youngest respondents age 13-17 saying that the presence or use of a mobile device during a class is inappropriate.



Q18 (M-5c)

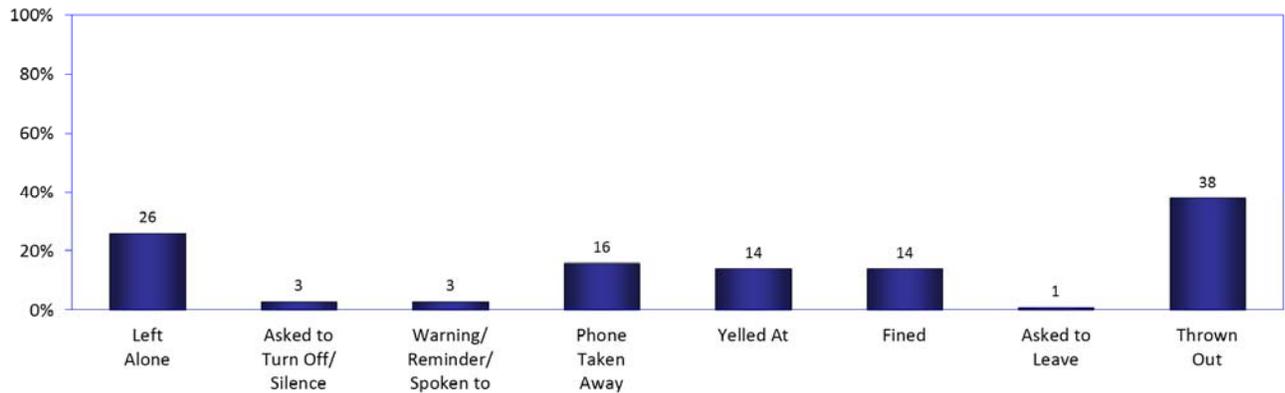
45. Mobile phone etiquette

If a mobile phone rings during a movie or theater performance, what should be done? The most common response: throw the offender out.

Thirty-eight percent of respondents said that if a mobile phone rings during a movie or theater performance, the owner of the phone should be thrown out. Another 16 percent said that the phone should be confiscated, while 14 percent said the offender should be fined or “yelled at.”

Much smaller percentages said that the offender should be asked to turn off the phone or warned (three percent), or simply asked to leave (one percent). About one-quarter (26 percent) said that nothing should be done; the offender should be “left alone.”

**What should be done with people whose mobile phone rings during a movie or theater performance?
(Respondents)**



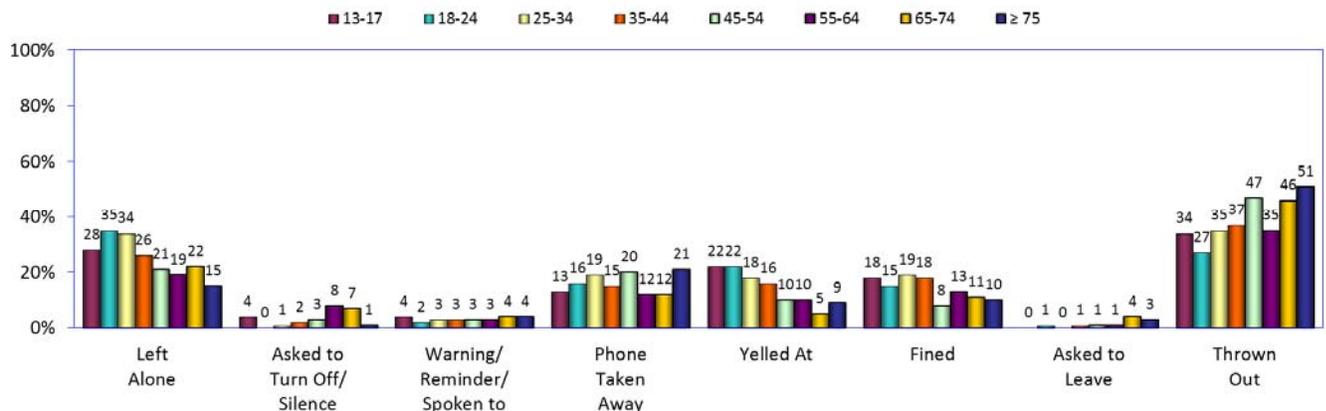
Q19 (Y-1)

46. Mobile phone etiquette (by age)

Age plays a role in determining what should be done if a mobile phone rings during a movie or theater performance, especially with the extremes of potential actions: in general, higher percentages of older respondents said the offender should be thrown out, while higher percentages of younger respondents said nothing should be done.

Perhaps surprisingly, however, the highest percentages of younger respondents said an offender should be “yelled at” or fined. And modest percentages in all age ranges – from 12 to 21 percent – said the phone should be taken away.

**What should be done with people whose mobile phone rings during a movie or theater performance?
(Respondents)**



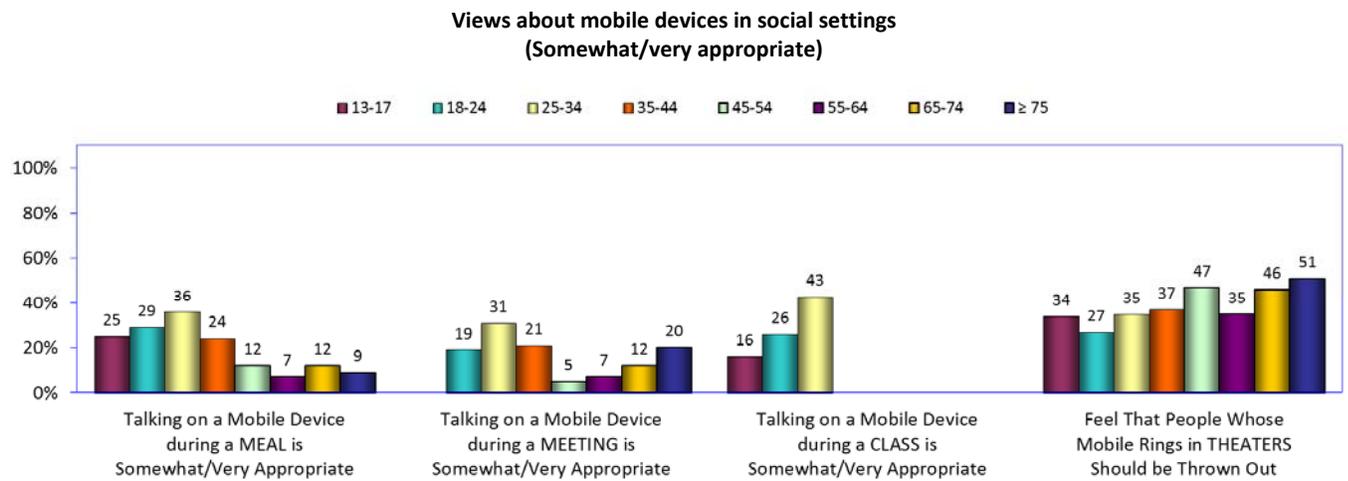
Q19 (M-1)

47. Mobile phone etiquette: in social settings

The Topical Survey found a compelling contrast between respondents' views of behavior involving mobile phones and how people should act in a public place such as a theater.

While moderate percentages of respondents said that talking on a mobile phone during a meal, a meeting, or a class was somewhat or very appropriate, even larger percentages said that people should be thrown out of a theater if their mobile phone rings.

For example, 24 percent of respondents age 35-44 said that talking on a mobile device during a meal is appropriate, but 37 percent of the same age group said the people whose mobile phones ring in a theater should be thrown out.



Q18-19 (M-1)

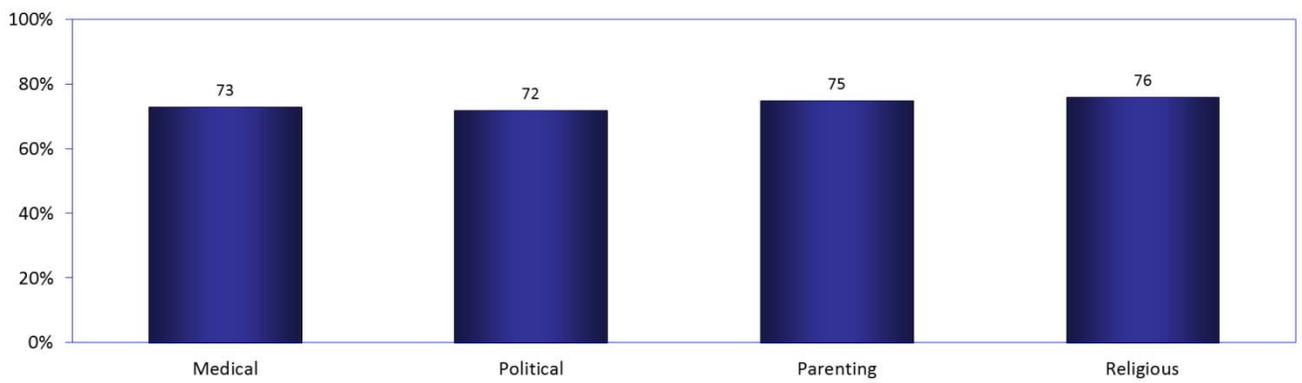
48. Social media and offline action

Does the use of social media or social networking motivate users to take offline action related to the online sites? For the vast majority of respondents, the answer is no.

More than 70 percent of respondents to the Topical Survey said that they never take offline action related to their online activity.

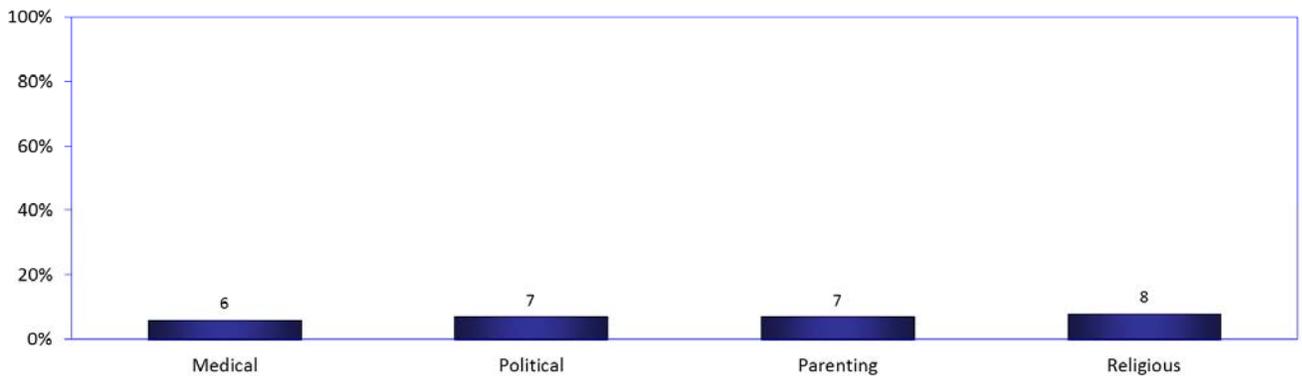
Of those that are involved in offline activities related to their online social behavior, only eight percent or less are involved weekly or more.

How often has your use of social media or social networking sites, such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, motivated you to take offline action? (Such as seeing a doctor, attending a political rally, talking to your children, going to a religious service) (Respondents – never)



Q20 (Y-2)

How often has your use of social media or social networking sites, such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, motivated you to take offline action? (Such as seeing a doctor, attending a political rally, talking to your children, going to a religious service) (Respondents – weekly or more)



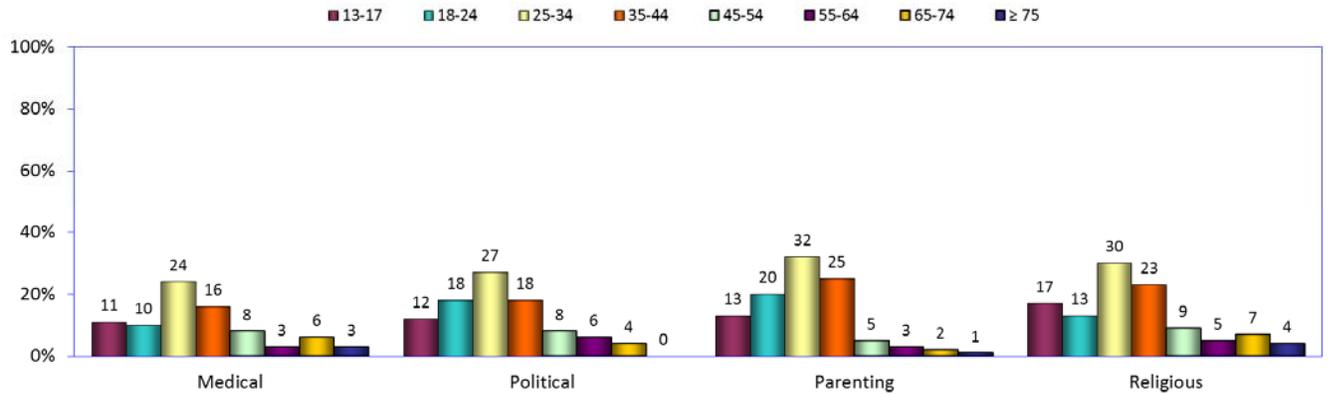
Q20 (Y-1)

49. Social media and offline action (by age)

Respondents age 25-34 led all other age groups in translating their online social activity into offline action in the Topical Survey, whether medical, political, parenting, or religious activities.

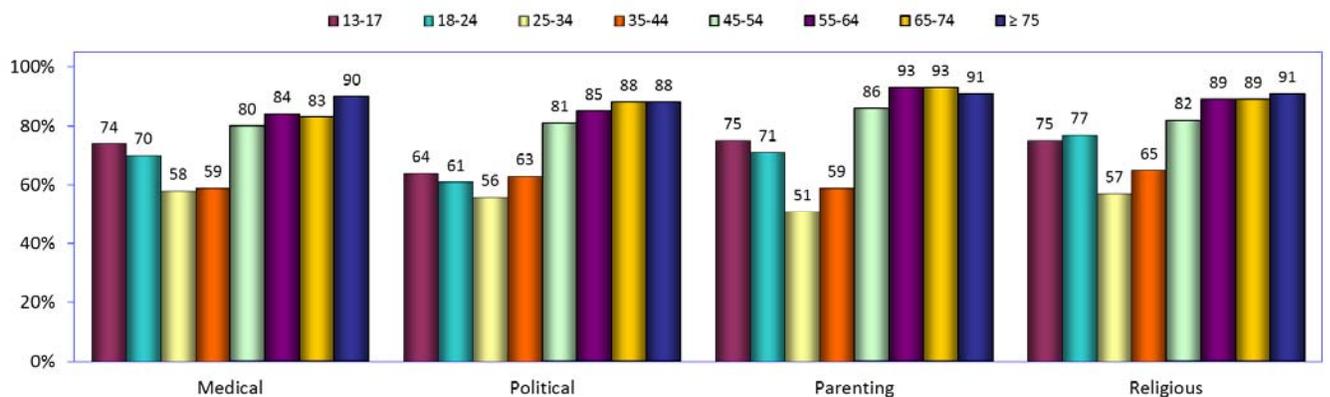
Respondents age 35-44 reported the second-highest level of offline action, while those age 55 and older report the lowest levels.

How often has your use of social media or social networking sites, such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, motivated you to take offline action? (Such as seeing a doctor, attending a political rally, talking to your children, going to a religious service) (Respondents – monthly or more)



Q20 (M-1)

How often has your use of social media or social networking sites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.) motivated you to take offline action (e.g., such as seeing a doctor, attending a political rally, talking to your children, going to a religious service) in the following realms? (Respondents – never)



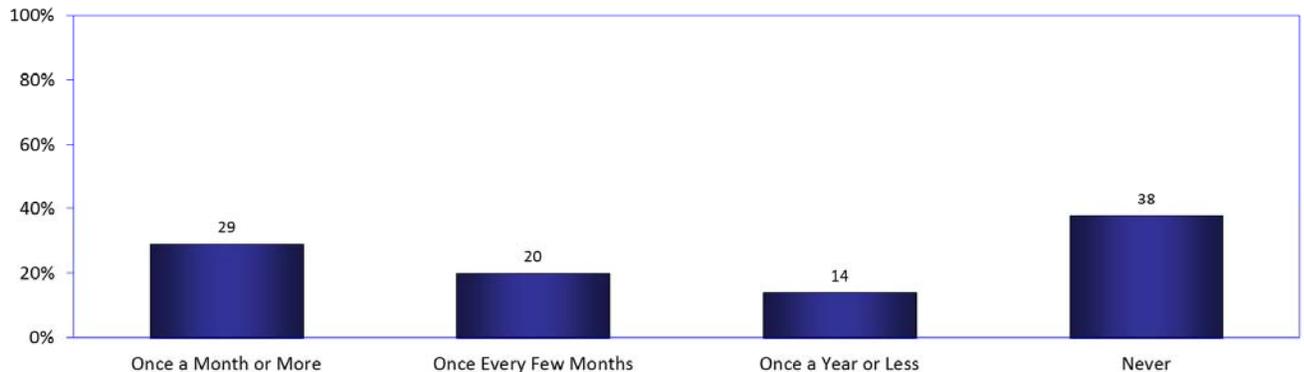
Q20 (M-2)

50. Television and binge viewing

How often are respondents involved in “binge viewing” of television shows – such as marathon viewings from a show’s DVD set, saved DVR material, or online sites such as Netflix or Hulu?

A viewing practice that was not possible only a few years ago is now common among a significant percentage of users: almost half – 49 percent – of respondents engage in binge viewing once every few months or more; of that group, 29 percent said they binge view once a month or more.

On average, how often do you engage in binge viewing of television shows (marathon viewing from a show’s DVD box set, saved DVR material, or online site)? (Respondents)



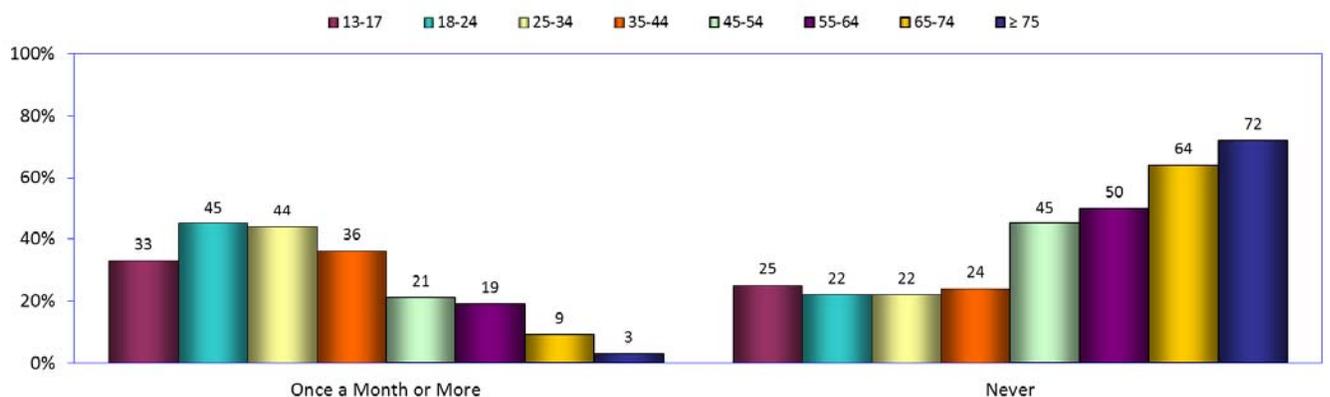
Q21 (Y-1)

51. Television and binge viewing (by age)

Binge viewing is most common among younger respondents, with at least one-third of those age 44 and under engaging in binge viewing once a month or more. Binge viewing peaks with respondents age 18-24 (45 percent binge view once a month or more), followed by respondents age 25-34 (44 percent binge view once a month or more).

Conversely, a larger percentage of older respondents never binge view, including 64 percent of those age 65-74, and 72 percent of those 75 and older.

On average, how often do you engage in binge viewing of television shows (marathon viewing from a show’s DVD box set, saved DVR material, or online site)? (Respondents)



Q21 (M-1)

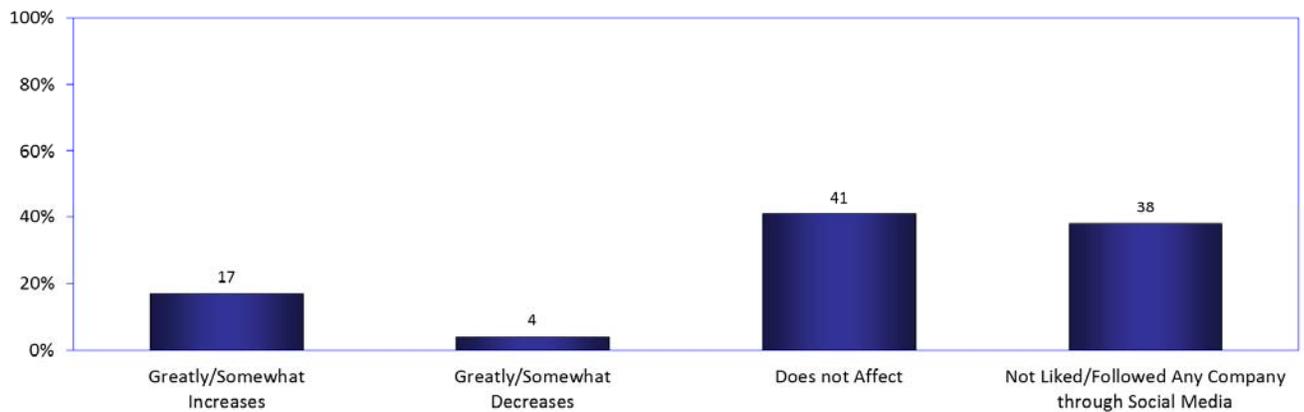
52. Facebook connections and effects on purchasing

Does “liking” or following a company through Facebook or other social media sites increase a user’s business with that organization? Overall, the answer is no.

Thirty-eight percent of respondents have never “liked” or followed a company on Facebook or other social media, and 41 percent said that “liking” an organization does not affect their purchases from a company. Seventeen percent said that liking an organization increases or greatly increases their purchasing from that company.

A surprising four percent said that liking a company actually somewhat or greatly decreases their purchases from that organization.

**How does your "liking" or following of companies through Facebook or other social media sites affect your purchasing of products and services?
(Respondents)**

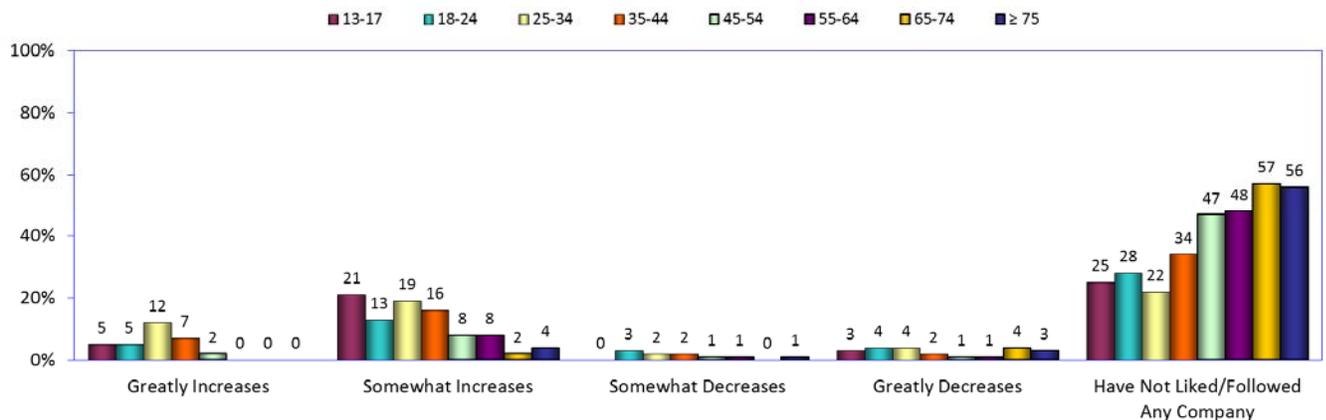


Q22 (Y-1)

53. Facebook connections and effects on purchasing (by age)

The connection between “liking” or following a company through Facebook and purchasing from that company is most pronounced among young users. For example, 31 percent of respondents age 25-34 said that “liking” or following companies somewhat or greatly increases their purchases of products and services, compared to eight percent or less of respondents in all age groups over age 45.

**How does your "liking" or following of companies through Facebook or other social media sites affect your purchasing of products and services?
(Respondents)**



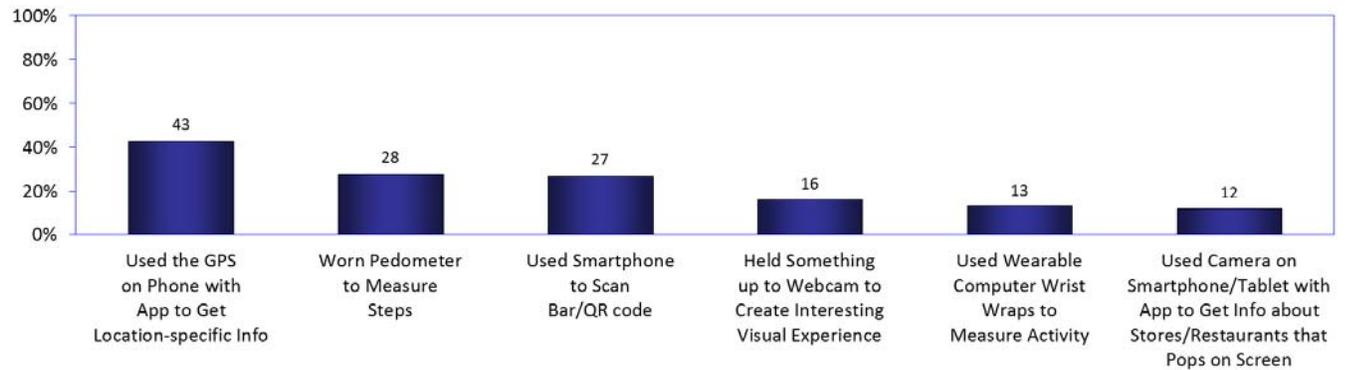
Q22 (M-1)

54. Using digital technology for travel, physical activity, and purchases

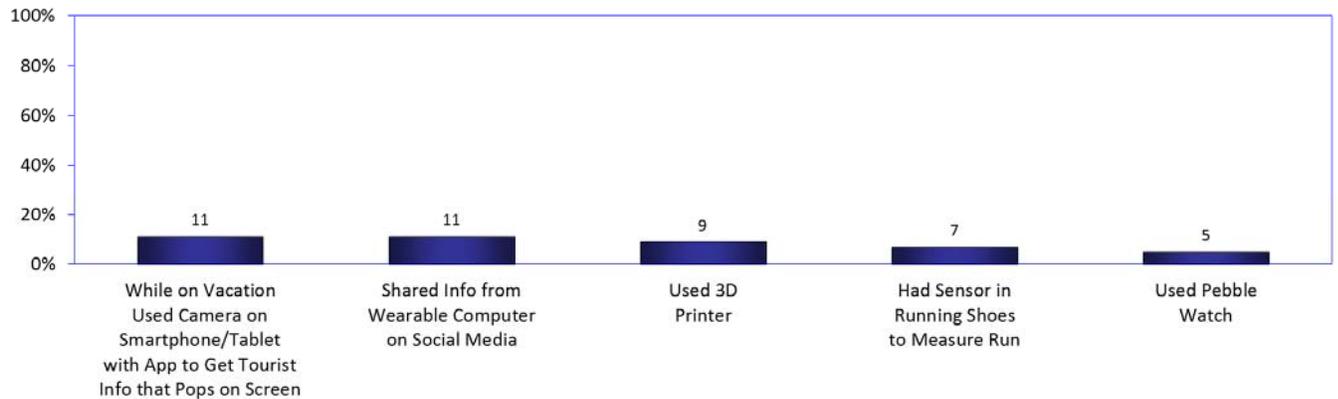
Exploring how digital technology is used for travel, physical activities, and alternative methods of purchasing showed that of the listed activities, the largest percentage of users have used GPS on their mobile devices to get information about a specific location (43 percent).

A much smaller percentage reported that they use digital technology during their physical activities (wearing a pedometer), or purchasing (scanning a bar code or QR code), or while traveling (using a camera on a smartphone or tablet with an app to get tourist information that pops on screen).

**Have you used digital technology for these activities?
(Respondents)**



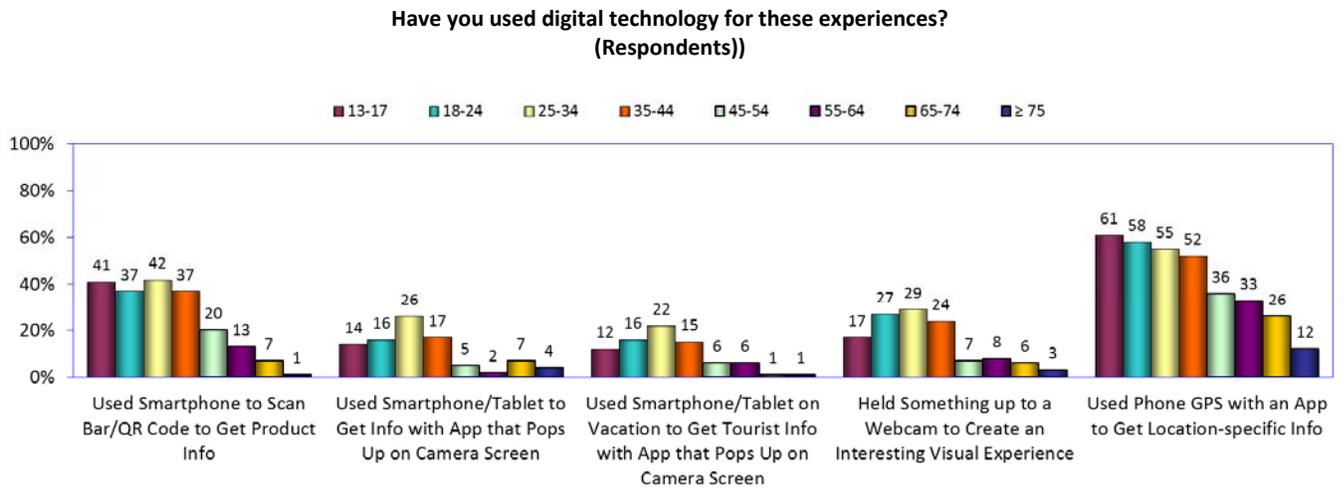
Q23 (Y-1a)



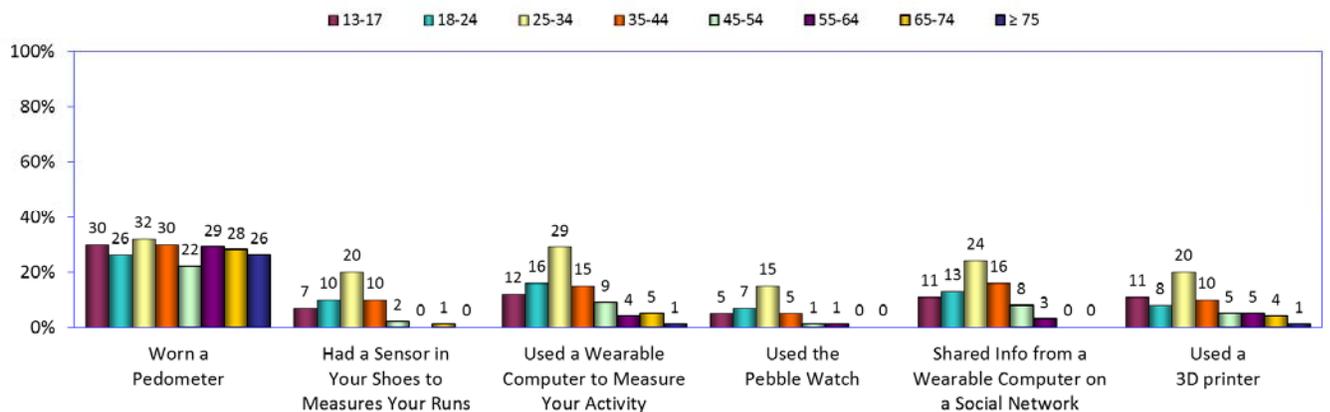
Q23 (Y-1b)

55. Using digital technology for travel, physical activity, and purchases (by age)

Some uses of digital technology vary by age. For example, a higher percentage of younger respondents used a smartphone GPS with an app to get location-specific information, or to scan bar codes or QR codes to get product information.



Q23 (M-1a)



Q23 (M-1b)

56. Distracted driving: views and behavior

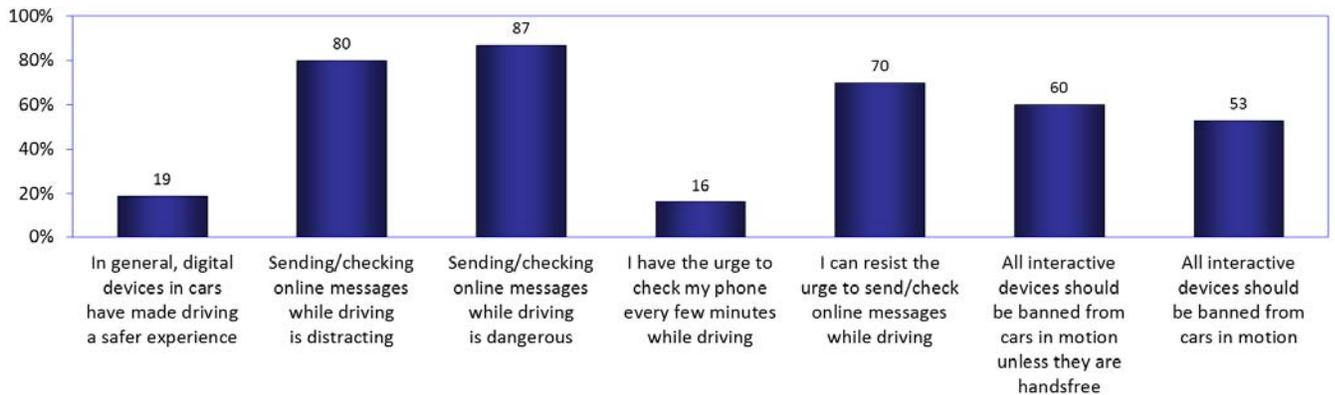
For distracted drivers, actions do indeed speak louder than words.

Although large percentages of respondents of all ages say that driving while sending or checking texts or emails is unsafe, unsettling numbers of drivers in all age ranges are frequently or *always* engaged in distracted behavior behind the wheel.

Overall, the survey found that a very large percentage of respondents – 87 percent – said that sending or checking online messages while driving is unsafe. Millennials are somewhat less likely to believe that online communication while driving is unsafe – 80 percent.

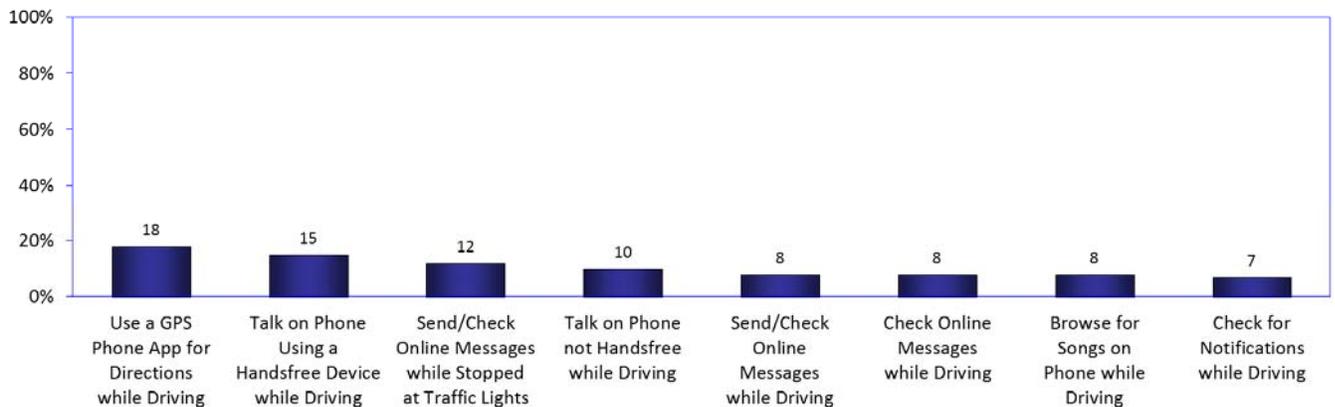
However, when asked about their actual behavior, some drivers admit that they still engage in driving behavior that has been proven unsafe and is illegal in many states. For example, 16 percent overall said they have the urge to send or check online messages every few minutes while driving. Another 10 percent said they always or often talk while driving on a phone that is not hands-free, while eight percent said they always or often text or email while driving.

**Have you used digital technology for these experiences?
(Respondents – somewhat/strongly agree)**



Q24 (Y-1)

**Do you ever...?
(Respondents – always/often)**



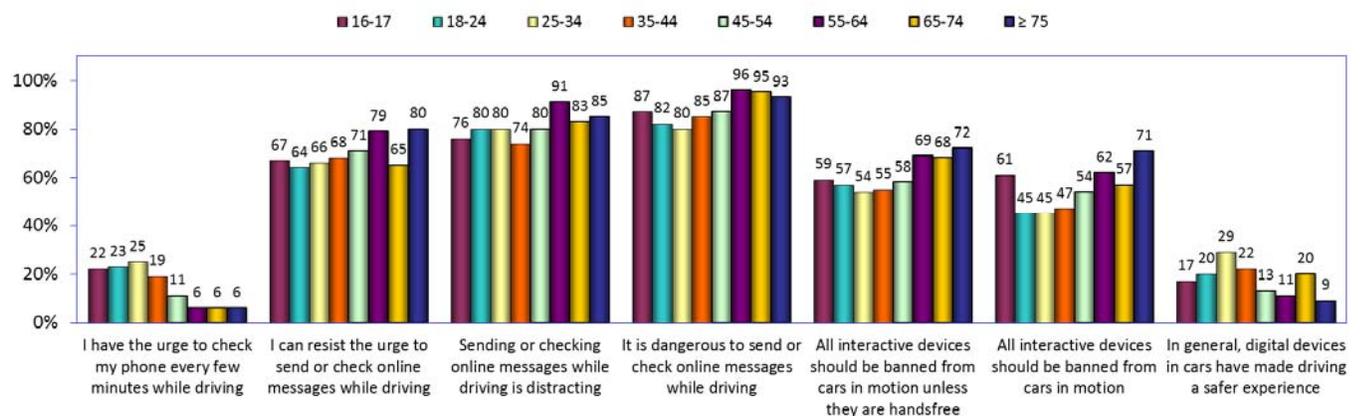
Q25 (Y-1)

57. Distracted driving: views and behavior (by age)

Respondents of all ages report disapproval of distracted driving; for example, 80 percent or more of respondents in every age range somewhat or strongly agree that it is dangerous to send or check online messages while driving.

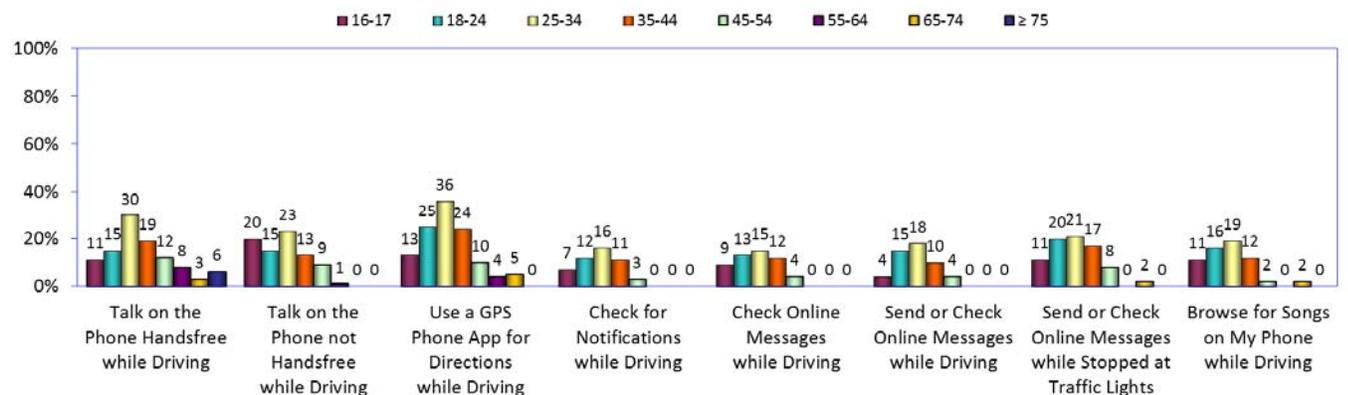
However, notable percentages of the young respondents – 22 percent or more of respondents age 34 or younger – said they have the urge to check their phones every few minutes while driving. Nine percent or more of these same age groups always or often check online messages while driving, or 15 percent or more always or often talk on the phone not hands free while driving.

How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the use of digital devices in cars? (Respondents – somewhat/strongly agree)



Q24 (M-1)

How often do you.... (Respondents – always/often)



Q25 (M-1)

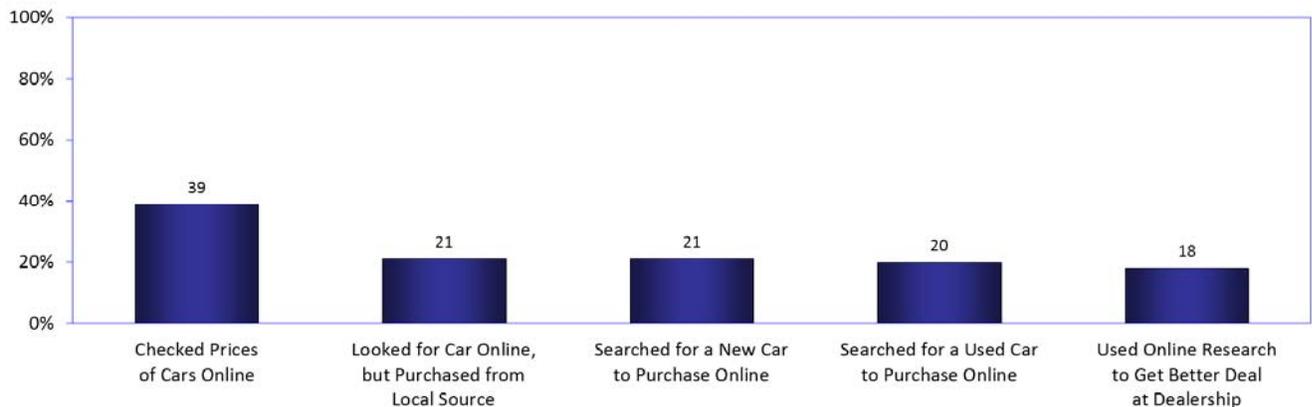
58. Car purchasing with online tools

For many computer users, the online experience has become a key tool in all aspects of buying new and used cars, including initial research, price checking, connecting to social media channels for guidance and advice, and using online information to expedite a car purchase.

With multiple responses possible, 39 percent said they checked car prices online, 21 percent said they have searched for a new car to purchase online, and 20 percent said they search for a used car to purchase online.

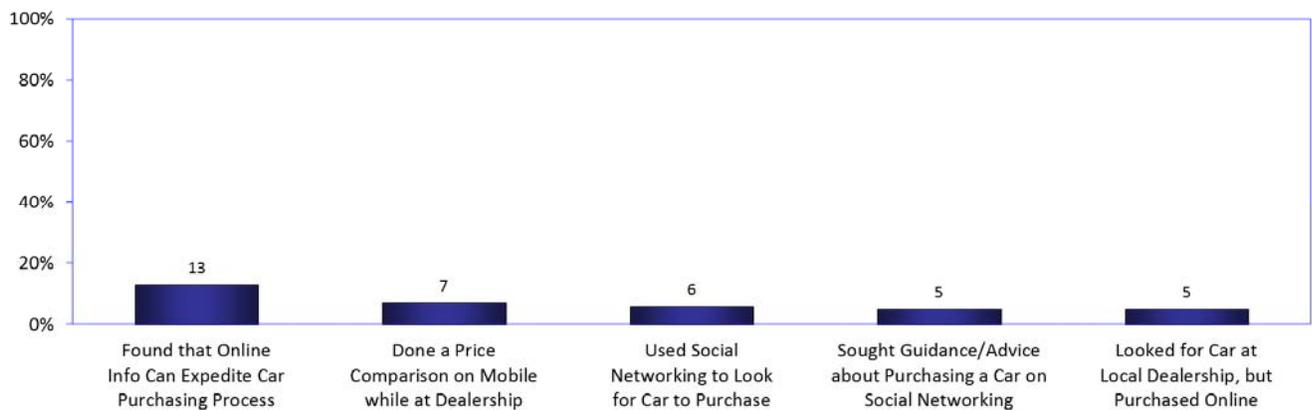
However, 21 percent said that although they looked for a car online, they ultimately purchased the car from a traditional dealership or a private party – this compared to five percent who purchased a car online. And even while car shopping at a brick-and-mortar dealer, online technology played a role: seven percent of respondents said that while at a dealer, they used a mobile device to search for a better deal available online.

**Have you ever...?
(Respondents)**



Q26 (Y-1a)

**Have you ever...?
(Respondents)**

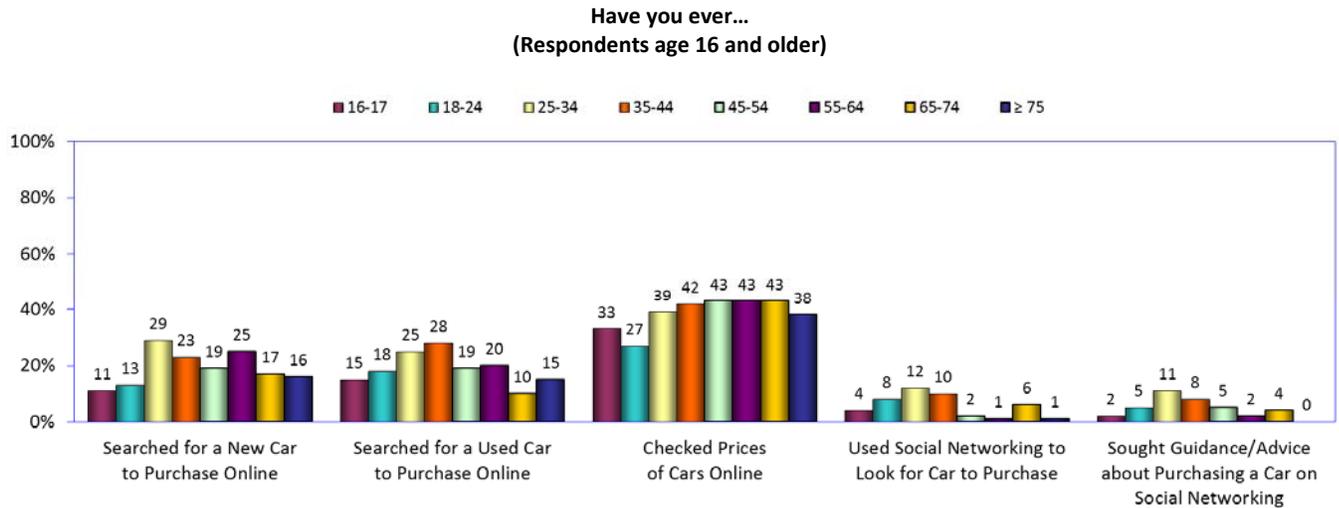


Q26 (Y-1b)

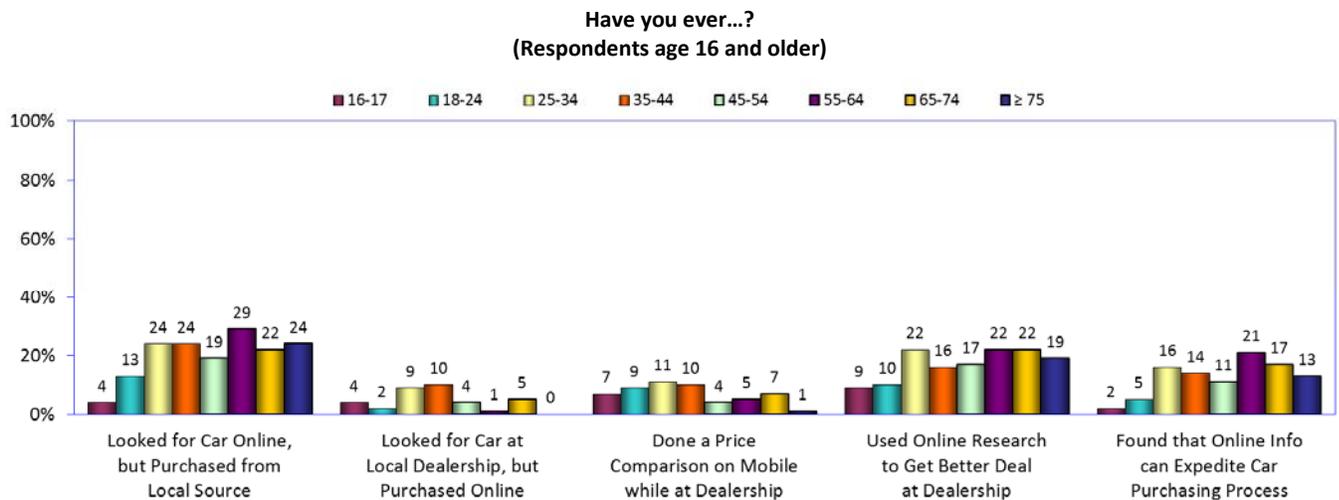
59. Car purchasing with online tools (by age)

While moderate percentages of respondents in all age ranges have checked car prices online, smaller percentages search for a new or used car to purchase.

For example, more than 40 percent of respondents age 35-74 have checked car prices online, while less than 30 percent of respondents in all age ranges have searched for a car to purchase.



Q26 (M-1a)



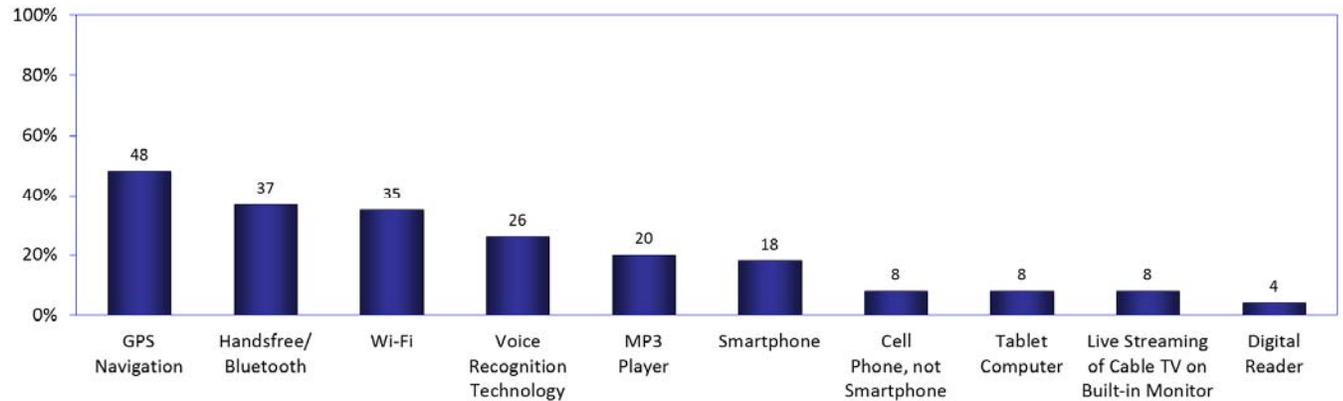
Q26 (M-1b)

60. Cars and new digital equipment

What digital options should be built into the next car you buy?

With multiple options possible, almost half of all respondents (48 percent) said GPS navigation should be included in their next car, followed by hand free or Bluetooth capabilities (37 percent). Thirty-five percent of respondents want Wi-Fi in their next car, and 26 percent would like some form of voice recognition (such as Siri).

Which of the following digital devices would you like to see manufacturers build into the next car you buy?



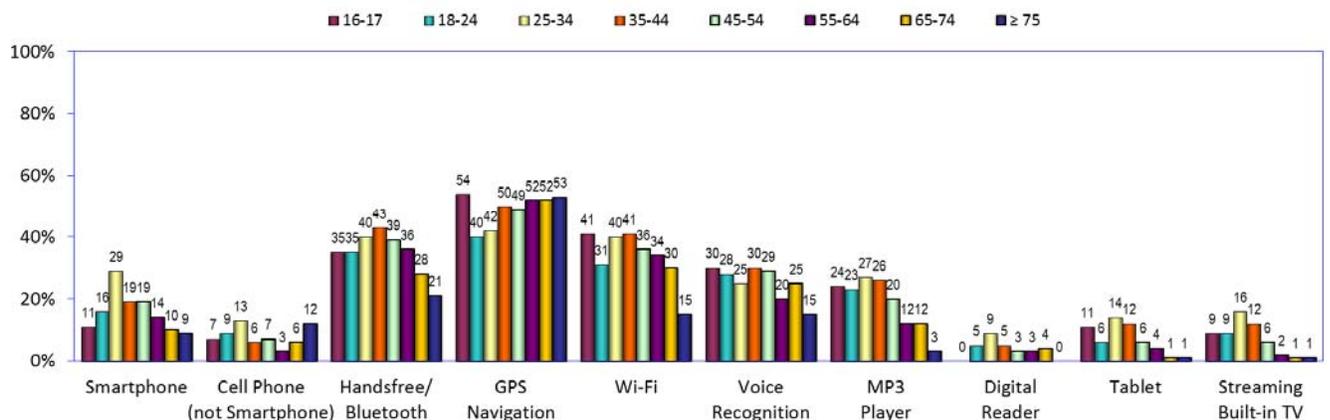
Q28 (Y-1) (Multiple responses possible)

61. Cars and new digital equipment (by age)

The most-requested digital option for cars – GPS navigation – was wanted by large percentages of respondents in all age ranges – at least 40 percent in all age ranges.

More than 30 percent of respondents ages 16-44 also want hand free/Bluetooth or Wi-Fi in the next car they buy.

Which of the following digital devices would you like to see manufacturers build into the next car you buy?
(RESPONDENTS 16+)



Q28 (M-1) (Multiple responses possible)

62. Opinions about the security of personal information

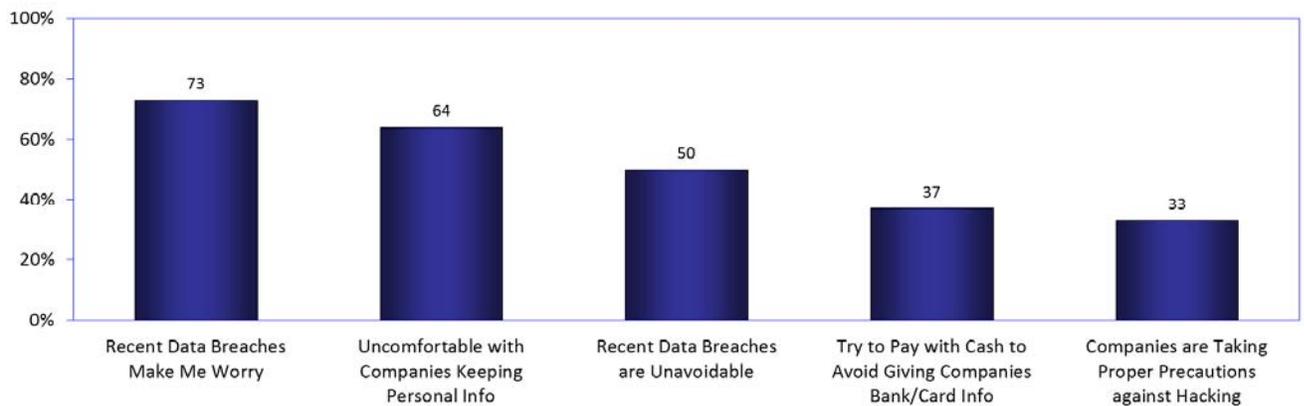
A large percentage of respondents to the Topical Survey expressed concerns about how companies maintain personal information, and an even larger percentage also worry about recent security breaches at several large companies that put massive amounts of data at risk.

Overall, almost two-thirds of respondents – 64 percent – agree or strongly agree that they are uncomfortable that companies keep personal information in their systems. An even larger percentage – 73 percent – have a specific reason for their concerns: they agree or strongly agree that recent data breaches make them worry that their person information is at risk of being hacked.

A much smaller percentage of respondents believes that companies maintain appropriate security measures; only one-third of respondents agree or strongly agree that companies are taking the proper precautions to safeguard against data hacking. Half of respondents think that such breaches are inevitable; 50 percent agree or strongly agree that recent data breaches are an unavoidable consequence of the technology age.

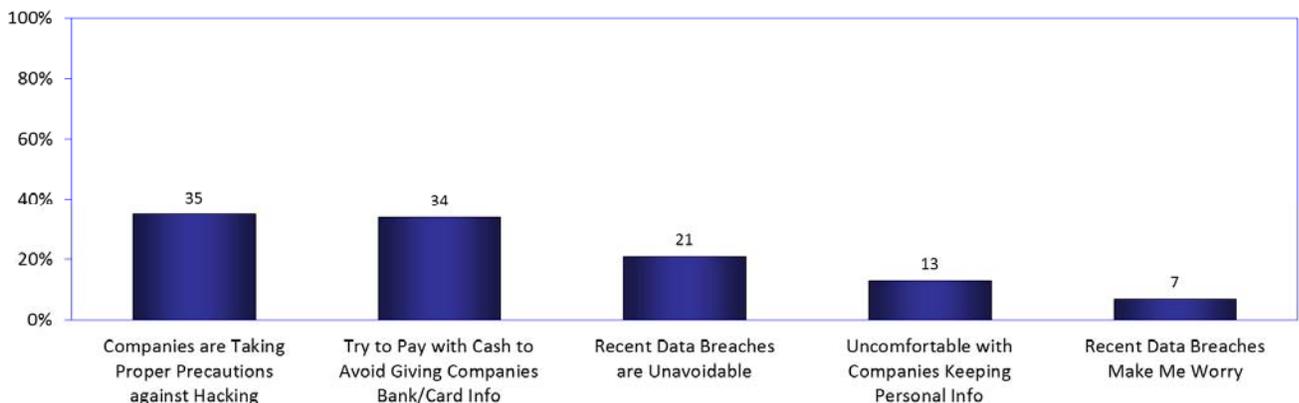
A smaller but significant percentage of respondents demonstrate their lack of faith through action: 37 percent of respondents agree or strongly agree that they try to pay cash to avoid giving companies their credit card information.

**How much do you agree or disagree with these statements about the security of your personal information?
(Respondents – somewhat/strongly agree)**



Q29 (Y-1)

**How much do you agree or disagree with these statements about the security of your personal information?
(Respondents – somewhat/strongly disagree)**

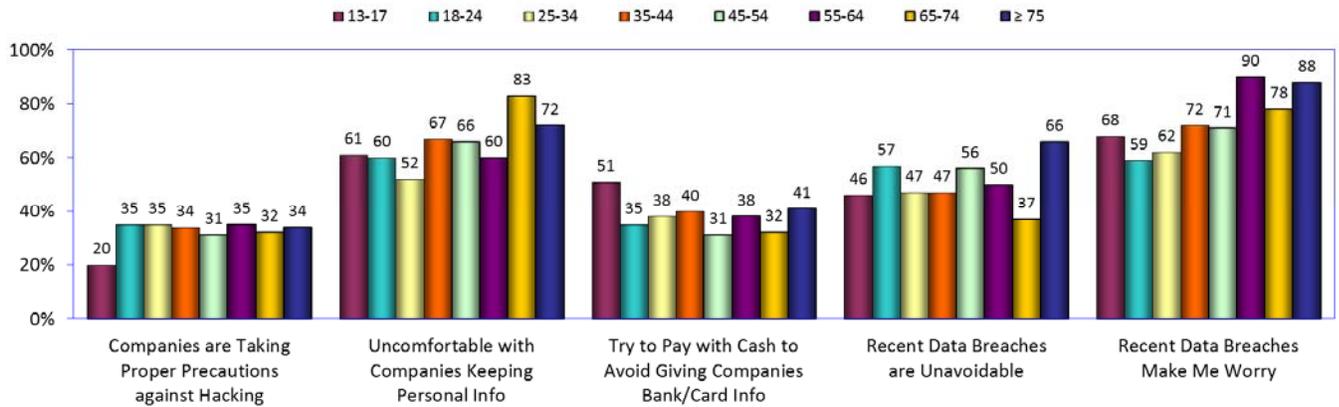


Q29 (Y-2)

63. Opinions about the security of personal information (by age)

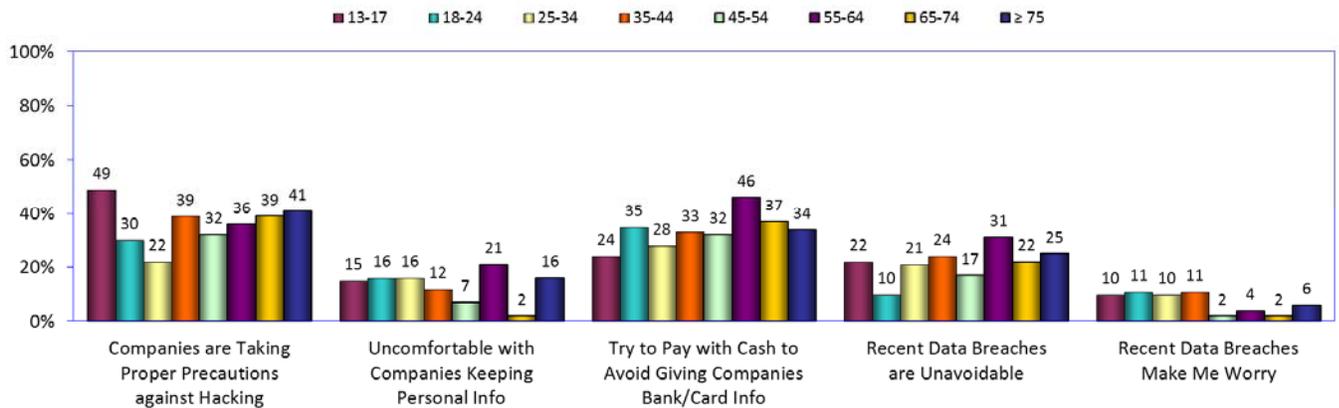
Concerns about the privacy of personal information are similar across most age groups, with somewhat higher percentages of agreement with statements about data breaches among older respondents. For example, 90 percent of respondents age 55-64 agree or strongly agree that they are worried about recent data breaches, compared to 57 percent of respondents age 18-24.

How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the security of your personal information? (Respondents – agree/strongly agree)



Q29 (M-1)

How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the security of your personal information? (Respondents – disagree/strongly disagree)



Q29 (M-2)

64. Concerns about online privacy

Compared to opinions about the security of personal information (see page 52), somewhat smaller – but still high – percentages of respondents expressed concerns about a variety of issues affecting their personal privacy.

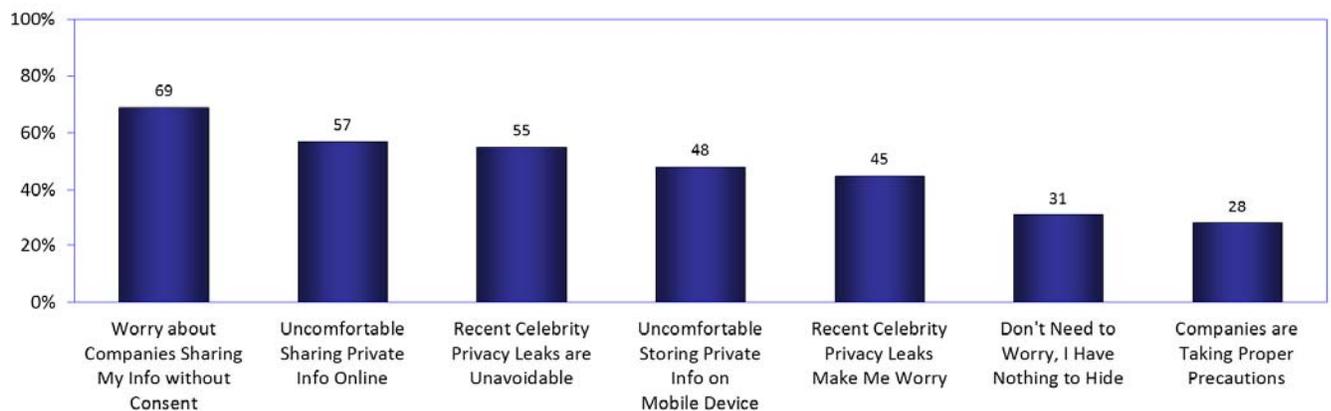
Notably, 57 percent of respondents agree or strongly agree that they are uncomfortable sharing private information online, such as photos, posts, and check-ins – this in spite of continuing growth in use of Facebook, Twitter, and other social media sites. The high levels of agreement with this statement extend through all age ranges (see the next page).

An even larger percentage of respondents – 69 percent – said that they worry about companies sharing their personal information without their consent.

News about leaks of celebrity’s private information has added to the concerns: 45 percent of respondents said that recent privacy leaks have made them worry about their own online privacy.

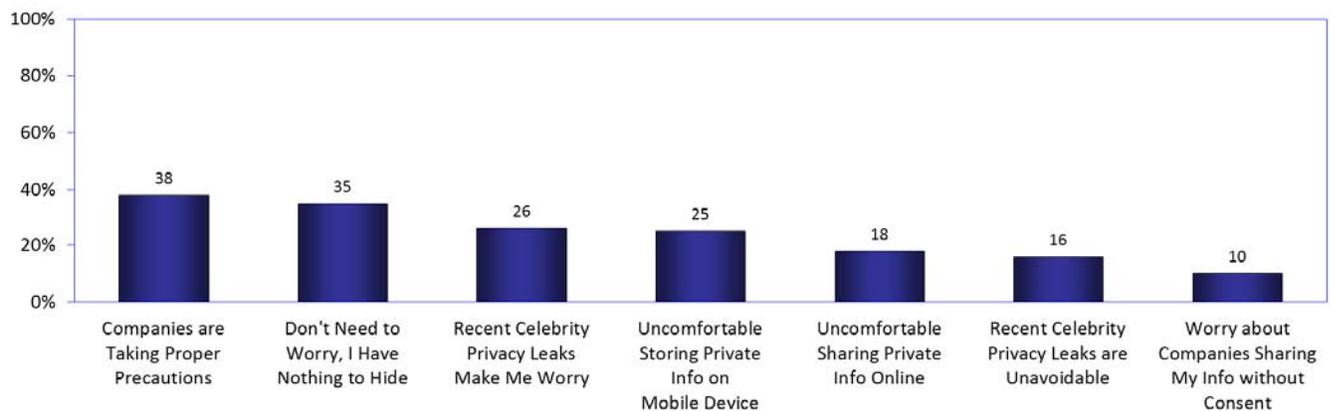
And as with issues of security of personal information, low percentages of respondents have confidence in the ability of companies to protect their privacy; only 28 percent agree or strongly agree that companies take proper precautions to safeguard privacy.

How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the security of your personal information? (Respondents – somewhat/strongly agree)



Q30 (Y-1)

How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the security of your personal information? (Respondents – somewhat/strongly disagree)



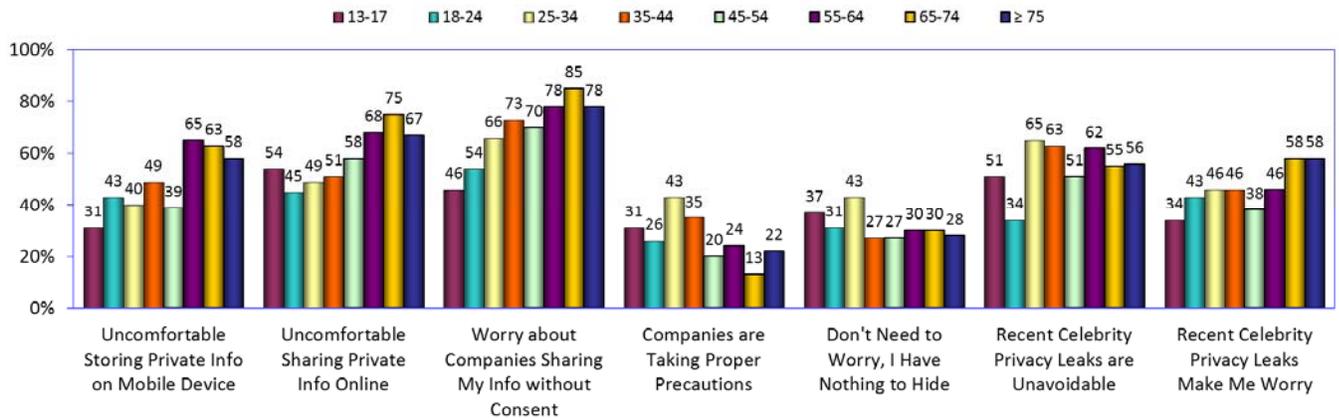
Q30 (Y-2)

65. Concerns about online privacy (by age)

While worries about security of personal information are generally similar across all age groups (see page 53), on most issues concerns about online privacy tend to increase as age increases. For example, in four of the seven questions asked in the Topical Survey about online privacy, the highest percentages of concerns were reported by the oldest age ranges.

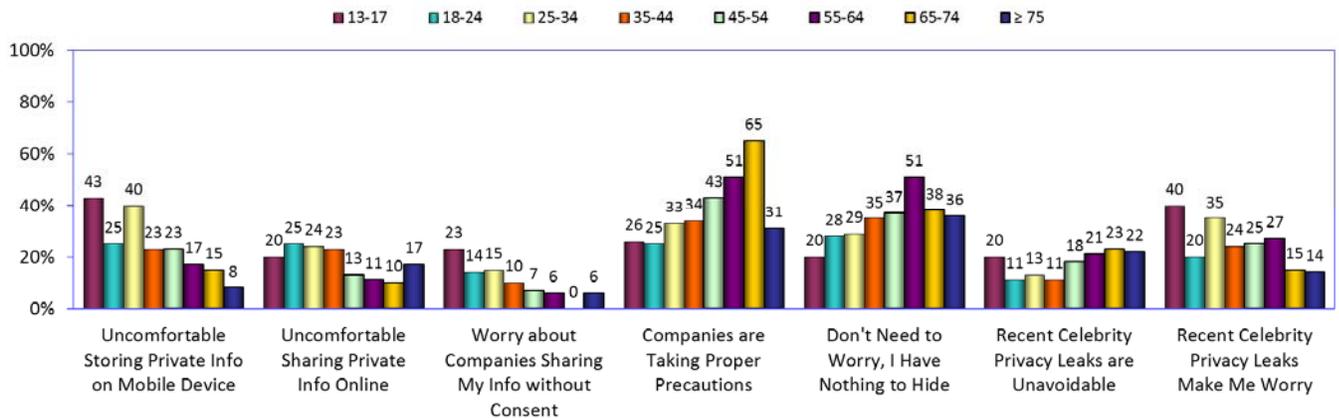
One common area of agreement was about the respondents' feelings about their own privacy: relatively low and similar percentages of users in all age ranges except age 13-17 and 25-34 agreed with the statement, "I don't need to worry about my privacy being invaded because I have nothing to hide."

**How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statement(s) about online privacy?
(Respondents – agree/strongly agree)**



Q30 (M-1)

**How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statement(s) about online privacy?
(Respondents – disagree/strongly disagree)**



Q30 (M-2)

Supplement 1

The USC Annenberg Center for the Digital Future (www.digitalcenter.org)

The USC Annenberg Center for the Digital Future is a forum for the discussion and development of policy alternatives addressing the leading issues in media and communication.

The Center conducts and facilitates research, courses, seminars, working groups, and conferences designed to have a major impact on policy at the local, national, and international levels. It also provides a base for visiting scholars who are engaged in efforts to examine and shape communication policy. The Center's goals include using the vast intellectual resources of USC to deal with some of the most important concerns of the day and to have a transforming effect on the issues.

The Center is based in the Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism at the University of Southern California. Until July 2004, it was housed at UCLA in the Anderson Graduate School of Management.

In October 2000, the Center released its first report on the Internet, the beginning of an international, long-term exploration of the impact of the Internet on society. This work is part of the World Internet Project, which is organized and coordinated by the Center; included in the World Internet Project are the Center's work and partner studies in countries in North America, Europe, South America, Asia, the Middle East, Australasia, and Africa. Initial comparative results from the World Internet Project were released in January 2004. The first comprehensive international report of the World Internet Project was released at the end of 2008, and the fifth in 2014.

In 2012-13, the Center began a new study that explores a wide range of issues that change frequently regarding digital technology. This project, called the Topical Survey, is published in this volume for the first time with findings from the most recent survey.

Since the Center's creation in September 1993, it has been awarded multi-million-dollar research grants from the National Science Foundation and the U.S. Department of Defense, held numerous national and local conferences, conducted three nationwide surveys with one of America's leading news magazines, and established a strong national and international identity in media and communication technology issues.

The Center for the Digital Future has become an internationally regarded policy studies center. The Center is committed to studying, through a variety of prisms, the important communication issues that transform our lives.

For more information about the Center, visit www.digitalcenter.org.

Supplement 2

Topical Survey 2015: research methodology

The Topical Survey was conducted among n=1,000 respondents drawn from a nationally representative, online survey panel. Respondents were age 13+, and were monitored to ensure a nationally representative distribution for age, gender, and ethnicity.

Respondents who completed the 2013 Topical Survey were excluded from the sample in 2014. The data were collected from December 3-14, 2014.

Beginning in 2014, the survey was conducted on a mobile-friendly platform that allowed respondents to easily complete the survey on smartphones and small tablet screen sizes. To ensure this change had no significant impact on survey responses, we ran a parallel test among a small subset of survey respondents using the traditional survey platform. When we compared the results across the two platforms, we found no substantive differences and will therefore be moving forward using the mobile-friendly platform for future waves.

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