

Digital Divide Grows, says survey by consumer researchers, Intersperience

Submitted by: Ten Stories High

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Digital divide grows as 29% of us use seven or more devices at home

A new phase in the digital divide is emerging as a growing number of us use seven or more digital devices in the home with up to five switched on at any one time.

According to the latest findings by consumer researchers, Intersperience, there is a 12% jump in the number of people who have seven or more digital devices whilst those with three or less remains the same as last year at 18%.

A new type of super user, the 'device junky', is emerging, represented by 29% of those surveyed. Whilst the majority of us (53%) have between four and six devices at home, a drop of 13% compared to the same time last year.

"We are seeing a new phase in the digital divide as the technology skills gap among consumers widens" comments Intersperience's CEO Paul Hudson.

"At one end of the spectrum there are digitally connected multi-device using households, who are adept at multi-tasking. And at the other end there is a persistent minority with fewer than three devices whose online repertoire is much more straight-forward."

Over a thousand people in the UK, of all ages, were asked how new technology is being used in the home through surveys, brainstorming, smart-boards, diaries and discussions. Compared to a similar survey last year the results show developing patterns of use with major implications for businesses that need to capture the attention of these polarising groups.

The 'device junky', the majority of who are under 45 years old, will have as many as five devices switched on at the same time. Multi-tasking, using several devices, dividing attention across devices rather than switching focus and using them in a more social environment are examples of the 'device junkies' more complex digital behaviours. "I was watching TV Sky + HD whilst using an iPad and also using a phone to text" said one respondent*.

Family households are more likely to have more than seven devices suggesting the presence of young residents may well explain the wider digital catalogue and more complicated behaviours of use.

This contrasts with the group who has three or less devices in the home. They are adapting more slowly to technological upgrades creating a new phase in the digital divide. 60% of them are 45 plus years old.

Paul Hudson adds:

"The implications for businesses and organisations seeking to serve all demographics are potentially far-reaching. When you add in the two in 10 UK households that Ofcom recently claimed were still

'digitally excluded', with no internet connection at all, we estimate that 31% are nowhere near the 'device junkie' multi tasker. On the one hand, businesses have to invest heavily in technology to support the device junkies, whilst simultaneously continuing to invest in supporting the rest of the population who may not be adapting as quickly."

* - case studies are available showing how devices are being used, please follow this link:
http://www.intersperience.com/news_more.asp?news_id=64

Ends

For specific information about the survey please contact Paul Hudson or Pam Taylor on 015395 65450.

Notes to editors

Devices: The term devices includes: smartphones, mobile phone, laptops, tablets, personal computers, satellite or cable TV, games console, internet radio, e-reader, connected TV. The biggest increase of all device use is the tablet computer. Four times more respondents indicated that they use the tablet computer compared to a survey in 2011. The increase in the use of the smartphone continues with uptake almost doubling (although slower than that of tablet computers).

About Intersperience: Intersperience is an international consumer research specialist with expertise in consumer behaviour, experience and attitudes. The team, which is headquartered in the UK, has more than 25 years experience in analysing consumer behaviour. It employs a range of interpretative models and frameworks including a proprietary online research platform. Intersperience has significant global expertise and an international research hub at Lancaster University which conducts research in more than 60 languages as well as associates in major global markets. Intersperience is an expert in how technology impacts on consumer behaviour and multi-channel customer service strategy. Clients include: ITV, The British Council; General Motors; Iceland; Samsung; ScottishPower and William Hill.
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