

TV still No. 1 but Internet growing as Canadians' main source of news: poll

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TORONTO - The number of anglophone Canadians who consider the Internet their main source of news has increased by almost 20 per cent in the last two years, while a majority of young people now go online to stay informed, a new study suggests.

According to the results of telephone surveys with 6,011 Canadians by the Media Technology Monitor, 43 per cent said they still relied on TV newscasts as their primary source of news. A third of the respondents cited the Internet as their go-to source for news and only 12 per cent each said they preferred newspapers and radio newscasts.

Compared to a similar study conducted in 2012, the number of respondents who said they mostly used the Internet to get their news grew by 18 per cent and TV was up by seven per cent. The numbers of respondents who said they preferred to get their news from newspapers and news radio dropped by 25 per cent and 20 per cent.

Not surprisingly, there was a major generational divide in how the polled Canadians accessed the news.

About 57 per cent of the respondents in the 18-to-34 demographic turned to their mobile devices or computers most often to get caught up on headlines, compared to 39 per cent of those aged 35 to 49, 18 per cent of 50- to 64-year-olds, and just seven per cent of those 65 and older.

The oldest respondents were the most likely to favour TV newscasts and newspapers.

MTM also identified a group they called "heavy news users," who said they read, watched or listened to a variety of news each and every day.

About 30 per cent of the poll respondents said they were heavy news users and they were more likely to be men, aged 48 or older, a resident in a big city, with a university education, and an income of \$75,000 or more.

Heavy news users were more likely than the other respondents to read online news. And the more digital devices a heavy news user owned, the more likely they were to prefer online news.

Of the "four screen heavy news users" — who owned a TV, computer, smartphone and tablet — virtually all of them said they read news online. About 84 per cent said they often did so on their

computer, 77 per cent used a tablet, 69 per cent read news on their smartphone, and 15 per cent said they even read news on their TV.

The results of the MTM polls conducted by Forum Research Group in the fall of 2013 and this past spring are considered accurate within plus or minus 1.3 percentage points 19 times out of 20.