

The latest findings on Baby Boomers and tech

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Baby Boomers are still a big influence in the Canadian market. It's not only the first generation to grow up with access to television and other mass media, boomers are also embracing and using new technologies. To get a truer look of their behaviour and media habits, a new MTM (Media Technology Monitor) report divides the generation into younger (58- to 67-year-olds) and older (68- to 77-year-olds) cohorts.

Baby Boomers make up about 28% of the Canadian population with Seniors, those aged 78-plus add another 6%. Gen Y/Millennials (ages 26 to 42) comprises 31% of the population, followed by Gen X (43 to 57) at 24% and Gen Z (18 to 25) at 10%.

Over 80% of Baby Boomers have retired. Younger Baby Boomers are nearly as likely to have left the workforce (41%) as they are to be employed full time (39%). For many, retirement means a decline in household income. About 33% of younger Baby Boomers and 43% of older Baby Boomers report an annual income of less than \$75,000 although most have been able to pay off mortgage debt so monthly household expenses should be lower as well. Younger boomers (32%) report household income of \$75,000 to \$150,00 compared to 14% of older boomers. Those numbers drop to 13% and 4% for boomer households reporting incomes over \$150,000.

Looking at device ownership, about 11% of older Baby Boomers are cellphone-free, while 6% of younger Baby Boomers, but it climbs to 26% for older anglophones. Smartphones are still the most popular device across all cohorts though, with 88% of younger Baby Boomers and 80% of older Baby Boomers owning one. Additionally, 6% of younger Baby Boomers and 9% of older Baby Boomers prefer to use basic cell phones. More than 50% of boomers, similarly to other anglophone Canadians, prefer iPhone smartphones followed by about one-third with a preference for Samsung smartphones.

Tablets are popular with boomers with about two-thirds owning one. Computer ownership is also high among both older (87%) and younger (91%) boomers. One in four boomers own a smart speaker, predominantly younger boomers at 35% compared to 25% of older boomers.

Connected TVs are prevalent across all demos including boomers, with 70% of younger boomers owning a CTV and 58% of older boomers. Over 80% of boomers subscribe to a paid TV service and are most likely to connect their TV to the internet via a digital TV box, although 30% of younger boomers and 29% of older boomers connect via their smart TV.

Cable is the preferred type of TV service for Baby Boomers – 35% younger, 42% older. Fibre optic services come second with younger boomers while older boomers are most likely to have a subscription to a satellite TV service out of the four demos. About 80% of younger boomers and 70% of older boomers have at least one subscription video on demand (SVOD) service. Netflix is the most popular service followed by Amazon Prime, Crave and Disney+. More than three in five boomers subscribe to both SVOD and linear TV services. With younger boomers nearly twice as likely to subscribe to four or more SVOD services.

When it comes to audio, young boomers are the highest traditional radio listeners (88%). Older boomers are more likely to listen to terrestrial radio 83% vs 50% who stream audio and 68% of younger boomers who prefer streaming. Smartphones and tablets are their preferred devices of boomers for listening to audio content.

Over half of older boomers and two thirds of younger boomers report using social networks. Facebook is their most used platform, followed by Instagram, WhatsApp, Pinterest, Linked In, X and TikTok. Boomers are also online news readers – 70% younger and 60% older- although 66% also turn to TV for news. They most often use their smartphones to access online news, secondly they read via computer.