

IN THE NEWS



CANADIAN INTERNET CONNECTIONS HAVE REACHED SATURATION: STUDY

Author: Bree Rody-Mantha

Source: Media in Canada

Date: 21/03/2017

A new study by the MTM shows that for the first time in two decades, home internet connections and rates of internet use have gone down.

It's not big news to say that more than 90% of Canadians are on the internet — but according to a duo of studies released by the Media Technology Monitor (MTM), home internet use may have peaked.

The pair of studies contain an amalgam of data from fall 2016, determining both how many Canadians are using the internet and how they are using the internet. In its usage study, which surveyed 4,000 anglophone Canadians by phone, the MTM found that for the first time since it began measuring internet penetration in the 1990s, the rate of home internet connections has gone down.

The decrease has only gone down slightly, from 92% in 2015 to 90% in 2016.

And, with the number of powerful phones and tablets with sophisticated enough apps to consume video, do work and play games, the rate of people who own a desktop or laptop computer at home has also gone down slightly, from 90% to 88%. Likewise, the number of Canadians who have used the internet in the past month has also seen a slight decrease from last year (91% down from 92%).

So who are the Canadians who don't have a home connection?

While only 9% of all Canadians fall into the group, several demographic factors appeared to be at play for those without the internet at home. The groups that under-indexed the most in terms of having the internet at home included Canadians who did not complete high school (only 72% of this group had a home connection), Canadians with a combined household income of less than \$35,000 per year (77%) and Canadians over the age of 65 (77%).

However, age may play less of a factor in internet usage than it once did. Overall internet use (both home connections and elsewhere) among seniors (65+) has grown consistently since 2007, with only 26% of people in the age group not regularly going online in 2016 — the lowest it's been yet.

Time spent online has still gone up despite home connections going down. The number of hours Canadians spend online per week has increased consistently over the last two decades, up to an estimated 24.5 hours per week (up from 22.6 hours last year).

The MTM study also found several correlations with demographics and groups that over-index in terms of their weekly browsing hours. As expected, people between the ages of 18 and 34 spend an average of 34 hours per week online. Students spend about 33.3 hours online per week. High-earners also seem to spend more time online, with those of household incomes higher than \$100,000 per year spending an average of 26.5 hours per week, and people living in areas with a population of more than 500,000 spend an average of 25.9 hours per week online.