

IN THE NEWS



## BOOMERS LOVE TRADITIONAL TV, BUT OTT PENETRATION IS STRONG: STUDY

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While the 50 to 70 demographic doesn't exactly outpace its younger counterparts in social networking, more than half are using it in some capacity - especially Facebook.

Baby boomers may be outpaced by the X, Y and Z generation when it comes to adopting smartphones, social media and Netflix – but don't count them out entirely.

A study released Dec. 12 by Media Technology Monitor (MTM) has found that boomers (defined as people between the ages of 50 and 70) still consume more traditional television than younger Canadians (nearly 20 hours per week), but penetration of SVOD services like Netflix and Crave TV is strong for the generation.

The study is part of the MTM's ongoing research into technology use and adoption habits among different age groups. The MTM has already released its findings on millennials and Gen X. With each group, the MTM surveyed 4,000 Anglophones through telephone interviews and follow-up online surveys.

For the purpose of the study, boomers were divided into younger (50 to 59) and older boomers (60 to 70).

The divide between the two caused some significant differences in the survey results – more older boomers are transitioning out of the workforce and earn a fixed income, while younger boomers are more susceptible to adopting new technology like wearables and smartphones.

Younger boomers are also more likely to have children living at home, which the study noted may have influenced some of the habits, like OTT subscription.

Boomers still love traditional television – 86% of them pay for a TV service like cable, satellite or fibre optic. Older boomers report watching about 18 hours of television per week, that drops to 14.7 hours a week for younger boomers.

But despite the popularity of traditional television, OTT has also penetrated the boomer demo – 45% of younger boomers and 37% of older boomers subscribe to some form of OTT, with the most popular being Netflix (40% and 32%). For younger Canadian respondents, 64% subscribe to an OTT service.

When it comes to technology like connected TV sets, boomers also fall behind younger Canadians – 37% of boomers surveyed owned smart TVs (compared to 44% of younger Canadians), while 12% own an Apple TV device (16% for younger Canadians) and 4% own a Chromecast (compared with 8% of younger

respondents).

The differences between older and younger boomers start to surface in the category of wearables – 15% of younger boomers own a wearable of some kind, putting them closer to younger Canadians (19%) than older boomers (11%). The most popular wearable is the Fitbit, which is owned by 11% of younger boomers surveyed and 8% of older boomers (10% of younger Canadians).

For smartphones, 76% of younger boomers own a smartphone, as do 61% of older boomers, but those totals pale in comparison to younger Canadians – 92% of those respondents reported ownership of the devices.

Although their social network usage is not as high as that of millennials and Gen X, 63% of younger boomers and 54% of older boomers have still used some sort of media consumption in the past month. The most popular is Facebook – 62% of younger boomers have used the site in the past month, versus 49% of older boomers. LinkedIn, Pinterest, Twitter and Instagram are the next-most popular, while Tumblr, Snapchat and Reddit barely register with the demographic.

With news consumption, boomers tend to love news – 35% of younger boomers are identified as “heavy news users” (defined as people who consume local, national, international and political news once or more a day) along with 42% of older boomers, while only 26% of their younger counterparts fall into the category. However, both older and younger boomers are twice as likely to subscribe to a hard copy version of a newspaper (20% of younger boomers, 28% of older boomers) as they are to an electronic version (10% of younger boomers, 12% of older boomers).