

‘Anywhere, anytime’ internet popular with Kiwis - report

(Embargoed until 1.30pm, Thursday 21 November)

Most New Zealand internet users are accessing the internet from a hand-held mobile device at least some of the time, according to the 2013 World Internet Project New Zealand (WIPNZ) Report.

“With internet use in New Zealand almost reaching saturation point, it is interesting to see how technology such as iPads, smartphones, gaming consoles and other wireless devices are influencing people’s behaviour. Seventy per cent of users surveyed in this study said they accessed the internet with a hand-held mobile device at least some of the time. This enables them to find and share information, and communicate with each other ‘anywhere, anytime’,” says AUT University’s Professor Allan Bell, lead researcher on the WIPNZ.

The WIPNZ Report also highlights the significance of the internet as a source of information as opposed to entertainment, with 81 per cent of respondents overall rating it as an important or very important source of information, compared to 56 per cent rating it as an important or very important source of entertainment.

The WIPNZ Report, part of the international World Internet Project, was completed by AUT’s Institute of Culture, Discourse and Communication and funded by InternetNZ and the National Library at the Department of Internal Affairs, with additional support from BuzzChannel.

International Director of the World Internet Project Dr Jeff Cole is in New Zealand and spoke at the launch of the New Zealand report in Wellington today. “New Zealand is widely recognised as a nation of ‘early-adopters’, so to have had AUT University as a partner of the World Internet Project since 2007 has added a new dimension to the international body of data. New Zealand provides us with a data set that tells a unique story of internet use. I am looking forward to seeing this latest set of data compared internationally.”

Some key findings from the report are listed below and copies of the full report are available from Aimee Wilkins (below) or on the WIPNZ website from 1.30pm on Thursday 21 November: <http://wipnz.aut.ac.nz>.

Key findings

- **Everyday importance:** 73% of New Zealanders feel that the internet is important or very important in their everyday life.
- **Internet confidence:** Most New Zealanders feel confident about their ability to use the internet, with 67% giving themselves 4 or 5 out of 5.
- **Time online:** 4 out of 5 users spend an hour or more online at home every day.
- **Source of information:** Overall, 81% of respondents rate the internet as an important or very important source of information (compared to media in their offline forms: television (47%), radio (37%) and newspapers (37%)). Young respondents place a somewhat higher importance on the internet’s role as a source of information than older respondents (91% of 16-29 year-olds), but the figures hold well, staying above 80% until the age of 65, above which it falls to 57%.
- **Source of entertainment:** Overall 56% of respondents value the internet as an important or very important source of entertainment. Young respondents place the most importance on the internet as a source of entertainment (80% for 16-29 year olds) with just 20% of those aged 65 years and older seeing it as an important or very important source of entertainment.
- **Consumer decisions:** The internet is used as a tool for consumer decision-making (94% look for information about products online and 85% compare prices).
- **Ethnicity and use:** Maori and Pasifika New Zealanders are less likely to use the internet with 14% of people being non-users, compared to 7% of New Zealand Europeans and 3% of Asians.
- **Social networking:** A quarter of users access Facebook or another social networking site several times a day. While Facebook is the most frequently used networking site for all age groups, for

those aged 30 and over Facebook is more popular with women, while LinkedIn is substantially more popular with men aged over 40 years.

- **Online phone calls:** 64 % of users make or receive phone calls online.
- **Music streaming:** Maori and Pasifika users, especially those in lower income households are leading the way with subscriptions to music streaming services like Spotify. More than one in five Maori and Pasifika internet users in households with a combined income of less than \$50,000 have paid for a subscription to a music streaming service compared to only one out of 20 New Zealand Europeans in the same income bracket.
- **Cloud computing:** Just over a third of users say they use the cloud (store or share files on a remote server maintained by a third party).

InternetNZ Chief Executive Jordan Carter said that the findings reinforced the power and importance of an open and uncapturable internet.

"One of the internet's hallmark qualities is its openness to innovation without permission. The number of Kiwis who view the internet as crucial to their life shows just how important it is that we work hard to maintain its openness," says Mr Carter.

Internal Affairs' deputy chief executive Sue Powell says the research has informed and supported the Department's investment in a large-scale digitisation programme which is enriching and increasing the availability of digital content that is relevant to New Zealanders.

"It has also informed our support to New Zealanders who are digitally disadvantaged," Sue says.

"The report shows the 'digital divide' exists - particularly for Māori, Pasifika, those in rural areas, and those on lower household incomes. It shows it has a significant impact on people and their ability to participate in society. Government has an important role in addressing these issues. National Library, for example, provides free internet access and content to public libraries and supports educators to encourage digital literacy and learning. We will work with Archives New Zealand to meet New Zealanders' digital content needs in the future," she says.

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Background

New Zealand is one of more than 30 countries that take part in the World Internet Project, an on-going study that enables comparisons of internet use across countries. The 2013 WIPNZ Report is based on data collected from July to September 2013. This survey has a different sample structure than previous years in order to include New Zealanders without a landline. The questionnaire has also undergone substantial updating to keep pace with changing digital technologies. For these reasons, the present report focuses solely on the findings for 2013, and longitudinal analyses will be presented in a subsequent report next year.

View the latest international comparison report of the WIP published in 2012:

<http://www.worldinternetproject.net/#reports>)