

Social Network Study Profiles Social Network Users on Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn and Twitter

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A recent study by Anderson Analytics estimated 110 million people in the US using social network services sites (SNSs) regularly.

The study investigated the differences between people who actively use SNS (on a monthly basis) and people who choose not to use SNS.

In addition, the study compared SNS users across generations and between genders.

Facebook and MySpace have the highest numbers of regular users (78 million and 67 million, respectively).

Twitter and LinkedIn are in third and fourth place (17 million and 11 million regular users, respectively).

Women (55%) are more likely than men (45%) to use SNS.

As social networking sites are a fairly recent phenomenon, the majority of SNS users are young (less than 35). Among the websites studied, LinkedIn has the oldest and MySpace the youngest average regular user.

Users of SNS sites on average login to the sites 5 days a week, 4 times a day and spend about 1 hour on SNS each day.

While age is a strong factor in determining whether a person is an SNS user, a person's attitudes towards social networking sites is the key difference between an SNS user and a non-user.

Non-users tend to believe that they do fine keeping in touch with people they care about without using social networking sites.

Tech-savviness is not the most critical factor separating users and non-users.

The most common reasons for using an SNS is to stay in touch with people you know. This is particularly true among older users whose primary reasons for using an SNS tend to be staying in touch with family members.

Younger users (young professionals, college students and those younger) are more likely to use SNS just for fun and to keep in touch with friends. GenXers and Boomers are most likely to use SNS for business/job related reasons.

More than half of the users surveyed use two or more social networking sites regularly.

It is common practice for users to have primary site, usually Facebook or MySpace, and use other SNSs for special purposes, such as LinkedIn for job/business related activities or Twitter for promoting blogs.

At least among Gen Y, the study found a correlation between happiness and use of SNS. Gen Yers who use SNS regularly are more likely to say they are happier. Greater use of SNS among the youth is correlated to the number of real life friends as well.

The study also found that singles who do not use SNS are less likely to be in a relationship and/or tend to date less.

Overall, male and female SNS users engage in similar activities online. However, male SNS users are more likely to share information about their hobbies, interesting articles or work related topics; female users are more likely to share photos, broadcasts about what they are currently doing or post about their pets.

Male users tend to have a greater number of connections and are more adventurous in connecting to strangers online; in addition, they are more likely to use SNS for business.

Many companies now take advantage of the SNS phenomenon by creating profiles on social networking sites for brand building and promotion.

Fifty percent of the SNS users have followed a commercial service, product, or brand on an SNS site.

In addition, almost half of users have said something positive about a brand on an SNS site while only one quarter of the users have said something negative about a brand.

Anderson Analytics conducted the study to help its clients better understand the reach and overlap among major social networks.

"Even if you're not actively marketing using SNS yet, a critical first step is to understand which of your customers are on what networks and how they view the medium" said Tom H. C. Anderson, managing partner of Anderson Analytics.

Anderson Analytics has been a pioneer in social media research investigating and text mining popular online communities such as hospitality industries Flyertalk.com and Unilevers' Dove/Campaign for Real Beauty discussion boards.

"There are a lot of social media consultants out there, but we've found most do not base their advice on hard data", said Anderson, adding that "Our clients are now looking to us to provide more than survey research to help them leverage social media".

In response to this Anderson Analytics has expanded its service offering to include Social Media Segmentation and Strategy Consulting, as well as help with tactical marketing/advertising including development and programming of proprietary social media applications/widgets.

Anderson Analytics' Social Network Study sampled over 11,000 Greenfield Online panelists over an 11 month period to understand SNS reach and overlap among the US Online Population.

In May Anderson Analytics surveyed an additional 5,000 panelists of which 1,250 participated in an in-depth attitude and usage survey. Anderson Analytics projected and balanced results based on key variables including age and gender.

About Anderson Analytics, LLC

More than market research, Anderson Analytics is the first next generation marketing consultancy to combine new technologies, such as data and text mining, with traditional market research.

Anderson Analytics helps clients gain The Information Advantage by combining the efficiencies and business experience found in large research firms with the rigorous methodological understanding from academia and the creativity found only in smaller firms.

For more information, please visit <http://www.andersonanalytics.com>

About Greenfield Online, Inc.

Greenfield Online, Inc. is a global interactive media and services company that collects consumer attitudes about products and services, enabling consumers to reach informed purchasing decisions about the products and services they want to buy; and helping companies better understand their customer in order to formulate effective product marketing strategies.

Proprietary, innovative technology enables us to collect these opinions quickly and accurately, and to organize them into actionable form.

Through our Greenfield Online and Ciao Surveys websites and affiliate networks, we collect, organize and sell consumer opinions in the form of survey responses to marketing research companies and companies worldwide.

For more information, visit www.greenfield-ciaosurveys.com .

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