

Just Under Half of Americans Have a Facebook or MySpace Account

Three-quarters of 18-34 year olds have an account on one of these social networking sites

ROCHESTER, N.Y. – April 16, 2009 – It may seem like everyone is “Twittering” or updating their Facebook pages, but half of Americans (51%) do not use Twitter or have a MySpace or Facebook account. Just under half (48%) of adults have either a MySpace or Facebook page with 16% of adults updating their page at least once a day. While the media may have found Twitter, only 5% of Americans are currently using it.

These are some of the findings of The Harris Poll, a new nationwide survey of 2,220 U.S. adults surveyed online between March 31 and April 1, 2009 by Harris Interactive.

As expected, there are some substantial differences in who is and who isn't using these social networking sites:

- Three-quarters of those aged 18-34 years old (74%) have a Facebook or MySpace account but this quickly drops off the older one gets. Just one-quarter (24%) of those 55 and older have an account;
- Tweeting is also slightly more prevalent among the young, but not by much; 8% of 18-34 year olds use Twitter, 7% of those 35-44 use it, 4% of those aged 45-54 and just 1% of those 55 and older;
- While men and women use Twitter at the same levels (5% each), women are more likely to have a Facebook or MySpace account (52% versus 45%); and,
- There is also an educational difference in usage of social networking sites. Two in five people with a high school degree or less (40%) have a Facebook or MySpace account compared to 55% of those with some college and 52% of those with at least a college degree.

There has been some discussion about whether these social networking sites may, at some point, become a threat to search engines such as Yahoo! or Google. Right now, that doesn't seem to be an issue – 45% of adults believe the sites are popular, but they won't pose a real threat to the domination of search sites while just one in ten (9%) say they may become a threat. Fully 46% of Americans are not at all sure. Even among the largest users of the social networking sites, 18-34 year olds, three in five (62%) say they will not become a real threat to the search engines.

So What?

The media may be all abuzz about Twittering, but mainstream America is not hopping on the same bandwagon. While the younger age groups are all about the social network sites, they haven't yet migrated to Twitter. The question is will they or won't they? If they had found it before the media had, there is a stronger possibility they would be increasing their usage, but they may already be looking for the next big thing – before it becomes a media darling.

TABLE 1
ONLINE SOCIAL NETWORK USAGE
 “Which of the following, if any, do you do?”

Base: All Online Adults

	Total	Age				Gender	
		18-34	35-44	45-54	55+	Male	Female
	%	%	%	%	%	%	
Have a Facebook or MySpace account	48	74	47	41	24	45	52
Update Facebook or MySpace account at least once a day	16	29	17	10	3	14	18
USE TWITTER (NET)	5	8	7	4	1	5	5
Follow people on Twitter	5	8	6	4	1	5	5
Use Twitter to send messages	3	4	5	1	*	3	2
None of these	51	25	50	59	76	54	47

Note: Multiple responses allowed; * indicates less than 0.5%

TABLE 2
ONLINE SOCIAL NETWORK USAGE – by education
 “Which of the following, if any, do you do?”

Base: All Online Adults

	Total	Education		
		HS or less	Some college	College grad +
	%	%	%	%
Have a Facebook or MySpace account	48	40	55	52
Update Facebook or MySpace account at least once a day	16	14	18	16
USE TWITTER (NET)	5	3	7	6
Follow people on Twitter	5	3	6	6
Use Twitter to send messages	3	1	4	4
None of these	51	59	43	47

Note: Multiple responses allowed;
 * indicates less than 0.5%

**TABLE 3
FUTURE OF SEARCH SITES**

“Which of the following statements is closer to your own opinion?”

Base: All online adults

	Total	Age			
		18-34	35-44	45-54	55+
	%	%	%	%	%
While social networking sites like Facebook or MySpace are very popular, they will never pose any real threat to the domination of search sites such as Google or Yahoo	45	62	46	39	28
Social network sites like Facebook and MySpace are becoming so dominant that they may become a real threat to search sites like Google or Yahoo	9	7	9	6	11
Not at all sure	46	31	45	55	61

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

Methodology

This *Harris Poll* was conducted online within the United States March 31 and April 1, 2009 among 2,220 adults (aged 18 and over). Figures for age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, region and household income were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents’ propensity to be online.

All sample surveys and polls, whether or not they use probability sampling, are subject to multiple sources of error which are most often not possible to quantify or estimate, including sampling error, coverage error, error associated with nonresponse, error associated with question wording and response options, and post-survey weighting and adjustments. Therefore, Harris Interactive avoids the words “margin of error” as they are misleading. All that can be calculated are different possible sampling errors with different probabilities for pure, unweighted, random samples with 100% response rates. These are only theoretical because no published polls come close to this ideal.

Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in Harris Interactive surveys. The data have been weighted to reflect the composition of the adult population. Because the sample is based on those who agreed to participate in the Harris Interactive panel, no estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

These statements conform to the principles of disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.

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