

# Study: More women embracing Web communities

April 6 2010, By BARBARA ORTUTAY , AP Technology Writer

---

(AP) -- In a sharp reversal, more young women are now embracing online communities than their male counterparts, a new study says.

By contrast, men are showing some signs of "networking fatigue," with fewer men saying that their online [communities](#) are as important as their offline equivalents.

The shift in attitudes between the two sexes has taken place over just a couple of years.

Researchers at the University of Southern California are reporting this week that 67 percent of women under 40 said they feel as strongly about their Internet communities as their offline ones, while only 38 percent of men said the same.

In 2007, the numbers were just the reverse, with 69 percent of the men and 35 percent of the women feeling that way.

Internet communities don't just mean social networks such as [Facebook](#) and [MySpace](#), but include online gathering sites focused on hobbies, politics or spirituality.

Michael Gilbert, senior fellow at USC's Annenberg Center for the Digital Future, said women tend to adopt new technologies more slowly than men, but once they do, they catch up and often surpass men in their enthusiasm.

Men made up the bulk of the shoppers who lined up Saturday to get their hands on Apple's new [iPad](#) in many cities including Seattle and New York, but that doesn't mean that gender disparity is permanent.

Gilbert said women are finding deeper connections to Web communities because many of them go there for social reasons rather than to find information about hobbies, for example. Men, especially those from 25 to 39, are disengaging from social networks.

"The infatuation is over," he said.

In 2005, 77 percent of men under 40 said their online community was "extremely important." That number has now dropped to 39 percent.

The latest findings are part of the Annenberg Center's decade-long study of 2,000 families and their digital habits. It has a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percentage points.

©2010 The Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed.

Citation: Study: More women embracing Web communities (2010, April 6) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2010-04-women-embracing-web.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--