

One-fourth of US adults use mobile applications: survey

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A Samsung Galaxy S Android smartphone. US cellphone owners are much more likely to use the devices to take pictures or send text messages than they are to run applications, according to a report released on Tuesday.

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Thirty-five percent of US adults have applications on their mobile phones but only 24 percent actually use the programs, according to the report from the Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life

Project.

Eleven percent of cellphone owners, mostly older users, are not sure if their device is equipped with applications, commonly known as "apps."

The Pew report found that among US adults, app use ranks well below using a [mobile phone](#) for other activities.

Seventy-six percent of cellphone owners take pictures on their phones, 72 percent send or receive text messages and 38 percent use their phone to access the Internet, the report said.

Thirty-four percent play games, send or receive emails or record a video while 33 percent use the device to play music.

Twenty-nine percent of cellphone owners have downloaded apps to their phone and 13 percent have paid to download apps, according to the report.

"An apps culture is clearly emerging among some cellphone users, particularly men and young adults," said Kristen Purcell, associate director for research at the Pew Internet Project and co-author of the report.

"Still, it is clear that this is the early stage of adoption when many cell owners do not know what their phone can do," Purcell said. "The apps market seems somewhat ahead of a majority of adult cellphone users."

The findings come from a Pew nationwide telephone survey of adult cellphone owners and a survey of recent apps downloaders by The Nielsen Company.

Roger Entner, co-author of the report and head of research and insights

for telecom practice at Nielsen, said the findings show "a widening embrace of all kinds of apps by a widening population."

"This is a pretty remarkable tech-adoption story, if you consider that there was no apps culture until two years ago," Entner said.

The Nielsen survey found that games were the most popular apps, followed by music, food and entertainment, news and weather, social networking and maps and navigation.

Apple's App Store has the largest apps selection but other handset makers are also offering programs for their devices. Apple's App Store offers more than 250,000 free and paid apps for the iPhone, iPod Touch and iPad.

Among cellphone users with apps, the average adult has 18 apps on their phone, the report said, adding that app users are disproportionately male, young, educated and affluent.

Men accounted for 57 percent of app users and women 43 percent.

Eighteen to 29 year olds made up 44 percent of apps users although they constitute only 23 percent of the total US adult population.

Only 14 percent of adults aged 50 and older are apps users although they make up 41 percent of the adult population.

Women were more likely than men to have used a social networking app in the past 30 days -- 53 percent to 42 percent -- while men were more likely to have used a banking or finance app -- 31 percent to 25 percent, Nielsen found.

According to the report, 82 percent of American adults now have

cellphones and 23 percent live in a "cellphone-only" household.

The Pew survey of 1,917 adult cellphone users was conducted between April 29 and May 30 and has a margin of error of plus or minus 2.7 percentage points.

The Nielsen data came from a December 2009 survey of 3,962 adult cellphone subscribers who had downloaded an [app](#) in the previous 30 days.

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