

# More people staying connected on vacation

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Scanning smartphones, tablets and laptops is as much a part of vacations as slathering on sunscreen, according to a Michigan State University study.

The results, which will appear in the forthcoming issue of *Annals of Tourism Research*, show that easy online access and ubiquitous personal devices have made the digital divide disappear, even for folks on holiday.

"Not that long ago, travelers would need to find a payphone or send postcards to brag about their vacations. Now they just log on and send photos and text," said Christine Vogt, MSU professor of community agriculture, recreation and resource studies, who co-authored the study with Kelly MacKay of Ryerson University (Canada). "Our results show clearly how the changing nature of IT behavior in everyday life is spilling over into our vacations."

The study showed that people using smart phones have tripled. The study also revealed that wireless use was higher on vacation (40 percent) than at home (25 percent). Also telling, were figures that show that people used the Web more to plan vacations (80 percent) than for work (70 percent).

"Travelers are using their laptops and phones more often, and not just to plan vacations," Vogt said. "Since Wi-Fi is available at most destinations, tourists are checking local weather forecasts, transportation schedules, restaurant recommendations, fishing reports, safe bicycling routes and

much more."

Pulling out computers, [iPads](#) and smartphones at home and work is addictive. It looks like the habit doesn't take a vacation, either, she added. Future research will give the [tourism industry](#) insight on the best ways to serve vacationers' online needs.

"We hope to conduct more research across the various stages of vacations," Vogt said. "This will help vacation service providers better understand what information travelers are looking for during trip planning and how it differs from the details they're searching for after arrival."

Provided by Michigan State University

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