

Twitter key source for 'mobile' news, survey finds

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A person poses with a cell phone in front of a computer screen to check Barack Obama's tweet on November 7, 2012

Twitter is finding a niche among younger US adults who monitor the messaging service for news on mobile devices, a survey showed Monday.

The Pew Research Center report said 16 percent of American adults use Twitter, and that much of what gets passed on is breaking [news](#).

Some 52 percent of Twitter users say they use it for news. That means some eight percent of US adults are Twitter news consumers, the survey found.

While Americans use other social networks such as Facebook to follow news, "Twitter news consumers stand out as younger, more mobile and more educated," the Pew report said.

Among the Twitter news consumers, some 85 percent said they get news at least sometimes on mobile devices. That outpaces Facebook news consumers by 20 percentage points.

Pew also found that 45 percent of Twitter news consumers are 18-29 years old—more than twice the percentage among the population overall and well above the 34 percent of Facebook news consumers in that age group.

Twitter news consumers also tend to be more educated than the general population and than Facebook [news consumers](#), Pew said: 40 percent have at least a bachelor's degree, compared with 29 percent of the total population and 30 percent of Facebook news [consumers](#).

A separate analysis of Twitter news sharing shows many of the conversations focus on breaking news and that sentiments can shift quickly.

For example, in the two weeks after the March 2013 Supreme Court hearings on same-sex marriage, Twitter sentiment was opposed to the idea of legalizing same-sex marriage by 55 to 32 percent; but a month later, Twitter sentiment had reversed and favored same-sex marriage 43 to 26 percent

Pew said that while sentiment on Twitter can sometimes match that of

the general population, it is not a reliable indicator of public opinion.

It noted that Republican candidate Ron Paul easily won the "Twitter primary" in the 2012 presidential race with 55 percent of positive remarks, but he failed to gain traction in real primaries.

After the Newtown, Connecticut, school shooting, 64 percent on Twitter said they supported stricter gun controls, compared to 21 percent in opposition. But public opinion survey after the tragedy were mixed.

This two-part report is based on a [survey](#) of more than 5,000 US adults from August 21 to September 2. The margin of error ranges from 1.7 to 4.6 percentage points.

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