

Tech makes couples closer despite tensions

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A woman texts a message on January 26, 2010 in Washington, DC

Technology helps bring married couples closer together even though the use of electronic devices can be a source of tension, a US survey showed Tuesday.

The Pew Internet survey found 21 percent of married or partnered adults felt closer to their spouse or [partner](#) because of exchanges they had online or via text message.

One in four of the couples surveyed said they texted their partner when they were both home together and nine percent have resolved an argument online or by [text message](#) that they were having difficulty resolving in person.

But the survey also found technology was a source of tension for some couples.

Twenty-five percent of [cell phone](#) owners in a marriage or partnership said their spouse or partner was distracted by their cell phone when they were together.

And eight percent said they argued with their spouse or partner about the amount of time one of them was spending online.

The trends appeared magnified among [younger adults](#) surveyed, Pew found.

The survey found 42 percent of 18-29 year olds with cell phones in serious relationships say their partner has been distracted by their mobile phone; but 41 percent in the age group said they felt closer to their partner because of online or text conversations.

"Technology is everywhere and our relationships are no exception," said Amanda Lenhart, a Pew researcher and lead author of the report.

"And for younger adults and those in newer relationships, tools such as cell phones and social media were there at the beginning and play a greater role today for good and for ill."

The survey also found two out of three people in a marriage or committed relationship shared a password to one or more of their online accounts with their spouse or partner.

One in four of those in a couple said they share an email account with a partner and 11 percent of these couples have an online calendar that they share.

The Pew researchers found those who have been married or partnered 10 years or less have different digital habits.

Those who were already together as a couple at the advent of a new platform or technology were more likely to jump on together, while those who begin relationships with their own existing accounts and profiles tend to continue to use them separately as individuals, the report said.

Some nine percent of adult [mobile phone](#) owners surveyed said they have sent a sext—or sexually suggestive image—of themselves to someone else, up from six percent in 2012.

And one in five cell owners have received a sext of someone else they know on their phone, up from 15 percent who said this in 2012.

The report is based on a [survey](#) of 2,252 US adults from April 17 to May 19. The margin of error for married or partnered [adults](#) is estimated at 2.9 points and for cell phone owners 2.4 percentage points.

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