

Facebook still has most users, but other social media sites grow

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Facebook remains the most popular social media site, by far, with 71 percent of online adults using the platform, according to a new survey by the Pew Research Center that involves researchers from the University of Michigan School of Information.

While the proportion of Internet [users](#) who connect on the [site](#) is unchanged from 2013, the level of user engagement with the platform has increased. Other platforms such as Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest and

LinkedIn all saw significant increases over the past year in the proportion of online adults who now use their sites.

In addition to the 71 percent of online adults who use Facebook:

- 28 percent use Pinterest, up from 21 percent in 2013
- 28 percent use LinkedIn, up from 22 percent in 2013
- 26 percent use Instagram, up from 17 percent in 2013
- 23 percent use Twitter, up from 18 percent in 2013

These findings come from a new nationally representative survey of 2,003 adults that explores Americans' patterns of social media use. The results are based on the 81 percent of American adults who use the Internet.

As in 2013, Facebook remains the most popular site among those who use only one social media platform—79 percent of those who use just one site report using Facebook.

"Socially, Facebook remains a source of 'one-stop shopping' for many online adults. Even older adults who are typically slow to adopt newer technologies are increasingly gravitating towards the site," said Nicole Ellison, associate professor at the U-M School of Information.

At the same time, the researchers found that an increasing number of Americans are using more than one social media platform. Fully 52 percent of online adults use two or more social media sites, a significant increase from the 42 percent who did so in 2013.

There are more Facebook users this year who also use Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest and LinkedIn than there were in 2013.

"Facebook remains home base for many social media users. It's still the

most popular site and has the most engaged users," said Maeve Duggan, research analyst at the Pew Research Center. "But the greatest change relates to the activity on other platforms. More people are using a variety of platforms, and the overlap between users shows just how interwoven social media has become."

Cliff Lampe, associate professor at the U-M School of Information, said growth in sites like Instagram is a key finding of the report.

"It speaks to people using the ecology of social media sites available to them to meet their specific communication and relationship goals," he said.

Facebook users gave additional details about the nature of their connections on the site, which for many included family members, work colleagues and neighbors. The median number of Facebook friends users report in their networks is 155, although of these, the median number they consider "actual" friends is 50.

"This suggests that users have diverse networks of people they are connected with, and that they understand that some of these relationships are with people they can rely on whereas other connections are weaker," Ellison said. "Research suggests both these kinds of relationships are useful and provide different kinds of benefits."

These are among the findings from the first in a series of studies that examine Americans' use of social media. The data were collected in omnibus surveys Pew Research Center conducted in association with U-M. Survey questions were designed in consultation with Ellison and Lampe.

Findings are based on data from telephone interviews conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates International from Sept. 11 to

Sept. 14, 2014, and Sept.18 to Sept. 21, 2014. Further reports with more details about how people use [social media](#) will be produced later this year.

Provided by University of Michigan

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