

# One-fourth make money from online platforms in US: survey

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Nearly one-fourth of American adults have earned money recently using online commerce platforms for "gigs" or to sell goods, a survey showed Thursday.

The Pew Research Center found eight percent of US adults earned [money](#) in the last year performing tasks like driving for a ride-hailing app or making deliveries, while 18 percent took in cash by selling something online. And one percent rented their property on a home-sharing site.

Taken together, Pew found 24 percent of Americans have engaged in at least one of these activities on digital platforms in the last year.

"These findings highlight the great diversity of experiences within the gig economy, and also illustrate the extent to which these services are blurring the boundaries between formal and informal employment," said Aaron Smith, the lead author of the Pew report.

"A slight majority of these workers rely heavily on the income they earn from these platforms, and use them for largely financial reasons. But a substantial minority views this work much more as a hobby—or simply a way to pass the time—as opposed to a true 'job' or a dedicated source of income."

The report noted a growing movement toward these services, which "allow people to work or otherwise make money at the time of their

choosing, using whatever resources they have available."

The survey found five percent of Americans have used platforms to seek out tasks performed entirely online, such as taking surveys or doing data entry, while two percent have driven for ride-hailing services.

Another one percent took in cash by shopping for or delivering household items, or by cleaning or doing laundry using an online service and two percent used them for other types of work, ranging from relatively simple physical tasks to complex and highly technical white-collar employment, Pew said.

## **Younger crowd**

Gig economy work was especially common among younger adults, with 16 percent of 18- to-29 year olds making money from one of these platforms in the last year.

It is also more common among blacks (14 percent) and Latinos (11 percent) than among whites (five percent).

Pew found 23 percent using [digital platforms](#) to find work are currently enrolled as students. But 44 percent said they were employed full-time and 24 percent working part-time, with 32 percent saying they were otherwise unemployed.

Nearly one-third said the money they make in these activities is essential to meeting their basic needs while 42 percent said they could get by comfortably without it.

For online selling on platforms like eBay or Etsy, 14 percent of those surveyed said they were getting rid of their own used goods, while two percent sold hand-made items and another two percent consumer goods.

Around 20 percent said that the income they earn from sales is either essential or very important to their overall financial situation.

While just one percent of US adults have earned money in the last year by renting out their properties on a home-sharing site, roughly one in ten Americans have used one of these sites to stay in someone's home.

The survey said there have been varying estimates of the so-called gig economy because there is no uniform definition of the phenomenon.

Pew surveyed 4,579 adults from July 12 to August 8, and said its margin or error was 2.4 percentage points.

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