



Pew Internet
Pew Internet & American Life Project

a project of the
PewResearchCenter

JULY 17, 2012

The Rise of the “Connected Viewer”

52% of adult cell owners use their phones while engaging with televised content; younger audiences are particularly active in these ‘connected viewing’ experiences

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<http://pewinternet.org/Reports/2012/Connected-viewers.aspx>

The rise of the ‘connected viewer’—half (52%) of adult cell phone owners use their phones while watching television

Television’s solitary screen is being supplemented by multi-screen interactivity. Half of all adult cell owners (52%) have used their phones recently for engagement, diversion, or interaction with other people while watching TV. The Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Project measured the prevalence of these multi-screen viewing experiences by asking the 88% of American adults who are cell owners whether they had used their phone to engage in several different activities while watching television in the 30 days preceding an April 2012 survey. We learned that:

- 38% of cell owners used their phone to keep themselves occupied during commercials or breaks in something they were watching.
- 22% of cell owners used their phone to check whether something they heard on television was true or not.
- 6% of cell owners used their phone to vote for a reality show contestant.

Three more questions were asked of the 57% of cell owners who download apps, use the internet, or use email on their phones:

- 35% of cell owners who use the internet, email or apps on their phone used their phone to visit a website that was mentioned on television (that works out to 20% of all cell owners).¹
- 20% of cell owners who use the internet, email or apps on their phone used their phone to see what other people were saying online about a program they were watching (that works out to 11% of all cell owners).
- 19% of cell owners who use the internet, email or apps on their phone used their phone to post their own comments online about a program they were watching (that works out to 11% of all cell owners).

In addition, 29% of cell owners who use text messaging have used their phone recently to exchange text messages with someone else who was watching the same program in a different location (since 79% of cell owners use text messaging, that means that 23% of all mobile users have done this).

Taken together, that works out to 52% of all adult cell owners who are “connected viewers”—meaning they took part in at least one of these activities in the 30 days preceding our survey.² Young adults in particular stand out for their embrace of multi-screen viewing experiences, as some 81% of mobile owners ages 18-24 reported using their cell phones during televised programming in the preceding 30 days. Other demographic differences in “connected viewing” include:

- Cell owners living in households earning \$50,000 per year or more are more likely to participate in interactive television experiences than those in households with lower annual incomes, and those with at least some college experience are more likely to do so than those who have not graduated high school.

¹ For the sake of simplicity, these figures will be reported based on all cell owners throughout this report.

² Even if we exclude those who only use their phones to occupy or distract themselves during commercials or other breaks, some 42% of cell owners have used their phone recently to actively engage with televised content.

- African American cell phone owners participate in connected viewing experiences at a somewhat greater rate than their white counterparts (59% vs. 50%), and urban residents are more likely to do so than those living in rural areas.

Who uses their cell phone while watching TV?

% of cell phone users within each group who have used their phone to distract themselves during breaks, get information or engage with others while watching TV in the preceding 30 days

All cell phone users (n=1954)	52%
Men (n=895)	52
Women (n=1059)	52
Age	
18-24 (n=225)	81
25-34 (n=230)	72
35-44 (n=276)	60
45-54 (n=371)	45
55-64 (n=387)	29
65+ (n=429)	16
Race/ethnicity	
White, Non-Hispanic (n=1404)	50
Black, Non-Hispanic (n=234)	59
Hispanic (n=180)	54
Annual household income	
Less than \$30,000/yr (n=447)	49
\$30,000-\$49,999 (n=316)	49
\$50,000-\$74,999 (n=272)	60
\$75,000+ (n=538)	60
Education level	
No high school diploma (n=156)	45
High school grad (n=542)	49
Some College (n=490)	54
College + (n=752)	55
Geographic location	
Urban (n=557)	54
Suburban (n=993)	52
Rural (n=316)	45

Source: Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project, March 15-April 3, 2012 Tracking survey. N=2,254 adults ages 18 and older, including 903 interviews conducted on respondent's cell phone. Margin of error is +/-2.6 percentage points based on cell phone owners (n=1,954).

Along with these demographic differences, smartphone owners use their devices to interact with televised content at far higher rates than owners of more basic cell phones. Fully 74% of smartphone owners reported using their devices in one way or another while watching television in the preceding 30 days, compared with 27% of non-smartphone owners.

Smartphone owners lead the way in “connected viewing” experiences

% in each group who have used their phone in the preceding 30 days to...

	Smartphone owners (n=904)	Other cell owners (n=1050)
Keep yourself occupied during commercials or breaks in what you were watching	58%	17%
Check whether something heard was true or not	37	6
Visit a website mentioned on TV	35	3
Exchange text messages with someone watching the program	32	13
See what others were saying online about a program you were watching	20	2
Post your own comments online about a program you were watching	19	2
Vote for a reality show contestant	9	4

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Project, March 15-April 3, 2012 Tracking survey. N=2,254 adults ages 18 and older, including 903 interviews conducted on respondent’s cell phone. Margin of error is +/-2.6 percentage points based on cell phone owners (n=1,954).

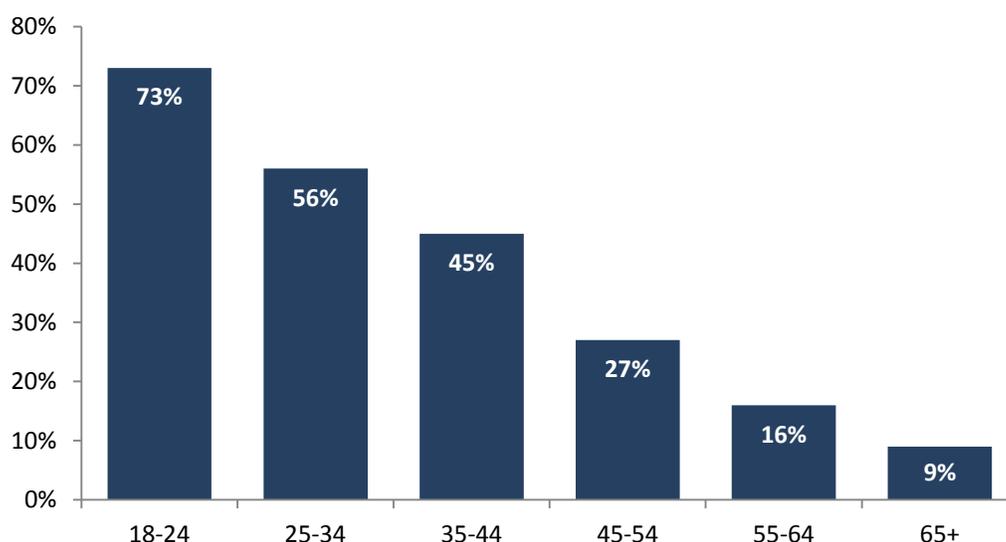
Focus on individual connected viewing activities

The use of cell phones as a “distraction device” or multitasking tool during programming breaks is the most prevalent of the seven individual connected viewing behaviors that we measured in our survey. Some 38% of adult cell owners reported using their mobile device to keep themselves occupied during commercials or other breaks in a program they were watching within the last 30 days.³

Young adults are especially likely to use their mobile phones to keep themselves occupied while watching television, as nearly three quarters of all cell owners ages 18-24 (73%) used their cell phone in this manner recently. But while this behavior is especially common among the youngest cell owners, a majority of 25-34 year olds and just under half of those in their mid-30s to mid-40s have done this recently.

Using cell phones as a TV “distraction device”

% of cell owners in each age group who have used their phone in the last 30 days to keep themselves occupied during breaks or commercials while watching television



Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Project, March 15-April 3, 2012 Tracking survey. N=2,254 adults ages 18 and older, including 903 interviews conducted on respondent’s cell phone. Margin of error is +/-2.6 percentage points based on cell phone owners (n=1,954).

Outside of these age differences, most cell owners are equally likely to use their phones for “distracted viewing” regardless of demographic characteristics. Educational background is a modest exception to this rule, as mobile users with at least some college experience are somewhat more likely to use their phone as a distraction device compared with those who have not attended college (42% vs. 34%).

³ This finding parallels with prior Pew Internet data, which documented that 42% of cell owners used their phone as an entertainment device when bored. See “Americans and their Cell Phones” available at <http://www.pewinternet.org/Reports/2011/Cell-Phones.aspx>

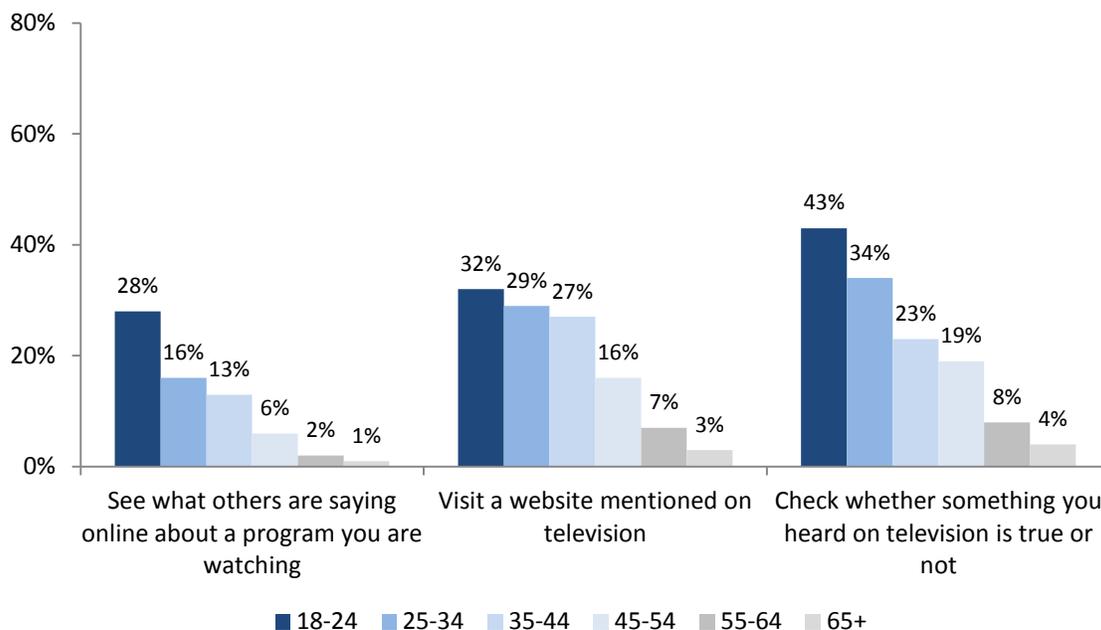
Usage of cell phones to get more information about televised content

Cell phones allow viewers to engage more deeply with televised content by letting viewers seek out additional information or commentary about programming that interests them. This includes activities such as using one’s mobile device to visit a website mentioned on television (20% of cell owners have done this recently), checking whether televised statements are true or not (22%), or going online to read the opinions of others watching the same program (11%).

Overall, 32% of cell owners used their mobile devices in the 30 days preceding our survey for one or more of these reasons, and cell owners under the age of 25 have high levels of engagement in each of these activities. At the same time, using one’s cell phone to visit a website mentioned during televised programming is relatively common with older cell owners as well—engagement in this behavior does not drop significantly until approximately age 45.

Using cell phones to get more information about televised content

% of cell owners in each age group who have used their phone in the preceding 30 days to...



Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Project, March 15-April 3, 2012 Tracking survey. N=2,254 adults ages 18 and older, including 903 interviews conducted on respondent’s cell phone. Margin of error is +/-2.6 percentage points based on cell phone owners (n=1,954).

Non-white cell phone owners also stand out when it comes to using their phones to engage more deeply with information they have seen on television. African-American cell owners are especially likely to say that they have used their phone recently to see what others are saying online about a program they are watching (28% of African-American cell owners have done this recently, compared with 8% of whites and 12% of Latinos). And both black and Latino cell owners are more likely than whites to have recently used their phone to fact-check something they heard on-air. Some 33% of African American cell owners and 30% of Latinos have done this in the preceding 30 days, compared to 19% of whites.

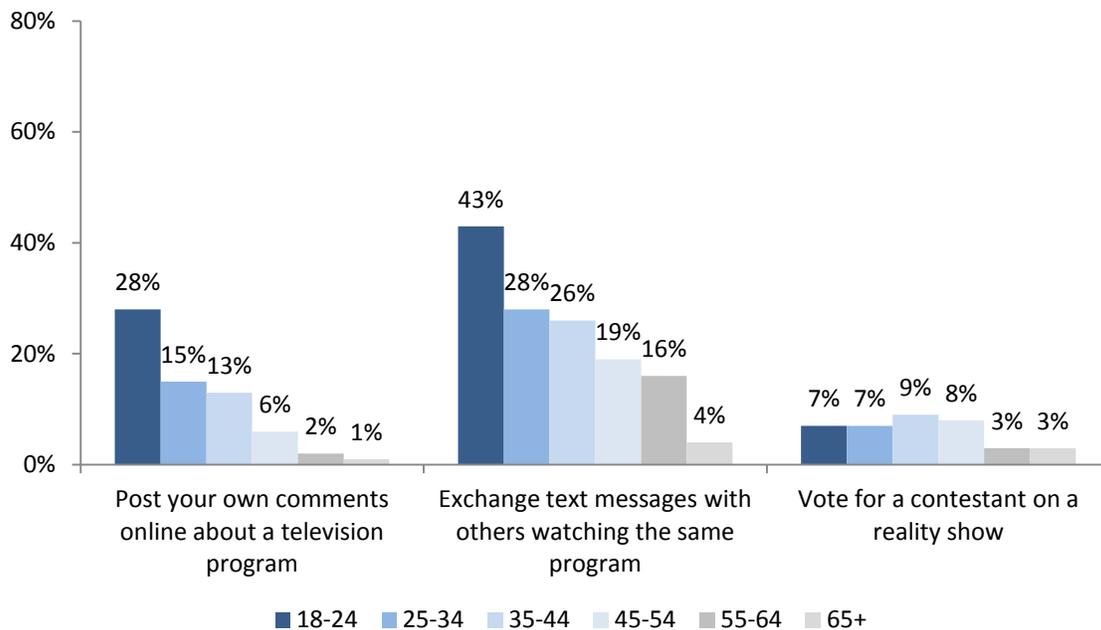
Usage of cell phones to interact with friends and contribute one's thoughts around televised content

Multi-screen experiences also allow audience members to connect directly with programming content—and to others who are interested in the same content. In our survey we examined three of these interactive behaviors: texting someone else watching the same program in a different location (23% of cell owners have done this in the last 30 days), posting one's own comments online about a program (11% of cell owners have done this recently) and voting for a contestant on a reality show (6% of cell owners have done this).

As we saw with the other connected viewing experiences discussed above, younger cell owners are more likely than their elders to engage with others around televised content. This is especially true for posting one's comments online and for sharing text messages with others watching the same program—for each of these activities, the youngest cell owners (those ages 18-24) stand out even compared with those just a few years older.

Using cell phones to interact with friends/contribute thoughts about televised content

% of cell owners in each age group who have used their phone to do the following in the preceding 30 days



Source: Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project, March 15-April 3, 2012 Tracking survey. N=2,254 adults ages 18 and older, including 903 interviews conducted on respondent's cell phone. Margin of error is +/-2.6 percentage points based on cell phone owners (n=1,954).

Similarly, African American cell owners are more likely than whites or Hispanics to exchange text messages with others about a program they are watching (35% of black cell owners have done this recently, compared with 24% of Latinos and 21% of whites) and are more than twice as likely as other groups to post their own comments online about a program they are watching (25% of black cell owners, 10% of Latinos and 8% of whites have done this).

While women and men are equally likely to be connected viewers overall, female cell owners are slightly more likely than men to engage in individual activities such as sharing text messages with others during televised programming (25% vs. 21%), posting their own comments online about a show they are watching (13% vs. 9%) and voting for a contestant on a reality show (8% vs. 4%).

About the Pew Internet Project

The Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project is an initiative of the Pew Research Center, a nonprofit "fact tank" that provides information on the issues, attitudes, and trends shaping America and the world. The Pew Internet Project explores the impact of the internet on children, families, communities, the work place, schools, health care and civic/political life. The Project is nonpartisan and takes no position on policy issues. Support for the Project is provided by The Pew Charitable Trusts. More information is available at pewinternet.org

Survey Questions and Methodology

Spring Tracking Survey 2012

Data for March 15–April 3, 2012

Princeton Survey Research Associates International for
the Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Project

Sample: n=2,254 national adults, age 18 and older, including 903 cell phone interviews
Interviewing dates: 03.15.2012 – 04.03.2012

Margin of error is plus or minus 2 percentage points for results based on Total [n=2,254]
Margin of error is plus or minus 3 percentage points for results based on cell phone owners [n=1,954]

Margin of error is plus or minus 3 percentage points for results based on cell phone owners who text message
[n=1,395]

Margin of error is plus or minus 4 percentage points for results based on those who use the internet or email on
their cell phone or download apps to their cell phone [n=953]

Q24 In the last 30 days, have you used your cell phone while you were watching something on television to [INSERT ITEMS; ASK a-c IN ORDER, RANDOMIZE d-g]?

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW	REFUSED
<i>Item A: Based on cell phone owners who text message [N=1,395]</i>				
a. Exchange text messages with someone else who was watching the same program in a different location	29	71	*	*
<i>Items B and C: Based on those who use the internet or email on their cell phone or download apps to their cell phone [N=953]</i>				
b. See what other people were saying online about the program you were watching	20	80	*	*
c. Post your own comments online about the program you were watching	19	81	0	0
<i>Items D, E, and F: Based on cell phone owners [N=1,954]</i>				

d. Vote for a contestant on a reality show	6	94	*	0
e. Check whether something you heard on television was true or not	22	78	*	*
f. Keep yourself occupied during commercials or breaks in what you were watching	38	62	*	0
<i>Item G: Based on those who use the internet or email on their cell phone or download apps to their cell phone [N=953]</i>				
g. Visit a website that was mentioned on television	35	65	1	0

This report is based on the findings of a survey on Americans' use of the Internet. The results in this report are based on data from telephone interviews conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates International from March 15 to April 3, 2012, among a sample of 2,254 adults, age 18 and older. Telephone interviews were conducted in English and Spanish by landline (1,351) and cell phone (903, including 410 without a landline phone). For results based on the total sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling is plus or minus 2.4 percentage points. For results based Internet users⁴ (n=1,803), the margin of sampling error is plus or minus 2.7 percentage points. In addition to sampling error, question wording and practical difficulties in conducting telephone surveys may introduce some error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

A combination of landline and cellular random digit dial (RDD) samples was used to represent all adults in the continental United States who have access to either a landline or cellular telephone. Both samples were provided by Survey Sampling International, LLC (SSI) according to PSRAI specifications. Numbers for the landline sample were selected with probabilities in proportion to their share of listed telephone households from active blocks (area code + exchange + two-digit block number) that contained three or more residential directory listings. The cellular sample was not list-assisted, but was drawn through a systematic sampling from dedicated wireless 100-blocks and shared service 100-blocks with no directory-listed landline numbers.

New sample was released daily and was kept in the field for at least five days. The sample was released in replicates, which are representative subsamples of the larger population. This ensures that complete call procedures were followed for the entire sample. At least 7 attempts were made to complete an interview at a sampled telephone number. The calls were staggered over times of day and days of the week to maximize the chances of making contact with a potential respondent. Each number received at least one daytime call in an attempt to find someone available. For the landline sample, interviewers asked to speak with the youngest adult male or female currently at home based on a random rotation. If no male/female was available, interviewers asked to speak with the youngest adult of the other gender. For the cellular sample, interviews were conducted with the person who answered the phone. Interviewers verified that the person was an adult and in a safe place before administering the survey. Cellular sample respondents were offered a post-paid cash incentive for their participation. All interviews completed on any given day were considered to be the final sample for that day.

⁴ Internet user definition includes those who access the internet on their cell phones or other mobile handheld device.

Weighting is generally used in survey analysis to compensate for sample designs and patterns of non-response that might bias results. A two-stage weighting procedure was used to weight this dual-frame sample. The first-stage corrected for different probabilities of selection associated with the number of adults in each household and each respondent's telephone usage patterns.⁵ This weighting also adjusts for the overlapping landline and cell sample frames and the relative sizes of each frame and each sample.

The second stage of weighting balances sample demographics to population parameters. The sample is balanced to match national population parameters for sex, age, education, race, Hispanic origin, region (U.S. Census definitions), population density, and telephone usage. The Hispanic origin was split out based on nativity; U.S born and non-U.S. born. The White, non-Hispanic subgroup is also balanced on age, education and region. The basic weighting parameters came from a special analysis of the Census Bureau's 2011 Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) that included all households in the United States. The population density parameter was derived from Census 2000 data. The cell phone usage parameter came from an analysis of the July-December 2010 National Health Interview Survey.⁶ Following is the full disposition of all sampled telephone numbers:

Table 2: Sample Disposition

Landline	Cell	
33,738	22,143	Total Numbers Dialed
1,502	332	Non-residential
1,491	45	Computer/Fax
8	----	Cell phone
15,401	8,237	Other not working
2,746	404	Additional projected not working
12,590	13,126	Working numbers
37.3%	59.3%	Working Rate
915	135	No Answer / Busy
3,472	4,465	Voice Mail
66	5	Other Non-Contact
8,137	8,521	Contacted numbers
64.6%	64.9%	Contact Rate
523	1,382	Callback
6,161	5,654	Refusal
1,453	1,485	Cooperating numbers
17.9%	17.4%	Cooperation Rate
52	43	Language Barrier
----	498	Child's cell phone
1,401	944	Eligible numbers
96.4%	63.6%	Eligibility Rate

⁵ i.e., whether respondents have only a landline telephone, only a cell phone, or both kinds of telephone.

⁶ Blumberg SJ, Luke JV. Wireless substitution: Early release of estimates from the National Health Interview Survey, July-December, 2010. National Center for Health Statistics. June 2011.

50	41	Break-off
1,351	903	Completes
96.4%	95.7%	Completion Rate
11.1%	10.8%	Response Rate

The disposition reports all of the sampled telephone numbers ever dialed from the original telephone number samples. The response rate estimates the fraction of all eligible respondents in the sample that were ultimately interviewed. At PSRAI it is calculated by taking the product of three component rates:

- Contact rate – the proportion of working numbers where a request for interview was made
- Cooperation rate – the proportion of contacted numbers where a consent for interview was at least initially obtained, versus those refused
- Completion rate – the proportion of initially cooperating and eligible interviews that were completed

Thus the response rate for the landline sample was 11 percent. The response rate for the cellular sample was 11 percent.