

RESEARCH SUMMARY

Title	Digital & social media monitor - October 2012		
Objective	Establish levels of various online activities including mobile internet and use of TfL's website		
Date	October 2012	Agency:	SPA Future Thinking
Methodology	Telephone interviews among 1,000 Londoners		

Abstract

Use of smartphones grew strongly in 2012, being used by two thirds (67%) of Londoners by October, significantly up from 58% in January. This led to increased mobile internet usage, with half (49%) of Londoners accessing the internet via a mobile device everyday, up from 40% in January. Three quarters (77%) of Londoners use TfL's website, and the proportion using TfL's website via mobile device continues to increase, up to 46%. Well over half (61%) of Londoners carry out social networking online, and 51% of Londoners use Facebook, while 17% use Twitter.

Key findings

Overall internet access continues to be steady, at close to nine in ten Londoners. Use of smartphones grew strongly in 2012, being used by two thirds (67%) of Londoners. People over 65 years old, those with a disability and those in the DE socio-economic group continue to be the least likely to have internet access.

Sending and receiving emails and finding/sourcing information continue to be undertaken by almost all those with internet access (94% and 89% respectively). 83% of internet users are using the internet for maps and directions, 76% to access live public transport information online and 65% to make day to day travel plans.

Two thirds of Londoners (67%) use a smartphone (significantly up from 58% in January 2012). This has led to strong growth in mobile internet usage in 2012; by October, two thirds of Londoners (63%) access the internet via a mobile device at least once a month, with half (49%) doing so everyday. Tablet users also continue to grow, up to 19% in this survey compared to 13% in January 2012.

Internet activities undertaken on mobile devices follow a similar pattern to general use of the internet, except for activities relating to purchases/finance or which require large data downloads/inputs – where use is generally lower on mobile devices. Accessing travel information via a mobile device has become more popular, with 73% of mobile internet users accessing live public transport information and 62% making day to day travel plans via a mobile device.

Three quarters of Londoners (77%) use TfL's website, with two thirds of Londoners (67%) using it at least once a month. The proportion of Londoners using TfL's website via mobile continues to increase, up to 46% in this survey.

Staff / announcements / displays are still the most used source of London travel information, used by 54% of online Londoners, closely followed by TfL's website on a mobile device, used by 51% of online Londoners. However, when asked what sources they are likely to use in the future, 84% of online Londoners say they would use TfL's website on a mobile device, which is higher than for non-TfL websites (61%). There is also very high claimed likelihood to use apps, Twitter and Facebook in the future for London transport information (around 90% of online Londoners)

Facebook is the most popular form of social media, used by 51% of Londoners, with Twitter at 17%.

Of the 62% of mobile phone users who use apps, 47% always prefer to use apps (as opposed to websites) compared to 23% who always prefer to use websites, while 30% sometimes use apps and sometimes use websites. The main reasons for deciding whether to use an app or a website are ease of use and speed.

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