

The NIACE Media Literacy Survey 2008

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Media Literacy Survey, 2008

Summary

Despite an explosion of media forms available for entertainment purposes, adults continue to spend more time each week watching TV than on any other leisure time activity. However, there has been a definite shift in viewing choices; an increasing proportion of adults indicate that they watch their favourite programmes and not much else rather than choosing what to watch on the day as in previous years. Satisfaction with the amount of choice and variety offered by channels has remained relatively constant since 2004. Moreover, no increase in net dissatisfaction was observed in 2008, with the figure remaining at its lowest since the survey began.

In recent years, access to new technologies has steadily increased. However, in 2008, there was no such increase, with a slight decline in use evident in relation to mobile phones and CD players. This is particularly surprising given that there has been an increase in the net proportion of adults stating that they are confident using new technologies. Correlations between gender, social class and age persist; adults most likely to access new technologies are young men in social class AB.

There has been a vast increase across all the activities that the Internet is used for in 2008. The largest increase, in terms of percentage points, is seen in relation to e-mail, finding information about goods and services, and buying or ordering tickets. There are marked disparities on the basis of gender, with men more likely to use the Internet to play or download music and women to look for jobs or work. Only a small minority of adults have ever placed content on the Internet. The most popular means amongst those who have include uploading photos to a public album, creating web pages and contributing to a discussion forum. Lack of skills is only a partial explanation for this, in that, only a small minority of adults indicated that they would be interested in adding content to the Internet if they had the necessary skills.

Leisure time activities

Time spent on various leisure time activities in a typical week; 2008

In recent years, there has been an explosion of media forms available to adults for entertainment purposes. Despite this, adults spend more time each week watching TV than on any other leisure time activity; 61 per cent of adults watch TV for 11 hours or more, whilst almost one-third (32 per cent) spend more than 20 hours per week doing so. The next most common leisure activity, in terms of the number of hours spent on it each week, is listening to the radio; over one-quarter (26 per cent) of adults spend 11 hours or more doing so. Interestingly, just one per cent spend as much time listening to podcasts. Only a small minority of adults do not spend any time watching TV or listening to the radio. The figures are two per cent and 22 per cent respectively. This highlights the continued importance of, what is considered by some as 'old-fashioned', sources of media information for adults in the United Kingdom. The third most popular leisure activity was surfing the World Wide Web (19 per cent said they spend 11 hours or longer doing this each week), although 40 per cent indicated that, in an average week, they spend no time at all on this.

Table 1: Hours in a week spent on various leisure time activities, 2008

	e-mail %	WWW %	Social sites %	DVDs %	Radio %	Podcasts %	TV %	Record ed TV %	Games %
None	44	40	78	38	22	86	4	59	75
1 hour	22	9	6	10	8	4	2	7	5
2 hours	11	10	3	20	10	2	3	9	4
3 hours	4	5	2	7	5	1	2	4	2
4 hours	3	5	1	6	4	-	3	2	1
5 hours	4	6	1	4	6	-	4	3	2
6-10 hours	5	13	3	8	17	1	20	7	3
11-20 hours	2	6	1	2	12	-	29	3	2
20+ hours	1	3	1	1	14	-	32	1	1
Don't know	3	3	4	4	3	5	2	4	4

Base: All adults 17+ (data extracted from the Adult Participation in Learning Survey, 2008)

Weighted base: 4932

Columns may sum to more/less than 100% due to rounding

Leisure time activities undertaken for 11 hours or more, by age; 2008

There is a clear pattern in leisure time activities undertaken with age. Over one-fifth (21 per cent) of 17-19 year olds spend more than 11 hours a week surfing the World Wide Web compared to just two per cent of those aged 75+. However, the opposite is true for time spent watching TV and listening to the radio. The percentage of adults watching 11 hours or more of TV each week doubles between the ages 17-19 and 75+ from 40 per cent to 80 per cent. Similarly, the percentage of adults spending 11 hours or more listening to the radio rises from 12 per cent amongst 17-19 year olds to 30 per cent amongst those aged 75+.

Although watching TV remains the most popular leisure time activity across all age groups, there are notable disparities in regard to the second most cited leisure pursuit; adults aged 17-24 years are most likely to report surfing the World Wide Web whereas those aged 25 years and over cited listening to the radio.

Table 2: Leisure-time activities undertaken for 11 hours or more, by age; 2008

	17-19 %	20-24 %	25-34 %	35-44 %	45-54 %	55-64 %	65-74 %	75+ %
Surfing the World Wide Web	21	19	12	12	6	5	3	2
Watching TV	40	43	49	52	62	71	80	80
Listening to the radio	12	18	22	23	25	31	34	30
Weighted base	221	416	803	954	761	808	545	423

Base: All adults 17+ (data extracted from the Adult Participation in Learning Survey, 2008)

Choosiness in TV viewing

How choose what to watch on TV; trends

Adults were asked about their viewing choices on TV; the majority indicated that they watch their favourite programmes and do not watch much else besides (34 per cent). This amounts to an increase of seven percentage points since 2007. This is in stark contrast to previous years when most adults said that they choose what they watch on the day. Since 2007, the proportion of adults who choose on the day has fallen by four percentage points from 32 per cent to 28 per cent.

Further evidence of choosiness in TV viewing is evident from the decrease in the percentage of adults who say that they tend to switch around a lot when watching TV; in 2007, 29 per cent of adults gave this response compared to 24 per cent in 2008. Correspondingly, there has been an increase in the number of adults who report that they usually watch the same channel (from six per cent in 2007 to eight per cent in 2008) and those that plan their viewing well in advance (from nine per cent in 2007 to 10 per cent in 2008). This suggests that viewers are now more selective about what they watch on TV and are making informed choices in advance.

Table 3: Statements selected by respondents about their viewing choices; 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008 compared

	2004 %	2005 %	2006 %	2007 %	2008 %
I usually watch the same channels	7	7	8	6	8
I like to plan my viewing well in advance	12	13	11	9	10
I tend to choose when I see what is on that day	38	36	36	32	28
I tend to switch around a lot when I am watching	28	29	31	29	24
I just watch whatever other people have decided to watch	7	7	9	8	7
I have favourite regular programmes and don't watch much else	36	31	31	27	34
Weighted base	1913	1931	1969	1982	1968

Base: all adults aged 17+ who watch TV in 2004 & 2005; all adults aged 17+ in 2006, 2007 & 2008
Owing to respondents being able to identify more than one response, columns may exceed 100%

Choosiness in TV viewing, by social class, gender and age; 2008

Although the majority of adults across all social classes watch their favourite TV programmes and not much else besides, the percentage of people in social classes C2 and DE reporting this viewing choice is less; 37 per cent of ABs and 38 per cent of C1s have favourite regular programmes compared to 29 per cent of C2s and 33 per cent of DEs. Instead, adults in social classes C2 and DE were more likely to state that they tend to switch around a lot when watching TV. There is relatively little difference on the basis of social class across the other categories listed with the exception of watching what other people have decided to watch; C2s are more likely than any other social class to report this as a viewing choice.

Women are significantly more likely than men to have regular favourite TV programmes; over two-fifths (41 per cent) of women stated this compared to less than one-third (27 per cent) of men. This amounts to a difference of 14 percentage points. Rather the majority (30 per cent) of men tend to switch around a lot when watching TV. This is relatively uncommon for women, where less than one-fifth (18 per cent) stated this when asked about their viewing choice. A further indication that men are less choosy about what they watch on television is that they are more likely to choose when they see what is available on the day (29 per cent of men indicated that they watch TV in this way compared to 26 per cent of women). There is almost no difference between men and women across the other categories.

There are notable differences in regard to viewing habits across the youngest and oldest adults. Whilst the majority of 17-19 year olds (42 per cent) stated that they switch around a lot, less than two-fifths of the over 75s (15 per cent) do so. Instead the majority (44 per cent) of adults in this age group stated that they have regular favourite programmes and do not watch much else besides. The other age band where the percentage of people reporting this viewing choice was noticeably higher than others was 35-44, where 41 per cent of people have favourite programmes.

Adults with multiple channels are more likely than those with 4-5 main channels only to switch around a lot, whilst a higher percentage of the latter plan their viewing in advance. On the basis of this finding, it is, therefore, surprising to note that people without multiple channels are more likely to choose when they see what is on that day (31 per cent compared to 28 per cent). This represents a difference of three percentage points.

Table 4: Statements selected by adults about their viewing choices, by social class, gender, age and multi-channel access; 2008

		I usually watch the same channel	I like to plan my viewing well in advance	I tend to choose when I see what is on that day	I tend to switch around a lot when I am watching	I just watch what other people have decided to watch	I have my favourite programmes and don't watch much else	Weighted base
Total		8	10	28	24	3	34	1968
Social class	AB	6	11	28	18	5	37	431
	C1	7	11	29	21	6	38	546
	C2	9	8	25	27	13	29	404
	DE	10	9	28	28	6	33	586
Gender	Men	8	9	29	30	8	27	956
	Women	9	10	26	18	7	41	1012
Age	17-19	11	1	26	42	9	30	75*
	20-24	13	4	23	20	13	24	174
	25-34	9	8	23	28	10	31	327
	35-44	9	8	23	24	6	41	375
	45-54	6	9	32	18	9	34	303
	55-64	8	13	30	22	6	33	325
	65-74	5	12	32	29	5	31	217
	75+	7	18	33	15	3	44	170
Multi-channel	Yes	8	9	28	25	8	35	1642
	No	10	13	31	17	5	34	291

Base: All adults aged 17+

Percentages are horizontal

* denotes small base

Choosiness in TV viewing, by gender; trends

Table 5: Statements selected by adults about their viewing choices, by gender; 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008 compared

	2004		2005		2006		2007		2008	
	Men %	Women %	Men %	Women %	Men %	Women %	Men %	Women %	Men %	Women %
I tend to choose when I see on the day	39	37	36	37	34	38	30	35	29	26
I tend to switch around a lot when I am watching	34	22	35	24	36	26	33	24	30	18
I have favourite regular programmes and don't watch much else	30	42	28	33	27	36	24	30	27	41
Weighted base	938	975	950	1019	934	997	964	1018	956	1012

Base: all adults aged 17+ who watch TV in 2004 & 2005; all adults aged 17+ in 2006, 2007 & 2008

Table shows only those statements where a difference between men and women was seen in 2008

Whilst in previous years the gap between men and women's viewing habits has steadily decreased, this year sees the gap between them notably increase. Although the trend for more men than women to switch channels when watching TV has remained constant since 2004, the difference between them has decreased by one percentage point each year. However, in 2008, the gap between men and women has increased by as much as three percentage points. Moreover, the gap between men and women in relation to favourite regular programmes has also increased markedly. In 2007, the difference between men and women stood at just six percentage points compared to 14 percentage points in 2008. The one exception to this trend is evident in regard to those who tend to choose when they see on the day, where the gap between men and women is once again narrowing following year on year increases since 2006.

However, interestingly, there has been a notable reversal in the gender divide. Since 2005, more women than men have described themselves as tending to choose on the day; this is no longer the case with men more likely to use this as a description of their viewing habits. The figures are 29 and 26 per cent respectively.

Stable versus Choosy viewers; trends

When looking at the general attitudes of adults about what they watch on TV by combining the statements previously discussed to create 'choosy', 'stable' and 'mixed', it is evident that there has been a significant increase in the percentage who are stable when compared to last year. Indeed, at 8 percentage points, the increase

in 2008 is twice that of the equivalent figure for 2007, which amounted to four percentage points. Correspondingly, there has been a decline in the proportion of adults giving a choosy response, from 51 per cent in 2007 to 41 per cent in 2008. The percentage of adults defined as choosy is at its lowest since the survey began.

Table 6: Choosy versus Stable viewers; 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008 compared

	2005 %	2006 %	2007 %	2008 %
Stable	37	35	39	47
Choosy	47	46	51	41
Mixed	13	15	7	8
None/Don't know	3	4	3	5
Weighted base	1932	1970	1982	1968

Base: all adults aged 17+ who watch TV in 2005; all adults aged 17+ in 2006, 2007 & 2008
Columns may sum to more/less than 100% due to rounding

Stable versus Choosy viewers, by gender; trends

There are notable disparities between men and women in regard to TV viewing choices. In 2008, the majority of women (54 per cent) are classed as stable compared to just two-fifths (40 per cent) of men. Moreover, there is evidence that the gap between them has more than trebled in the last 12 months, from a difference of four percentage points in 2007 to 14 percentage in 2008. The gap between men and women, in terms of percentage points, is identical for choosy, although it is men rather than women that are more likely to define their viewing choices in this way (48 per cent of men compared to 34 per cent of women). The gap has increased markedly since 2007, where the gap between them was just two percentage points.

Table 7: Stable versus Choosy viewers, by gender; 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008 compared

	2005		2006		2007		2008	
	Men %	Women %	Men %	Women %	Men %	Women %	Men %	Women %
Stable	32	42	32	38	37	41	40	54
Choosy	51	42	50	42	52	50	48	34
Mixed	13	13	13	16	7	7	8	8
None/Don't know	5	3	5	4	4	2	5	5
Weighted base	934	997	950	1019	964	1018	955	1009

Base: all adults aged 17+ who watch TV in 2005; all adults aged 17+ in 2006, 2007 & 2008
Columns may sum to more/less than 100% due to rounding

Satisfaction with choice and variety of channels available

Satisfaction with amount of choice and variety offered by channels; trends

The proportion of adults stating that they are satisfied with the amount of choice and variety on TV has remained relatively constant since 2004. There has been marginally less consistency in net dissatisfaction, with a decrease of three percentage points between 2006 and 2007 from 29 per cent to 26 per cent. However, it is encouraging to note that the pattern of decreasing levels of

dissatisfaction with the choice and variety of channels offered has been maintained in 2008; the percentage of adults has remained the same as that observed in 2007.

Table 8: Satisfaction with choice and variety of channels available; 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008 compared

	2004 %	2005 %	2006 %	2007 %	2008 %
Very satisfied	14	17	16	18	17
Fairly satisfied	56	52	53	53	53
Net: Satisfied	70	70	70	71	70
Not very satisfied	22	22	23	21	20
Not at all satisfied	7	7	6	6	6
Net: Dissatisfied	29	29	29	26	26
Don't know	1	2	1	2	4
Weighted base	1913	1931	1969	1982	1968

Base: all adults aged 17+ who watch TV in 2004 & 2005; all adults aged 17+ in 2006, 2007 & 2008
Columns may sum to more/less than 100% due to rounding

Satisfaction with choice and variety of channels available, by gender; trends

Women are currently marginally more satisfied (71 per cent) than men (69 per cent). However, the gap between them has narrowed in the last year (from four percentage points in 2007 to two percentage points in 2008) due to a small decline in levels of satisfaction amongst women. The same gap, in terms of percentage points, is evident in relation to dissatisfaction, only men are slightly more dissatisfied (27 per cent) than women (25 per cent). The level of dissatisfaction with choice and variety offered by TV channels has gradually decreased for both men and women since 2006, and for women only since 2005, where it reached its peak at 30 per cent.

Table 9: Satisfaction with choice and variety of channels available, by gender; 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008

	2004		2005		2006		2007		2008	
	Men %	Women %	Men %	Women %	Men %	Women %	Men %	Women %	Men %	Women
Satisfied	66	72	71	68	70	70	69	73	69	71
Dissatisfied	33	26	27	30	29	29	28	25	27	25
Don't know	1	1	2	2	2	1	3	2	4	4
Weighted base	938	975	934	997	950	1019	964	1018	956	1012

Base: All adults aged 17+ who watch TV in 2004 & 2005; all adults aged 17+ in 2006, 2007 & 2008
Columns may sum to more/less than 100% due to rounding

Satisfaction with choice and variety of channels available, by age, children in household, Internet access and multi-channel access; 2008

There is a strong correlation between age and satisfaction with the choice and variety of channels available; the proportion of adults indicating that they are satisfied is at its highest amongst 17-19 year olds (89 per cent), and then gradually decreases until the age band 65-74 (61 per cent). The notable exception to this pattern is adults aged 75 years and over as satisfaction levels rise to 70 per cent. Interestingly, the sharpest decreases are seen between the ages of 17-19 and 20-24 (13 percentage points) and 45-54 and 55-64 (11 percentage points). The reverse pattern is evident in relation to dissatisfaction, with the highest levels found amongst

older adults, although a decrease is apparent at age 65-74 rather than 75+ as expected. However, the difference between these age bands is marginal when compared to the decrease between the group 65-74 and 75+ (2 percentage points and 8 percentage points respectively).

Adults with children have higher satisfaction levels than those without. The age of children has only a small impact; people with children aged 5-15 years are marginally more likely than those with children aged 0-4 years to state that they are satisfied with the choice and variety of channels available (77 per cent compared to 75 per cent). Correspondingly, adults without children have the highest levels of dissatisfaction. In 2008, just under one-third (29 per cent) of this group were dissatisfied compared to 22 per cent with children 0-4 and 20 per cent with children 5-15.

Just under three-quarters (73 per cent) of people with the Internet are satisfied compared to 64 per cent of those without. This is broadly consistent with satisfaction levels on the basis of multi-channel access; 73 per cent of people with any multi-channel are satisfied compared to 62 per cent of those with only main channels.

Table 10: Satisfaction with choice and variety of channels available, by age, children in household, Internet access and multi-channel access; 2008

		Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Don't know	Weighted base
Total		1378	513	76	1967
Age					
	17-19	89	9	2	75*
	20-24	76	15	9	174
	25-34	75	21	4	327
	35-44	73	24	4	375
	45-54	71	23	5	303
	55-64	60	38	2	325
	65-74	61	36	3	217
	75+	70	28	2	170
Children in household					
	0-4 years	75	22	3	257
	5-15 years	77	20	3	462
	None	68	29	4	1355
Internet					
	Yes	73	24	4	1352
	No	64	32	4	615
Multi-channel					
	Yes	73	25	3	1642
	No	62	34	4	291

Base: all adults aged 17+
Percentages are horizontal

New technologies

Access to new technologies; trends

Between 2004 and 2007, access to new technologies steadily increased. However, in 2008, there has been no such increase, with the proportion of adults indicating that they regularly use a mobile phone¹ or CD player declining by three and four percentage points respectively when compared to 2007. That said, it is encouraging to note that there has been no decline in the proportion of people who report regular access to a DVD player, computer/PC/laptop and the Internet, which have remained the same as 2007.

Table 11: Access to newer technologies; 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008

	2004 %	2005 %	2006 %	2007 %	2008 %
Mobile phone	77	81	82	85	82
CD player	81	85	84	84	80
DVD player	60	75	80	83	83
Computer/PC/Laptop	54	58	61	64	64
Internet	51	55	57	58	58
Weighted base	1949	1960	1969	1982	4932

Base: all adults aged 17+ (2008 data extracted from the Adult Participation in Learning Survey)

Access to newer technologies, by gender; trends

Whilst overall more men continue to access newer technologies than women, the divide has closed by one percentage point for both mobile phones and computers. Conversely, a gap has emerged between men and women in relation to CD players where previously there was no discernable difference in access; however, at one percentage point, it is only marginal. The divide in access to DVD players and the Internet remains unchanged when compared to 2007 at three and five percentage points respectively. The greatest differences in 2008 are in respect to using a computer and accessing the Internet; both have a five percentage point gap.

Table 12: Access to new technologies, by gender; trends

	2004		2005		2006		2007		2008	
	Men %	Women %	Men %	Women %	Men %	Women %	Men %	Women %	Men %	Women %
Mobile phone	80	75	83	78	83	80	85	84	82	82
CD player	83	79	87	84	85	83	84	84	80	79
DVD player	66	54	76	74	82	79	85	82	84	81
Computer/PC/ Laptop	59	19	61	56	63	60	67	61	67	62
Internet	56	47	58	52	59	54	61	56	61	56
Weighted base	953	996	952	1010	950	1019	964	1018	2396	2537

Base: all adults aged 17+ (2008 data extracted from the Adult Participation in Learning Survey)

¹ In 2008, the Adult Participation in Learning Survey differentiated between a standard mobile phone, a mobile phone which connects to faster 3G networks, a handheld mobile device which connects to email and a handheld mobile device which connects to the World Wide Web. The percentage reported is the net score for any mobile phone from the above.

Access to newer technologies, by social class, age and multi-channel access; 2008

There is a strong correlation between social class and access to newer technologies, in that, access declines with social class. This pattern is discernible across all technologies listed. However, there are considerable differences in the gap between the highest (AB) and lowest (DE) social classes, ranging from 13 percentage points for DVD players to 49 percentage points for Internet access. The equivalent figures for mobile phones, CD players, DVD players and the computers are 18, 15 and 42 percentage points respectively. It is, therefore, apparent that mobile phones and CD and DVD players are more accessible to the lower social classes than computers and the Internet; although the proportion reporting access is less than other social classes, the vast majority of DEs report that they have regular access to these.

There are notable differences in regard to access to newer technologies by age. There is relatively little difference in the proportion of adults accessing mobile phones and CD and DVD players until the age band 65-74, where there is then a drop of, on average, 13 percentage points. More striking is the stark decline in access between adults aged 65-74 and 75+. Across the three technologies, the decline is most apparent in relation to DVD players (22 percentage points), followed by mobile phones (21 percentage points) and CD players (14 percentage points). Levels of access by age group vary more in relation to computers and the Internet. Access is at its highest amongst 35-44 and 17-19 year olds, with drops of up to 10 percentage points between age bands up to 55-64. However, as with the other technologies discussed, it is from here where the decline is most apparent. Between the age group 55-64 and 75+, the proportion of adults reporting regular access to computers and the Internet decreased by 46 and 43 percentage points respectively. Just 17 per cent of the over 75s use computers and 15 per cent the Internet.

There is a tendency for people with multi-channels to access other technologies; across all technologies listed, access levels were higher amongst those who reported that they multi-channels when compared to adults with 4-5 main channels.

Table 13: Access to newer technologies, by social class, age and multi-channel access; 2008

		Mobile phone	CD player	DVD player	Computer/PC/ Laptop	Internet	Weighted base
Total		82	80	83	64	58	4932
Social class	AB	89	86	88	84	82	992
	C1	85	82	85	74	69	1454
	C2	85	82	85	64	57	1017
	DE	71	71	75	42	33	1469
Age	17-19	89	81	84	80	70	221
	20-24	89	79	85	70	62	416
	25-34	90	80	88	73	65	803
	35-44	88	84	89	80	76	954
	45-54	87	83	88	73	67	761
	55-64	84	85	85	63	58	808
	65-74	69	73	74	39	33	545
	75+	48	59	52	17	15	423
Multi-channel	Yes	85	83	87	70	64	4083
	No	64	64	64	35	29	757

Base: All adults aged 17+ (data extracted from the Adult Participation in Learning Survey, 2008)

Percentages are horizontal

Access to mobile phones, for younger and older adults and gender; 2008

Whilst overall the percentage of men and women reporting regular access to a mobile phone is identical at 82 per cent, a different picture emerges when age is taken into consideration. Indeed, for both men and women, adults under 55 are more likely to use a mobile phone than their counterparts aged 55 and over. The difference between younger and older adults is most marked in relation to women; the difference for men amounts to 15 percentage points compared to 21 for women. Just over a third (69 per cent) of women aged 55 and over report regular access to a mobile phone compared to four-fifths (90 per cent) of those under 55 years.

Table 14: Access to mobile phones, by age and gender; 2008

	<55 %	55+ %
Men	87	72
Women	90	69
Weighted base	3156	1778

Base: All adults aged 17+ (data extracted from the Adult Participation in Learning Survey, 2008)

Computer and Internet access, for younger and older adults; trends

In 2008, three-quarters of adults aged under 55 (75 per cent) access a computer compared to less than half (45 per cent) of those aged 55 years and over. However, it is encouraging to note that, in a period that has seen no increase in the use of computers overall, access amongst older adults has increased by three percentage points in the past 12 months. Overall, there has been no change in the gap between gap between the two age groups, which has remained stable at 35 percentage points since 2007, due to the small decline in access amongst the under 55s.

Accordingly, only 40 per cent of adults aged 55 and above access the Internet compared to 69 per cent of those under 55. Again there is evidence of increased use amongst older adults (from 34 per cent in 2007 to 40 per cent in 2008) and a slight decline (from 72 per cent in 2007 to 69 per cent in 2008) for those below 55. However, on this occasion, the gap has narrowed considerably; the difference in 2008 stands at 29 percentage points compared to 38 percentage points in 2007.

Table 15: Computer and Internet access; 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008 compared

	2004		2005		2006		2007		2008	
	<55	55+	<55	55+	<55	55+	<55	55+	<55	55+
Computer access	68	27	72	35	73	39	77	42	75	45
Internet access	64	27	67	34	69	33	72	34	69	40
Weighted base	1289	660	1253	709	1287	681	1276	706	3155	1777

Base: all adults 17+ (2008 data extracted from the Adult Participation in Learning Survey)

Confidence in using new technologies, by gender; trends

There has been an increase in the net proportion of adults stating that they are confident using new technologies (from 61 per cent in 2007 to 66 per cent in 2008). Correspondingly, there has been a decline by approximately the same proportion in

the net numbers reporting a lack of confidence (from 38 per cent in 2007 to 32 per cent in 2008). In 2008, confidence levels are higher than in any previous year.

Men are twice as likely as women to report that they are very confident using new technologies (30 per cent compared to 15 per cent); however, the gap is marginal for the statement quite confident at just two percentage points. Disparities between men and women are also apparent in relation to the proportions reporting a lack of confidence with new technologies, with almost twice as many women as men (11 per cent compared to 6 per cent) describing themselves as not confident at all. A significant gap is also evident in relation to not very confident; in 2008, the difference between men and women amounts to 11 percentage points.

Table 16: Confidence in using new technologies, by gender; trends

	2006			2007			2008		
	Total %	Men %	Women %	Total %	Men %	Women %	Total %	Men %	Women %
Very confident	22	28	17	25	32	18	22	30	15
Quite confident	41	41	41	36	38	35	44	45	43
Net: Confident	64	69	59	61	70	53	66	75	58
Not very confident	25	23	28	27	22	31	24	18	29
Not confident at all	10	7	13	12	7	16	9	6	11
Net: Unconfident	35	30	40	38	30	46	32	24	40
Don't know	1	1	1	-	-	1	2	2	2
Weighted base	1969	950	1019	1982	964	1018	1968	956	1012

Base: all adults 17+ (2008 data extracted from the Adult Participation in Learning Survey)

Columns may sum to more/less than 100% due to rounding

- denotes a value of zero

Confidence in using new technologies, by age; trends

The proportion of adults indicating that they are confident using newer technologies declines dramatically with age from 96 per cent at age 17-19 to just 20 per cent for those aged 75+. This amounts to a difference of 76 percentage points. Since 2006, the gap between younger and older adults has increased by three percentage points each year; in 2006 and 2007, it stood at 70 and 73 percentage points respectively. However, it is encouraging to note that, with the exception of adults aged 20-24 and 35-44, confidence levels have increased across all age bands. Moreover, the increase has been most striking in relation to adults aged 55-64 and 65-74; the percentage reporting that they are confident has increased by 15 and 13 percentage points respectively. Whilst there has been a decline in confidence levels for adults aged 20-24 and 35-44, it is marginal at just two percentage points for both.

Table 17: Adults who say feel 'confident' using new technologies, by age; 2006, 2007 and 2008 compared

	Total	17-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
2006	64	89	89	86	78	63	47	32	19
Weighted base	1969	117	138	323	383	326	317	214	150
2007	61	91	90	83	77	63	45	27	18
Weighted base	1982	112	146	322	375	321	298	213	195
2008	66	96	88	85	75	64	60	40	20
Weighted base	1968	75*	174	327	375	303	325	217	170

Base: all adults aged 17+

* denotes small base

Confidence in using new technologies, by social class and terminal age of education; trends

Over three-quarters of adults in social classes ABC1 (77 per cent) feel confident using new technologies compared to less than one-third (63 per cent) of C2s and half (49 per cent) of DEs. The gap between social classes is increasing (the difference between ABs and DEs in 2008 is 28 percentage points) due to confidence levels increasing by a more significant margin amongst ABC1s compared to C2DEs.

The close association between confidence and terminal age of education is once again apparent in 2008. Over half (55 per cent) of adults who left education aged 16 or under indicated that they are confident using new technologies compared to just under three-quarters of those aged 17-18 (72 per cent) and 19-20 (73 per cent) and four-fifths (84 per cent) of those aged 21 or above. When compared to 2007, confidence levels have increased amongst those who left education aged 16 or under (by 8 percentage points) and 21 and over (by 5 percentage points), and decreased amongst those who left education aged 17-18 (by three percentage points). There was no change in relation to those aged 19-20. This is of particular interest as the reverse pattern was evident between 2006 and 2007; confidence levels decreased across all levels with the exception of adults who left education aged 17-18, where it increased by four percentage points in the period.

Table 18: Adults who say they 'confident' using new technologies, by social class and terminal age of education; 2006, 2007 and 2008 compared

	Total %	Social Class				Terminal age education			
		AB %	C1 %	C2 %	DE %	<=16 %	17-18 %	19-20 %	21+ %
2006	64	74	72	64	51	53	71	82	80
Weighted base	1969	357	578	398	635	1080	355	103*	315
2007	61	71	72	60	46	47	75	73	79
Weighted base	1982	432	544	394	612	1081	365	98*	330
2008	66	77	77	63	49	55	72	73	84
Weighted base	1968	431	548	404	586	1042	374	113	343

Base: all adults aged 17+

* denotes small base

Internet use

Main activities that the Internet is used for; trends

There has been a vast increase in the proportion of adults reporting use of the Internet since 2007 across all the activities listed. The largest increase, in terms of percentage points, is seen in relation to the percentage of people indicating that they have used the Internet for e-mail, which has rose by 47 percentage points from 31 per cent in 2007 to 78 per cent in 2008. This means that, as of 2008, three out of every four people have used the Internet for this purpose. The next largest increases were observed in relation to finding information about goods and services (49 percentage points) and buying or ordering tickets, goods or services excluding financial services (45 percentage points). That said, whilst the difference in terms of percentage points is less marked, it is important to note that there have been significant increases in the proportion of adults using the Internet for looking for jobs or work and using and accessing government or official services. This is highlighted by the percentage increase between 2007 and 2008 which amounts to 2800 per cent and 2400 per cent respectively. The percentage increase for learning on/off line and personal banking is also sizeable at 1600 per cent and 1200 per cent respectively. On the basis of this, the largest increases were, therefore, seen in relation to these.

Table 19: Main activities that the Internet is used for; 2006, 2007 and 2008 compared

	2006 %	2007 %	2008 %
Using e-mail	25	31	78
General browsing or surfing	23	29	65
Finding information about good and services	9	9	58
Buying or ordering tickets, goods or services	5	5	50
Personal banking, financial and investment activities	5	3	41
Finding information for my learning or training	5	4	35
Playing or downloading music	2	2	34
Looking for jobs or work	2	1	29
Learning on/off line	3	2	26
Using or accessing government or official services	*	1	25
Weighted base	1113	1156	2965

Base: all adults aged 17+ with regular Internet access (2008 data extracted from the Adult Participation in Learning Survey)

Only those activities where the total is greater than or equal to 25% in 2008 are shown

* denotes small base

Main activities that the Internet is used for, by social class, gender and age; 2008

The main uses of the Internet vary across social class, gender and age. Adults who use e-mail are more likely to be in social classes AB and C1. Although there is a tendency for younger adults to make more use of e-mail than their older counterparts – 91 per cent of 17-19 year olds use e-mail compared to 70 per cent of those 75+ – it is notable that the majority of adults in all age groups use e-mail. This is in stark contrast to some of the other main activities that the Internet is used for. The difference in use of e-mail in terms of gender is marginal at two percentage points.

Men are more likely than women to use the Internet for playing or downloading music (38 per cent of men compared to 30 per cent of women), learning on/off line (28 per cent of men compared to 23 per cent of women) and using or accessing government or official websites (28 per cent of men compared to 22 per cent of women). By contrast, women are more likely to use the Internet for looking for jobs or work, although the difference is marginal at only one percentage point.

Perhaps unsurprisingly younger adults are more likely to use the Internet for general browsing or surfing and playing/downloading music and least likely to use it for finding information about goods and services and using or accessing government or official websites. The adults that are most likely to use the Internet for these purposes are those in the age bands 25-34, 35-44, 45-54 and 55-64.

Table 20: Main activities the Internet is used for, by social class, gender and age; 2008

		Using e-mail	General browsing /surfing	Finding information about good/ services	Buying/ ordering tickets, goods or services	Personal banking	Finding information for my learning/ training	Playing/ downloading music	Looking for jobs or work	Learning on/off line	Using/accessing government or official services	Weighted base
Total		78	65	58	50	41	35	34	29	26	25	2965
Social class	AB	86	71	68	64	50	42	36	29	33	35	819
	C1	83	68	63	53	45	38	38	31	27	29	1024
	C2	69	59	50	43	37	28	30	28	19	17	605
	DE	64	56	41	32	26	25	26	24	19	13	516
Gender	Men	79	67	58	51	43	36	38	28	28	28	1490
	Women	77	63	58	49	39	33	30	29	23	22	1475
Age	17-19	91	64	41	37	20	41	60	34	29	7	162
	20-24	81	72	51	52	45	46	61	46	34	18	272
	25-34	80	67	59	53	50	34	42	45	27	26	548
	35-44	81	67	64	56	47	38	36	31	30	29	737
	45-54	73	63	59	49	39	35	26	24	24	27	519
	55-64	74	62	62	49	39	31	18	13	22	29	478
	65-74	71	55	49	36	27	16	8	3	10	22	184
	75+	70	55	43	30	24	22	8	-	10	17	65*

Base: all adults aged 17+ with regular Internet access (data extracted from the Adult Participation in Learning Survey 2008)

* denotes small base

- denotes zero

Whether ever placed content on the Internet, by social class, gender, age and multi-channel access; 2008

The vast majority of adults (75 per cent) have never placed content on the Internet. The most popular means of doing this amongst those who have include uploading photos to a public album (10 per cent), creating web pages (7 per cent) and contributing to a discussion forum (6 per cent). Only 1 per cent of adults have created and uploaded a podcast or contributed to a Wiki.

The percentage of adults who report that they have never placed content on the Internet is higher amongst the lower social classes (C2 and DE). This is possibly a consequence of the higher levels of access and confidence reported previously. With the exception of publishing a blog and uploading photos to a public domain, more adults in social class AB report using the Internet for each of the purposes listed than C1, C2 and DE. Instead C1s make more use of the Internet for this purpose, although the difference between this social class and AB – the next largest group in both instances – is marginal at two and one percentage point respectively.

Men are more likely than women to place content on the Internet across each of the means listed with the exception of uploading photos to a public album where the reverse is true; 11 per cent of women upload photos compared to nine per cent of men. The gap between men and women is most apparent in relation to creating web pages, where almost twice as many men report that they use the Internet in this way (nine per cent of men compared to five per cent of women). The divide is at its smallest in relation to other ways of adding content. There was no discernible difference on the basis of gender in regard to creating and uploading a podcast and contributing to a Wiki.

The younger the adult, the greater the likelihood of them having placed content on the Internet; the percentage gradually declines for each consecutive age band from over half of 17-19 year olds (55 per cent) to just one per cent of those aged 75+. The gap between the youngest and oldest adults is most apparent in relation to creating and uploading a video (28 percentage points), uploading photos to a public album and (23 percentage points) creating a webpage (22 percentage points). Interestingly, there were notable differences in reported use on the basis of age for some of the ways of adding content listed whilst almost none for others. Those where there is relatively little difference are contributing a review of a product or service, creating and uploading a podcast, contributing to a Wiki and other.

Adults with multi-channel access are almost three times more likely to have placed content on the Internet when compared to those with 4-5 main channels only (22 per cent compared to 8 per cent). The percentage of adults adding content is consistently higher amongst those with multi-channel access than those without; the difference is most marked in relation to adults adding content via uploading photos to a public photo album (8 percentage points) and least marked in relation to publishing a blog (one percentage point).

Table 21: Whether ever placed content on the Internet by social class, gender, age and multi-channel access; 2008

		Contributing to a discussion forum	Contributing own review of a product/service	Creating own web pages	Publishing a blog	Uploading photos to a public album	Creating/uploading a podcast	Creating/uploading a video	Contributing to a Wiki	Other	Net: has placed content on Internet	No, never placed content on Internet	Weighted base
Total		6	4	7	3	10	1	5	1	2	20	75	1968
Social class	AB	10	6	12	3	12	1	6	2	2	26	70	431
	C1	8	6	8	5	13	1	5	1	1	26	68	546
	C2	4	3	5	2	9	1	5	1	1	18	76	404
	DE	3	1	5	1	6	*	3	*	2	11	85	586
Gender	Men	8	5	9	4	9	1	6	1	2	23	73	956
	Women	5	3	5	2	11	1	3	1	1	17	77	1012
Age	17-19	10	5	22	11	23	6	28	-	5	55	38	75*
	20-24	11	5	13	8	26	1	13	3	1	40	53	174
	25-34	9	5	10	5	18	2	6	1	1	31	64	327
	35-44	11	5	11	3	12	1	5	1	2	26	70	375
	45-54	4	4	3	1	4	1	1	1	2	11	82	303
	55-64	4	5	4	1	5	*	1	1	1	13	82	325
	65-74	1	*	2	*	1	-	-	-	1	3	94	217
	75+	-	*	-	-	*	-	-	-	*	1	97	170
Multi-channel	Yes	7	4	8	3	11	1	5	1	2	22	73	1642
	No	2	1	3	2	3	*	2	-	1	8	88	291

Base: all adults aged 17+

* denotes small base

- denotes zero

Whether would like to publish on the Internet in any of the following ways if had skills, by social class, gender, age and multi-channel access; 2008

Only a small minority (15 per cent) of adults would be interested in publishing on the Internet if they had the skills. The most popular of the ways listed is via their own web pages (10 per cent). Less than one per cent would like to publish via a podcast.

There is correlation between social class and net interest in publishing on the Internet; 18 per cent of social class AB reported that they would be interested in publishing if they had the skills compared to 13 per cent of DEs. A gap of four percentage points is notable between the highest and lowest social classes in relation to publishing via their own web pages (12 per cent of ABs compared to 8 per cent of DEs), whereas the difference is marginal for the other ways listed.

Overall, men are more interested than women in publishing on the Internet. The difference, in terms of percentage points, is fairly significant at nine points. The gap between men and women is stark in relation to publishing via their own web pages, where twice as many men expressed an interest in this (13 per cent compared to 6 per cent), but marginal in relation to a blog or video. There was no discernible difference on the basis of gender in regard to publishing via a podcast or public photo album.

The likelihood of an adult indicating that they are interested in publishing on the Internet is higher the younger they are; 42 per cent of 17-19 year olds indicate that they would be interested if they had the skills compared to just 2 per cent of those aged 75+. The percentage of individuals gradually declines with each consecutive age band. The same pattern as social class and gender is apparent in relation to publishing via their own web pages, that is, a significant difference in terms of percentage points between the youngest and oldest adults when compared to the other ways of publishing on the Internet listed.

Adults with multi-channel access are more likely than those with 4-5 main channels only to have an interest in publishing information on the Internet (17 per cent compared to 7 per cent). The difference amounts to 10 percentage points.

Table 22: Whether would like to publish on the Internet in any of the following ways if had skills by social class, gender, age and multi-channel access; 2008

		In a blog	In a podcast	In a video	In own web pages	In a public photo album	Net: interested	No, I am not interested	Don't know	Don't know
Total		3	1	3	10	4	15	80	4	1968
Social class	AB	4	1	4	12	5	18	78	4	431
	C1	4	1	3	11	4	16	78	5	546
	C2	3	*	3	9	4	14	80	6	404
	DE	2	1	2	8	4	13	84	3	586
Gender	Men	4	1	4	13	4	20	76	4	956
	Women	2	1	2	6	4	11	84	5	1012
Age	17-19	7	7	14	20	9	42	57	2	75*
	20-24	6	1	9	15	8	28	64	8	174
	25-34	5	1	3	13	9	22	74	4	327
	35-44	7	1	3	15	4	21	76	3	375
	45-54	1	1	1	8	2	10	82	7	303
	55-64	1	*	1	6	2	9	88	3	325
	65-74	*	*	*	3	1	4	92	4	217
	75+	-	1	-	-	1	2	95	3	170
Multi-channel	Yes	4	1	3	11	4	17	79	4	1642
	No	2	1	2	4	3	7	89	4	291

Base: all adults aged 17+

* denotes small base

- denotes zero

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