

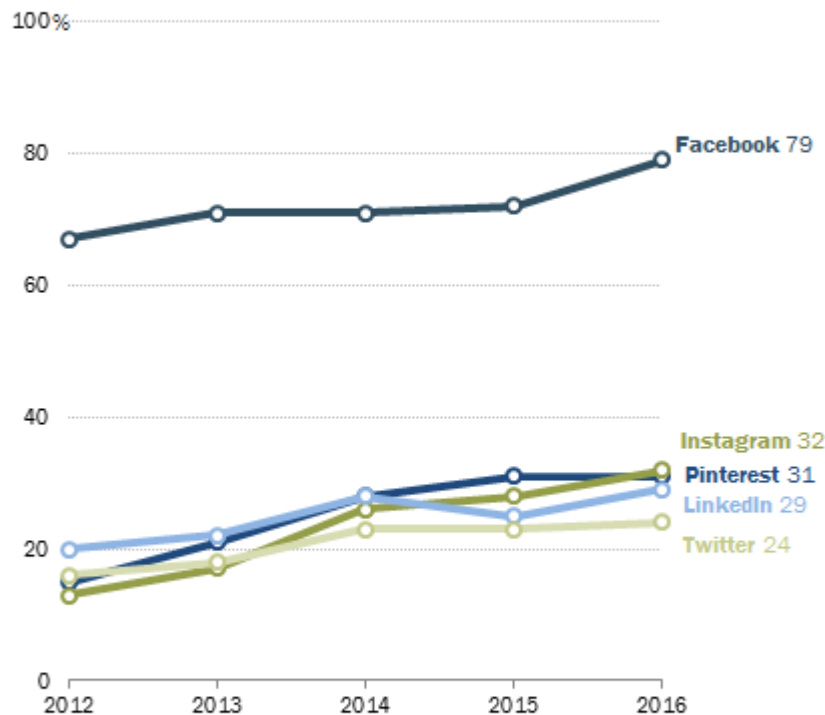
# Social Media Update 2016

Facebook usage and engagement is on the rise, while adoption of other platforms holds steady

BY SHANNON GREENWOOD, ANDREW PERRIN AND MAEVE DUGGAN

## Facebook remains the most popular social media platform

% of *online* adults who use ...



Note: 86% of Americans are currently internet users  
Source: Survey conducted March 7-April 4, 2016.  
"Social Media Update 2016"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Over the past decade, Pew Research Center has documented the wide variety of ways in which Americans use social media to seek out information and interact with others. A majority of Americans now say they **get news via social media**, and half of the public has turned to these sites to **learn about the 2016 presidential election**. Americans are using social media in the context of work (whether to take a **mental break** on the job or to **seek out employment**), while also engaging in an ongoing effort to navigate the **complex privacy issues** that these sites bring to the forefront.

In addition to measuring the broad impact and meaning of social media, since 2012 the Center has also tracked the specific sites and platforms that users turn to in the course of living their social lives online.

In that context, a national survey of 1,520 adults conducted March 7-April 4, 2016, finds that Facebook continues to be America's most popular social networking platform by a substantial margin: Nearly eight-in-ten *online* Americans <sup>1</sup> (79%) now use Facebook, more than double the share that uses Twitter (24%), Pinterest (31%), Instagram (32%) or LinkedIn (29%). On a total population basis (accounting for Americans who do not use the internet at all), that means that 68% of all U.S. adults are Facebook users, while 28% use Instagram, 26% use Pinterest, 25% use LinkedIn and 21% use Twitter.

Thanks in part to the growing number of older adults who are joining the site, Facebook use appears to be on the rise: The share of online adults who report using Facebook has increased by 7 percentage points compared with a Pew Research Center survey conducted at a similar point in 2015. In addition, the share of Facebook users who check in daily has increased slightly in the past year: 76% of Americans who use Facebook now report that they visit the site on a daily basis, up from 70% in 2015.

What follows is a deeper examination of the current state of the social media landscape in America.

## Usage and demographics of social media platforms

### 79% of internet users (68% of all U.S. adults) use Facebook

Roughly eight-in-ten online Americans (79%) now use Facebook, a 7-percentage-point increase from a survey conducted at a similar point in 2015.

Young adults continue to report using Facebook at high rates, but older adults are joining in increasing numbers. Some 62% of online adults ages 65 and older now use Facebook, a 14-point increase from the 48% who reported doing so in 2015. In addition, women continue to use Facebook at somewhat higher rates than men: 83% of female internet users and 75% of male internet users are Facebook adopters.

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#### 79% of online adults (68% of all Americans) use Facebook

*% of online adults who use Facebook*

All online adults	79%
Men	75
Women	83
18-29	88
30-49	84
50-64	72
65+	62
High school degree or less	77
Some college	82
College+	79
Less than \$30K/year	84
\$30K-\$49,999	80
\$50K-\$74,999	75
\$75,000+	77
Urban	81
Suburban	77
Rural	81

Note: Race/ethnicity breaks not shown due to sample size.

Source: Survey conducted March 7-April 4, 2016.

"Social Media Update 2016"

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### 32% of internet users (28% of all U.S. adults) use Instagram

Around one-third of online adults (32%) report using Instagram – roughly the same share as in 2015, when 27% of online adults did so.

To a greater extent than the other social platforms measured in this survey, Instagram use is especially high among younger adults. Roughly six-in-ten online adults ages 18-29 (59%) use Instagram, nearly double the share among 30- to 49-year-olds (33%) and more than seven times the share among those 65 and older (8%). And as was the case in previous Pew Research Center surveys of social media use, female internet users are more likely to use Instagram than men (38% vs. 26%).

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## **32% of online adults (28% of all Americans) use Instagram**

*% of online adults who use Instagram*

All online adults	32%
Men	26
Women	38
18-29	59
30-49	33
50-64	18
65+	8
High school or less	27
Some college	37
College+	33
Less than \$30K/year	38
\$30K-\$49,999	32
\$50K-\$74,999	32
\$75,000+	31
Urban	39
Suburban	28
Rural	31

Note: Race/ethnicity breaks not shown due to sample size.

Source: Survey conducted March 7-April 4, 2016.

"Social Media Update 2016"

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## **24% of internet users (21% of all U.S. adults) use Twitter**

Roughly one-quarter of online adults (24%) use Twitter, a proportion that is statistically unchanged from a survey conducted in 2015 (23%).

Younger Americans are more likely than older Americans to be on Twitter. Some 36% of online adults ages 18-29 are on the social network, more than triple the share among online adults ages 65 and older (just 10% of whom are Twitter users).

Twitter is also somewhat more popular among the highly educated: 29% of internet users with college degrees use Twitter, compared with 20% of those with high school degrees or less.

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## 24% of online adults (21% of all Americans) use Twitter

*% of online adults who use Twitter*

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All online adults	24%
Men	24
Women	25
18-29	36
30-49	23
50-64	21
65+	10
High school degree or less	20
Some college	25
College+	29
Less than \$30K/year	23
\$30K-\$49,999	18
\$50K-\$74,999	28
\$75,000+	30
Urban	26
Suburban	24
Rural	24

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Note: Race/ethnicity breaks not shown due to sample size.

Source: Survey conducted March 7-April 4, 2016.

"Social Media Update 2016"

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## 29% of internet users (25% of all U.S. adults) use LinkedIn

The share of online adults who use LinkedIn has remained steady over the past year: 29% report using the site, similar to the 25% who said this in 2015.

LinkedIn has long been especially popular with college graduates and high income earners, and this trend continues to hold true. Half (50%) of online adults with college degrees are on LinkedIn, compared with 27% of those who have attended but not graduated from college and just 12% of those with high school degrees or less.

Similarly, 45% of online adults with an annual household income of \$75,000 or more use LinkedIn, compared with just 21% of those living in households with an annual income of less than \$30,000. And 35% of online adults who are employed use LinkedIn, compared with 17% of those who are not employed for pay.

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## **29% of online adults (25% of all Americans) use LinkedIn**

*% of online adults who use LinkedIn*

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All online adults	29%
Men	31
Women	27
18-29	34
30-49	33
50-64	24
65+	20
High school degree or less	12
Some college	27
College+	50
Less than \$30K/year	21
\$30K-\$49,999	13
\$50K-\$74,999	32
\$75,000+	45
Urban	34
Suburban	30
Rural	18
Employed	35
Not employed*	17

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Note: Race/ethnicity breaks not shown due to sample size.  
\*Not employed includes those who are retired, not employed for pay, disabled or students.  
Source: Survey conducted March 7-April 4, 2016.  
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## **31% of internet users (26% of all U.S. adults) use Pinterest**

Roughly three-in-ten online Americans (31%) use Pinterest, identical to the 31% who used the platform in 2015.

Continuing a long-standing trend, women use Pinterest at much higher rates than men. Nearly half of online women use the virtual pinboard (45%), more than double the share of online men (17%) who do so.

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## **31% of online adults (26% of all Americans) use Pinterest**

*% of online adults who use Pinterest*

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All online adults	31%
Men	17
Women	45
18-29	36
30-49	34
50-64	28
65+	16
High school or less	24
Some college	34
College+	34
Less than \$30K/year	30
\$30K-\$49,999	32
\$50K-\$74,999	31
\$75,000+	35
Urban	30
Suburban	34
Rural	25

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Note: Race/ethnicity breaks not shown due to sample size.

Source: Survey conducted March 7-April 4, 2016.

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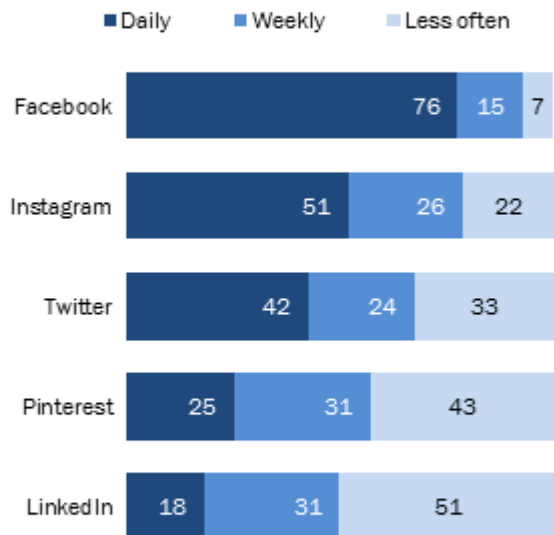
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## **Frequency of use on social media sites**

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## Three-quarters of Facebook users and half of Instagram users use each site daily

*Among the users of each social networking site, % who use these sites ...*



Note: Do not know/refused responses not shown.

Source: Survey conducted March 7-April 4, 2016.

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Facebook remains the most popular social media platform, with its users visiting the site more regularly than users of other social media sites. Roughly three-quarters (76%) of Facebook users report that they visit the site daily (55% visit several times a day, and 22% visit about once per day). This represents a modest but statistically significant increase from the 70% of Facebook users who indicated that they visited the site daily in 2015.

Other than this slight uptick among Facebook users, daily engagement for each of the other major social media platforms is generally similar to Pew Research Center findings from 2015.

Instagram and Twitter occupy the middle tier of social media sites in terms of the share of users who log in daily. Roughly half (51%) of Instagram users access the platform on a daily basis, with 35% saying they do so several times a day. And 42% of Twitter users indicate that they are daily visitors, with 23% saying they visit more than once a day.

A slightly larger share of Americans use Pinterest and LinkedIn than use Twitter, but users of these sites are less likely than Twitter users to check in every day: 25% of Pinterest users and 18% of LinkedIn users are daily visitors.

## Using multiple sites: The social media matrix

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## Substantial 'reciprocity' across major social media platforms

*% of users of each social media site who use another social media site*

	Use Twitter	Use Instagram	Use Pinterest	Use LinkedIn	Use Facebook
% of Twitter users who ...	–	65%	48%	54%	93%
% of Instagram users who ...	49	–	54	48	95
% of Pinterest users who ...	38	57	–	41	92
% of LinkedIn users who ...	45	53	43	–	89
% of Facebook users who ...	29	39	36	33	–

Source: Survey conducted March 7-April 4, 2016.  
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...Social media users continue to use a relatively diverse array of platforms. More than half of online adults (56%) use more than one of the five social media platforms measured in this survey, a share that is statistically unchanged from the 52% who did so in 2014.

As the most-used social media site, Facebook continues to be the starting platform for most social media users. Among those who only use one social media platform, 88% indicate that Facebook is the one site that they use. Moreover, the vast majority of those who use other social media sites also use Facebook. For instance, 93% of Twitter users also use Facebook – as do 95% of Instagram users and 92% of Pinterest users.

Outside of Facebook, other sites' users show high levels of reciprocity. For instance, 65% of those with a Twitter account also use Instagram, while 49% of Instagram users also have Twitter. Similarly, 54% of those who use Instagram also use Pinterest and 57% of Pinterest users are also on Instagram.

## Messaging apps



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## Messaging apps are especially popular with younger smartphone owners

Among smartphone owners, % who use ...

	Messaging apps	Auto-delete apps	Anonymous apps
Total	29%	24%	5%
Men	31	24	4
Women	27	23	7
18-29	42	56	10
30-49	29	13	6
50+	19	9	<1
High school or less	28	24	5
Some college	25	27	8
College+	33	21	4
Less than \$50K/year	28	27	5
\$50,000+	29	22	6

Note: Findings based on the 72% of American adults who own a smartphone.

Source: Survey conducted March 7-April 4, 2016.

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\_\_\_\_\_Social media sites are not the only venue where people can connect with others online. Today smartphone owners (at the time of this survey, 72% of American adults) can choose from a variety of messaging apps that fill many of the same functions. Some of these apps look and function like a traditional chat or messaging service, while others offer unique features – such as the ability to post anonymously, or to have one’s posts expire or delete themselves after they are viewed.

This survey asked about three different types of messaging apps that people might have on their smartphones and found that:

- 29% of smartphone owners use general-purpose messaging apps such as WhatsApp or Kik. Due to a change in how this question was asked, this figure is not directly comparable to a previous measure collected in 2015.<sup>2</sup>
- 24% use messaging apps that automatically delete sent messages, such as Snapchat or Wickr. This represents a 7-point increase from a survey conducted in 2015 (at that point 17% of smartphone owners used these apps).
- 5% use apps that allow people to anonymously chat or post comments, such as YikYak or Whisper. This is the first time Pew Research Center has asked about these types of apps.

In general, messaging apps are especially popular among younger smartphone owners. Some 56% of smartphone owners ages 18 to 29 use auto-delete apps, more than four times the share among those 30-49 (13%) and six times the share among those 50 or older (9%). Similarly, 42% of smartphone owners ages 18 to 29 use more general messaging apps like WhatsApp or Kik, compared with 19% of smartphone owners ages 50 or older.

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1. Note: 86% of Americans currently use the internet ↩
2. The previous version of this question included iMessage (the default messaging service on iPhones) in the list of examples; iMessage was excluded from the version of this question fielded in 2016. ↩

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