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SCIENCE

The web turns 25

BY **BRIDGET SHIRVELL** *February 27, 2014 at 9:44 AM EDT*

The World Wide Web is growing up. It turns 25 on March 12 — if you use the date Sir Tim Berners-Lee wrote a paper proposing the system as the birthday of the Web.

The Web is now woven in our everyday lives. We use it for everything, from looking up directions to chatting with friends and family thousands of miles of away. Can you even remember the last time you went a day without the Web?

Back in 1995, only 14 percent of American adults used the internet. Today it's 87 percent, according to the Pew Research Center, and among young adults aged 18 to 29 it's 97 percent.

Pew Research Center's Internet Project in partnership with Elon University's Imagining the Internet Project is marking the internet's birthday this year with a series of reports on internet penetration, privacy, cyber security, the "internet of things" and net neutrality.

On this NeXT computer, British scientist Tim Berners-Lee devised the basic principles of the World Wide Web, while working at CERN in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

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The first report, released this morning, uses Pew's extensive research on technology in American life, which dates back to 1990 when Pew first asked a question about computer use in a national survey. The report also includes telephone interviews conducted in January of 2014 to look at internet penetration and how Americans feel about the internet. Those interviews surveyed 1,006 adults living in the continental United States, including 502 with landline phones and 504 cell phones, 288 of which didn't have a landline phone.

Those telephone interviews show that Americans generally feel the internet has made a positive impact on their lives and personal relationships.

"After they tote up all the positives and negatives of life in the digital age, the vast majority of users believe these technologies have made things better for them and for society," Lee Rainie, director of the Pew Research Center Internet Project said. "They see problems, to be sure, but most have now brought technology so deeply into the rhythms of their lives that they say it would be very hard to give up."

How hard would it be to give up these technologies?

% of users of each technology who report how difficult to give up …

■ Very hard ■ Somewhat hard ■ Not too ■ Not at all

	Very hard	Somewhat hard	Not too	Not at all
Internet (among internet users)	53	20	15	12
Your cell/smartphone (among cell owners)	49	21	16	13
Email (among internet users)	36	21	20	21
Your television (among all adults)	34	23	21	20
Your landline phone (among landline owners)	28	19	22	29
Social media (among internet users)	11	17	21	40
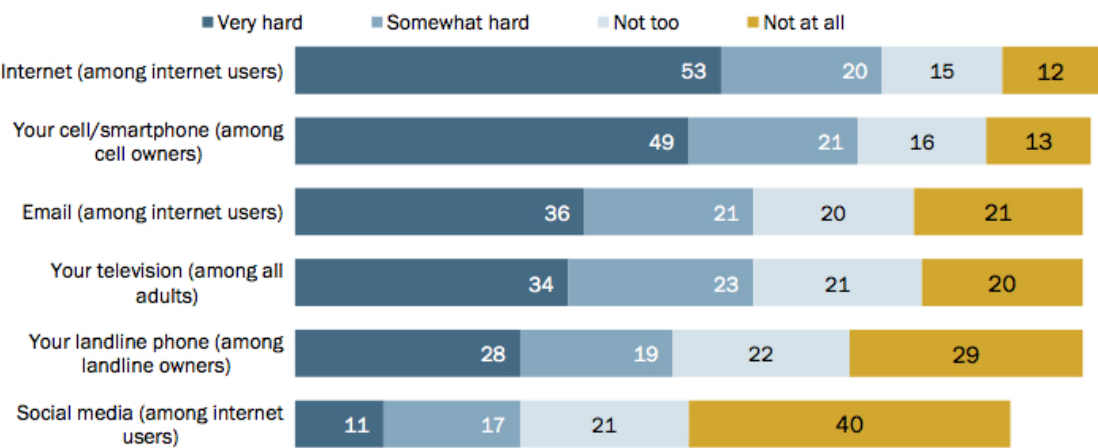
Source, Pew Research Center Internet Project Survey, January 9-12, 2014. N=1,006 adults' N=857 internet users; N=717 landline owners; N=928 cell owners.

Here are some of the key findings of the survey:

**The internet is ingrained into American life**

- 71 percent of adults in the U.S. say they use the internet on a typical day.

The internet is good

- 90 percent of internet users say the internet has been a good thing for them personally, while 6 percent say it has been a bad thing and 3 percent volunteer that it has been some of both.

- 76 percent of users say the internet has been a good thing for society, while 15 percent say it has been a bad thing and 8 percent say it has been equally good and bad.

Kindness and cruelty online – younger users have seen more of both

% of internet users in each age group who report witnessing or experiencing these acts
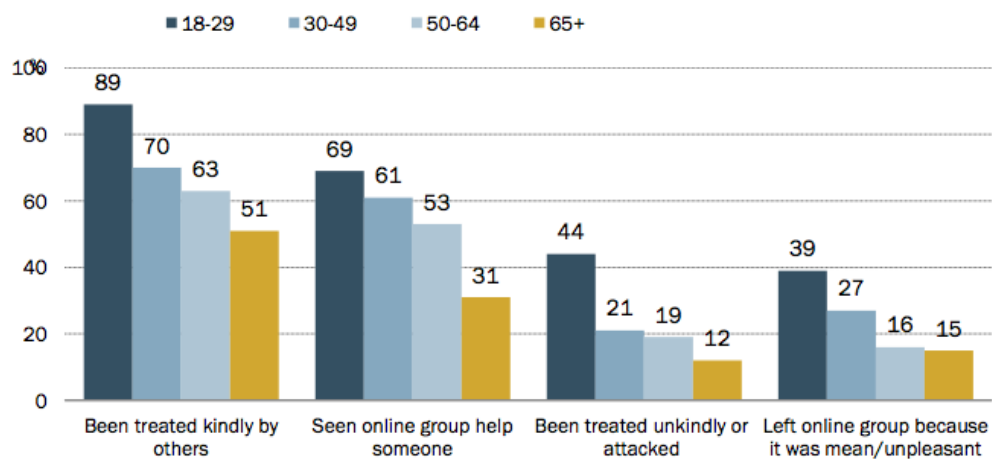
Source, Pew Research Center Internet Project Survey, January 9-12, 201. N=857 internet users;

The internet is essential

- 53 percent of internet users say the internet would be, at minimum, "very hard" to give up. That's more than those who say cell phones, televisions and landlines would be "very hard" to give up.

- 39 percent of internet users feel they absolutely need to have internet access.

- 30 percent of internet users said it would be hard to give up access because they simply enjoy being online.

The internet has strengthened relationships

- 67 percent of internet users say their online communication with family and friends has generally strengthened those relationships, while 18 percent say

it generally weakens those relationships.

- 76 percent of internet users said that people they witnessed or encountered online were mostly kind, while 13 percent of people said were mostly unkind.

- 56 of internet users say they have seen an online group come together to help a person or a community solve a problem, while 25 percent say they left an online group because the interaction became too heated or members were unpleasant to one another.

"Looking back at the origins of the Web, we can see patterns of use and non-use that persist today," Susannah Fox, co-author of the Pew Research Center report said. "A person's level of education is still a primary factor in predicting whether she uses technology or not. And the younger someone is, the more likely it is that she uses technology. One constant is that users, whenever they start, say that digital communications tools strengthen their relationships."

Do you feel the same way about the internet?

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leo mathew · 7 days ago
I think the internet will get slow depend on suppose when we use in desktop means , depend on the web page size, it takes time to load . when you use the mobile like iphone, android or anything it should be load depend on their application which are in the phones. So,

the Development of the application is does not matter in pacewisdom . Their are making high resolution websites and also latest applications developed.

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David Quackenbush · 20 days ago

Sorry but you need to check your facts. Without DARPA and ARPANET there would be no world wide web. http://inventors.about.com/lib...

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JollyRod → David Quackenbush · 20 days ago

This article isn't about "the internet," it's about a specific part of "the internet" known as W3, WWW, or the World Wide Web. "The Internet" has been around for many years, but W3 hasn't.

Specifically W3 refers to protocols associated with accessing hypertext documents (http, https, et all). Where the internet refers to the physical network and the protocols used to access data on the network (TCP/IP and the like). All modern webpages are based on W3 technology.

Example: most peer-to-peer services, and their associated protocols (bittorrent, xdcc, etc.) operate on the internet, but not necessarily on W3.

While it's true that DARPA, and ARPANET were around, and without them there wouldn't be W3 - disqualifying W3's age because the existence of prior technologies would be like saying that I'm not actually celebrating my 26th birthday this year because my mother had been around before I was born. The fact is W3, as we know it today, has only been around for 25 years and this article is specifically about W3, not any other part of the 'net.

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James G → JollyRod · 19 days ago

Actually, even though WWW tech has been around for 25 years, it wasn't until Netscape Navigator came around several years after it was introduced that it became viable and relevant for the common user. In other words, Netscape made the W3 protocol what we know today and I would argue that THAT was the commercial birth of the Web as we know it today. I'm quite certain that if it wasn't for the commercialization of Web browsers, the Web would not be what it is today.

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postimo — You go right ahead and do that Timmy.I'm sure the whole thing is nothing more than a left-wing …

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jay — If there was only oil on board flight 370, America would have found it already!

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