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Smartphone Ownership Up Among Adults Age 50-Plus According to AARP Research

Nearly nine in 10 (89%) adults over 50 own some type of mobile device and nearly three quarters of adults age 50-59 (73%) own a smartphone, according to latest trend report

WASHINGTON, Dec. 5, 2016 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- AARP today issued the latest results from its Attitude, Trend & Opinion (ATOM) module, which includes ongoing research on technology ownership and usage among people 50-plus. The ATOM report found that nearly nine in 10 (89%) adults over 50 own some type of mobile device, with over half of adults over age 50 – and nearly three quarters of adults age 50-59 (73%) -- owning a smartphone. Smartphone ownership among people 50-plus is up ten percentage points over July 2014 and 25 points since 2013.

The research also found that portable device adoption such as smartphones and tablets continues to grow among Americans age 50-plus while adoption of traditional computing has flattened or declined. Over three quarters of adults 50-plus (76%) own some type of computing device (desktop/laptop/tablet).

Other key findings include:

- One in ten (11%) adults over 50 own a wearable device, with those age 50-70 the most likely to own this technology.
- Email, visiting websites, news, and getting directions are the most common activities that smartphone users engage in. Six in ten have downloaded an app.
- 70-plus smartphone owners are most likely to be email-only users (20% vs. just 2% of those 50-59).
- Adults age 50-plus who are mobile enabled do more activities on their computers and tablets than they do on their smartphones, but there are some tasks that are becoming mobile dominant: sending email/IMs (92% on mobile vs. 89% on computer), getting traffic and directions (81% on mobile vs. 84% on computer), and downloading apps (63% on mobile vs. 61% on computer) are all done as much or more on mobile than traditional computers.
- Over time, email has dropped slightly as a mode of communication, while texting and social media have gained in popularity. Among the 50-59 age group, text messaging has overtaken email in the tool most used to stay connected, and still leads the way on using social media to remain in touch.

The ATOM Technology module is available for download at this link:

<http://www.aarp.org/research/topics/technology/>

About the ATOM Module:

The data presented in this report are from AARP's Attitude, Trend & Opinion Monitor (ATOM). ATOM is an ongoing telephone survey administered to a national ABS-based sample of adults age 50 and older. The most current data contained in this report were collected from July 1 2016-July 31, 2016. Previously collected data are show from March 2016 and July 2015; January and July 2014; June and March 2013; January, May and September 2012; and April and August 2011. The sampling error for the total monthly sample (n=1500) for adults 50-plus is +/- 2.5%.

About AARP's Technology Resources:

AARP is a resource that helps members and others 50-plus make the most of tablets and smartphones as well as provides tips on how to protect oneself from online scams and fraud.

Popular offerings include:

- **AARP TEK** offers community-based mobile technology workshops and features robust online learning (www.aarp.org/academy) that expands on the capabilities of mobile technology/social media, enables people to engage online safely, and opens up new possibilities. The workshops and online learning are both highly interactive and customized for people 50-plus.
- **AARP Fraud Watch Network** (www.aarp.org/fraudwatchnetwork) helps protect people 50-plus from identity theft and scams, learn how to shop and bank online safely, create strong passwords, and use social media risk free.
- **AARP Bookstore** (www.aarp.org/bookstore) offers practical guidebooks that walk readers through everything from navigating social media to mastering mobile devices to safe Internet practices.

About AARP


AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, with a membership of nearly 38 million that helps people turn their goals and dreams into "Real Possibilities" by changing the way America defines aging. With staffed offices in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, AARP works to strengthen communities and promote the issues that matter most to families such as healthcare security, financial security, and personal fulfillment. AARP also advocates for individuals in the marketplace by selecting products and services of high quality and value to carry the AARP name. As a trusted source for news and information, AARP produces the world's largest circulation magazine, AARP The Magazine, and AARP Bulletin. AARP does not endorse candidates for public office or make contributions to political campaigns or candidates. To learn more, visit www.aarp.org or follow @aarp on Twitter.

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