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The State of Social Media in Canada

2017

By *Anatoliy Gruzd, Jenna Jacobson, Philip Mai, and Elizabeth Dubois*

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About This Report

This report was produced by the Social Media Lab (SocialMediaLab.ca) at Ted Rogers School of Management, Ryerson University and is part of the Social Media Data Stewardship Project (SocialMediaData.org). The report was written by Anatoliy Gruzd, Jenna Jacobson, Philip Mai, and Elizabeth Dubois. It is based on a census-balanced online survey of 1,500 online Canadian adults conducted between June 1–July 15, 2017.

About the Social Media Lab

The Social Media Lab is an interdisciplinary research laboratory at Ted Rogers School of Management at Ryerson University. The lab studies how social media is changing the ways in which people communicate, share information, conduct business and form communities, and how these changes impact society. The broad aims of the lab's research initiatives are to provide decision makers with additional knowledge and insights into the behaviours and relationships of online network members, and understand how these interpersonal connections influence our choices and actions.

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About the Authors

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Foreword

Today, billions of people around the world are turning to social media to socialize, conduct business, keep up with the news, as well as discover, discuss, and share information. The significance of this global adoption of a relatively new communication and information technology cannot be overlooked.

As a country, Canada has one of the most connected populations in the world. For many Canadians, social media is now a part of their daily routine. Our survey results show that an overwhelming majority of online Canadian adults (94%) have an account on at least one social media platform. This makes it critical for policy makers, researchers, and others to have a better grasp of what social media platforms Canadians are using to connect and converse with one another.

This report provides a snapshot of the social media usage trends and patterns amongst online Canadian adults based on an online survey of 1,500 participants (see Methods on p. 16 for more details).

Highlights

- Facebook is the most popular social media platform in Canada; 84% of online Canadian adults report having a Facebook account, followed by YouTube (59%) and LinkedIn (46%)—See pp. 7–9.

- Facebook also has the highest percentage of daily users (79%), followed by Instagram (61%) and Snapchat (60%)—See p. 6.

- Facebook is the only social media platform where the oldest generation (55+) crosses the 50% adoption mark (75%)—See p. 7.

- Young people aged 18–24 are the largest adopters of social media (except for LinkedIn and Pinterest)—See pp. 7–15.

- Women have adopted most social media platforms in higher proportions than men (except for YouTube, LinkedIn, and Reddit)—See pp. 7–15.

- Pinterest is the second most popular platform for women (56%) after Facebook (88%)—See p. 7 and 11.

- LinkedIn is particularly popular with those who are self-employed (56%)—See p. 9.

- Canadians in the highest household income group ($120,000+) are more likely to have an account on LinkedIn, as well as Twitter, than those who are less wealthy—See pp. 9–10.

- While the number of online Canadians on Reddit is relatively small (9%), those who do use the platform visit it regularly (57% daily)—See p. 6 and 15.

Social Media Use

Percentage of online Canadian adults with an account on the following platforms:

Facebook — 84%

YouTube — 59%

LinkedIn — 46%

Twitter — 42%

Pinterest — 38%

Instagram — 37%

Snapchat — 22%

Tumblr — 11%

Reddit — 9%

Source: Survey conducted June 1–July 15, 2017.
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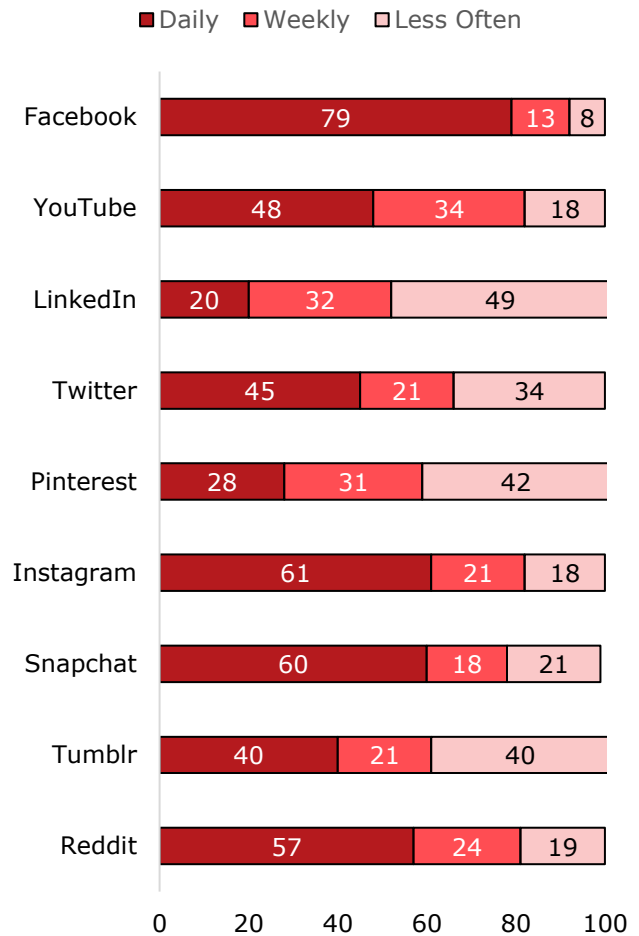
Frequency of Social Media Use

Facebook is the most widely used social media platform in Canada, and it is also the platform that has the highest percentage of daily users amongst the nine platforms detailed in this survey. 79% of Facebook users visit the platform daily (48% visit several times a day and 30% visit daily[1]).

Instagram (61% daily), Snapchat (60% daily), and Reddit (57% daily) comprise the second category of the most daily frequented platforms with over half the users of each platform visiting daily. While the number of online Canadians on Reddit is relatively small (9%), those who do use the platform visit it regularly.

YouTube (48% daily), Twitter (45% daily), and Tumblr (40% daily) are in the third category with close to half of users visiting the platforms daily.

Finally, Pinterest (28% daily) and LinkedIn (20% daily) trail behind with the lowest daily use.

Amongst users of each platform, frequency of use (%)

■ Daily   ■ Weekly   □ Less Often

Platform	Daily	Weekly	Less Often
Facebook	79	13	8
YouTube	48	34	18
LinkedIn	20	32	49
Twitter	45	21	34
Pinterest	28	31	42
Instagram	61	21	18
Snapchat	60	18	21
Tumblr	40	21	40
Reddit	57	24	19

Note: All numbers are rounded to the nearest 1%.
Source: Survey conducted June 1–July 15, 2017.
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[1] The 1% difference is due to rounding.

Facebook

Facebook dominates the social media landscape; 84% of online Canadian adults report having a Facebook account making it the most widely adopted platform in Canada. Beyond adoption, Canadians are also the most active on this platform with 80% of people being Monthly Active Users (MAU). Women (88%) are more likely to use Facebook than men (81%).

Facebook adoption is almost ubiquitous with young people aged 18–24 (95%); three-quarters of those 55+ years old (75%) are also on Facebook. In fact, this is the only platform where the oldest generation crosses the 50% adoption and monthly usage mark.

Facebook adoption is consistently high across all income groups—ranging from 80% to 88%. Those with the least education (75%) are less likely to be on Facebook.

Canadians who are not employed (77%) have the lowest adoption, whereas those who work full-time (90%) have the highest adoption of Facebook.

84% of online Canadian adults have a Facebook account

	Total	Monthly Active Users
All Online Adults	**84%**	**80%**
Female	88	85
Male	81	75
18–24	95	88
25–34	94	92
35–44	92	89
45–55	83	80
55+	75	69
Less than $20K/year	82	77
$20K to $39,999	80	77
$40K to $59,999	87	82
$60K to $79,999	84	81
$80K to $99,999	86	83
$100K to $119,999	88	83
$120,000+	82	78
Some school	75	75
High school	84	80
Some college	85	79
College diploma	83	79
Bachelor's	85	81
Master's	85	83
Professional degree	93	87
Doctorate	81	74
Full-time	90	86
Part-time	85	82
Self-employed	78	72
Not employed	77	73

Source: Survey conducted June 1–July 15, 2017.
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YouTube

YouTube is the second most popular social media platform in Canada; 59% of online adults report having an account on the platform. Canadians are active users of the video-sharing platform with the majority of users being Monthly Active Users (54%). Aside from Facebook, this is the only platform where the MAU is above 50%.

Unlike Facebook, men (62%) are more likely to have an account on YouTube than women (55%). There is a large distribution of use across the age groups, but adoption lowers with age; 41% of those 55+ have a YouTube account. 90% of young people aged 18–24 have an account on YouTube and almost the same percentage use the platform at least monthly (88%).

YouTube adoption is relatively consistent across income groups—ranging from 55% of those who have an annual household income of $100,000–$119,999 to 65% of those in the lowest income group.

Those with the lowest education (46%) and those not employed (49%) are least likely to have a YouTube account.

59% of online Canadian adults have a YouTube account

	Total	Monthly Active Users
All Online Adults	**59%**	**54%**
Female	55	50
Male	62	58
18–24	90	88
25–34	79	76
35–44	64	59
45–55	55	50
55+	41	36
Less than $20K/year	65	62
$20K to $39,999	57	55
$40K to $59,999	60	54
$60K to $79,999	57	53
$80K to $99,999	61	57
$100K to $119,999	55	52
$120,000+	58	52
Some school	46	42
High school	56	51
Some college	58	54
College diploma	58	54
Bachelor's	62	58
Master's	58	54
Professional degree	53	49
Doctorate	59	48
Full-time	65	61
Part-time	60	55
Self-employed	56	49
Not employed	49	46

Source: Survey conducted June 1–July 15, 2017.
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LinkedIn

LinkedIn is the third most popular social media platform in Canada; 46% of online adults report having an account on the platform.

Almost half of the men (49%) surveyed have a LinkedIn account, whereas women (44%) are slightly less likely to have an account.

LinkedIn adoption is quite high across age groups, but those in the oldest age group of 55+ (43%) and youngest age group of 18–24 year olds (40%) have the lowest adoption rates.

Generally, the higher the level of education, the higher the LinkedIn adoption. High school graduates (21%) have the lowest LinkedIn adoption, and individuals with a professional degree (69%) have the highest adoption.

LinkedIn is particularly popular with those who are self-employed (56%). In fact, this is the only platform where people who are self-employed comprise the highest user group, which makes sense considering that LinkedIn is a business- and employment-related social media platform.

46% of online Canadian adults have a LinkedIn account

	Total	Monthly Active Users
All Online Adults	**46%**	**33%**
Female	44	29
Male	49	36
18–24	40	26
25–34	53	39
35–44	49	37
45–55	48	37
55+	43	28
Less than $20K/year	30	23
$20K to $39,999	34	21
$40K to $59,999	38	24
$60K to $79,999	51	35
$80K to $99,999	49	34
$100K to $119,999	53	39
$120,000+	59	48
Some school	25	21
High school	21	11
Some college	43	24
College diploma	39	27
Bachelor's	57	42
Master's	66	54
Professional degree	69	42
Doctorate	59	48
Full-time	54	41
Part-time	39	23
Self-employed	56	45
Not employed	34	20

Source: Survey conducted June 1–July 15, 2017. "State of Social Media in Canada 2017" Ryerson University Social Media Lab

Twitter

Twitter is the fourth most popular social media platform in Canada; 42% of online adults report having an account on the platform.

Men and women have similar adoption rates of Twitter; women (43%) are slightly more likely than men (40%) to have a Twitter account, but men are slightly more active users (33% being Monthly Active Users) versus women (31% being Monthly Active Users).

Older people are the least likely to adopt Twitter; only 27% of those 55+ have a Twitter account. Young people aged 18–24 (60%) and 25–34 (59%) are the most prevalent user groups on Twitter.

Like LinkedIn, the wealthiest Canadians are more likely to adopt Twitter; 46% of those with an annual household income of $120,000+ have a Twitter account.

Individuals with doctorates (33%) have the lowest adoption rate of Twitter. Almost half of full-time workers (49%) have a Twitter account, dropping to roughly a third amongst those who are not employed (31%).

42% of online Canadian adults have a Twitter account

	Total	Monthly Active Users
All Online Adults	**42%**	**32%**
Female	43	31
Male	40	33
18–24	60	47
25–34	59	45
35–44	50	40
45–55	40	32
55+	27	20
Less than $20K/year	42	34
$20K to $39,999	36	26
$40K to $59,999	40	31
$60K to $79,999	39	31
$80K to $99,999	44	34
$100K to $119,999	45	37
$120,000+	46	35
Some school	46	29
High school	36	28
Some college	46	33
College diploma	36	27
Bachelor's	45	27
Master's	47	39
Professional degree	47	36
Doctorate	33	26
Full-time	49	39
Part-time	47	36
Self-employed	38	26
Not employed	31	23

Source: Survey conducted June 1–July 15, 2017.
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Ryerson University Social Media Lab

Pinterest

38% of online Canadians report having a Pinterest account. Of all social media platforms, Pinterest has the largest adoption difference between men (18%) and women (56%). Even though Pinterest is the fifth most popular platform for Canadians, it is the second most popular platform for online Canadian women with only Facebook having higher adoption.

Online adults aged 25–34 are the most prevalent user group on Pinterest with an adoption rate of 54%, while those 55+ are less likely to be on Pinterest with an adoption rate of 30%.

Except for Canadians in the highest household income group, Pinterest adoption tends to increase with annual household income.

Based on education, a bell curve shape emerges with the highest rate of adoption amongst those who report having some college (39%), college diploma (42%), and bachelor's (39%).

Like Twitter, YouTube, and Facebook, Canadians that are self-employed (28%) and not employed (34%) have the lowest Pinterest adoption.

38% of online Canadian adults have a Pinterest account

	Total	Monthly Active Users
All Online Adults	**38%**	**29%**
Female	56	44
Male	18	14
18–24	45	32
25–34	54	43
35–44	37	29
45–55	38	28
55+	30	24
Less than $20K/year	34	25
$20K to $39,999	35	30
$40K to $59,999	36	28
$60K to $79,999	41	31
$80K to $99,999	40	31
$100K to $119,999	42	33
$120,000+	36	25
Some school	29	21
High school	33	27
Some college	39	29
College diploma	42	33
Bachelor's	39	30
Master's	36	28
Professional degree	31	20
Doctorate	30	15
Full-time	42	32
Part-time	41	29
Self-employed	28	24
Not employed	34	26

Source: Survey conducted June 1–July 15, 2017.
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Instagram

As the sixth most popular social media platform in Canada, 37% of online Canadians report having an Instagram account.

Women (46%) are on Instagram at a much higher rate than men (28%). Those with an Instagram account are active users with comparatively high Monthly Active Users across all demographic groups.

The youngest age group of 18–24 year olds (67%) dominates Instagram, and high levels of adoption can also be found in the 25–34 year old group (62%).

Almost half of Canadians with a Professional degree (47%) have an Instagram account.

Those who work full-time (46%) are almost twice as likely to have an Instagram account than those not employed (24%).

37% of online Canadian adults have an Instagram account

	Total	Monthly Active Users
All Online Adults	**37%**	**33%**
Female	46	41
Male	28	24
18–24	67	65
25–34	62	58
35–44	45	42
45–55	32	25
55+	17	14
Less than $20K/year	43	38
$20K to $39,999	31	27
$40K to $59,999	35	30
$60K to $79,999	32	28
$80K to $99,999	38	35
$100K to $119,999	44	42
$120,000+	40	35
Some school	42	33
High school	32	27
Some college	37	31
College diploma	37	34
Bachelor's	39	36
Master's	35	30
Professional degree	47	42
Doctorate	37	33
Full-time	46	43
Part-time	44	39
Self-employed	26	22
Not employed	24	20

Source: Survey conducted June 1–July 15, 2017.
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Snapchat

Roughly one quarter of online Canadians (22%) report having a Snapchat account. Like Instagram and Pinterest, women (28%) are more likely to adopt Snapchat than men (16%).

Young people 18–24 years old (66%) and 25–34 years old (46%) are the largest user groups on the platform. They are also active on the platform with 62% and 39% being Monthly Active Users, respectively.

Adoption is relatively consistent across income groups—ranging from 19% to 26%. Snapchat adoption does not follow a predictable pattern in terms of education—ranging from 11% amongst those with a doctorate to 26% amongst those with a bachelor's.

There is a large difference in adoption rates between those who work full-time (29%) or part-time (29%) and those who are self-employed (10%) or not employed (13%).

22% of online Canadian adults have a Snapchat account

	Total	Monthly Active Users
All Online Adults	**22%**	**19%**
Female	28	25
Male	16	12
18–24	66	62
25–34	46	39
35–44	19	15
45–55	13	11
55+	5	3
Less than $20K/year	24	18
$20K to $39,999	19	16
$40K to $59,999	24	22
$60K to $79,999	20	17
$80K to $99,999	21	18
$100K to $119,999	26	22
$120,000+	22	19
Some school	25	17
High school	18	17
Some college	24	20
College diploma	20	17
Bachelor's	26	23
Master's	18	16
Professional degree	22	16
Doctorate	11	11
Full-time	29	26
Part-time	29	27
Self-employed	10	8
Not employed	13	9

Source: Survey conducted June 1–July 15, 2017.
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Tumblr

Roughly one-in-ten online Canadian adults (11%) report having a Tumblr account.

Women (13%) are slightly more likely than men (7%) to be on Tumblr.

18–24 year olds (36%) are almost twice as likely to adopt the platform as 25–34 year olds (17%); Tumblr adoption drops to 10% or below for those 35 years old and older.

Tumblr is most popular amongst those in the lowest household income group (16%). In comparison, those who earn $100,000–$119,00 (8%) and $120,000+ (8%) are half as likely to have a Tumblr account.

People who work part-time (20%) are more likely to be on Tumblr than those who work full-time (12%), are self-employed (3%), or are not employed (8%). Tumblr is the only platform where adoption is higher amongst part-time workers than full-time workers.

11% of online Canadian adults have a Tumblr account

	Total	Monthly Active Users
All Online Adults	**11%**	**8%**
Female	13	9
Male	7	6
18–24	36	27
25–34	17	12
35–44	10	6
45–55	6	6
55+	3	2
Less than $20K/year	16	12
$20K to $39,999	12	6
$40K to $59,999	10	8
$60K to $79,999	10	7
$80K to $99,999	12	9
$100K to $119,999	8	6
$120,000+	8	7
Some school	8	4
High school	10	8
Some college	9	3
College diploma	9	6
Bachelor's	13	11
Master's	10	8
Professional degree	11	9
Doctorate	11	11
Full-time	12	9
Part-time	20	15
Self-employed	3	1
Not employed	8	5

Source: Survey conducted June 1–July 15, 2017. "State of Social Media in Canada 2017" Ryerson University Social Media Lab

Reddit

Less than one-in-ten online Canadian adults (9%) are on Reddit. Of the nine social media platforms detailed in this research, Reddit has the smallest population of users—meaning the platform remains niche in use across Canadian demographic groups.

10% of men and 8% of women report having a Reddit account.

Reddit's users are largely comprised of young people. Over one-quarter of young people aged 18–24 (28%) have a Reddit account with the adoption rate dramatically dropping in the older age groups (only 2% amongst those 55+).

Reddit users are relatively equally distributed across income groups with slightly higher adoption rates in the higher income groups. 11% of those with $120,000+ annual household income have a Reddit account; those with less than $20,000 annual household income have the lowest adoption (3%).

Canadians who are employed full-time (12%) or part-time (11%) are more than twice as likely to adopt Reddit as those self-employed (5%) or not employed (5%).

9% of online Canadian adults have a Reddit account

	Total	Monthly Active Users
All Online Adults	**9%**	**8%**
Female	8	7
Male	10	9
18–24	28	26
25–34	16	15
35–44	8	8
45–55	7	6
55+	2	2
Less than $20K/year	3	3
$20K to $39,999	8	8
$40K to $59,999	8	8
$60K to $79,999	9	8
$80K to $99,999	11	9
$100K to $119,999	9	9
$120,000+	11	10
Some school	0	0
High school	7	7
Some college	10	10
College diploma	8	7
Bachelor's	11	10
Master's	8	8
Professional degree	11	9
Doctorate	7	0
Full-time	12	11
Part-time	11	9
Self-employed	5	5
Not employed	5	4

Source: Survey conducted June 1–July 15, 2017.
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Methods

Data was collected using a market research data company, Research Now, for panel recruitment. The survey was open from June 1 to July 15, 2017 and was hosted by Qualtrics. We received a total of 1,500 completed responses after data cleaning. The survey was made available to online Canadian adults in French and English. The term "online Canadian adults" refers to Internet users aged 18 and older.

To increase the representativeness of the data, we used quota sampling by age, gender, and geographical region to match the distributions in the 2016 Statistics Canada Census[2]. We recognize gender is not binary; however, the sampling question was phrased to be in line with Statistics Canada for recruiting a representative sample of adult Canadians. Later in the survey, participants were invited to self-identify as "trans*, non-binary, two-spirit, genderqueer, or other" and 0.8% (12 people) did. Considering the small and non-representative sample of this group, the gender-based distributions are only reported based on the counts of participants who self-identified as female or male. Four respondents were excluded from the demographic-based counts due to their incomplete demographic data.

Census-balanced Sampling by Gender, Age, and Region

CANADA	2016 %
GENDER	
Female	51
Male	49
AGE	
18–24	11
25–34	16
35–44	16
45–54	18
55+	39
REGION	
Western (Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan)	32
Atlantic (New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island)	7
Ontario	38
Quebec	23

Ethics

The data is anonymized and presented in aggregate in this report. Prior to data collection, Research Ethics Board approval was obtained from two Canadian universities. Participants were shown a comprehensive consent form. Participants were offered eRewards for completing the survey, which can be transferred to various loyalty rewards programs.

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[2] Unfortunately, Research Now does not have panel survey participants from Northwest Territories, Nunavut, and Yukon.

Reporting

The report is primarily based on two statistics: *adoption rate* as measured by the percentage of participants with a social media account, and *usage rate* as measured by the percentage of Monthly Active Users (MAU). All percentages are rounded to the nearest 1%. Income is reported as the annual household income.

Survey Questions

For this report, we analyzed the following 7 questions from our survey:

Social Media Adoption	Do you have an account on the following social media sites? Facebook [Yes; No; Unsure] LinkedIn [Yes; No; Unsure] Instagram [Yes; No; Unsure] Twitter [Yes; No; Unsure] Snapchat [Yes; No; Unsure] Tumblr [Yes; No; Unsure] YouTube [Yes; No; Unsure] Reddit [Yes; No; Unsure] Pinterest [Yes; No; Unsure]
Frequency	How often do you visit the following social media sites? [Several times a day; Daily; Weekly; Monthly; Less than monthly; Never]
Age	What is your age group? [18–24; 25–34; 35–44; 45–54; 55+]
Gender	For the purposes of this study, how would you like to be identified? [Female; Male; Trans*, non-binary, two-spirit, genderqueer, other]
Education	What is your highest level of education earned? [Some school, no degree; High school graduate; Some college, no degree; College diploma; Bachelor's degree; Master's degree; Professional degree (J.D., M.D., D.O., etc.); Doctorate degree]
Employment	Are you currently employed? [Full-time; Part-time; Self-employed; Not employed]
Income	What is your total household income? [Less than $20,000; $20,000 to $39,999; $40,000 to $59,999; $60,000 to $79,999; $80,000 to $99,999; $100,000 to $119,999; More than $120,000]

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