

Our Digital Future

Welcome to Connected Britain



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Get it straight from the top

Neil Berkett from Virgin Media introduces Our Digital Future

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2012 What a year!

Britain hosted the first truly digital Olympics. When we weren't glued to our TVs, we were catching the latest action on our phones and computers, supporting the athletes on Twitter and Facebook and sharing our favourite moments on YouTube. What's more, since Virgin Media provided free WiFi to everyone on the tube all summer, people could even catch the action underground.

And that's not the only big digital story of 2012. In May this year, the nation hit 10 million Twitter users. On top of this, it's the year that analogue TV gets switched off for good. All of this means one thing...

2012 is the year that the UK officially goes digital.

So there's no better time for us all to think about the digital world, how it's changing our lives today and what it means for the future. How has the web affected us already? What are the issues you worry about? And how do you think such technology can make our lives better in the future?

So, what does Connected Britain look like?

We've gone digital

The web. Smart phones. Social media. Digital technology has become a huge part of how we live our lives today, whether we're at home, work or on the move. As a nation, we're online for nearly five hours everyday. And half of us have one or more of the following devices in our homes: a Wii, a Personal Video Recorder or iPhone, iPod touch or an iPad.

We've got lots in common

We found that the normal demographic measures, like age, gender or where you live don't matter all that much when it comes to understanding what people think about the digital world.

But there are big differences too

Across society, there are still some big differences in the way that people see all things digital. We found that it's not who you are, but how you use digital technology that matters most.



The Big Red Box
What we've heard so far...

We're finding out about Connected Britain in a number of ways. We asked research experts ICM to help us with a national online survey. And we're hitting the road with our Big Red Box. It's an interactive video-booth that will be popping up in 10 towns and cities around the country to hear what people think.

Say hello to a Connected Britain

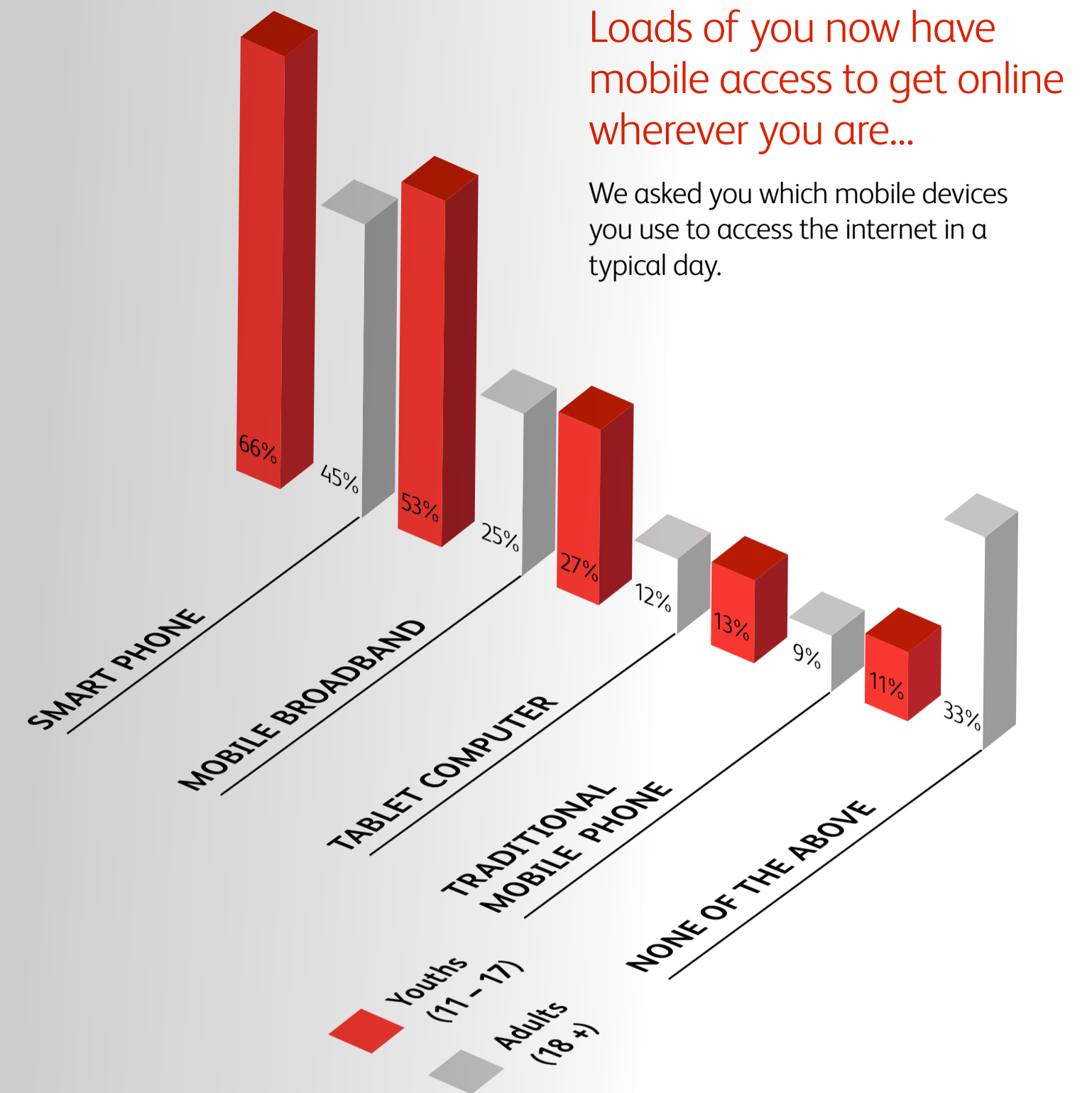
As a nation, we're getting pretty confident when it comes to using digital technology and we're positive about the benefits it brings to our lives. Almost half of us see ourselves as very confident online. From the nearly 2000 people we spoke to, only eight said they felt unconfident when using the internet.

Digital technology plays a huge role in our social lives. Two thirds of people agree that being online is great for keeping in touch, sharing experiences, photos and even meeting new people.

Nearly four out of five young people and six in ten adults use Facebook several times a week

Nearly half of young people and one in five adults use Twitter several times a week

A quarter of young people use Google+ several times a week



We know it's a fast paced digital world out there and it's changing all the time. People recognise that all this change has some important implications for society.

Over two thirds of people agree that faster broadband and other advances in digital technology benefit families, bring huge educational benefits and make life more enjoyable.

Nearly six in ten people think the country as a whole would be better off if more people knew how to get the most out of the internet, as this would help the economy and create jobs.

When it comes to the digital world, there are a few big issues that people really care about.

Some people worry about keeping up with all it has to offer. A quarter of people think that sometimes technology moves so fast that it might leave them behind. And six in ten people think that some people have access to all the benefits of the web, while others don't and are missing out.



We found six very different groups of people

There are some big differences in how people think about the digital world. We found that it's not who you are, but how you use digital technology that matters most.

Our research shows that most of the country fall into one of six different groups. We're not slipping into stereotypes, though. Take the 'Modern Classics' for example. They may be older, but that doesn't mean they're more worried than other people about digital technology. It's actually the opposite - they are much more likely to think the web brings big benefits for families and communities. And while the 'Signs of the times' and 'Steady does it' groups might live next door to each other, they have very different opinions about the digital world!

How we did it

With the help of some statistical wizardry from the clever people at ICM, we grouped together similar types of people by combining how they use digital technology and what they think about the web, with their views on life in general.

Which group are you?



Easy come easy go 23% of the population

We're always on the move and we take the web with us wherever we go. We're not too bothered about the digital world's biggest issues. After all, almost all of us are still in our teens. For us, it's our way of life and always has been. Or maybe it's just that we don't feel responsible, because we rarely pay the bill ourselves.

Over half of us will use mobile broadband in a normal day. Four in ten of us have either experienced cyber-bulling ourselves or have friends who have. Three in five of us think that teenagers should be trusted to behave on the internet.



Socially charged 19% of the population

We think that how many followers you've got on Twitter matters. We're always using social media. And we mean always. As a result, we are more likely to have had a social media experience that we'd rather forget. We think we're missing out on some of the best stuff on TV and we're the most likely to download TV, films and music illegally.

We are three times more likely to depend on Twitter than the average person. 7 out of 10 of us have smart phones. Half of us use unofficial or illicit downloading or streaming websites. Two in five of us have done things on social media that we've later regretted.



Signs of the times 17% of the population

With both kids and work to think about, we've got our hands full and we worry about the future. We often use the web and digital technology to help simplify our busy lives. We're digitally savvy and we're pretty open-minded about the world's big issues – whether they are digital or in other aspects of our lives!

Nearly a third of us have kids under 18. We're twice as likely as the average person to be focused on our careers. Almost half of us think that if the government gets involved in policing the internet it will be a threat to personal liberty. 16% of us download/stream illegally all or most of the time.



Steady does it Also 17% of the population

We might live next door to the "Upwardly Digital" but what we think about the digital world and how we tend to use digital technology are very different! Although we are very active online and positive about the internet generally, we do have a few concerns, particularly when it comes to kids.

More than a third of us have children under 18. Over half of us think that children should only be free to use the internet unsupervised from 15-16 years old. Almost three in five of us think our Internet Service Provider should allow us to block whole categories of websites (such as adult content websites or illegal movie streaming). 97% of us would like strong security settings so that people can't hack into our computers.





Modern Classic 12% of the population

We don't use the web as much as the other groups, and when we do, it's for simple things like getting information. Despite this, we're open-minded about the digital world's big issues and think that the web and digital technology can be a really positive thing for everyone.

Only a quarter of us would describe ourselves as heavy internet audiences. Over half of us think that kids of 15 should be able to use the internet unsupervised, compared to a national average of 36%. We are near the top when it comes to thinking the internet will benefit families, bring huge educational benefits and make life more enjoyable.



Thanks, but no thanks 13% of the population

We are actually online more than the **Modern Classics** but we're not too bothered about keeping up with the latest things. This means we're actually quite indifferent about the web and we're not aware of or interested in some of the digital world's biggest issues.

We are the least likely to try something new. We're not sure whether parents have the right tools to protect their children online. Less than a third of us would describe ourselves as heavy internet users.



Have your say!

We're hitting the road with our Big Red Box. It's an interactive video-booth that will be popping up in 10 towns and cities around the country to hear what you think about the digital world's big issues.

Or join in online at
ourdigitalfuture.co.uk
#Ourdigitalfuture #ODF

What it all means

We think Digital Britain is an exciting place right now. Our digital lives are fast paced, social and connected.

We use digital technology for keeping up with friends and we're used to being connected to the web, even when we're on the go. Generally, we're pretty confident about how to get the best out of our digital technology.

But there are some big differences in how people think about the digital world. And this means some big differences in the things that matter most to people and any concerns they might have. Internet Service Providers like us, the media and the government all need to be aware of these different perspectives and recognise that one size fits all approaches aren't the best way to tackle complicated issues such as protecting children and online piracy.

What next?

This is just the start of Our Digital Future and it only scratches the surface of what Connected Britain's all about.

We want to understand what people really think about the digital world, how it's changing our lives today and what it means for the future. In the end, what we find out could take us anywhere. But the goal remains the same: to understand the best way to make sure Our Digital Future is the best it can possibly be for everyone.

Join the conversation
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