

MEDIA RELEASE

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TECH-SAVVY SENIORS ARE HEALTHIER, MORE INDEPENDENT AND EMPOWERED BY THEIR USE OF TECHNOLOGY

Almost 7 in 10 Aussie seniors feel confident they would be able to keep up with future innovations in technology, new research reveals

Australian seniors are embracing technology with a confidence that may surprise their younger counterparts, and they're reaping the benefits, according to a new study released today by the Australian Seniors Insurance Agency.

The *Seniors and Technology* report is the twelfth instalment of *The Australian Seniors Series* – an ongoing national study investigating the shifting attitudes and concerns affecting Australia's over 50s. This chapter explores how Australian seniors are embracing the use of technology and the positive impact it has on their daily lives.

More than eight in ten (84.0%) of seniors are willing to consider adopting new technology, and over seven in ten (71.0%) think advancing technology allows them to be more independent. Seniors also see themselves as tech savvy (58.7%) and feel confident in their abilities to keep up with future innovations in technology (69.0%).

Chief Marketing Officer and Australian Seniors Insurance Agency spokesperson, Simon Hovell, said: "Technology plays a key role in Australians' lives, and it's a common misconception that seniors are not confident or capable of using the latest technology. Rather, modern seniors welcome the positive impact technology has on their lives, both from a social and health perspective."

The research reveals that health is one of the key areas where seniors are taking advantage of technology. Almost three in ten (28.0%) use technology to monitor their personal health. Of these, the vast majority (85.5%) believe technology gives them more empowerment in managing their health and close to two-thirds (64.3%) say technology is an integral part of their everyday health routine.

Associate Professor Kim Delbaere, Principal Research Scientist at NeuRA said: "It's important to remember that technology is a tool, like any other, that can be used to enhance how people are going about their everyday lives. The research shows that this is no different for older Australians, the majority of whom are successfully integrating technology in their daily routines.

"Whether monitoring their personal health using wearable devices, such as Fitbits, sleep trackers and heart rate monitors, keeping in contact with distant family members online or staying connected with their community and professional network, it is evident that seniors are making technology work for them."

Contrary to popular belief, Aussie seniors are also actively engaging on social media platforms, with many saying it reduces feelings of isolation (61.8%) and disconnectedness (59.5%).

According to the research, seniors tend to focus on strengthening their relationship with their

personal network and keeping up with current affairs when using social media. Over two in five (43.5%) believe technology leads to greater feelings of connection with family, friends and the community.

Surprisingly, many would be happy to use technology for more formal occasions as well, if the occasion called for it. More than a third of seniors say they would attend a virtual wedding (34.9%) or birthday (34.7%), while over a quarter (27.0%) would be open to attending a virtual funeral.

“Our research demonstrates that seniors are taking a predominantly positive approach to technology, and have their finger on the pulse as much as younger Australians do. It’s inspiring to see that seniors today are leveraging their tech-savviness to better their personal health and feel more independent,” Mr Hovell concluded.

You can view the full findings of the report here: [insert link]

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Further findings from the research

- Seven in 10 (70.1%) seniors use Facebook, while close to two in five (39.3%) watch YouTube. Seniors also report using include Skype (23.5%), Instagram (16.7%), LinkedIn (16.0%) and Pinterest (15.2%).
- Among seniors who use health technology, fitness/activity trackers such as Fitbits are most popular (56.1%), followed by apps for monitoring blood pressure (30.2%) and heart rate (27.5%), and apps to track sleep (19.1%) and count calories (16.8%).
- Almost two in five (39.1%) seniors tend to check their symptoms online first before consulting with a doctor whenever they feel unwell.
- Seniors who use social media networks spend an average of 12 hours per week on these platforms
- The vast majority (82.2%) of seniors say they would undergo elective surgery to prolong their lifespan. Those who would consider elective surgery are willing to spend an average of \$38,061.

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About Australian Seniors Insurance Agency

Australian Seniors Insurance Agency was established in 1998 to provide cost effective insurance solutions for the mature Australian Market, a market too often ignored. Australian Seniors Insurance Agency offers car, home, travel, funeral, pet and accident insurance for Australians over 50.

About the 'Australian Seniors Series'

In order to explore seniors' use of and attitudes towards technology in Australia, CoreData surveyed online 1,000 typical Australians over 50 years old, across the nation in July 2018. The sample collection employed soft quotas to monitor representativeness of the Australian senior adult population.

Hard quotas by state were also employed to ensure all the main states were represented with sufficiently robust samples in the research: NSW = 200, VIC = 200, QLD = 200, WA = 200, Remaining states/territories = 200.