

# Old vs Young on the Net - UK - May 2010

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## What is this report about?

Technology is playing an increasing role in all aspects of our everyday lives, yet is often viewed as the domain of the young and the affluent, marginalising older and less well-off consumers. In this report, Mintel addresses the relationship between older consumers – often called ‘Silver Surfers’ – and the young, exploring the following questions:

## What have we found out?

- Over the past five years, internet penetration among over-65 year-olds has doubled to two in five in this age group. Take-up among those aged 55-64 is higher still, and both continue to grow.
- Over-55 year-olds demonstrate having a below-average number of technology-related devices in the home. However those aged 45-54 have one of the highest, boding well for increased usage of gadgets among older age groups in the years ahead.
- Companies are making their products more inclusive. Third parties are developing skins and apps for the Apple iPhone to encourage use among the visually impaired. Nintendo has created a larger-screen version of its DSi console. And Intel has launched a device that translates the printed page into audio format.
- Facebook has achieved near saturation across all internet users who regularly use social networks. Nearly half the over 55-yr-old internet users surveyed are Facebook users.
- The use of outside specialist help for IT problems remains low below the age of 45. Older age groups are more likely to seek professionals to fix their technical problems but, they are more likely to favour local specialists over out of town stores.
- The main reason older and younger age groups go online is to keep in touch with friends and family. Doubtless, this is related to the hectic social lives of 18-24 year olds, but parents and children wanting to keep in touch with each other may be another factor at work here.

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