

age of majority

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Pandemic Effects Socialization & Communication

Post COVID-19 Socialization & Communication

For obvious reasons the COVID-19 pandemic dramatically changed the way the world approaches socialization and communication. With face-to-face contact and traditional group gatherings no longer an option, we have all had to adapt and find new ways to stay connected.

At the start of the pandemic it was safe to say that there was a fear that older adults would get left behind, as they are often seen as tech-averse and prone to isolation. Our insights have shown us that those stereotypes could not be more untrue. Despite the many hardships emerging from this pandemic, many older adults have found ways to thrive and stay more connected than ever.

What social media platforms are they using? How have they changed their socialization habits? How are they staying connected to family and friends? These are the key questions we explored in our research.

COVID-19 has changed the way older adults socialize.

- More than six in 10 (61%) respondents sought out new ways to remain social during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Video-chatting has exploded in popularity...

- Nearly two thirds (63%) of adults 55+ utilized video chatting technology during the pandemic, compared to just 37% before.
- Adults 55+ utilize video technology for many reasons: more than 80% use it to socialize with family, 60% use it to socialize with friends, and 33% use it for work meetings.

...and it will certainly stick around.

- Three quarters (75%) of respondents said that they will be selective with who they see in person and socialize with others virtually.
- A small percentage - 13% of total respondents - plan on abandoning virtual communications entirely over the next year.

Pandemic Effects is an eight-part series looking at the ways in which the COVID-19 pandemic will affect the lives and habits of adults 55+.

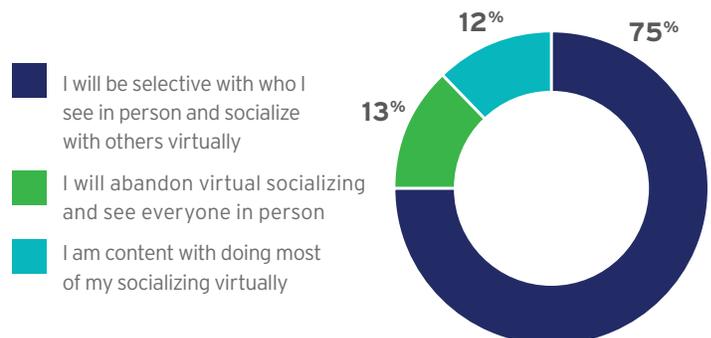
Survey methodology

An average of 400 U.S. and Canadian residents participated in eight online surveys fielded between June 10 and July 28, 2020. Respondents were all members of Revolution55, an online insights community of Age of Majority.



Nearly two thirds (63%) of adults 55+ utilized video chatting technology during the pandemic

Select which statement best reflects your attitude towards social events over the next year



Growth of Instagram, Facebook and Tik Tok.

- While 36% of respondents used Instagram before the pandemic, an additional 5% joined the platform as a result of COVID-19.
- Similarly, 82% of respondents used Facebook before the pandemic, and an additional 3% joined as a result of the pandemic.
- The new, buzzy app - Tik Tok - had a 3% usage rate amongst adults 55+ before the pandemic. The outbreak of COVID-19 encouraged an additional 5% of adults 55+ to join, demonstrating a doubling in usage rate compared to pre-pandemic levels.

Socializing outside their “bubble”? Definitely.

- We asked respondents to identify with one of a range of personas aligned with their comfort level with social association during the pandemic.
- Nearly half of respondents identify with the persona of a “Distance Defender”, meaning that they will see people outside of their people, but only with proper social distancing.

Grandparents feel closer than ever.

- 23% of respondents reported an increase in their frequency of communication with their grandchildren as a result of the pandemic, while 60% said they were able to maintain their pre-pandemic levels of communication.

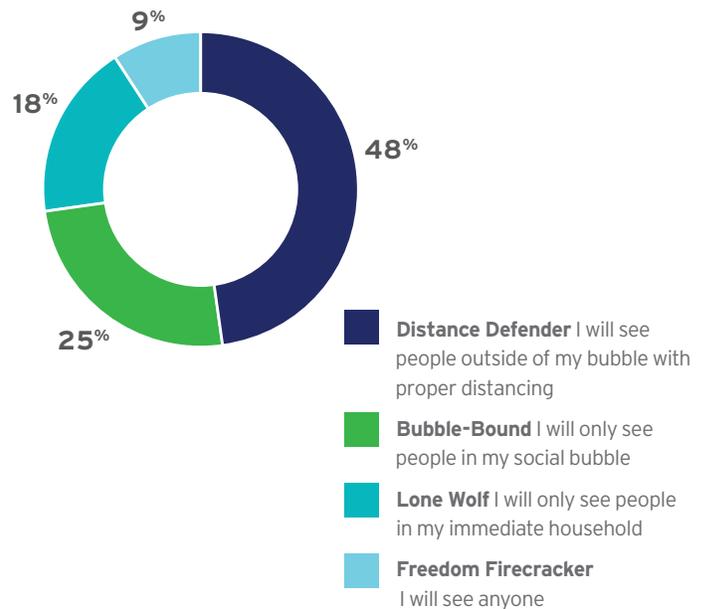
What does it all mean?

COVID-19 altered the way older adults socialize and communicate with their family, friends, and colleagues. The constraints of social distancing have ushered in a new age of communication - one that Active Agers have adapted to quickly.

While many had dabbled in video-chatting prior to the pandemic, usage rates more than doubled as a result of lock downs and the need to social-distance. In general, they have become more comfortable online, expanding their membership and usage of social media platforms - a trend we predict will continue in the coming months.

There have also been some silver linings - with many Active Agers able to connect with family and friends more than ever before and grandparents feeling closer to their grandkids. We believe, based on these trends, the pandemic has irreversibly altered the way Active Agers socialize, with an increased interest in virtual socialization methods and widespread adoption of social media platforms.

Select which statement best reflects your attitude towards social events over the next year



Visit ageofmajority.com to subscribe to our email list and receive all of the Pandemic Effects white papers, as well as our regular updates.

About Age of Majority and Revolution55

Age of Majority is a strategic marketing consultancy that identifies, sizes and capitalizes on opportunities to deliver better products, services and experiences to Active Aging consumers. Powered by our highly engaged online community of Active Agers, Revolution55, we deliver actionable consumer insights and decisive recommendations that lead to executable solutions. Let us put our community to work for your brand or company.



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