

A couple with curly hair is smiling and looking at a red smartphone in a kitchen. In the foreground, there is a wooden countertop with a bowl of fruit (bananas, apples, oranges) and a cutting board with sliced carrots. A sink and faucet are visible in the background.

THE SIMPLII REPORT 2019

DEEP DIVE ON DIGITAL TRENDS IN CANADA

simplii
FINANCIAL



INTRODUCTION

THE SIMPLII REPORT

Deep Dive on Digital Trends in Canada

Technology. Canadians love it, they loathe it, and when they are without it, they long for it. Or do they? Many of us agree that digital helps us save time but what are we really doing with that supposed time savings? Yes, we can recall how things used to be – phone calls out of the blue, spiraling cord stretched from one room to the next while someone inevitably gets kicked off the dial up – but is life really easier today with everything digital?

Digital is unequivocally driving us to live much different lives than 20, and even 10 years ago. So we decided to find out how Canadians really feel about digital, and to find out if we can honestly say it is changing our lives for the better.

So we asked A LOT of questions. We delved beyond the conventional data points of download rates and subscription levels to find out how we're embracing digital – and what hesitations we still have.

The key takeaway: digital is making a positive impact in our lives, and at the crux of our digital adoption is the desire to simplify our lives so that we can save time. But, going digital comes with its own set of challenges. Canadians let us know that at times, technology creates feelings of anxiety, complications and emptiness. We learned that an abundance of digital tools doesn't always leave us feeling satisfied, and that when it comes to using technology, such as apps, nearly half of us agree that most of the apps we download are not actually useful.


So then, is less *really* more for Canadians?


We're certainly seeing concepts like minimalism, the idea of not owning "things," and participation in the sharing economy growing steadily. Our research supported these growing trends with nearly two-thirds of Canadians (**63 per cent**) saying they're eager to share more. In addition to saving on space, resources and money, sharing has the potential to create a feeling of community, and connectivity, with the people around us.

And if our future is digital, then optimistically, we'd like to believe that we can use that technology to do good, for ourselves and our world. At Simplii we believe that choosing digital will simplify our experiences and allow us to find more time for things that matter and as a whole, we think that's what Canadians want too.

So all that said, our first-ever digital trends report takes a peek into the minds of Canadians, what motivates them to pick up their mobile device and what actions they are most likely to take. We examine overall tech trends across our country, what's driving them, the impact of demographics on these trends, the app era, and the rise of the sharing economy.

Here's what's in store.

 **DIGITAL BANKING:** What Canadians say about the future of digital banking

 **DIGITAL BEHAVIOUR:** Life in a digital world, what has changed

 **THE SHARING ECONOMY:** Canadian awareness and participation

 **DIGITAL ETHOS:** Why and how Canadians are embracing (or rejecting!) technology

 **APP CULTURE:** How many, which ones and identifying today's 'app gaps'

 **DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS:** The impact of age, geography and gender



Top 5 digital tools making the most positive impact on Canadians' lives



Banking, Investing and Budgeting (45 per cent)



GPS (42 per cent)



Online Shopping (40 per cent)



Music and Entertainment (39 per cent)



Social Networking (37 per cent)

Technology Definition and Analysis:

By **digitally enabled services or tools** we mean applications and services you access online or through your mobile device. This can include using apps, social media, streaming services (for example Netflix or Spotify), online shopping/ordering services or online banking etc. via a computer/laptop, tablet or mobile device.

Methodology

The results were compiled using an online survey of 3,040 randomly selected Canadian adults who are Maru Voice Canada panelists, and was executed by Maru/Blue. For a complete overview of the information gathering please see our Disclaimer page.

Top 10 digital tools Canadians use daily



Social Networking



Online Shopping



Music and Entertainment



Maps & GPS



Banking, Investing and Budgeting



News and current events



DIY



Travel



Food and dining out



Fitness



DIGITAL BANKING

How are Canadians adopting digital banking?

Show me the money. Virtually.

Canadians are banking online because it's convenient, safe and an easy way to manage their finances. And our findings show that across the board, Canadians value the convenience of tech-driven banking.

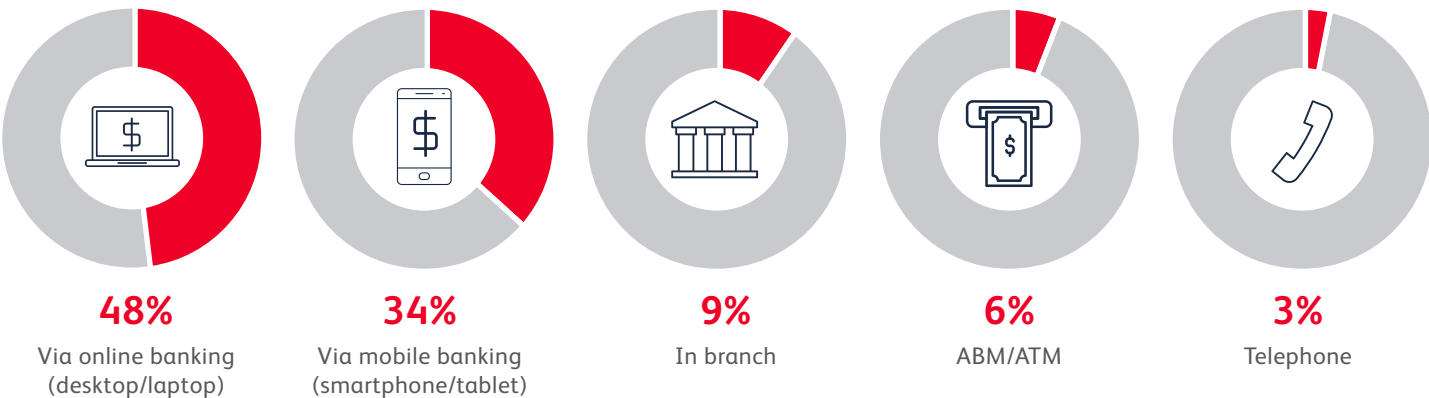
According to March 2019 findings from the Canadian Bankers Association (CBA) digital tools are becoming increasingly popular with Canadians^[iii]. The study noted that **91 per cent** of Canadians believe that new technologies have made banking a lot more convenient with **88 per cent** saying that their banks have improved service through technology.

The CBA also noted that looking ahead five years, Canadians say they expect to increase their use of the following top three technologies: Tap & Pay (**45 per cent**), digital transfer (**40 per cent**) and mobile app (**40 per cent**).

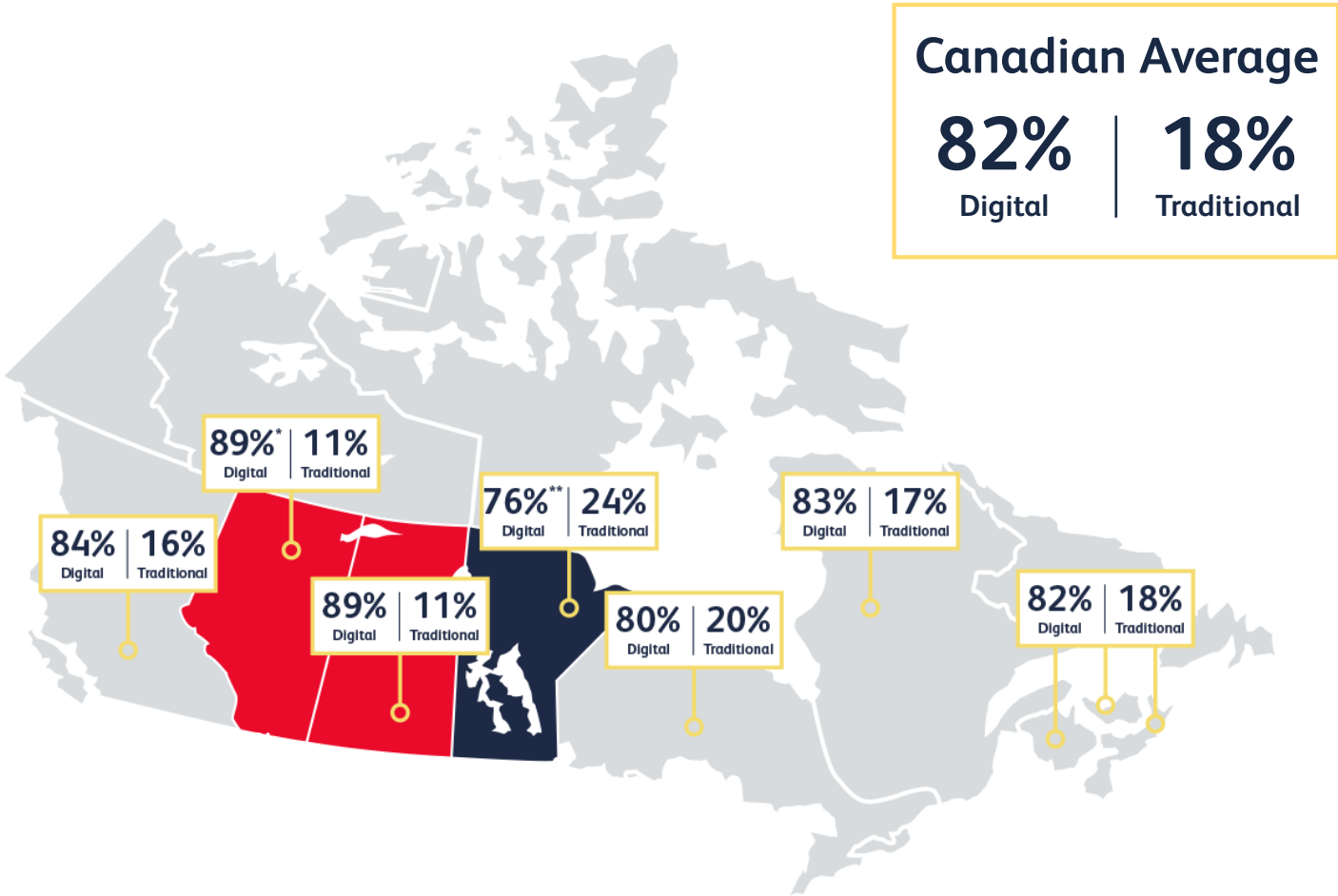
“When we asked Canadians what areas of their lives were the most positively impacted by technology, the #1 response was banking.”

[iii] Canadian Banking Association, “How Canadians Bank,” Accessed May 25, 2019. <https://cba.ca/technology-and-banking>

How Canadians Do Everyday Banking



Regional Breakdown: How Canadians Bank



* Highest in Canada
** Lowest in Canada

DIGITAL ETHOS

Why and how Canadians are embracing (or rejecting!) technology and what are we doing with the time we save?

Off the top we wanted to understand the motivations for using technology. While it's second nature to send an email or pre-order your coffee for prompt pick up, are there other underlying reasons for going digital?

According to the data, the top three reasons Canadians choose digital are:

- to help simplify their lives (**43 per cent**)
- to save time (**40 per cent**)
- to be able to do things and complete tasks from anywhere (**38 per cent**)

So clearly when it comes to our daily activities, there are definitely perceived efficiencies that technology creates.

It is interesting to note that one in four respondents said they use technology simply because it's how things are done nowadays. Feeling this way is not uncommon, given how pervasive technology is in our personal and professional lives.

Time Savings

- Time savings is one of the most popular motivations for Canadians choosing digital with **78 per cent** saying that digital tools or services have saved them time.
- Funnily enough, more than half (**58 per cent**) of Canadians say they use digital tools to save time but end up spending the time they save on more technology!
- Conversely, many Canadians also identified spending extra time socializing with friends and family (**45 per cent**), consuming more media and entertainment (**39 per cent**) and pursuing a passion, hobby or activity (**38 per cent**).

Clearly, in many cases digital plays a positive role in Canadians' lives – and schedules – allowing them to spend more time pursuing personal fulfilment in their mental, emotional, spiritual and physical health.

Why do we use digital tools or services?



So what are Canadians doing with that extra time?



58%

Spend time using more technology



45%

Socializing with friends/
family



39%

Consuming more
media / entertainment



38%

Pursuing a passion,
hobby or activity



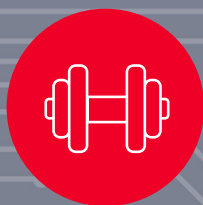
29%

Catching up on social
media



26%

Spending more time
reading or listening to
books or news



24%

Exercising



21%

Learning to cook or
cooking more



15%

Learning new
professional skills or
taking a course



15%

Focusing more on my job



4%

Other*

*Such as: Keeping up with the news, DIY activities, self-care, volunteering, travel or planning your next escape.

DIGITAL BEHAVIOUR: LIFE IN A DIGITAL WORLD

More tech versus less tech, Canadians are torn.

Canadians are split when it comes to life without technology:



49 per cent of Canadians say they can't live without technology. 51



per cent of Canadians say they can survive without it.

How have Canadians' online habits changed over the past year?

57%

I use the same number of digital tool/services

31%

I use more digital tools/services

8%

I don't/have not used any digital tools/services

4%

I use fewer digital tool/services



Driverless cars, smart homes, dating apps, digital nomads working from around the world...digital hasn't just changed how we perform daily tasks – it's created entire shifts in our behaviour.

With **94 per cent** of Canadians online, nearly 1 in 3 say that they are using more digital tools or services this year, than the previous year. When asked about motivations for using technology, those who reported using more technology over the past year also said they were highly motivated by the idea of being early adopters - the first one in their network to try out new things.

There are also apparent drawbacks. For example, of those surveyed, **36 per cent** of Canadians agree that technology can leave them feeling empty and **37 per cent** of Canadians felt anxious when separated from their mobile device, this was highest among Millennials (**43 per cent** and **49 per cent** respectively) who are also the demographic that use digital the most frequently.

In contrast to these seemingly negative sentiments, almost half of Canadians (**48 per cent**) agree that technology helps them take better care of their physical and mental well-being and **64 per cent** of Canadians agree it has improved their connection with family and friends. This also indexes the highest with millennial Canadians (**57 per cent** and **72 per cent** respectively).

Technology has an impact on our lives in so many different ways, it would be impossible to view our relationship with it in isolation - we see the good, the bad and the ugly.

Are Canadians doubling-down on digital or in need of a detox?

When we asked Canadians about the impact of digital, **just over 3 in 4 Canadians agree that digital tools have made a positive impact on their lives.** Canadians also say technology:

- Empowers them to learn or try new things
- Helps them stay informed (news curator!)
- Allows them to stay organized and on top of things

A small portion of respondents (**6 per cent**) say they have never used digital tools or digitally enabled services. Perhaps, not surprisingly, those respondents tended to be older (55+). Two-thirds (**62 per cent**) noted that they are 'frequently/or always' using them.

Technology accessories Canadians own and use on a regular basis



77%
Mobile Device /
Smartphone



65%
Laptop



47%
Desktop



46%
Tablet



31%
Smart TV

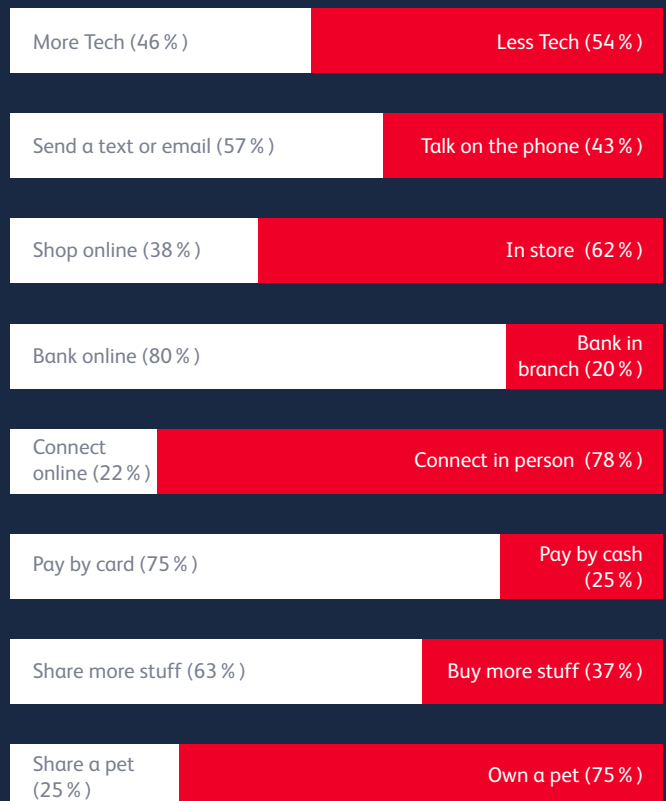
Online or IRL (In Real Life) when it matters?

In today's world a device is always within arm's reach but when asked where their mobile device typically was when doing their favourite things, only nine per cent of Canadians say it is out and capturing the experience.

The large majority (**81 per cent**) have it close by in their pocket or their purse not in use or turned off, suggesting, go figure – they may actually be living in the moment.

So when it comes to Canadians' personal lives, where are they eager to embrace digital versus a more traditional (in-person) approach?

Here's the results of our 'Would You Rather' game:



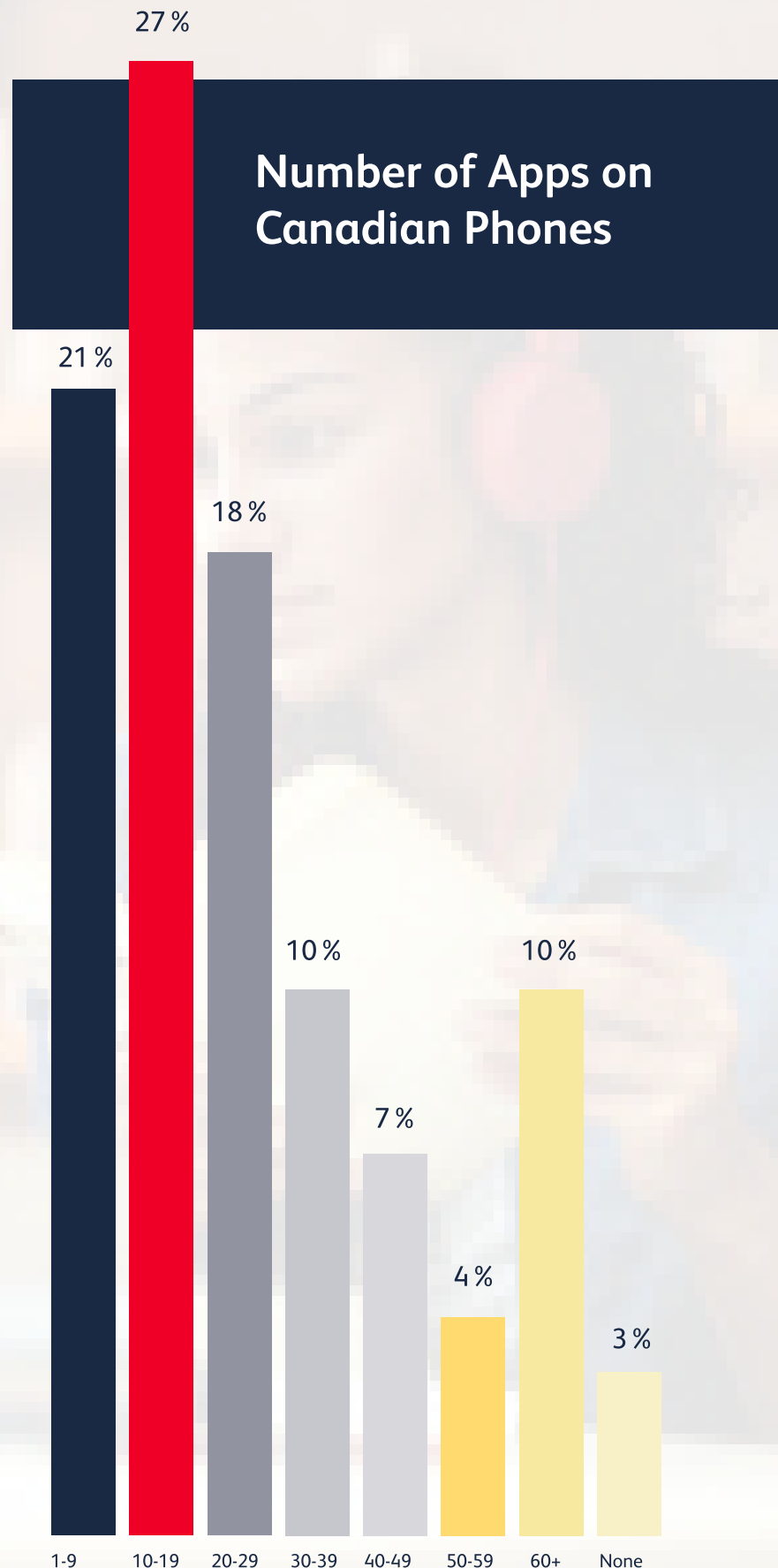
APP CULTURE: IS LESS MORE?

According to Statistica, during the first quarter of 2019, the two leading app stores, Android and Apple, had 2.1 million and 1.8 million apps respectively available to users[i]. But when it comes down to it – we found that Canadians gravitate toward a few favourites – that means many of us have devices full of apps that don't get much love. So, is less really more for Canadians?

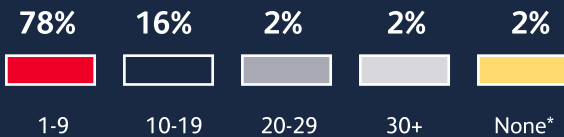
Our data reveals the following:

- Almost half (**46 per cent**) of Canadians say that most of the apps they download are not actually useful to them.
- Twenty-five is the average number of apps installed on Canadians' smartphones, however that number is pushed up by the **10 per cent** of smartphone users who have a staggering 60+ apps.
- At the end of the day, about half (**48 per cent**) of Canadians actually have less than 20 apps (including **21 per cent** that have just 1-9 apps).

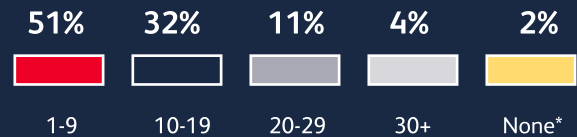
Canadians tend to keep their home screen clean and lean and the data shows that two-thirds of Canadians (**69 per cent**) say they've done an 'app cleanse,' with millennials leading the charge (**78 per cent** of millennials say they have done this).



How Many Apps Do Canadians Use Daily?

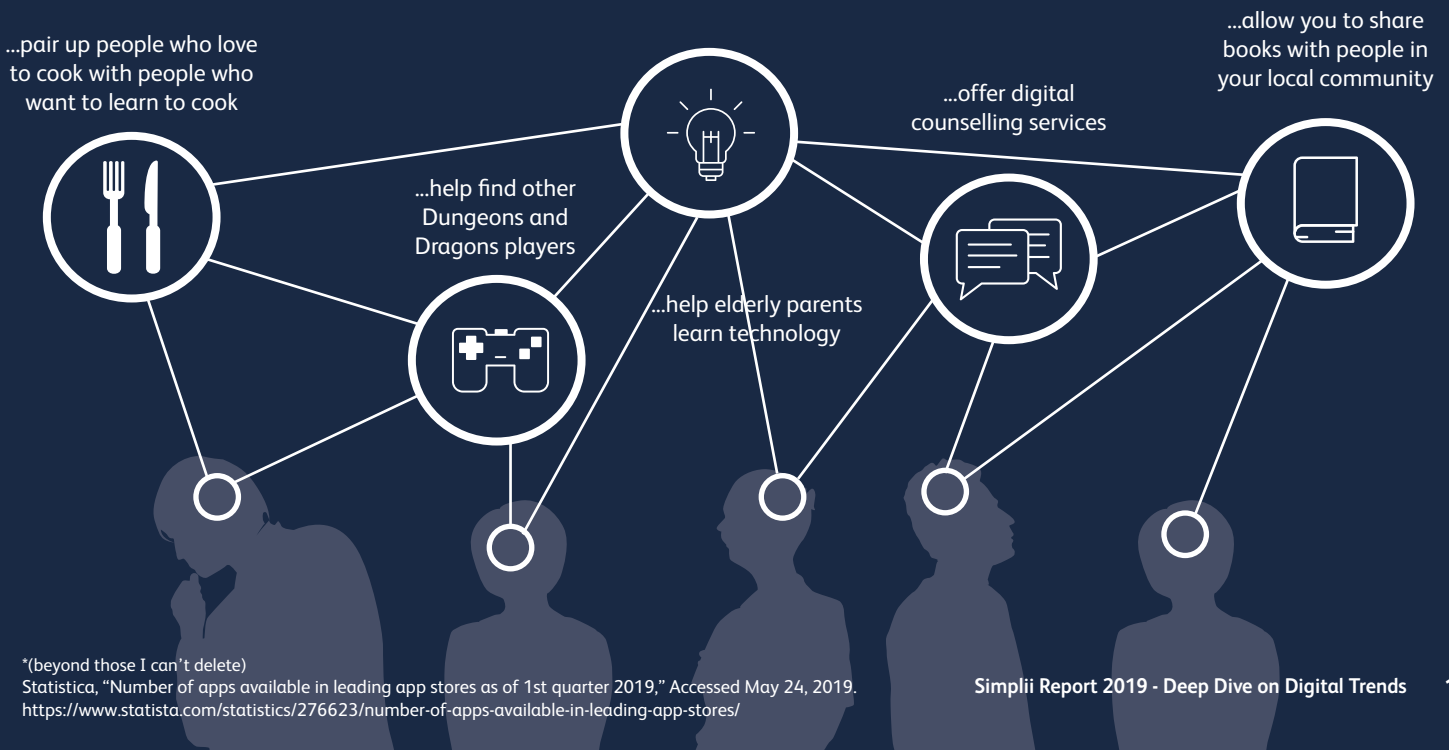


How Many Apps Do Canadians Use Weekly?



We also gave Canadians the opportunity to tell us what apps they're missing in their lives; app developers, on your mark, get set ... go!

What digital tools do Canadians wish they had?



*(beyond those I can't delete)
 Statista, "Number of apps available in leading app stores as of 1st quarter 2019," Accessed May 24, 2019.
<https://www.statista.com/statistics/276623/number-of-apps-available-in-leading-app-stores/>

IS SHARING REALLY CARING?

“ The more we share, the more we have. ”

Spock (Leonard Nimoy)

The sharing economy is disrupting countless industries – travel, transportation, entertainment – making it easier, and often more affordable to access goods and services, moving from a strictly producing, selling and purchasing model to a user and provider model.

When we refer to the sharing economy, we're talking about using technology to match customers with goods and services, this could include everything from home and ridesharing services, to co-working spaces to video streaming subscriptions.

Our research uncovered that many Canadians are actively participating in the sharing economy, and that the majority are interested in sharing more!



63%

of Canadians want to share more things rather than make new purchases.



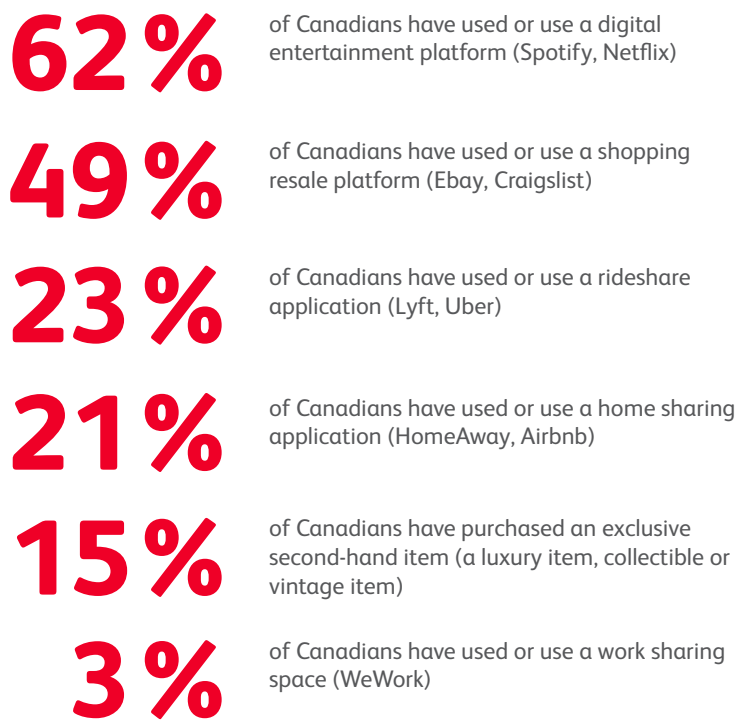
The Sharing Economy's Potential

Digital tools and services are the power and foundation for the success of the sharing economy. Without access to technology, the growth of the sector would be impossible.

The sharing economy has the potential to connect communities and empower participants through employment flexibility (think Uber!) and independence (think WeWork!).

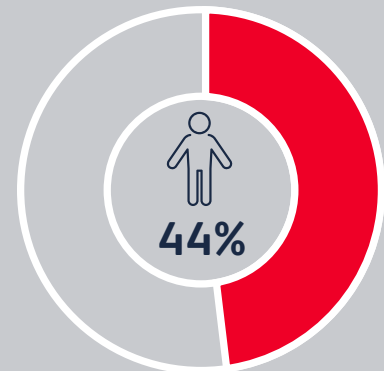
According to the World Economic Forum^[ii], the sharing economy is expected to grow from generating global revenues around \$15 billion in 2015 to \$335 billion by 2025. Six in every 10 Canadians told us they're participating in some form of the sharing economy, here's a snapshot:

Canadians and the sharing economy

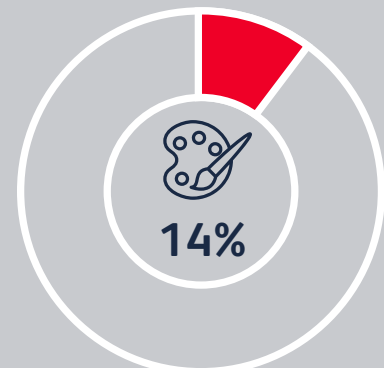


What else would Canadians consider sharing?

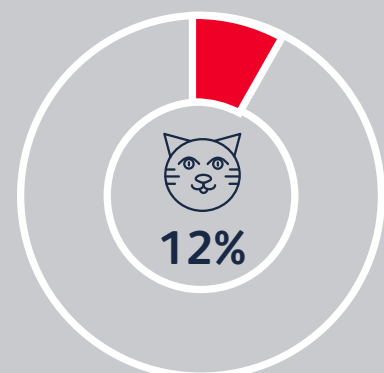
We asked Canadians what new apps the sharing economy might benefit from:



of Canadians would be interested in an assistant on demand or assistant sharing app



of Canadians want to try an art sharing app



of Canadians said they wish there was a pet sharing app

[ii] World Economic Forum, "Does the sharing economy truly know how to share," Accessed May 25, 2019. <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/01/does-the-sharing-economy-truly-know-how-to-share/>



Demographic Trends: The impact of age, geography and gender on digital

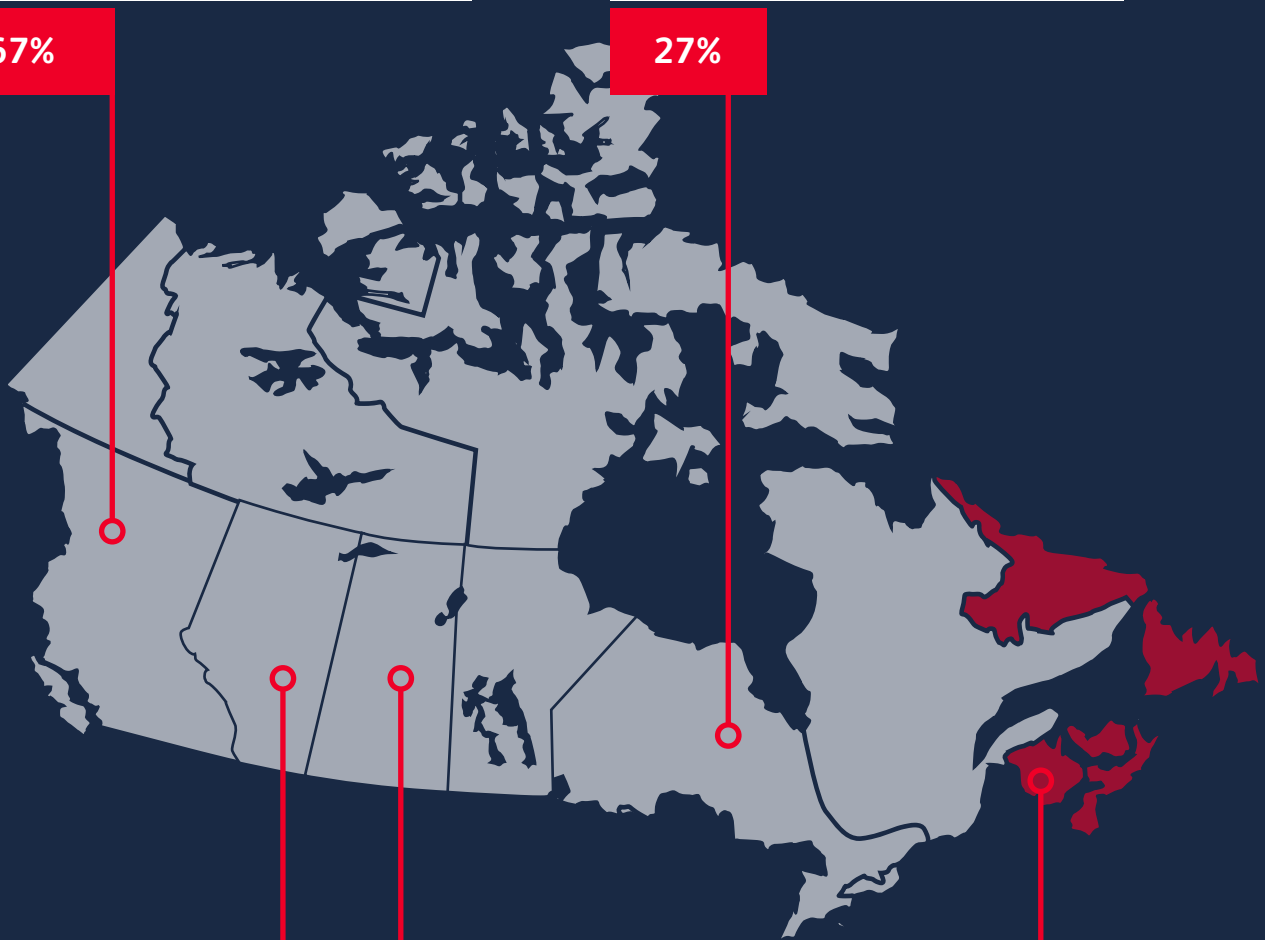
When it comes to digital, demographics matter. This report has uncovered many general population trends, but when you hone in on where people live, how old they are, and what gender they identify with, some interesting differences become clear. Read on to find out how Canadians' attitudes and habits vary across the country.

People from BC are the most likely to want to share more stuff vs. buy more (**67 per cent vs. 63 per cent national average**)

67%

Happy shopping from the couch? People from Ontario have seen positive impact for online shopping services (**44 per cent vs. 40 per cent national average**)

27%



37%

It's a breeze ordering takeout through an app, right? People in Alberta are the most likely to say they use technology to avoid human interaction (**37 per cent vs. 32 per cent national average**)

87%

Trouble remembering your password? **87 per cent** of people from Saskatchewan use one login for multiple sites, that's **23 per cent** higher than people from British Columbia or Ontario

FOMO?

FOMO? Canadians from Atlantic Canada have the lowest rate of phone separation anxiety (**29 per cent**) where almost one in two (**49 per cent**) people from Saskatchewan report feeling anxious when they're separated from their phone

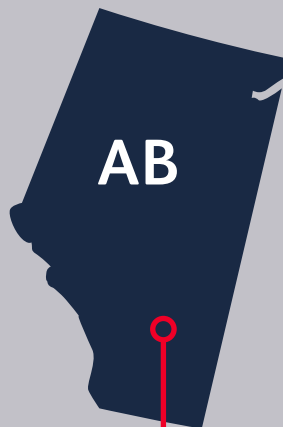
*Fear of Missing Out

Full Regional Data



BRITISH COLUMBIA

- **78 per cent** would rather connect in person than digitally **BUT** over half (**56 per cent**) would still prefer to send a text or email than talk on the phone
- Just over one in three feel anxious when they don't have access to their mobile device
- Over three quarters (**77 per cent**) of British Columbians agree that technology and/or digital tools have simplified their lives
- **67 per cent** said they have done a full app cleanse or regularly review their apps, deleting those that aren't used
- British Columbians are the most likely of any province to feel that technology empowers them to learn (**78 per cent vs. 76 per cent national average**)



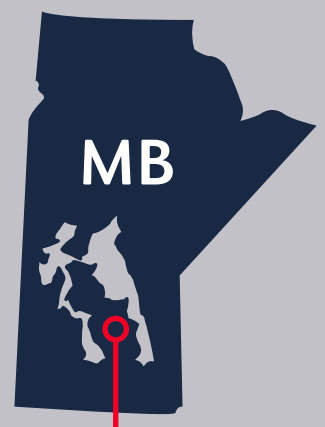
ALBERTA

- Almost **80 per cent** prefer to connect in person **BUT** **60 per cent** would still prefer to send an email or text than talk on the phone
- **40 per cent** feel anxious when separated from their mobile device
- 4 of every 5 agree that technology and/or digital tools have simplified their lives
- **45 per cent** agree that they could do their job from anywhere in the world because of technology
- Albertans are the most likely to use online shopping services (**41 per cent vs. 38 per cent national average**)



SASKATCHEWAN

- **80 per cent** would prefer to connect in person than digitally **BUT** over half (**55 per cent**) would still prefer to send an email or a text than talk on the phone
- Almost half (**49 per cent**) feel anxious when separated from their mobile device. That is the highest rate across all provinces
- **53 per cent** agree that they could do their job from anywhere in the world because of technology
- People from Saskatchewan are the least likely to feel that digital tools or technology simplify their lives (**65 per cent vs. 79 per cent national average**)



MANITOBA

- Just over three quarters (**77 per cent**) prefer to connect in person than digitally **BUT** half (**50 per cent**) would still prefer to send a text or an email than talk on the phone
- **38 per cent** feel anxious when they don't have access to their mobile device
- **77 per cent** agree that technology and/or digital tools have simplified their lives
- **42 per cent** agree that they could do their job from anywhere in the world because of technology
- People from Manitoba are the most likely to want to share a pet (**18 per cent vs. 12 per cent national average**)

Full Regional Data



ONTARIO

- Almost three quarters (**73 per cent**) prefer to connect in person than digitally BUT 60 per cent would still prefer to send an email or text than talk on the phone
- Almost 2 in 5 feel anxious when separated from their mobile device
- Just over 3 in 4 (**77 per cent**) agree that technology and/or digital tools have simplified their lives
- Half agree that they could do their job from anywhere in the world because of technology
- Ontarians noted that GPS and digital maps have made a more positive impact in their lives than any other province (**45 per cent vs. 42 per cent national average**)



QUÉBEC

- People in Quebec are the most likely to say they couldn't live without technology (**55 per cent vs. 49 per cent national average**)
- **86 per cent** would prefer to connect in person rather than digitally, BUT over half (**53 per cent**) would still prefer to send an email or text than talk on the phone
- Just under one third (**33 per cent**) feel anxious when separated from their mobile devices
- Over 4 in 5 people (**85 per cent**) agree that technology and/or digital tools have simplified their lives
- **55 per cent** agree that they could do their job from anywhere in the world because of technology – the highest in Canada
- People in Quebec are the most likely to have done an app cleanse (**73 per cent vs. 69 per cent Canadian average**)



ATLANTIC PROVINCES

- People in Atlantic Canada are the least likely to say they couldn't live without technology (**39 per cent vs. 49 per cent national average**)
- Over three quarters (**78 per cent**) would prefer to connect in person rather than digitally BUT over half (**56 per cent**) would still prefer to send an email or text than talk on the phone
- **29 per cent** feel anxious when separated from their mobile device. This is the lowest rate across all provinces
- **76 per cent** agree that technology and/or digital tools have simplified their lives
- **47 per cent** agree that they could do their job from anywhere in the world because of technology

Facts by demographic



Boomer Canadians (age 55+) are the most likely to want less tech (**64 per cent** vs. **52 per cent** for GenX and **44 per cent** for Millennials). They also are far more likely to want to talk on the phone than text



When it comes to working on your fitness, Millennials (**36 per cent**) are more than three times as likely to incorporate digital into their routines than Boomer Canadians (**11 per cent**)



Hungry? Almost half of Millennial Canadians (**47 per cent**) have used digital tools to call a meal delivery service, make a reservation through an app or cook up dinner using a meal kit subscription - that's just over **20 per cent** higher than GenX (**26 per cent**) and more than triple Boomers (**14 per cent**)



Do you think you could share a pet? Canadians age 55+ are the most likely of any age group to prefer to share a pet (**34 per cent**) versus own an animal friend



78%

Millennials (ages 18-34) have the least patience for ineffective or inefficient technology. In fact, **78 per cent** have done an app cleanse from their Smartphone/Tablet. Still that is only **seven per cent** higher than GenX Canadians (35-55) and **22 per cent** higher than Canadians ages 55+.



DISCLAIMER

The following report is prepared by Simpli Financial™. Information contained in this report is current as of May 2019 and may not reflect any event or circumstances which occur after the date of this report.

From May 22nd to May 26th 2019 an online survey of 3,040 randomly selected Canadian adults who are Maru Voice Canada panelists was executed by Maru/Blue. For comparison purposes, a probability sample of this size has an estimated margin of error (which measures sampling variability) of +/- 1.6 %, 19 times out of 20. The results have been weighted by education, age, gender and region (and in Quebec, language) to match the population, according to Census data. This is to ensure the sample is representative of the entire adult population of Canada. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding.

As with any consumer marketplace report, this is a snapshot in time based on the statistics and findings uncovered during the nationwide survey conducted by Maru/Blue. Given the evolving nature of the Canadian digital space, these statistics and findings will change overtime.

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July 2019

[i] Statista, "Number of apps available in leading app stores as of 1st quarter 2019," Accessed May 24, 2019. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/276623/number-of-apps-available-in-leading-app-stores/>

[ii] World Economic Forum, "Does the sharing economy truly know how to share," Accessed May 25, 2019. <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/01/does-the-sharing-economy-truly-know-how-to-share/>

[iii] Canadian Banking Association, "How Canadians Bank," Accessed May 25, 2019. <https://cba.ca/technology-and-banking>