



**Pew Internet**  
Pew Internet & American Life Project

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# Photos and Videos as Social Currency Online

*46% of internet users post original photos and videos online they have created themselves and 41% curate photos and videos they find elsewhere on the internet and post on image-sharing sites. Women are more likely than men to use Pinterest, while Instagram and Tumblr attract equal shares of men and women*

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<http://pewinternet.org/Reports/2012/Online-Pictures.aspx>

# Main Findings

## Creators and Curators

Photos and videos have become key social currencies online.

- 46% of adult internet users post original photos or videos online that they themselves have created. We call them *creators*.
- 41% of adult internet users take photos or videos that they have found online and repost them on sites designed for sharing images with many people. We call them *curators*.

The *creator* group is made up of those who have shared photos they have taken themselves (45% of internet users have done that) and those who have shared videos they have created themselves (18% of internet users have done that). If a person did either one of those two activities—and many do both of them—that person was considered an online image *creator*.

The *curator* group is made up of those who have taken photos they found online and posted them on a site that is used for sharing images with others (35% of internet users have done that) and those who have taken videos they found online and posted them on a video-sharing site that is used for sharing videos with others (25% of internet users have done that). If a person did either of those two activities—and a number do both of them— that person was considered an online image *curator*.

Overall, 56% of internet users do at least one of these creating or curating activities and 32% of internet users do both creating and curating activities.

## The rise of Pinterest, Instagram, and Tumblr

This is the first time that the Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Project has asked questions about Pinterest, Instagram and Tumblr, so it is not possible to compare these data to previous material. It is safe to say, though, that the rise of smartphones is a major part of the story because those phones have cameras built into them, making it easy to take and share self-made pictures online. It is also safe to say that the rise of social media, especially YouTube and newer services like Pinterest, Instagram, and Tumblr has made curating activities easier because they are organized for easy image and video-sharing.

### Services we measured:

<a href="#">Pinterest</a>	<a href="#">Instagram</a>
<a href="#">Tumblr</a>	<a href="#">Facebook</a>
<a href="#">LinkedIn</a>	<a href="#">Twitter</a>

In a phone survey of 1,005 adults ages 18 and older between August 2-5, 2012 the Pew Internet Project found that:

- 12% of online adults say they use Pinterest, which is dominated by women. Nearly a fifth of online women (19%) use Pinterest, a site that allows users to organize and share content from around the web by “pinning” photos and images into “pinboards” that are organized by

categories or themes. Each “pin”, which includes a caption, links back to the site from which it originated.

- 12% of online adults say they use Instagram, which is dominated by young adults. Some 27% of the internet users between ages 18-29 use Instagram, which is a photo-sharing service built around a smartphone app that allows users to filter or tint photos they’ve taken and then share them with their networks. Facebook recently bought the service.
- 5% of online adults say they use Tumblr. Some 11% of young adults use this social blogging service that allows for easy sharing of various types of posts, including text, photos, quotes, links, music, and video.

This survey also found that:

- 66% of online adults use Facebook
- 20% use LinkedIn
- 16% use Twitter

Demographic data on users of each service are broken out in tables in this report.

## About the survey

A nationally representative phone survey of 1,005 adults (ages 18+) was taken August 2-5, 2012. It was conducted in English on landline and cell phones. The sample contained 799 internet users, who were asked questions about their online activities. The margin of error for the full sample is  $\pm 3.7$  percentage points. The margin of error for the internet sample is  $\pm 3.8$  percentage points.

One special note on demographic analysis in this sample: This survey had 73 African-American internet user respondents and 72 English-speaking Hispanic internet user respondents. Those are not big enough sample sizes to do independent statistical analyses. As a result, there are no data in the demographic tables about race and ethnicity.

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# Additional Material and Demographics

The material that follows in this report is built around a series of tables that give a demographic portrait of *creators* and *curators* and users of various social media services.

## Creators are younger

### Do you ever post to any kind of website PHOTOS that you, yourself, have taken?

*% of internet users within each group who share photos they have taken themselves*

<b>All internet users (n=799)</b>	<b>45%</b>
Men (n=393)	43
Women (n=406)	47
<b>Age</b>	
18-29 (n=140)	67***
30-49 (n=224)	50**
50-64 (n=229)	28
65+ (n=182)	26
<b>Annual household income</b>	
Less than \$30,000/yr (n=195)	45
\$30,000-\$49,999 (n=156)	49
\$50,000-\$74,999 (n=128)	51
\$75,000+ (n=218)	41
<b>Education level</b>	
High school grad or less (n=238)	38
Some College (n=230)	48
College + (n=329)	50*

**Source:** Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project, Omnibus Survey, Aug. 2-5, 2012. N=1,005 adults ages 18 and older, including 405 interviews conducted on respondent's cell phone. The survey was conducted in English. Margin of error is +/-3.8 percentage points for internet users (n=799). \*Represents significant difference between rows.

## Do you ever post to any kind of website VIDEOS that you, yourself, have taken?

*% of internet users within each group who share videos they have taken themselves*

<b>All internet users (n=799)</b>	<b>18%</b>
Men (n=393)	17
Women (n=406)	18
<b>Age</b>	
18-29 (n=140)	33***
30-49 (n=224)	18**
50-64 (n=229)	8
65+ (n=182)	8
<b>Annual household income</b>	
Less than \$30,000/yr (n=195)	15
\$30,000-\$49,999 (n=156)	24
\$50,000-\$74,999 (n=128)	17
\$75,000+ (n=218)	16
<b>Education level</b>	
High school grad or less (n=238)	13
Some College (n=230)	23*
College + (n=329)	17

**Source:** Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project, Omnibus Survey, Aug. 2-5, 2012. N=1,005 adults ages 18 and older, including 405 interviews conducted on respondent's cell phone. The survey was conducted in English. Margin of error is +/-3.8 percentage points for internet users (n=799). \*Represents significant difference between rows.

The table below covers anyone who said she or he had taken photos and shared them on a website. It is the entire *creator* cohort.

## Photo and video creators as a group

*% of internet users within each group who share either photos or videos they have taken themselves*

<b>All internet users (n=799)</b>	<b>46%</b>
Men (n=393)	45
Women (n=406)	48
<b>Age</b>	
18-29 (n=140)	69***
30-49 (n=224)	52**
50-64 (n=229)	28
65+ (n=182)	29
<b>Annual household income</b>	
Less than \$30,000/yr (n=195)	46
\$30,000-\$49,999 (n=156)	50
\$50,000-\$74,999 (n=128)	51
\$75,000+ (n=218)	44
<b>Education level</b>	
High school grad or less (n=238)	40
Some College (n=230)	48
College + (n=329)	51*

**Source:** Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project, Omnibus Survey, Aug. 2-5, 2012. N=1,005 adults ages 18 and older, including 405 interviews conducted on respondent's cell phone. The survey was conducted in English. Margin of error is +/-3.8 percentage points for internet users (n=799). \*Represents significant difference between rows.

## Curators are more likely to be women and younger adults

### Do you ever take IMAGES that you find online and share or repost them on sites designed for sharing images with many people?

*% of internet users within each group who share photos they have found elsewhere online*

<b>All internet users (n=799)</b>	<b>35%</b>
Men (n=393)	31
Women (n=406)	40*
<b>Age</b>	
18-29 (n=140)	52***
30-49 (n=224)	38**
50-64 (n=229)	26
65+ (n=182)	17
<b>Annual household income</b>	
Less than \$30,000/yr (n=195)	43*
\$30,000-\$49,999 (n=156)	43*
\$50,000-\$74,999 (n=128)	35
\$75,000+ (n=218)	24
<b>Education level</b>	
High school grad or less (n=238)	33
Some College (n=230)	44**
College + (n=329)	30

**Source:** Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project, Omnibus Survey, Aug. 2-5, 2012. N=1,005 adults ages 18 and older, including 405 interviews conducted on respondent's cell phone. The survey was conducted in English. Margin of error is +/-3.8 percentage points for internet users (n=799). \*Represents significant difference between rows.

## Do you ever take VIDEOS that you find online and share or repost them on sites designed for sharing images with many people?

*% of internet users within each group who share videos they have found elsewhere online*

<b>All internet users (n=799)</b>	<b>25%</b>
Men (n=393)	23
Women (n=406)	27
<b>Age</b>	
18-29 (n=140)	44***
30-49 (n=224)	21*
50-64 (n=229)	18
65+ (n=182)	11
<b>Annual household income</b>	
Less than \$30,000/yr (n=195)	25
\$30,000-\$49,999 (n=156)	30
\$50,000-\$74,999 (n=128)	22
\$75,000+ (n=218)	22
<b>Education level</b>	
High school grad or less (n=238)	20
Some College (n=230)	32*
College + (n=329)	23

**Source:** Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project, Omnibus Survey, Aug. 2-5, 2012. N=1,005 adults ages 18 and older, including 405 interviews conducted on respondent's cell phone. The survey was conducted in English. Margin of error is +/-3.8 percentage points for internet users (n=799). \*Represents significant difference between rows.



The table below covers the whole cohort of those who either curate photos or videos.

## Photo and video curators as a group

*% of internet users within each group who either take photos or videos they have found online and shared them on picture-sharing sites*

<b>All internet users (n=799)</b>	<b>41%</b>
Men (n=393)	38
Women (n=406)	45
<b>Age</b>	
18-29 (n=140)	63***
30-49 (n=224)	42**
50-64 (n=229)	31*
65+ (n=182)	20
<b>Annual household income</b>	
Less than \$30,000/yr (n=195)	50*
\$30,000-\$49,999 (n=156)	48*
\$50,000-\$74,999 (n=128)	40
\$75,000+ (n=218)	29
<b>Education level</b>	
High school grad or less (n=238)	39
Some College (n=230)	50**
College + (n=329)	36

**Source:** Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project, Omnibus Survey, Aug. 2-5, 2012. N=1,005 adults ages 18 and older, including 405 interviews conducted on respondent's cell phone. The survey was conducted in English. Margin of error is +/-3.8 percentage points for internet users (n=799). \*Represents significant difference between rows.

## Social media activities

Pinterest is dominated by women.

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### Who uses Pinterest

*% of internet users within each group who use Pinterest*

<b>All internet users (n=799)</b>	<b>12%</b>
Men (n=393)	5
Women (n=406)	19*
<b>Age</b>	
18-29 (n=140)	16*
30-49 (n=224)	12*
50-64 (n=229)	13*
65+ (n=182)	4
<b>Annual household income</b>	
Less than \$30,000/yr (n=195)	11
\$30,000-\$49,999 (n=156)	8
\$50,000-\$74,999 (n=128)	16
\$75,000+ (n=218)	12
<b>Education level</b>	
High school grad or less (n=238)	8
Some College (n=230)	15
College + (n=329)	14*

**Source:** Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project, Omnibus Survey, Aug. 2-5, 2012. N=1,005 adults ages 18 and older, including 405 interviews conducted on respondent's cell phone. The survey was conducted in English. Margin of error is +/-3.8 percentage points for internet users (n=799). \*Represents significant difference between rows.

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Instagram is more likely to be used by internet users who are young adults.

## Who uses Instagram

*% of internet users within each group who use Instagram*

<b>All internet users (n=799)</b>	<b>12%</b>
Men (n=393)	11
Women (n=406)	12
<b>Age</b>	
18-29 (n=140)	27***
30-49 (n=224)	8
50-64 (n=229)	6
65+ (n=182)	4
<b>Annual household income</b>	
Less than \$30,000/yr (n=195)	8
\$30,000-\$49,999 (n=156)	14
\$50,000-\$74,999 (n=128)	9
\$75,000+ (n=218)	16*
<b>Education level</b>	
High school grad or less (n=238)	8
Some College (n=230)	15*
College + (n=329)	12

**Source:** Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project, Omnibus Survey, Aug. 2-5, 2012. N=1,005 adults ages 18 and older, including 405 interviews conducted on respondent's cell phone. The survey was conducted in English. Margin of error is +/-3.8 percentage points for internet users (n=799). \*Represents significant difference between rows.

Younger adults are more likely to use Tumblr.

## Who uses Tumblr<sup>1</sup>

*% of internet users within each group who use Tumblr*

<b>All internet users (n=799)</b>	<b>5%</b>
Men (n=393)	4
Women (n=406)	7
<b>Age</b>	
18-29 (n=140)	11**
30-49 (n=224)	4
50-64 (n=229)	2
65+ (n=182)	1
<b>Annual household income</b>	
Less than \$30,000/yr (n=195)	6
\$30,000-\$49,999 (n=156)	6
\$50,000-\$74,999 (n=128)	2
\$75,000+ (n=218)	3
<b>Education level</b>	
High school grad or less (n=238)	3
Some College (n=230)	7
College + (n=329)	5

**Source:** Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project, Omnibus Survey, Aug. 2-5, 2012. N=1,005 adults ages 18 and older, including 405 interviews conducted on respondent's cell phone. The survey was conducted in English. Margin of error is +/-3.8 percentage points for internet users (n=799). \*\*Represents significant difference between rows.

<sup>1</sup> Our question wording was as follows: "Please answer these next questions by thinking about all the ways you use the internet with computers, laptops, mobile phones, and other devices. Please tell me if you ever use the internet or an app with any of those devices to use Tumblr?" Based on the nature of the Tumblr platform, we believe our figure for Tumblr usage represents primarily the proportion of online adults who have created or used a Tumblr profile, rather than casual Tumblr readers or viewers.

In addition to getting first-ever readings on several services that have recently become popular, we also asked questions in this survey about other social networking sites and the data are shown below. As we have often found in the past, younger adults often dominate social networking sites. However, LinkedIn has a somewhat different demographic profile.

## Who uses Facebook

*% of internet users within each group who use Facebook*

<b>All internet users (n=799)</b>	<b>66%</b>
Men (n=393)	63
Women (n=406)	70
<b>Age</b>	
18-29 (n=140)	83***
30-49 (n=224)	72**
50-64 (n=229)	56*
65+ (n=182)	40
<b>Annual household income</b>	
Less than \$30,000/yr (n=195)	73*
\$30,000-\$49,999 (n=156)	75*
\$50,000-\$74,999 (n=128)	68
\$75,000+ (n=218)	57
<b>Education level</b>	
High school grad or less (n=238)	72
Some College (n=230)	63
College + (n=329)	64

**Source:** Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project, Omnibus Survey, Aug. 2-5, 2012. N=1,005 adults ages 18 and older, including 405 interviews conducted on respondent's cell phone. The survey was conducted in English. Margin of error is +/-3.8 percentage points for internet users (n=799). \*Represents significant difference between rows.

## Who uses LinkedIn

*% of internet users within each group who use LinkedIn*

<b>All internet users (n=799)</b>	<b>20%</b>
Men (n=393)	21
Women (n=406)	19
<b>Age</b>	
18-29 (n=140)	16
30-49 (n=224)	25*
50-64 (n=229)	22*
65+ (n=182)	11
<b>Annual household income</b>	
Less than \$30,000/yr (n=195)	7
\$30,000-\$49,999 (n=156)	20*
\$50,000-\$74,999 (n=128)	24*
\$75,000+ (n=218)	34**
<b>Education level</b>	
High school grad or less (n=238)	7
Some College (n=230)	17*
College + (n=329)	36**

**Source:** Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project, Omnibus Survey, Aug. 2-5, 2012. N=1,005 adults ages 18 and older, including 405 interviews conducted on respondent's cell phone. The survey was conducted in English. Margin of error is +/-3.8 percentage points for internet users (n=799). \*Represents significant difference between rows.

## Who uses Twitter

% of internet users within each group who use Twitter

<b>All internet users (n=799)</b>	<b>16%</b>
Men (n=393)	17
Women (n=406)	15
<b>Age</b>	
18-29 (n=140)	27***
30-49 (n=224)	15*
50-64 (n=229)	12
65+ (n=182)	7
<b>Annual household income</b>	
Less than \$30,000/yr (n=195)	15
\$30,000-\$49,999 (n=156)	14
\$50,000-\$74,999 (n=128)	15
\$75,000+ (n=218)	19
<b>Education level</b>	
High school grad or less (n=238)	12
Some College (n=230)	21*
College + (n=329)	16

**Source:** Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project, Omnibus Survey, Aug. 2-5, 2012. N=1,005 adults ages 18 and older, including 405 interviews conducted on respondent's cell phone. The survey was conducted in English. Margin of error is +/-3.8 percentage points for internet users (n=799). \*Represents significant difference between rows.

## Methodology

## **August 2012 Omnibus Week 1**

Prepared by Princeton Survey Research Associates International

August 2012

The PSRAI August 2012 Omnibus Week 1 obtained telephone interviews with a nationally representative sample of 1,005 adults living in the continental United States. Telephone interviews were conducted by landline (600) and cell phone (405, including 196 without a landline phone). The survey was conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates International (PSRAI). Interviews were done in English by Princeton Data Source from August 2-5, 2012. Statistical results are weighted to correct known demographic discrepancies. The margin of sampling error for the complete set of weighted data is  $\pm 3.7$  percentage points.