

Press release

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Deloitte news release – East or west, phone is best

Global Mobile Consumer Survey Belgium 2016

Brussels, Belgium – October 12, 2016

- Survey highlights Belgian consumers' smartphone habits
- People tend to use their mobile at busy moments, rather than at moments of rest
- 3 out of 4 Belgians own a smartphone as well as a laptop
- 23% use their mobile phone to browse shopping websites/apps on a weekly basis, but only 4% use their phone to pay for a product

Deloitte's Global Mobile Consumer Survey, a multi-country study of mobile phone users around the world, has revealed that a mere nine years after the launch of the first full touchscreen smartphone, mobile is everywhere. The fact that more than half of Belgian mobile users reach for their phones within 30 minutes of waking up illustrates that our phone rarely leaves our side and that it plays a role in many of our daily rituals.

"Our research, which analyses the mobile usage habits of Belgian consumers, reveals that the Belgian public favours smartphones over all other devices. They want to be able to conveniently connect wherever they are, at any time of the day," comments Vincent Fosty, TMT Industry Leader Deloitte. "Strikingly, people use their phone more while watching TV or when they are at work, than during periods of rest like when on a train or on a bus."

Smartphone growth era continues

In Belgium, the smartphone's success has overshadowed the performance of other devices. Tablets and laptops are much less likely to be bought in 2016 than in 2013, but the intent to purchase smartphones remains constant.

The app is one of the most disruptive innovations of the last decade and has been pivotal to the commercial success of the smartphone. The quantity of apps downloaded on smartphones varies. The main reason for not downloading more apps is the limited added value of these extra apps in the eyes of the user.

Today, three out of four Belgians owns a smartphone as well as a laptop. Generally, younger age groups own more portable devices than people aged 55+, but tablet ownership is lower amongst younger people. One out of four smartphones has an after-life as the majority of users keep one smartphone as a spare.

Despite all the fuss around the Internet of Things, the purchase intent for connected devices (smart home appliances, smart watch, fitness band, ...) remains particularly low in Belgium, resulting in no connected device reaching more than 20% market penetration.

4G adoption rises while Wi-Fi remains important

In the last three years 4G has grown to become the predominant data network and still has the potential to grow further. Nevertheless, the reliance on Wi-Fi among smartphone owners is still high with two out of three persons most often choosing Wi-Fi.

Overall, cost remains the driving factor for choosing a mobile operator, and its importance is growing. Having chosen their mobile operator, Belgians increasingly tend to subscribe to other services provided by that operator.

Texting and browsing prevail

According to Deloitte's research, only one out of four people aged between 18 and 24 uses their mobile phone to make a call on a daily basis. Texting remains the most popular communication method among all age groups. Social networks have taken over email, which nevertheless remains very popular.

Browsing a shopping website/app is the most performed shopping-related activity. 23% of Belgians use their mobile phone to browse shopping websites/apps on a weekly basis, but only 4% use their phone to pay for a product.

"Banks and store chains still need to do a tremendous amount of work to increase the mobile usage for financial transactions," adds Kasper Peters, strategy director for the financial services industry at Deloitte. "Almost half of the respondents find no added value in the current mobile payment offering in the Belgian market, which is partly due to the very limited mobile financial transaction offering in Belgium today."

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About the Mobile Consumer Survey 2016

Deloitte's Global Mobile Consumer Survey is a multi-country study of mobile phone users around the world. The 2016 study comprises of 53,000 respondents across 31 countries and five continents.

Belgium-related data cited in this report are based on a nationally representative sample of 2,000 consumers aged 18-75. The sample follows a country specific quota on age, gender, region, working and socio-economic status. Fieldwork took place during May to June 2016 and was carried out online by Ipsos MORI, an independent research firm, based on a question set provided by Deloitte. For more information visit http://www2.deloitte.com/be/en/pages/technology-media-and-telecommunications/articles/Global_mobile_consumer_trends_BE_2016.html.

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