

Press Release

Contact: Isabel Box
Title: Marketing & Communications Manager
Tel: +32 (0)2 302 25 51
Mobile: +32 (0)485 31 79 63
Email: ibox@deloitte.com

Belgian smartphone accessories and wearables market is booming

In 2019, the wearable ownership has reached 22%, and Belgians own on average 5.8 accessories per person.

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With smartphone ownership expected to plateau in the coming years, the focus is shifting towards the smartphone ecosystem. Vendors are increasingly motivated to drive sales of smartphone accessories and wearables, according to Deloitte Belgium. The organisation's annual 2019 Global Mobile Consumer Survey found that, with an average of 5.8 accessories per person, Belgians own multiple accessories and wearables for multiple activities, such as work, commute, sports. Younger age groups own on average eight accessories, while 65-75 year-olds have four.

Belgians own an average of 5.8 accessories per person

While the smartphone base is aging, the accessories market is booming, with cable chargers, phone cases and wired earphones being the most popular smartphone accessories in Belgium. The delicate nature of lightweight smartphones and increasing prices of high-end smartphones are driving consumers to purchase accessories to protect them from physical damage.

"Thanks to technological advancements, the growing demand for wireless mobile accessories such as Bluetooth headsets and wireless chargers is one of the crucial trends that is driving the market of mobile accessories. With a higher willingness to spend, iPhone owners are more likely to buy more accessories," said **Vincent Fosty, Deloitte Belgium's Technology, Media and Telecommunications Industry Leader.**

This increased willingness to spend, in combination with the communication convenience and health monitoring features offered by smart watches and fitness bands, are driving the uptake of the electronic wearables market. During the last four years, the wearable market grew on average seven times faster than the smartphone market and 14 times faster than laptops and tablets. In 2019, 22 percent of Belgians own a wearable such as a fitness band, smart watch, and three out of five use them on a daily basis.

Belgians' favourite mobile activities: watching videos and shopping

At 93 percent daily use, the smartphone is further consolidating its position as the favoured device. Especially amongst younger generations, the phone is the preferred device for a large majority of applications. They are the so-called mobile first generation.

More than one third of Belgians read the news every day, and more than one fifth watch short videos or live posts, making these the two most popular media-related activities that people do on a smartphone, closely

followed by watching videos on instant messaging networks. Compared to last year, watching short videos on a daily basis has increased by five percentage points. This growth is driven by the over the top (OTT) providers pushing more and more content into the market and a boosted application market, with Belgian players launching their apps to be present in the viewers' pockets.

Fosty: "Facebook remains the most popular communications platform across all age groups at 64 percent daily usage, followed by Instagram and Snapchat. To allow for this increased media consumption, telcos are launching unlimited mobile data bundles." Orange (Eagle tariff plans), Proximus (Mobilus XL Unlimited) and Telenet (Kong Unlimited) have all launched their unlimited data plans. New tariff plans also offer the possibility to choose one or multiple apps with unlimited data usage as part of the package.

In 2019, 63 percent of smartphone users purchased some kind of product or service using their smartphone. Forty-five percent of respondents bought clothing, footwear and accessories, followed closely by events at 44 percent. Smartphone accessories and holidays & travel close the top 3 for 43 percent of Belgian smartphone users.

Half of all smartphone owners play games on their smartphone and 30% play while commuting

More than 70 percent of 18-24 year olds play games on their smartphones, compared to 64 percent of 25-34 year olds and 54 percent of 35-44 year olds. Compared to 2018, the number of people who play games on their smartphone has increased by nine percent. Interestingly, the percentage of women playing games on their mobile phone (52 percent) is higher compared to men (48 percent).

"Half of all Belgian smartphone owners play games on their smartphone. The younger the age group, the more often they play games on their smartphone. Belgium is home to 4.2 million active gamers, who spent an estimated €302 million on gaming in 2017. Our country ranks number 31 on the list of the world's largest games markets," says **Fosty**. Whilst we expect casual gaming to continue increase, game subscription services, novel technologies such as virtual and augmented reality and enhanced connectivity like 5G and cloud streaming will continue to impact the mobile gaming industry in terms of what and how we play.

Mobile gamers in Belgium play during different times of day, with more than half playing when they are relaxing at home. Around one third of gamers plays when commuting. Maybe surprisingly, 28 percent plays while watching TV and four percent plays while eating out.

Only 29 percent of all mobile gamers spends money on games, with in-app credits being most popular. Only 16 percent pays more than €1 per month, five percent pays more than €20 per month.

About the Global Mobile Consumer Survey

The Deloitte Global Mobile Consumer Survey provides unique insight into the mobile behaviour of nearly 44,150 respondents across 28 countries, with the sample for Belgium covering 2,000 respondents aged 18-75. The largest consumer survey of its kind, this year's report compiled four years of data.

Learn more about the survey at www.deloitte.com/be/mobile-consumer

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