

Canadians at work: technology enables more flexibility, but longer hours too; checking in is the new normal

Overall, Canadians view mobile technology, despite increase in working hours, as a positive thing

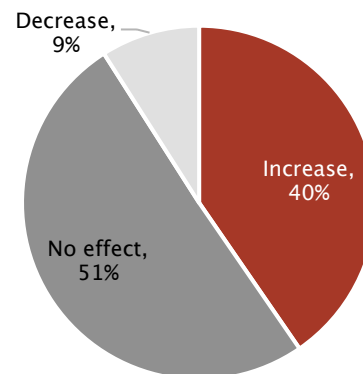
February 09, 2015 – Working Canadians say the use of mobile technology as a tool of the trade has them working more, checking in more often, but on balance, they're fine with the added flexibility.

Asked how important the internet, email and cell phones are for doing their job, two-in-three (65%) working respondents described one or more of these tools as "vital". Those are among the results of an Angus Reid Institute survey of more than 1500 Canadian adults.

Key Findings:

- Two-in-five (40%) say technology has them working more hours, while half (51%) say it's had no effect. Only one-in-ten (9%) say technology actually reduces the amount of time they spend working.
- Despite being on the job more because of technology and mobile devices, the majority (71%) of Canadians see this as an "overall positive" for working people.
- This feeling intensifies among those who use mobile technology for work the most, rising to 86 per cent among the so-called "tech intense". Those who don't use mobile technology to do their jobs are evenly split on whether it's a good or bad thing.
- Many Canadians who use technology at work admit they're slaves to the flashing light of their devices: 41 per cent say they check email outside of office hours, while roughly three-in-ten respond to some of these emails and/or call or text about work after hours.

Have technologies such as the Internet, email and cell/smartphones affected the amount of time you spend working?



METHODOLOGY:

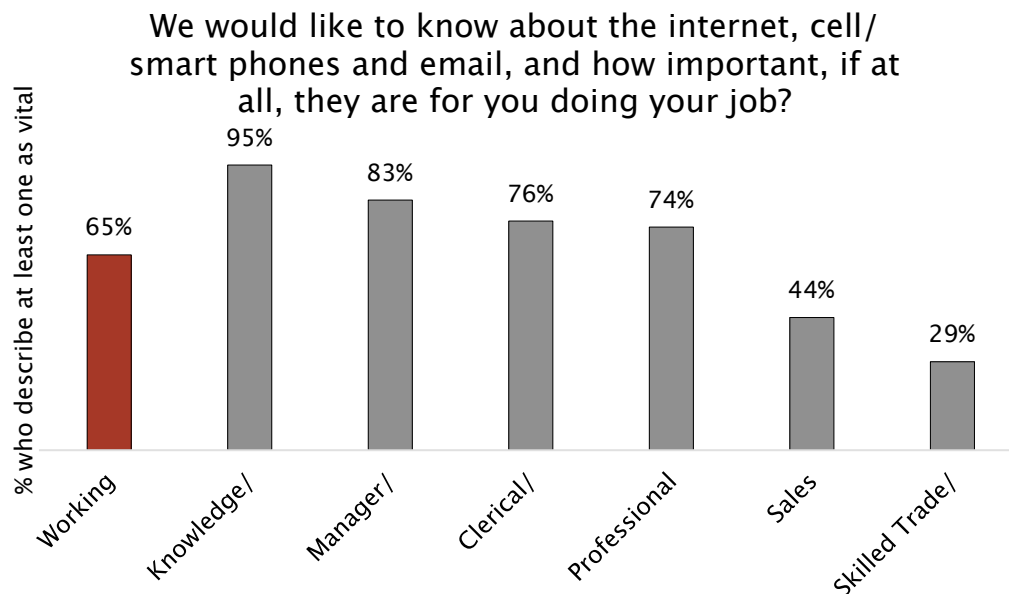
The Angus Reid Institute conducted an online survey of 1508 Canadian adults who are Angus Reid Forum panelists from January 15-19, 2015. A probability sample of this size carries a margin of error of +/- 2.5%, 19 times out of 20.

This survey was self-commissioned and paid for by ARI.

Detailed charts, tables and regional results are found at the end of this release.

Who's using what – and how often?

Half of working Canadians surveyed (51%) described email and the internet as “vital” to their job, while one-quarter (24%) said both were “very important”. Mobile phones are somewhat less critical, but almost half (45%) said it is vital or very important they have one on the job. As might be expected, the indispensability of technology on the job depends on the industry in which Canadians work:



- Those who work in the knowledge and creative sectors are almost unanimous in describing one or more of these tools as “vital” to their job (95%).
- This was also the strong majority assessment of those who identify as owners, managers or executives (83%), and among clerical and administrative workers (76%).
- Just under half (44%) of those in retail, sales and service, and hospitality say mobile technologies are vital to their job. Less than a third (29%) of those working in skilled trades and labour sectors say the same.

There is a significant difference in the role of technology at work across educational and income strata. Those with a university degree are almost twice as likely as their counterparts who did not go beyond high school to describe one or more of these mobile communication tools as “vital” to their job (83% and 45% respectively).

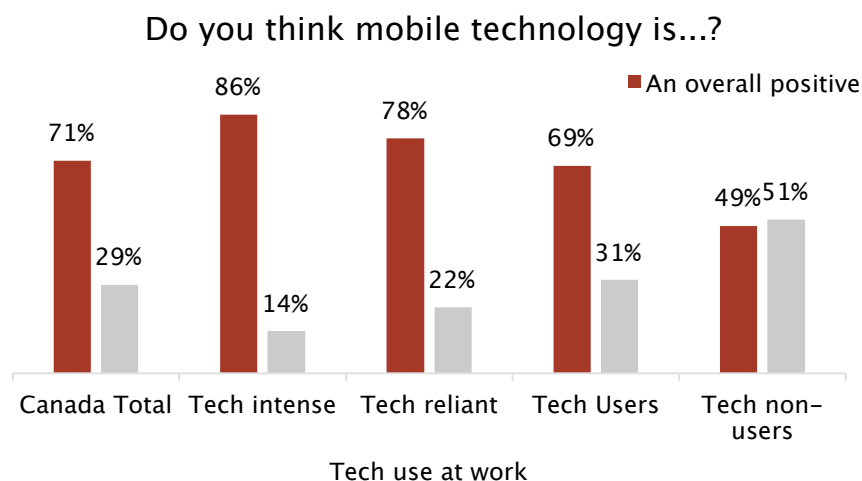
The pattern is consistent but somewhat more muted across household income strata (declining from 74% in the higher income group to 54% of those in lower income households). The survey results show very little differences in Canadians’ reliance on technology at work across age groupings.

Mobile technology: an overall positive at work

Canadians see mobile technology at work as a good thing, with seven-in-ten (71%) of all surveyed Canadians saying, “Mobile technology is an overall positive for working people because it allows for more flexibility with hours and remote work.” That’s more than twice as many as those who said, “Mobile technology is an overall negative because now people are expected to work and respond to emails in their personal time,” (29% of respondents).

Differences in outlook occur depending on how much working Canadians rely on mobile technology. Those who are more “technology intense” – that is, they consider all mobile technology tools to be vital to their jobs – are the strongest believers that mobile technology has been an overall positive for working people (86%).

Those who are “technology reliant” – saying at least *one* of the tools is vital, along with those who are “technology users” share this view, but less enthusiastically. Of note, the small group who don't use technology at work are evenly split on this question of the overall impact of technology on working Canadians.



Flexibility is the reward, but many see longer hours too:

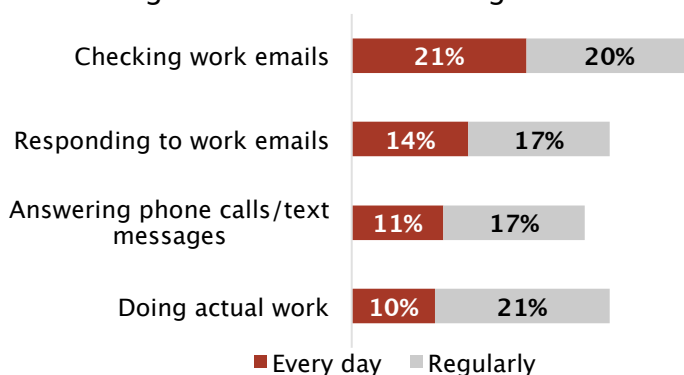
Asked whether mobile technology has allowed respondents more flexibility in the hours they work, half (49%) say it has indeed done so, while the other half said this has not been their experience.

- The flexibility dividends are very much related to workers’ reliance on technology at work. Three-quarters of those who are most “technology intense” report enhanced flexibility in their hours of work, versus one-half of “technology users”.
- While a sizeable proportion of working Canadians acknowledge the flexibility benefit, almost as many (40%) report that it has increased the amount of time they spend working. Only one-in-ten (9%) report that technology has delivered decreased hours of work. Half (51%) said there has been no effect one-way or the other.
- Notably, there is a significant overlap between those reporting greater flexibility and increased hours. Fully half (54%) of those who report greater flexibility also report increased time working.

Checking in is the new normal:

Other findings from the survey strongly underline the fact that longer hours, or at least after-hours, work is a widespread phenomenon for working Canadians. Those using technology at work were asked how often, if ever, they did the following activities outside of regular hours. The results are visible in the chart below:

How often, if at all, are you doing each of the following activities outside of regular office hours?



Of course, each of these after-hours work activities is most prevalent among the “usual suspects” we’ve been looking at: those most reliant on technology at work and, correspondingly, those in occupations with high representation of these groups of workers.

And what about age? The results do show the youngest cohort (those 18-24) more likely to report some afterhours work activities than those who are older, but the differences are not very strong or very consistent.

The **Angus Reid Institute (ARI)** was founded in October 2014 by pollster and sociologist, Dr. Angus Reid. It has the status of a registered charity in Canada. ARI is a national, not-for-profit, non-partisan public opinion research organization established to advance education by commissioning, conducting and disseminating to the public accessible and impartial statistical data, research and policy analysis on economics, political science, philanthropy, public administration, domestic and international affairs and other socio-economic issues of importance to Canada and its world.

We would like to know about various technologies and tools and how important, if at all, they are for you doing your job? VITAL/IMPORTANT							
	Working Canadians (888)	Occupation					
		Professional (164)	Knowledge/Creative/IT (124)	Manager/Owner/Exec (116)	Clerical/Admin (155)	Sales/Service/Hospitality (140)	Skilled Trade/Labour (168)
The Internet	75%	83%	95%	92%	91%	60%	42%
Cell phone /smart phone	46%	51%	60%	72%	20%	35%	44%
Email	75%	85%	97%	95%	92%	50%	42%
At least one is vital	65%	74%	95%	83%	76%	44%	29%

We would like to know about various technologies and tools and how important, if at all, they are for you doing your job? The INTERNET							
	Working Canadians (888)	Occupation					
		Professional (164)	Knowledge/Creative/IT (124)	Manager/Owner/Exec (116)	Clerical/Admin (155)	Sales/Service/Hospitality (140)	Skilled Trade/Labour (168)
Vital I could not do my job without it	51%	59%	84%	68%	57%	37%	15%
Important	24%	24%	10%	24%	34%	23%	27%
Not too important	10%	11%	4%	5%	7%	10%	23%
I do not use this at work at all	14%	6%	1%	3%	3%	31%	35%

We would like to know about various technologies and tools and how important, if at all, they are for you doing your job?
Cell phone or smart phone

	Working Canadians (888)	Occupation					
		Professional (164)	Knowledge/Creative/IT (124)	Manager/Owner/Exec (116)	Clerical/Admin (155)	Sales/Service/Hospitality (140)	Skilled Trade/Labour (168)
Vital I could not do my job without it	20%	21%	26%	41%	6%	15%	20%
Important	25%	30%	34%	31%	14%	20%	25%
Not too important	20%	19%	24%	11%	23%	16%	21%
I do not use this at work at all	35%	30%	16%	17%	57%	49%	35%

We would like to know about various technologies and tools and how important, if at all, they are for you doing your job?
Email

	Working Canadians (888)	Occupation					
		Professional (164)	Knowledge/Creative/IT (124)	Manager/Owner/Exec (116)	Clerical/Admin (155)	Sales/Service/Hospitality (140)	Skilled Trade/Labour (168)
Vital I could not do my job without it	51%	56%	88%	76%	64%	25%	14%
Important	24%	29%	9%	20%	28%	25%	28%
Not too important	10%	9%	1%	4%	6%	14%	23%
I do not use this at work at all	15%	7%	1%	1%	2%	36%	35%

We'd like to get people's overall views on the impact of mobile communications technology (smart phones, email, internet) on working people. Which of the following two broad statements best describes how you feel?

	Total (1508)	Occupation							
		Professional (164)	Knowledge /Creative/IT (124)	Manager/ Owner/Exec (116)	Clerical /Admin (155)	Sales/ Service/ Hospitality (140)	Skilled Trade /Labour (168)	Not working/ Student (227)	Retired (399)
Mobile technology is an OVERALL POSITIVE for working people - it allows for more flexibility with hours and remote	71%	68%	76%	69%	69%	74%	71%	70%	70%
Mobile technology is an OVERALL NEGATIVE - now people are expected to work and respond to emails in their personal time	29%	32%	24%	31%	31%	26%	29%	30%	30%

We'd like to get people's overall views on the impact of mobile communications technology (smart phones, email, internet) on working people. Which of the following two broad statements best describes how you feel?

	Tech Use			
	Tech intense (111)	Tech reliant (517)	Tech user (236)	Tech non-users (75)*
Mobile technology is an OVERALL POSITIVE for working people - it allows for more flexibility with hours and remote	86%	78%	69%	49%
Mobile technology is an OVERALL NEGATIVE - now people are expected to work and respond to emails in their personal time	14%	22%	31%	51%

We'd like to get people's overall views on the impact of mobile communications technology (smart phones, email, internet) on working people. Which of the following two broad statements best describes how you feel?

	Total (1508)	Region						
		BC (202)	AB (151)	SK (101)	MB (101)	ON (500)	PQ (352)	ATL (101)
Mobile technology is an OVERALL POSITIVE for working people because it allows for more flexibility with hours and remote	71%	67%	78%	66%	67%	69%	72%	76%
Mobile technology is an OVERALL NEGATIVE because now people are expected to work and respond to emails in their personal	29%	33%	22%	34%	33%	31%	28%	24%

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We'd like to get people's overall views on the impact of mobile communications technology (smart phones, email, internet) on working people. Which of the following two broad statements best describes how you feel?

	Total (1508)	Gender		Age		
		Men (745)	Women (763)	18 – 34 (405)	35 – 54 (572)	55+ (531)
Mobile technology is an OVERALL POSITIVE for working people - it allows for more flexibility with hours and remote	71%	69%	72%	74%	69%	69%
Mobile technology is an OVERALL NEGATIVE - now people are expected to work and respond to emails in their personal time	29%	31%	28%	26%	31%	31%

Have technologies such as the Internet, email and cell/smartphones increased or decreased the amount of time you spend working, or have they had no effect?

Working Canadians who use Tech (813)		Occupation					
		Professional (161)	Knowledge/ Creative/IT (122)	Manager/ Owner/Exec (115)	Clerical /Admin (153)	Sales/ Service/ Hospitality (110)	Skilled Trade /Labour (136)
Increase	40%	46%	59%	51%	37%	34%	16%
No effect	51%	41%	34%	36%	61%	58%	74%
Decrease	9%	13%	8%	13%	2%	8%	10%

Do technologies such as the Internet, email and cell/smart phones allow you more flexibility in the hours you work?

Working Canadians who use Tech (813)		Occupation					
		Professional (161)	Knowledge/ Creative/IT (122)	Manager/ Owner/Exec (115)	Clerical /Admin (153)	Sales/ Service/ Hospitality (110)	Skilled Trade /Labour (136)
Yes	49%	56%	76%	64%	35%	40%	28%
No	51%	44%	24%	36%	65%	60%	72%

Have technologies such as the Internet, email and cell/smartphones increased or decreased the amount of time you spend working, or have they had no effect?				
Working Canadians who use Tech (813)		Tech Use		
		Tech die hard (111)	Tech reliant (517)	Tech user (236)
Increase	40%	60%	48%	21%
No effect	51%	29%	42%	72%
Decrease	9%	10%	10%	8%

Do technologies such as the Internet, email and cell/smart phones allow you more flexibility in the hours you work?				
Working Canadians who use Tech (813)		Tech Use		
		Tech die hard (111)	Tech reliant (517)	Tech user (236)
Yes	49%	76%	63%	25%
No	51%	24%	37%	75%

Have technologies such as the Internet, email and cell/smartphones increased or decreased the amount of time you spend working, or have they had no effect?				
Working Canadians who use Tech (813)		More Flexibility		
		Yes (386)	No (427)	
Increase	40%	54%	27%	
No effect	51%	35%	66%	
Decrease	9%	11%	7%	

How often, if at all, are you doing each of the following activities outside of regular office hours? EVERY DAY/REGULARLY							
Working Canadians who use Tech (813)		Occupation					
		Professional (161)	Knowledge/Creative/IT (122)	Manager/Owner/Exec (115)	Clerical/Admin (153)	Sales/Service/Hospitality (110)	Skilled Trade/Labour (136)
Checking email	41%	47%	55%	65%	24%	31%	28%
Responding to email	31%	35%	43%	47%	19%	26%	21%
Answering calls or texts	27%	26%	28%	41%	14%	31%	28%
Doing actual work	31%	42%	35%	49%	17%	20%	24%
Do at least one of these every day/regularly	53%	60%	64%	74%	29%	47%	48%

How often, if at all, are you doing each of the following activities outside of regular office hours? EVERY DAY/REGULARLY				
Working Canadians who use Tech (813)		Tech Use		
		Tech die hard (111)	Tech reliant (517)	Tech user (236)
Checking email	41%	79%	51%	26%
Responding to email	31%	64%	39%	17%
Answering calls or texts	27%	55%	35%	19%
Doing actual work	31%	52%	36%	24%
Do at least one of these every day/regularly	53%	87%	63%	40%