

Communication Preferences For Older People Report 2024

**Council on The Ageing
(COTA)**

Western Australia



Background Issues

The emerging growth of digital technology has opened up various possibilities for long distance communication because people rely heavily on technology on a day to day basis. The requirement for people, including older people, to communicate through technology, is essential in today's society. Rapid changes intensified by the emergency of Covid-19 have forced older people to learn and adapt to new technology. These changes may seem overwhelming at times.

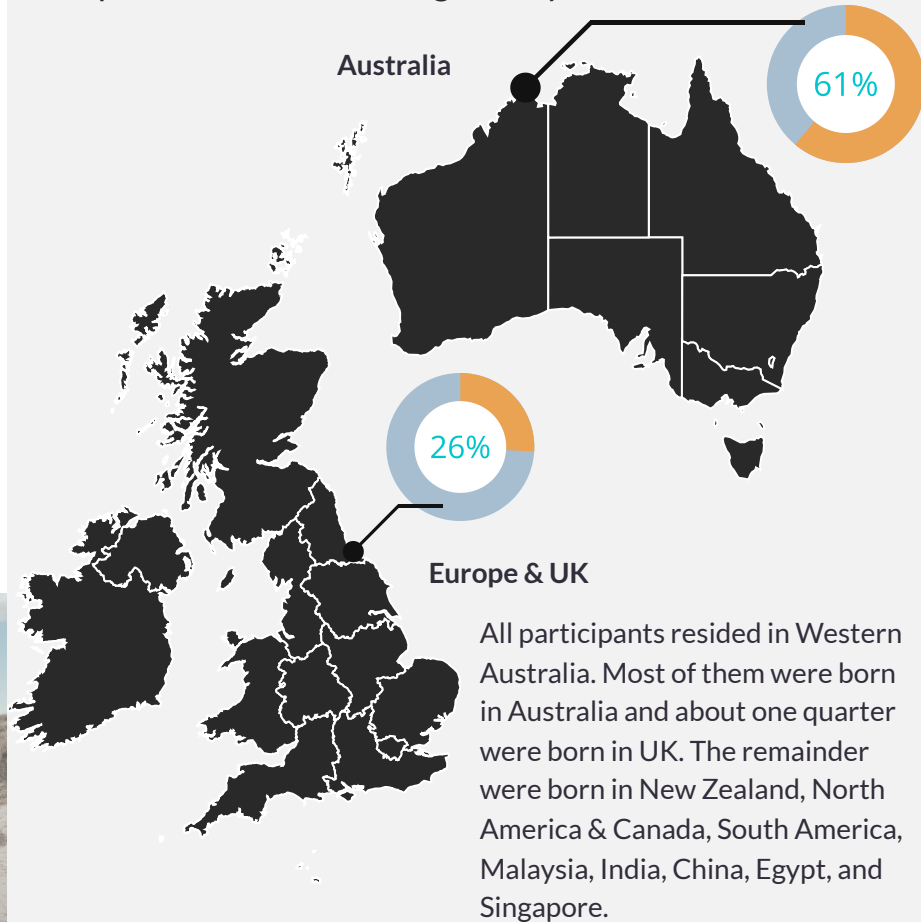


Challenges Affecting Communication Preferences For Older People in WA:

- ▶ Lifestyle and Habits
- ▶ Fear: Uncertainty, Scams
- ▶ Technology Adaptation
- ▶ Ageing: Medical Issues

Methodology

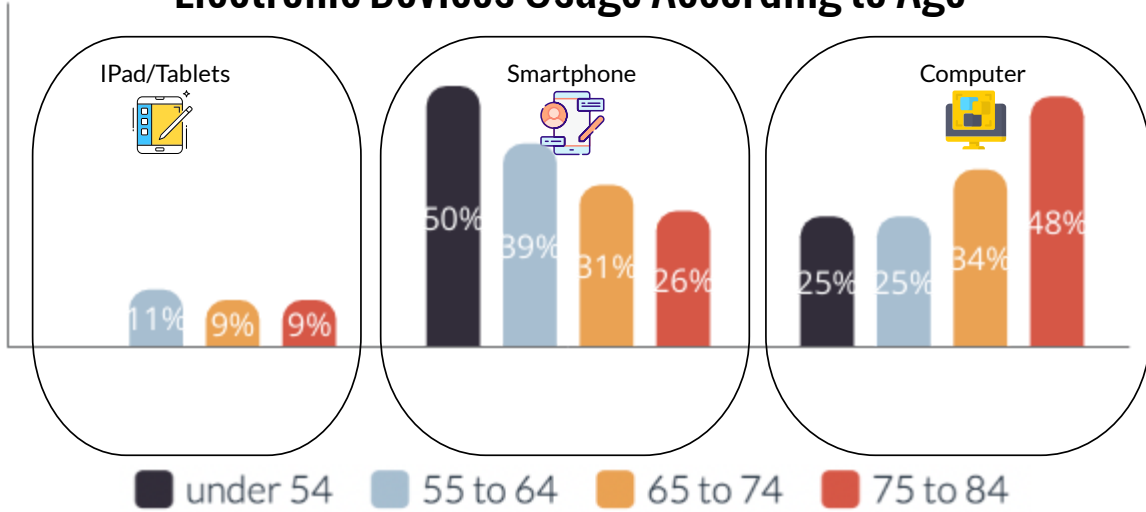
The survey was conducted through both online and via hardcopy in Western Australia. The 10 to 15 minute survey was completed by approximately 560 respondents who were aged 50 years and above.



Key Findings

- Younger people in WA use smartphones the most, whereas older adults in WA prefer computers.
- Females are more involved in social media compared to males.
- The main technology barriers for participants are the complication and confusion of user interface as well as the phone call related problems and long waiting times.
- Email is the most preferred tool to receive information. However, emails are often bombarded with too much information.

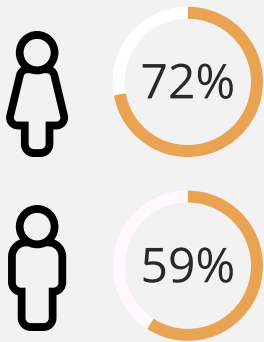
Electronic Devices Usage According to Age



Of the respondents, **50%** of the users of smartphones are under 54 years old. The percentage of smartphone users decreases as age increases.

Of the respondents, **48%** of the users of computers are 75 to 84 years old. The percentage of computer users increases as age increases.

Social Media Usage



Female use social media more often compare to male

Reason for Not using Electronic Devices

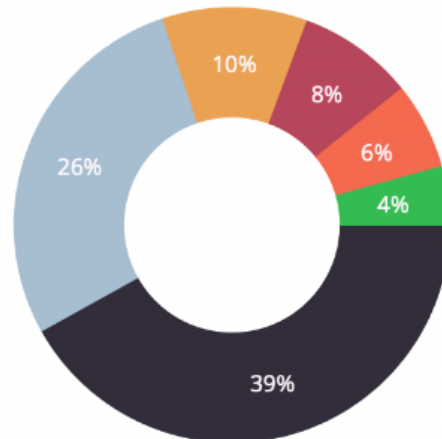
31% Of participants said
Technology changes too quickly

10% Of participants said
High Cost

16% Of participants said
Complexity

4% Of participants said
Can't be bothered

Main Barriers in Communicating with Organisations:



Lack of clarity/ or confusion in user interface websites
 Long waiting times
 Limited Technology knowledge
 Dealing with geographically distant call centres
 Over use of emails
 Concern about Scams

Communication Preferences



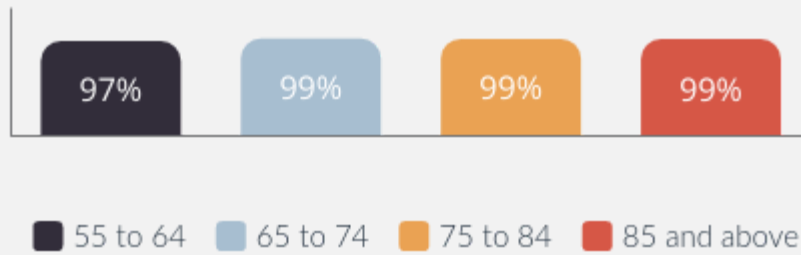
Email is the main preference for receiving most information EXCEPT for Legal Advice



100%

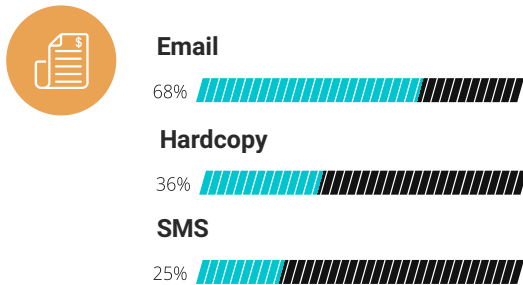
of participants **under 54** use email multiple days a day

Email Usage

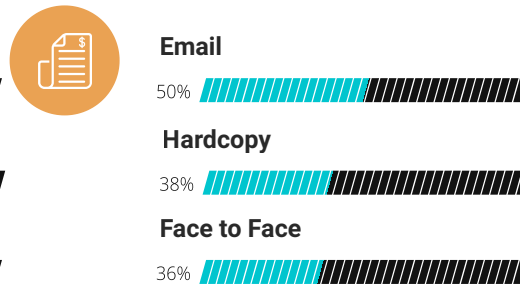


Communication Preferences for Different Types of Communication

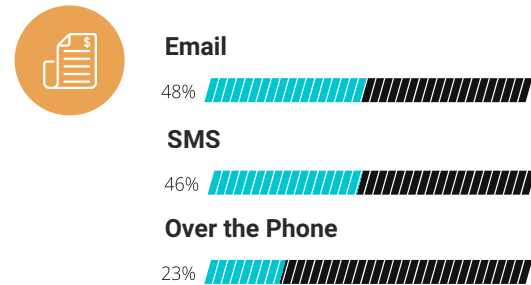
Bills and Payments



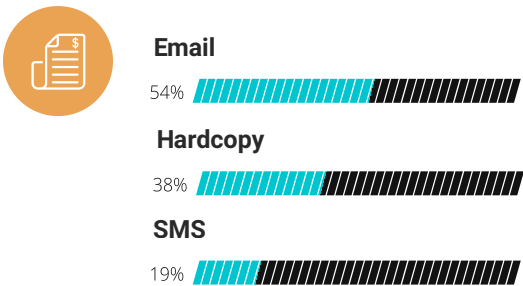
Financial Advice/Information:



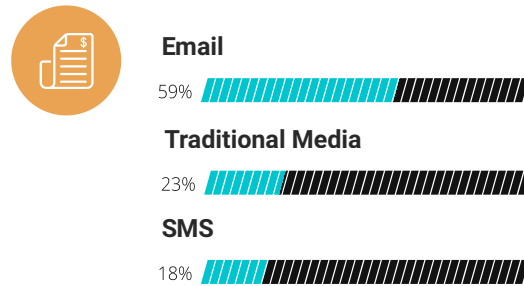
Emergency and Privacy:



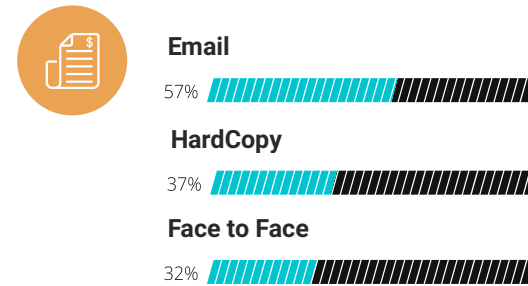
Information from Government



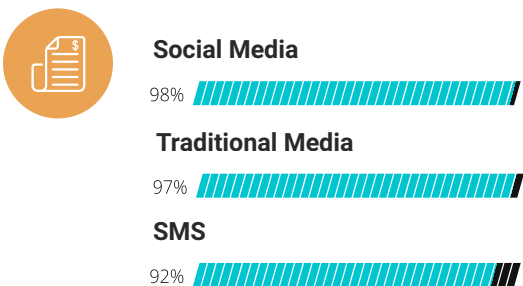
Social Information



Health Care Information:



Legal Advice



Community Service Advice

