



Nearly One in Five Internet Users Regret Online Behavior

*** Complete Tables for Poll Appended ***

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This Marist Poll Reports:

Former Congressman Anthony Weiner's sexting scandal sent shock waves throughout the nation. But, can American Internet users relate to Mr. Weiner's questionable online behavior?

Although 82% of Internet users nationally say they have never sent or said anything over the Internet that they regret, a notable 18% have.

Younger Internet users are more likely than older ones to have engaged in regrettable online actions. 24% of Internet users younger than 45 years old compared with 13% of those 45 and older report this to be the case. And, men who use the Internet -- 21% -- are slightly more likely than female Internet users -- 15% -- to have sent or said something online they wish they could take back.

In general, what kind of impact does social media like Facebook have on relationships? Half of Internet users nationwide -- 50% -- think social media does more harm than good. About one-third -- 33% -- report social media does more good than harm, and 17% are unsure. Similar proportions of adults overall share these views. 51% of residents think social media does more harm than good while nearly three in ten adults -- 29% -- think it has a positive impact. 20% are unsure.

How the Survey was Conducted

Nature of the Sample: National Poll of 1,003 Adults

This survey of 1,003 adults was conducted on June 15th through June 23rd, 2011. Adults 18 years of age and older residing in the continental United States were interviewed by telephone. Telephone numbers were selected based upon a list of telephone exchanges from throughout the nation. The exchanges were selected to ensure that each region was represented in proportion to its population. To increase coverage, this land-line sample was supplemented by respondents reached through random dialing of cell phone numbers. The two samples were then combined. Results are statistically significant within ± 3.0 percentage points. There are 791 Internet users. The results for this subset are statistically significant within ± 3.5 percentage points. The error margin increases for cross-tabulations.

Nature of the Sample: Adults

Nature of the Sample - National Adults		
		National Adults
		Col %
National Adults		100%
Registered Voters		80%
Internet Users		79%
Region	Northeast	19%
	Midwest	22%
	South	37%
	West	22%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	51%
	\$50,000 or more	49%
Race	White	67%
	African American	10%
	Latino	11%
	Other	11%
Race	White	67%
	Non-white	33%
Age	Under 45	42%
	45 or older	58%
Generation	Millennials (18-30)	21%
	Gen X (31-46)	25%
	Baby Boomers (47-65)	33%
	Silent-Greatest (Over 65)	21%
Gender	Men	49%
	Women	51%
Interview Type	Landline	74%
	Cell Phone	26%

Marist Poll National Adults: Interviews conducted June 15th through June 23rd, 2011, N=1003 MOE +/- 3%. Totals may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Personal Online Practices

Asked of National Internet Users

Question Wording: Have you, yourself, ever sent or said anything over the Internet that you regret? If you have never used the Internet to send something, please say so.

		Internet Users	
		Have you, yourself, ever sent or said anything over the Internet that you regret? If you have never used the Internet to send something, please say so.	
		Yes	No
		Row %	Row %
Internet Users		18%	82%
Region	Northeast	19%	81%
	Midwest	16%	84%
	South	16%	84%
	West	24%	76%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	13%	87%
	\$50,000 or more	24%	76%
Age	Under 45	24%	76%
	45 or older	13%	87%
Gender	Men	21%	79%
	Women	15%	85%
Interview Type	Landline	17%	83%
	Cell Phone	22%	78%

Marist Poll National Internet Users: Interviews conducted June 15th through June 23rd, 2011, N=791 MOE +/- 3.5%. Totals may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Social Media: More Good Than Harm or More Harm Than Good?

Asked of National Internet Users

Question Wording: In general, do you think social media like Facebook does more harm than good or more good than harm to relationships?

		National Adults		
		In general, do you think social media like Facebook does more harm than good or more good than harm to relationships?		
		More harm than good	More good than harm	Unsure
		Row %	Row %	Row %
National Adults		51%	29%	20%
Internet Users		50%	33%	17%
Region	Northeast	53%	29%	18%
	Midwest	53%	27%	20%
	South	53%	26%	21%
	West	44%	38%	18%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	53%	26%	21%
	\$50,000 or more	50%	34%	16%
Age	Under 45	50%	38%	13%
	45 or older	52%	23%	25%
Gender	Men	51%	30%	19%
	Women	51%	29%	20%
Interview Type	Landline	53%	29%	17%
	Cell Phone	44%	30%	27%

Marist Poll National Adults: Interviews conducted June 15th through June 23rd, 2011, N=1003 MOE +/- 3%. Totals may not add to 100 due to rounding.