

Article for February 18, 2015

I consider myself pretty computer-literate. I can troubleshoot some minor computer errors and can set up my printers and most other plug-and-play devices! I don't mind learning new software applications and am much quicker than I used to be to update, even though I know the program has changed and I will need to work through the new parts!

I am, however, a little slower when it comes to social media! Yes, I Facebook. Yes, I tweet. Check out www.facebook.com/MadisonCountyOfficeOfEmergencyManagement and "Like" our page! Follow us on Twitter @EMC_Mad_Co_Tx. We try to share information that might help our citizens to prepare and plan for emergencies, as well as information on threats, incidents, or weather conditions. We like to engage you and welcome your feedback.

Recently, we posted a question about what type of social media sites our "friends" use. It was interesting to see the results! We had the usual Facebook, Pinterest, Vine, Instagram, and YouTube. We had one or two different apps, too. The interesting thing to me is the diversity of the apps, and the diversity of their audiences.

According to Pew Research Center, from a survey conducted in September 2014, "Facebook remains by far the most popular social media site. While its growth has slowed, the level of user engagement has increased. Other platforms like Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest and LinkedIn say significant increases over the past year in the proportion of online adults who now use their sites."

The part that I truly find interesting is in regards to the age of the users on the various sites and apps. The survey also shares, "Usage among seniors {on Facebook} continues to increase. Some 56% of internet users ages 65 and older now use Facebook..." Overall, "71% of online adults use Facebook..."

You may ask about Twitter usage. The survey shows, "Some 23% of online adults currently use Twitter. "Twitter is particularly popular among those under 50 and the college-educated." In the same survey, Instagram came in with 26% of adult internet users and 53% of young adults, ages 18-29.

Twenty-eight percent of adult internet users use Pinterest. Although Pinterest has enjoyed a younger audience, the survey noted an increase in usage of users over the age of 50.

Although LinkedIn was once thought to only be a platform to search for jobs, the site has expanded, as has its audience. According to the survey, "It is the only platform where those ages 30-64 are more likely to be users than those ages 18-29."

We could go on and on with YouTube, Vine, Google+, YikYak, Snap Chat, etc., but you get the idea! There's a huge social media community that you may or may not choose to be a part of! If you do choose to become part of that community, please remember to "Stop, Think, Connect" – from our October article – and Be Safe Out There!