Surviving the Digital Age: Strategies for Healthy Technology Use

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Presenter Introduction

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Learning Outcomes

• Explore current research on frequency and patterns of technology use
• Discover the effects of frequent technology use
• Assess personal technology use and identify strategies for changing problematic behaviors
Technology and Social Media Use

- Technology Use: usage of an electronic device for communication (receiving or sending info)
  – An electronic device that connects to internet and social media platforms
- Social Media: websites and other online applications that are used by large groups of people to share information and to develop social and professional contacts

Change in Usage Over Time

- Percentage of American adults using social media increased from 7% to 65% between 2005 and 2015.
- For young adults ages (18 to 29 yrs) social media usage increased from 12% in 2005 to (90%) reported using in 2015.
- Usage among adults 65+yrs went from 2% in 2005, to 11% in 2010 to 35% in 2015.
- In 2017 American users spent an average of five hours a day on a mobile device (20% increase from 4th quarter 2015).

User Demographics

- 99% of adults own at least one electronic device (including a television)
- Almost 9 in 10 adults (86%) own a computer
- 74% of adults own an internet-connected smartphone
- 55% of adults own a tablet (a mobile PC, typically with a touchscreen)
- Men and women use social networking sites at comparable rates
Overall, 70% of smartphone users say their device has made their life better; 24% believe it has made their life a lot better.

**Smart Phone Attachment by Generation**

- **Millennials (18-37 yrs)**: 63%
- **Gen Xers (38-51 yrs)**: 47%
- **Boomers (52-70 yrs)**: 26%
- **Matures (71 yrs +)**: 7%

American Psychological Association, Stress in America 2017: Technology and Social Media

**Attitudes Toward Social Media**

- **Social Media Has Helped Me Find My Identity**
  - Millennials (18-37 yrs): 63%
  - Gen Xers (38-51 yrs): 47%
  - Boomers (52-70 yrs): 26%
  - Matures (71 yrs +): 7%
Attitudes Toward Social Media

“I worry about negative effects of social media on my physical and mental health” (% that strongly/somewhat agree)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Generations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>48%</td>
<td>Millennials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37%</td>
<td>Gen Xers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22%</td>
<td>Boomers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Baby Boomers</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Types of Users

- **Constant Checkers**: individuals who constantly check their gadgets on a typical day.
  - 45 percent of Americans say they constantly or often check their emails, texts and social media accounts.
  - 40 percent of Americans say they constantly or often check
    - Total of 85% of adults in this study (3,511 ppl) representative of U.S. population
- **Non-Constant Checkers**: Individuals who check their devices less than constantly.

Type of User

On a typical day (day off from work):
- 65% of American adults say they often or constantly check personal email
- 52% constantly check texts
- 44% constantly check social media
- 28% often check work email (of those employed)
Website & App Usage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Network</th>
<th>Monthly Active Users</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>2,200,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YouTube</td>
<td>1,900,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instagram</td>
<td>800,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qzone</td>
<td>563,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weibo</td>
<td>376,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>336,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reddit</td>
<td>330,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pinterest</td>
<td>200,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask.fm</td>
<td>160,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tumblr</td>
<td>115,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flickr</td>
<td>112,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Google+</td>
<td>111,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LinkedIn</td>
<td>106,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VK</td>
<td>97,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Odnoklassniki</td>
<td>71,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meet up</td>
<td>35,300,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Effects of Technology

"Because of technology, even when their family is together they feel disconnected from them"
- 45% of Millennials
- 38% of Gen Xers
- 23% of Boomers
- 16% of Matures

American Psychological Association, 2017: Stress in America 2017, Technology and Social Media
Usage Frequency & Stress

On a 10-point scale, where 1 is “little or no stress” and 10 is “a great deal of stress,” overall, average stress levels were:

- 5.3 for constant checkers
- 4.4 for non-constant checkers

American Psychological Association, Stress in America 2017: Technology and Social Media

Facebook and Subjective Well-Being

- Some research reveals positive associations between online social network use (in particular Facebook) and well-being.
- Other research reveals the opposite & others showed a more nuanced relationship to well-being:
  - Number of Facebook friends, perceived supportive of one’s online network, depressive symptomatology, loneliness, and self-esteem
- Current research: Facebook use predicted negative shifts in two components of subjective well-being:
  - How people feel moment-to-moment
  - How satisfied they are with their lives

Kross et al., 2013

Technology Use & Obesity

- All member nations of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) have witnessed greater prevalence of obesity in their populations over the past two decades (27 nations).
- Obesity is a trigger for many chronic diseases and can impact emotional and psychological health
- United States has highest rate of obesity
  - In America, about 1 in 3 adults (33.8 percent) are obese
  - Mexico (30 percent)
  - New Zealand (25.5 percent)
  - Australia (24.6 percent)
  - Canada (24.2 percent)

Chatterjee & Ross, 2012
Technology Use & Obesity

- For every 10 percentage point increase in ICT (information and communications technology) investment, the obesity rate climbs 1.4 percentage point on average.
- Roughly 4.2 million people in a nation the size of the United States.

- Two contributing variables:
  - Less strenuous work/more sedentary home behaviors (1.0 percent)
  - The indirect effect of higher caloric consumption during screen-time activities (0.4 percent).

Chatterjee & Ross, 2012

Vicarious Trauma

The transfer of traumatic experiences (feelings of/visual detail) from one person to another

Media & Vicarious Trauma

- Research shows that individuals may suffer longer-lasting effects:
  - Positive stress reactions, anxiety, and in some cases post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).
- One study found that 20% of participants across four clinical studies were significantly affected by media events:
  - Scored high on clinical measures of PTSD.
  - Some of the individuals had previous trauma and were not present at the traumatic events.
  - Had only watched them on social media.
Technology Use & Overall Stress Levels

- Overall, frequent internet and social media users do not have higher levels of stress.
  - for women, the opposite is true for Twitter, email and cellphone picture.
  - sharing reports lower levels of stress.
- The social use of digital technology increases awareness of stressful events in the lives of others.
  - That awareness can produce stress called "the cost of caring."

Digital Footprint

- A digital footprint is the word used to describe the trail, traces or "footprints" that people leave online.
  - It includes the websites you visit, emails you send, and information you submit to online services.
- Passive digital footprints: data is collected without the owner knowing.
  - A footprint may be stored in an online data base as a "hit." This footprint may track the user IP address, when it was created, and where they came from.
- Active digital footprints: personal data is released deliberately by a user for the purpose of sharing information about oneself by means of websites or social media.
  - A footprint can be stored by a user being logged into a site when making a post or change, with the registered name being connected to the edit.
  - Deleting a post/comment/history does not delete your footprint.
How to Manage Your Footprint

- Google yourself: Take inventory of what’s out there. Search for your name or the name of your community, diocese, etc. every few months, so you’re cognizant of the information others have access to.
- Set up Google alerts: Set up a Google alert for your name. You will receive occasional alerts of every post that has your name on it.
- Protect your personal data: Don’t disclose your personal information; consider using a nickname instead of your real name.
- Keep login info under lock and key: Never share any of your usernames or passwords with anyone.
- Think before you post: Never put a temporary emotion on the permanent internet. Pause before you post.
- As a benefit: Use it to "brand" yourself and/or your community or diocese.

Social Media: Ministerial Boundaries & Guidelines

"Communication is a means of expressing the missionary vocation of the entire Church; today the social networks are one way to experience this call to discover the beauty of faith, the beauty of encountering Christ. In the area of communications too, we need a Church capable of bringing warmth and of stirring hearts."

Pope Francis
48th World Communications Day, 2016
Technology in Ministry Settings

- Community/parish Facebook page
- Twitter account
- Community/parish website
- Online campaigns/fundraisers
- E-newsletters

Assumptions for Social Media Use

- Clergy have a unique power dynamic with people with whom they have a pastoral relationship, and therefore have a special responsibility to guard how they interact with those people.
- All communications sent digitally are not confidential and may be shared or reposted to others.
- Interactions in the virtual world need to be transparent, as a window in the door provides transparency in the physical world.
- In the virtual world healthy boundaries and practices must be adhered to just as they should be in the physical world.

Assumptions for Social Media Use

- In the virtual world, “friend” can mean anyone with whom you are willing to communicate through that medium.
- In the physical world, friend can mean much more in terms of intimacy, self-disclosure, mutuality and expectations for relationship. The difference should be recognized and respected.
Social Media Guidelines

• Digital communications are appropriate for communicating basic factual information but it is not appropriate for matters that are pastorally or legally sensitive, emotionally charged or require extensive conversation and explanation.

• Individual personal profiles of clergy are to be used to interact with real friends, family and peers. Clergy should not submit “friend” requests to parishioners and others to whom they minister.
  – The disparity of power may not give the other person the ability to decline such request.

Social Media Guidelines

• Clergy are strongly advised not to accept “friend” requests from people with whom they have no prior relationship.

• Clergy, especially new ones, should examine the pictures/videos that are posted of themselves to make sure they are appropriate to share with the general public.

Self-Assessment

• What is my relationship with technology?
  – Do I use it too much, or perhaps not enough?

• Am I a “constant checker”?

• What are my emotions before and after use?

• Am I viewing material that could be traumatizing?

• Am I aware of my own “digital footprint” and how that affects how I am perceived in a ministry setting?

• Do I model healthy use of technology to those to whom I minister and my peers?
Finding a Healthy Balance

- Consider the purpose of your internet use (ministry, personal, etc.).
- Give yourself permission to set boundaries – with people and time.
- Set daily time limits for yourself based on responsibilities and leisure time away from screen.
- Utilize your critical thinking skills – if something seems tricky, consult with someone else before acting.

Finding a Healthy Balance

- Consider your emotional health and make adjustments that foster more calm emotions.
  - Are you feeling more anxious, worried, sad, etc. after social media use?
  - Have you begun feeling less safe in your environment after seeing images on social media?
- If you worry about the frequency of your use, that’s a good sign that it’s likely time to make changes.

Devising a Healthy Tech Plan

- Decide which social networking sites meet your needs/wants (personally and professionally).
  - Also decide whether the intention is branding (tracing back to you or organization) or less personal (nickname etc.).
- Document policy and decisions (for work related use) & stay up to date with clergy guidelines for use.
- Check and update privacy settings on your devices.
- Schedule time for tech use and time limits for use.
Devising a Healthy Tech Plan

- Create some basic technology rules for yourself
  - Keep the phone away at meals or in-person interactions
  - Adjust settings in evenings (vibrate, fewer alerts, no banner alerts)
  - No emails after a specific time of day
- Turn off all “blue-light” devices one hour before bedtime; engage in a wind-down (no technology) activity

Devising a Healthy Tech Plan

- Be intentional about times in your day/week/month where you totally “unplug”
- Utilize your in-person supports often
  - Phone and social media are not appropriate substitutes for in-person intimate connections
- If you have had difficulty setting boundaries with tech use, consider an accountability partner

Web Resources

- http://www.usccb.org/about/communications/social-media-guidelines.cfm
- Software Internet Filters (e.g., Net Nanny): http://internet-filter-review.toptenreviews.com/. For mobile devices see: http://www.mobicip.com
- Internet Behavior Consulting (David Delmonico, Ph.D. & Elizabeth Griffin, MA): http://www.internetbehavior.com
QUESTIONS

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