

- **CALIFORNIANS' COMPUTER AND INTERNET USE INCREASED AT A FASTER PACE IN 2009.**

Over the past year, computer use (at home, work, or elsewhere) among California adults has increased slightly from 75% to 80%. Use of the Internet (accessed from anywhere) has increased almost as much in the past year as during the previous eight years (65% in 2000, 70% in 2008, 76% today). Six in 10 Californians (62%) have access to high-speed broadband Internet at home, up from 55% a year ago. With a few notable exceptions (discussed below), computer, Internet, and broadband use has increased among Californians across most regions and demographic groups.

- **THE DIGITAL DIVIDE HAS NARROWED SIGNIFICANTLY AMONG SOME DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS ...**

Internet use among rural residents rose rapidly in the past year (from 63% to 77% today), making rural residents as likely as urban residents (76%) to log on. Rural Californians are nearly as likely as urban residents to have access to broadband at home (59% to 63%). Blacks and Asians are nearly as likely as whites to use computers, although Internet use among blacks has remained stable, while increasing among Asians, Latinos, and whites.

- **... BUT THE GAP REMAINS FOR LATINO, LESS-EDUCATED, AND IMMIGRANT RESIDENTS.**

Latinos remain substantially less likely than whites, blacks, or Asians to use information technology. Although the rate of technology use among Latinos has increased at about the same pace as for other groups, it still remains low (61% use computers, 53% use the Internet, 39% have broadband). However, variation exists among Latinos. Those who prefer to speak English (83% use the Internet, 68% have broadband) or make at least \$40,000 per year (85% use the Internet, 68% have broadband) are nearly on par with other racial/ethnic groups. Those who prefer to speak Spanish (31% use the Internet, 17% have broadband) or make less than \$40,000 per year (44% use the Internet, 29% have broadband) lag far behind. Among all adults, nearly all college graduates (93%) use the Internet, compared to only 54% of those without any college education. Eighty-three percent of college graduates have broadband, compared to only 37% of those with no college education. Naturalized citizens and noncitizens remain less likely to be computer or Internet users than their native-born counterparts.

- **INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES CONTINUE TO LAG BEHIND ...**

Californians with disabilities still lag significantly behind those without disabilities in computer and Internet use and broadband access. Those who self-report having a disability, handicap, chronic disease, or who say they have difficulty seeing, hearing, walking, or talking are 16 points less likely than others to use a computer, 19 points less likely than others to use the Internet, and 18 points less likely to have broadband.

- **... AND DIFFERENCES PERSIST AMONG OTHER GROUPS.**

Those with incomes under \$40,000 remain far less likely than those with incomes over \$80,000 to use the Internet (58% vs. 97%) or to have broadband at home (40% vs. 89%). Renters are significantly less likely than homeowners to use the Internet (66% vs. 83%), and only about half of renters have broadband (48%), compared to nearly three-quarters of homeowners (73%). Internet and broadband use has increased in all regions of the state except the Central Valley, with technology use remaining highest in the San Francisco Bay Area.



## California's Digital Divide

		Internet Use*		Broadband at Home	
		2008	2009	2008	2009
<b>All Adults</b>		70%	76%	55%	62%
<b>Community</b>	<b>Rural</b>	63	77	51	59
	<b>Urban</b>	70	76	56	63
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Asian</b>	80	85	67	74
	<b>Black</b>	82	81	66	62
	<b>Latino</b>	48	53	34	39
	<b>White</b>	81	88	68	75
<b>Education</b>	<b>No college</b>	47	54	32	37
	<b>Some college</b>	81	84	63	69
	<b>College graduate</b>	92	93	81	83
<b>Citizenship</b>	<b>U.S.-born</b>	81	85	67	71
	<b>Naturalized citizen</b>	62	68	46	57
	<b>Noncitizen</b>	36	45	23	31
<b>Disability**</b>	<b>Yes</b>	57	60	36	47
	<b>No</b>	73	79	60	65
<b>Gender</b>	<b>Men</b>	71	77	59	65
	<b>Women</b>	68	74	52	59
<b>Homeownership</b>	<b>Own</b>	76	83	64	73
	<b>Rent</b>	61	66	44	48
<b>Region</b>	<b>Los Angeles</b>	61	71	48	58
	<b>San Francisco Bay Area</b>	77	86	65	73
	<b>Central Valley</b>	71	67	53	51
	<b>Orange/San Diego</b>	73	81	58	70
	<b>Inland Empire</b>	70	76	56	60
<b>Age</b>	<b>18 to 34</b>	78	83	60	65
	<b>35 to 54</b>	73	75	61	64
	<b>55 and older</b>	58	68	44	57
<b>Income</b>	<b>Under \$40,000</b>	49	58	33	40
	<b>\$40,000 to under \$80,000</b>	83	87	64	74
	<b>\$80,000 or more</b>	92	97	85	89
<b>Children age 18 or younger</b>	<b>Yes</b>	69	74	54	62
	<b>No</b>	71	77	57	63

\* "Internet Use" includes those who answered yes to the question "Do you ever go online to access the Internet or send or receive email?" or to the question "Do you send or receive email, at least occasionally?"

\*\* For 2008, "Disability" includes those who answered yes to the question "Does any disability, handicap, or chronic disease keep you from participating fully in work, school, housework, or other activities, or not?" For 2009, it includes those who answered yes to that question or to the question "Do you often have difficulty seeing, hearing, talking, or walking in the course of your everyday life?"

**Sources:** (1) PPIC Statewide Surveys, *Californians and Information Technology*, June 2008 (2,503 adults) and June 2009 (2,502 adults). Margin of error for all adults  $\pm 2\%$ ; margin of error for subgroups is larger. (2) Pew Internet & American Life Project, Spring 2009.

**Contact:** [surveys@ppic.org](mailto:surveys@ppic.org)

Supported with funding from California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF) and ZeroDivide.



**PPIC**

PUBLIC POLICY  
INSTITUTE OF CALIFORNIA

[www.ppic.org](http://www.ppic.org)