Seattle Technology Access Report 2024 Key FIndings

"To ensure inclusion, educational success, and economic prosperity for all Seattle residents, we must also strive for digital equity for all." – Mayor Bruce Harrell

What was this study about?

The City of Seattle wanted to understand how residents use technology and the internet. They surveyed over 4,600 people to learn about:

- Who has internet access
- What devices people use
- How comfortable people are using technology
- What barriers prevent people from getting online

Who has access to the internet?

· 98% of Seattle households can access the internet at home (up from 95% in 2018)

· However, certain residents face more challenges getting online:

- People with low incomes
- People who don't speak English as their first language
- People with disabilities
- Black and Native American residents
- Older adults

The cost of internet impacts its access and use

- Most households pay at least $100 per month for internet
- Low-income families spend about 5% of their income on internet, while the average household spends 2.2%
- There are programs that can help eligible households save money on internet service, but many people don't know about them or aren't using them

What devices people are using in Seattle

- Almost all households (95%) have smartphones
- 86% have laptops
- 67% have tablets
- Some households have to share devices between family members, which can make it harder to work, study, or access services

People want and need more digital skills

- About 60% of Seattle residents are comfortable doing all basic digital tasks
- Many people want to learn more about:
  - Protecting their personal information online
  - Basic computer skills
  - Using software and applications
  - Finding jobs online

Who is left behind

The study found that these groups face more difficulties in using technology:

- Older adults
- People with disabilities
- People who don't speak English as their first language
- People with low incomes
- Black and Native American residents

What Seattle will do about this

The City is working to:

1. Share these findings widely to get more support for digital access programs
2. Help people learn about and sign up for internet discount programs
3. Help people get the devices they need
4. Work with community organizations to provide training and support
5. Make it easiter for people to find help with technology
6. Build stronger public and private partnerships to improve digital access across the City

Why this matters

Having reliable internet access and knowing how to use technology is becoming more important for: work, school, healthcare, government services, staying connected with family and community, and finding information and resources.

The City wants to make sure everyone has the tools and skills they need to participate in our increasingly digital world. Thank you to the many community members who participated in this study.

Seattle
Information Technology

The City's work on digital inclusion can be followed at: www.seattle.gov/tech