

## Digital Trends Quarterly: Online Reviews - UK - July 2018

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“Despite increasing concerns about misuse of user reviews by companies – for example commissioning fake positive reviews about themselves or negative reviews about their competitors – people still see them as more reliable than professional reviews, as well as more impartial and more useful.”

– **Matt King** – Category Director, Technology and Media Research

This report looks at the following areas:

A two percentage point increase in smartphone ownership to 85% - its highest level to date - in the most recent quarter shows that it's still possible to attract new customers despite the challenge posed by innovation fatigue in a near-saturated market. Most of these new customers are from older age groups, however, and it's unlikely they will be buying in at the premium end of the market. Manufacturers are acknowledging that consumers are now holding onto their handsets longer due to the maturity of the technology. Apple, for example, stressed its continuing support for older iPhone models at WWDC (Worldwide Developer Conference) 2018.

Companies are moving to take advantage of evolving digital habits to engage more with people at every stage of the customer journey - particularly on mobile and social media - and Mintel's data shows the extent to which this will resonate with younger Millennials and the Digital Generation. Online user reviews are playing an increasingly important part in the customer journey overall, but there are concerns that companies are misusing them to create fake positive reviews about themselves or negative ones about their competitors. Nevertheless, people still see them as more reliable, impartial, and useful than traditional professional reviews.

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## Table of Contents

### Overview

What you need to know

Covered in this Report

### Executive Summary

Personal technology

Smartphone growth potential remains in over-45 age group

Figure 1: Ownership of mobile phones, January 2012-April 2018

Smartwatches can become central to connected ecosystems

Figure 2: Ownership of wearable devices, November 2014-April 2018

Household technology

Smart speakers the star performers as more devices arrive

Figure 3: Ownership of voice-controlled speakers and VR headsets, December 2017 and April 2018

Cloud-based gaming services could threaten desktop PC sales

Figure 4: Household ownership of computers, January 2012-April 2018

World Cup boost for TVs, despite 4K disappointment

Figure 5: Household ownership of HD and Ultra HD 4K televisions, July 2016-April 2018

Online activities

Digital activity subdued in Q1

Figure 6: Online activities done in the last three months on any device\*, October 2017 and April 2018

Social targeting in an evolving digital landscape

Special Focus: Online user reviews

Nearly two thirds read reviews, with leisure activities top of the list

Figure 7: Online user reviews read in the last six months, April 2018

User reviews seen as more impartial than professional reviews

Figure 8: Perceptions of user reviews vs professional reviews, April 2018

### Personal Technology – Headline Data

Ownership of mobile phones

Figure 9: Ownership of mobile phones, January 2012-April 2018

Figure 10: Ownership of mobile phones and smartwatches (source data), January 2012-April 2018

Figure 11: Smartphone and basic mobile phone ownership combinations, June 2017-April 2018

Figure 12: Smartphone and basic mobile phone ownership combinations (source data), June 2017-April 2018

Ownership of wearable technology

Figure 13: Ownership of wearable devices, November 2014-April 2018

Figure 14: Ownership of wearable devices (source data), November 2014-April 2018

Ownership of other personal technology

Figure 15: Ownership of other personal technology products, December 2013-April 2018

Figure 16: Ownership of other personal technology products (source data), December 2013-April 2018

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### Recent personal technology purchases

Figure 17: Personal technology products bought in the last three months, June 2017-April 2018

Figure 18: Personal technology products bought in the last three months (source data), June 2017-December 2017

### Planned personal technology purchases

Figure 19: Personal technology products plan to buy in the next three months, June 2017-April 2018

Figure 20: Personal technology products plan to buy in the next three months (source data), June 2017-April 2018

### Personal Technology – Market Commentary

#### Smartphone growth potential remains in over-45 age group

Figure 21: Smartphone ownership, by age, April 2016-April 2018

#### Apple targets owners of older devices with iOS 12

#### Screen improvements taking on renewed importance...

Figure 22: Galaxy S9 | S9+ Infinity Display

Figure 23: Razer Phone with HDR & Dolby Digital Plus 5.1

#### ...and camera specs comes back into focus

Figure 24: Important factors when upgrading, February 2018

#### Smartwatches can become central to connected ecosystems

#### Talk to the wrist

#### Can Alexa make her voice heard?

### Household Technology – Headline Data

#### Ownership of computers

Figure 25: Household ownership of computers, January 2012-April 2018

Figure 26: Household ownership of computers (source data), January 2012-April 2018

Figure 27: Ownership of computers, by form factor. June 2017-April 2018

Figure 28: Ownership of computers, by form factor (source data), June 2017-April 2018

Figure 29: Computer ownership combinations, June 2017-April 2018

Figure 30: Computer ownership combinations (source data), June 2017-April 2018

#### Ownership of TVs

Figure 31: Household ownership of HD and Ultra HD 4K televisions, July 2016-April 2018

Figure 32: Household ownership of HD and Ultra HD 4K televisions (source data), July 2016-April 2018

Figure 33: TV ownership combinations, June 2017-April 2018

Figure 34: TV ownership combinations (source data), June 2017-April 2018

#### TV connectivity

Figure 35: Type of TV internet connection, June 2017-April 2018

Figure 36: Type of TV internet connection (source data), June 2017-April 2018

#### Ownership of other household technology

Figure 37: Ownership of other household technology products, January 2012-April 2018

Figure 38: Ownership of other household technology products (source data), January 2012-April 2018

Figure 39: Ownership of voice-controlled speakers and VR headsets, December 2017 and April 2018

Figure 40: Ownership of voice-controlled speakers and VR headsets (source data), December 2017 and April 2018

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### Recent computer and static console purchases

Figure 41: Computers and static consoles bought in the last three months, June 2017-April 2018

Figure 42: Computers and static consoles bought in the last three months (source data), June 2017-April 2018

### Planned computer and static console purchases

Figure 43: Computers or static consoles plan to buy in the next three months, June 2017-April 2018

Figure 44: Computers or static consoles plan to buy in the next three months (source data), June 2017-April 2018

### Recent TV purchases

Figure 45: TVs bought in the last three months, June 2017-April 2018

Figure 46: TVs bought in the last three months (source data), June 2017-April 2018

### Planned TV purchases

Figure 47: TVs plan to buy in the next three months, June 2017-April 2018

Figure 48: TVs plan to buy in the next three months (source data), June 2017-April 2018

## Household Technology – Market Commentary

### Smart speakers the star performers as more devices arrive

### World Cup boost for TVs, despite 4K disappointment

Figure 49: BBC iPlayer World Cup 2018 Ultra HD promo page

Figure 50: Total above-the-line, online display and direct mail advertising expenditure\* on televisions, by month, January 2016-May 2017

### Can VR crash the World Cup party?

Figure 51: "Virtual reality sofa" in the BBC Sport VR - FIFA World Cup Russia 2018 app

### Cloud-based gaming services could threaten desktop PC sales...

### ...and call consoles' future into question

### Laptops and tablets focused on core features and price in the fight for share

## Online Activities – Headline Data

### Online activities across all devices

Figure 52: Online activities done in the last three months on any device\*, October 2017 and April 2018

Figure 53: Online activities done in the last three months on any device\*, October 2017 and April 2018

### Online activities on a desktop/laptop

Figure 54: Online activities done in the last three months on a desktop/laptop, October 2017 and April 2018

Figure 55: Online activities done in the last three months on a desktop/laptop (source data), October 2017 and April 2018

### Online activities on a tablet

Figure 56: Online activities done in the last three months on a tablet, October 2017 and April 2018

Figure 57: Online activities done in the last three months on a tablet (source data), October 2017 and April 2018

### Online activities on a smartphone

Figure 58: Online activities done in the last three months on a smartphone, October 2017 and April 2018

Figure 59: Online activities done in the last three months on a smartphone (source data), October 2017 and April 2018

### Use of new technology

Figure 60: Use of new technology in the last three months, April 2017-April 2018

Figure 61: Use of new technology in the last three months (source data), April 2017-April 2018

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## Online Activities – Market Commentary

Digital activity subdued in Q1  
 More publishers exploring e-commerce  
 Younger Millennials' consumption and payment habits make them ideal targets  
 Digital Generation will expect a more joined-up path to purchase  
 Growth in voice continues, while Amazon shows developers the money  
 Snapchat makes AR shoppable

## Special Focus: Online User Reviews – Headline Data

Types of online user reviews read  
 Figure 62: Online user reviews read in the last six months, April 2018  
 Figure 63: Online user reviews read in the last six months (source data), April 2018

Number of types of reviews read  
 Figure 64: Number of types of online user reviews read in the last six months, April 2018  
 Figure 65: Number of types of online user reviews read in the last six months (source data), April 2018

Perceptions of online reviews  
 Figure 66: Perceptions of user reviews vs professional reviews, April 2018  
 Figure 67: Perceptions of user reviews vs professional reviews (source data), April 2018

## Special Focus: Online Reviews – Market Commentary

Nearly two thirds read reviews, with leisure activities top of the list  
 Companies acting to combat growing concerns over fake reviews...  
 ...but user reviews still seen as more impartial than professional reviews  
 Who's reading and who's writing?  
 Figure 68: Read or written product/service reviews on any device\* in the last three months, by selected demographics, April 2018

Monetising the space where trust meets convenience

## Appendix – Data Sources, Abbreviations and Supporting Information

Data sources  
 Nielsen Ad Intel coverage  
 Abbreviations

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