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Advancing Technology

- **68%** of American adults use the Internet, which increased from last year which was **62%**
- **32%** of American adults do not go online and it is not always by choice
- Those who are currently online have had varying levels of exposure to the online world
- One out of five American adults say they have never used the Internet or e-mail and do not live in an Internet-connected household
- **53%** of home Internet users have high-speed access, creating a new divide among Internet users

Information courtesy of a new report by the Pew Internet & American Life Project

Antioch's dependency on technology essential for everyday functions.

M e t a m o r p h o s i s

A connection

The world is in technology frenzy, and everything revolves around computers. From the government to Wall Street, to even Antioch Community High School, computer technology has become prevalent in society. As everyday applications continue to be regularly completed through the computer, it seems as if society has acquired a significant dependence to the programs computer. Mark Thompson, ACHS English teacher, uses the computer for a number of applications at school. "I do my grades on there like any other teacher, I use it in the classroom for presentations, for the district publications, I use web page software for the school web site, and digital photography," said Thompson. "With the yearbook, we use the computer all the time."

In the school atmosphere, the computer is widely used, and according to Thompson, they serve as an advantage, but not a necessity. "They're a tool and a convenience. A computer is a huge advantage when trying to share information with other people, even with just e-mail alone," said Thompson. "But you can teach without a computer."

Tim Larson, ACHS senior, uses the computer for gaming, research, homework, and networking. "I get paid to fix computers at homes, and I network," said Larson. Larson indicated that computers are becoming taken for granted because of their easy access. "Computer technology is becoming so easy to use that people are taking advantage of what computers are capable of," said Larson. Thompson said that computers are viewed as something that is available all the time. "People take computers for granted as much as they take for granted for flipping a switch a light will come on, they are always there," said Thompson. It is sometimes considered what would happen if all of the computers would break down, however, according to Gregg Henning, the Director of Technology for District of 117, there is almost no way the school could lose data stored in the computer. "We typically don't have many problems because the computers are extremely stable," said Henning. "There is virtually no way we could lose data because we do backup and it could all be restored." Henning added that a battery backup protects the systems, so they are not affected by power surges. Although ACHS is thoroughly prepared to repair the computer system when something goes down, Larson said computer technology should not be relied on so intensely. "I wouldn't want to put too much emphasis on what the computer is used for," said Larson. "Technology may be at an all time high right now, but we don't know what the future holds."

A Wi-Fi Society

Since the invention of the internet in the 1960s, there has been an increasing demand in the search for faster, safer and more reliable ways of finding information and allowing individuals to connect with one another. One of the biggest innovations in the world of technology in the past ten years was the invention of Wi-Fi or Wireless Internet. The creation of wireless internet has lead to many other leaps and bounds in the "Digital Age".

Cities and towns are also conforming to using the new form of communication as a way to relay information throughout the community and surrounding areas. Cities such as Chicago and San Francisco are starting to make huge coverage areas in the downtown and suburban area, letting thousands maybe millions of users connect to the same internet wherever they are. Many coffee shops and small businesses have been offering this kind of service for a number of years, but having whole communities be wireless is just getting started. Who knows, perhaps one day even Antioch might be a Wi-Fi hot spot.

What is Wi-Fi?

Wi-Fi stands for "wireless fidelity", meaning that a wireless signal is reproduced at the same speed that a regular land-line internet service would run at. Without all the technical mumbo-jumbo, this service can be used in notebook computers, PDA's, Palm Pilots, Bluetooth-enabled cell phones, tablet computers, Blackberry phones and many other of the devices we commonly see in the corporate world. The Wi-Fi revolution has enabled employees of companies to not only share the work which is stored on a network of computers, but also take it home with them and connecting to the same wireless network. This network can also be pass-worded to protect the files from corruption and hackers. This secured network is what makes Wi-Fi internet so great.

How does it benefit us?

This service has also enabled households to be rid of all the useless cables and cords that come with a basic internet connection. Whole houses can have up to 15 computers running off of the same signal that a wireless router sends. If Antioch were to go wireless, it could not only benefit the regular everyday citizens, but also could attract a lot of neighboring communities to share the connection with our small town. With the school implementing the new wireless system, few students are taking advantage of the offer. If the system were to become really effective, a notebook computer would be issued to every student in the school with a built-in wireless card and so any student could access the network from anywhere in the school, no strings attached, instead of having to go to a computer lab or wait for a computer to free up in the library.

When it comes to technology these days, nothing beats wireless. No cables, no hackers, no worries. The wireless revolution has just begun.



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