Online sharing, information overload is worldwide problem: poll

Patricia Reaney, Reuters

(Reuters) - The languages and the cultures are different, but the pet peeves of mobile technology users around the globe are the same, with most people annoyed by receiving too much information, according to a poll released on Wednesday.

About 60 percent of adults and teenagers in eight countries said too much is being divulged online, including inappropriate photos, unsolicited opinions, profanity and mind-numbing details of daily life.

"We love our technology because it connects us and gives us an outlet for expression, but then at the same time, we are also feeling there is a bit of information overload," said Jessica Hansen, a spokesperson for Intel Corporation, which commissioned the survey.

About half of the 7,087 adults and 1,787 teenagers questioned in the online poll said they felt overwhelmed by all the information. Nearly 90 percent would like people to think about what they share and how others will perceive them online.

Although many complain about oversharing, few people admit to doing it themselves.

"We feel like others are sharing too much information, that there is too much to consume," Hansen said, "but when we self-reflect, of course it's not us. We're not the ones who are over sharing."

TRUE OR FALSE

The most irritating online complaint in Australia [1] is posting mundane details of life. In Indonesia, profanity is the online pet peeve. Americans cannot tolerate constant complaining.

By most accounts, people share too much information and much of it is untrue.

In Japan [2], nearly a third of adults admitted that they had released false information, and 55 percent said they had a different online personality than their real one. In the United States, the number of admitted online fibbers was 19 percent.

Most people share information through mobile technology to express themselves and to feel connected to friends and family. The majority do it once a week, according to the survey, but in Brazil [3], China and India, daily sharing is the norm for half the population.

Almost half of Brazilians said they share sports information online, while in China [4], France and Japan people share reviews and information.

The Chinese admitted to being an "open book" because there is very little that they would not share online, but half of the adults questioned said at times they share too much personal information online.

For 41 percent of the French, sharing information online is easier than in public setting. And like Brazilians, the French said people have poor manners online.

Most Indians are more comfortable revealing things about themselves online than in person, but 44 percent regretted or had been embarrassed by something they had shared.

"What is most interesting is not necessarily how widespread our use of mobile technology has become, but how similar our reasons are for sharing, regardless of region or culture," said Dr. Genevieve Bell, the director of user interaction and experience at Intel Labs.

The poll conducted earlier this year in Australia, Brazil, China, France [5], India, Indonesia, Japan and the United States has a margin of error ranging from plus or minus 2.2 percent to 6.2 percent depending on the country.

(Editing By Jill Serjeant and Stacey Joyce)

Source URL (retrieved on *12/13/2013 - 4:25am*):
http://www.ecnmag.com/news/2012/09/online-sharing-information-overload-worldwide-problem-poll-0?qt-most_popular=0

Links:
[1] http://www.reuters.com/places/australia
[2] http://www.reuters.com/places/japan
[3] http://www.reuters.com/places/brazil
[4] http://www.reuters.com/places/china
[5] http://www.reuters.com/places/france