

COMPETENCY AND CONSUMPTION: What we can learn from older peoples' engagement with ICT



JULIANA MANSVELT,

SARAH DODDS & JONATHAN ELMS,

MASSEY UNIVERSITY



UNIVERSITY OF NEW ZEALAND

AIM: To examine older peoples' use and experiences of ICT with a view to understanding the significance of these technologies for engaging in consumption practices and social relationships and in shaping identities



Juliana Mansvelt,
Assoc. Professor in
Geography,
Palmerston North
Campus



Dr Sarah Dodds,
Lecturer in Retail
& Marketing,
Albany Campus,



Professor Jonathan Elms,
Sir Stephen Tindall Chair in Retail
Management
Albany Campus

AGEING IN A DIGITAL WORLD

- “Every touchpoint — from digital to TV, radio and social networks — will let shoppers complete immediate purchases on the spot.”

Greg Yevich, co-founder and technology director of OperationROI, cited in Grosman, *Forbes*, **20 June 2017**



<https://medium.com/datadriveninvestor/the-internet-of-things-90263f7b1249>

Digital Infrastructures will become a more integral part of everyday life



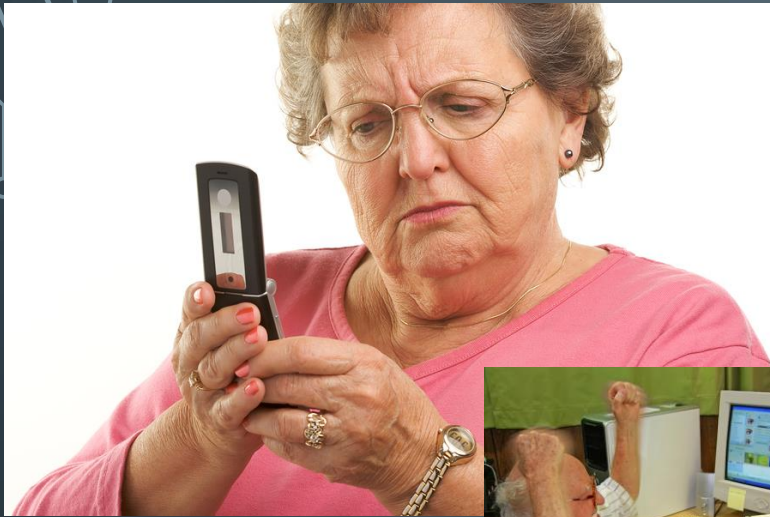
POSITIONING OF OLDER PEOPLE AS DIGITAL CITIZENS

- “Healthy, Independent, Connected and Respected” includes notion of digital connection as part of contribution
- Older people often seen as being on the wrong side of the digital divide



<http://ethicsandtechnologyuseineducation.blogspot.co.nz/2010/11/digital-divide.html>

Confused, Incapable,
Frustrated



<http://www.silvergroup.asia/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/AOL1.jpg>



Cool,
connected
competent,
and cheerful



<http://static3.businessinsider.com/image/4e565c706bb3f7886900002f/older-people-are-buying-a-lot-of-ipads.jpg>

INTERNET USAGE IN NZ (2017)

- For all age groups usage <65 levels were greater than 97%
- 65-74 years 10% non-users
- 75-84 years 25% non-users
- 85+ years 50% non-users

Díaz Andrade, A., Hedges, M.R., Karimikia, H. & Techatassanasoontorn, A. (2018).
World Internet Project: The Internet in New Zealand 2017. New Zealand Work
Research Institute, AUT.

Type of use	Percentage	N
Work	38.8	1308
Business	36.9	1277
Banking and finance	63.2	1336
Shopping	51.8	1318
Reading News	67.1	1338
Health information	59.5	1325
Other information	86.0	1340
Music/entertainment	52.3	1322
Games	38.9	1333
Connecting with friends	83.9	1333
Connecting with family	84.8	1339
New friends	37.7	1325
Sharing photos/data	68.2	1339
Other uses	31.1	331

LEVELS AND TYPES OF INTERNET USE (N=1558)



PARTICIPANTS

- 20 participants (9M, 9F, 16 NZ European, 1 British, 1 American citizenship)
- Aged 65 -91 (60% aged 70-76 yrs) located in Horowhenua, Kapiti, Auckland regions
- All but one accessed the internet through multiple devices



SHOPPING

- Majority of participants purchased online (travel, tickets, books, hobby related items)
- Goods that were purchased did not require testing, trying or groceries
- Internet was used for comparison shopping

GROCERY SHOPPING

Grocery shopping?



Henry (J5) Not really no. I have still got my car and my mobility and it's a chance to go out

Neetha (J6) I can see how very handy it would be if you were incapacitated, but I'd still have to trust to give my details for paying

Frank (J4): I can see if I was an invalid or something that would be good.

MOBILITY BEYOND THE BODY



• <https://www.surfertoday.com/images/stories/surfingtheinternet.jpg>

I can only physically get around two or three shops when I'm out in the town, but ... in an hour (online) you can whip through a lot of things (S4, Carol, 76).

COMPETENCY



- Emerges in areas of interest, embedded in practices
- Provides a source of pleasure and autonomy
- Does not necessarily apply to other applications or devices, but does increase belief in capability

EXPRESSED CONCERNS

- Challenges in assessing degrees of risk, trust and privacy
- Concerns over:
 - Vulnerability of security systems
 - Scams
 - Personal ability (getting stuck, making mistakes)

KEEPING UP WITH DIGITAL FUTURES



Technology for older people can be scary because it is going so fast, you turn round and something's out of date.
(Neetha, Aged 74)

And I thought yeah, that's what you've got to do, just get on board, roll with it.
(Ellie, age 66)

CONCLUSIONS

- Negative constructions of identity and competence surrounding older people and use of ICT technologies can be challenged.....
 - Self-Expressed competence provides a sense of pride, pleasure and independence but is not necessarily transferred from one digital context/device to another
 - Experiences and the emotions attached to digital technologies matter to engagement

IMPLICATIONS



- Learning in relation to interests is a key to engagement
- Education: Giving it a go – Confidence – Competence
- Information: public, private and voluntary organisations, families need cognisant of the concerns, preferences and capabilities of older people
- Digital support: providing a range of options for interaction, and opportunities to share and socialise digital learning are important



<http://dunboyneathleticclub.com/a-big-thank-you-to-all-the-volunteers-for-their-help-2/>

Contact for correspondence:
Assoc Prof Juliana Mansvelt, School of People, Environment and Planning,
Massey University, Private Bag 11222, Palmerston North
Email: J.R.Mansvelt@massey.ac.nz