



Verizon Look Forward Study: Key Stats

Verizon conducted a survey in conjunction with Morning Consult on how Americans have adapted to life one year into the COVID-19 pandemic, and what they think it will look like a year in the future. The [Look Forward study](#) dives into a number of specific areas including work, kids & learning, staying connected, streaming, gaming, and retail. The results are quite staggering with the data suggesting changes in the workplace, a sustained larger appetite for streamed content, a comeback for phone calls and a more hybrid approach (online and in-person) for shopping becoming the new norm.

Work

- According to Verizon network data use of collaboration tools, like video conferencing, is still a remarkable 2872% above pre-pandemic levels. Traffic across VPNs, an internet security service used by many businesses, also remains 91% higher than pre-pandemic volumes.
- Over half of employed adults say they are currently working remotely at least part of the time (54%), nearly twice the share who say they were doing so before the pandemic began (28%).
- Among those who've worked at least partially remotely at some point in the last year, about 7 in 10 say they would like to be working remotely at least 1-2 days per week a year from now (69%), including 24% who hope to be working fully remote a year from now. Just 1 in 4 hope to return to in person work full-time (25%).
- 50% of workers who've worked remotely in the last year either strongly or somewhat agreed that they will consider looking for a job at a new employer if their current employer does not allow for remote or hybrid work after the pandemic has subsided.
- Remote workers largely say they tend to be more mobile when they're working remotely (75%). 2 in 3 say they plan to take advantage of remote work to travel or work from places other than their home when the pandemic has subsided (67%).
- Most respondents who've worked remotely in the last year (77%) say their employer plans to continue to offer employees some degree of remote work options for after the pandemic.
- 19% report that their employers have communicated plans to be fully-remote after the pandemic subsides.

- 40% of currently full-time remote workers hope to stay in a 100% remote position next year.

Kids and Learning:

- A large majority (77%) say it is likely that most children will be attending school fully in-person a year from now, and nearly half (49%) expect K-12 students will have the option to attend classes online at least part time even when COVID-19 is no longer a concern.
- This flexibility may not be well received by everyone though: 58% expect K-12 schools to move classes online during inclement weather, rather than canceling classes. For many, “snow days” may soon be a relic of the past.
- Parents with children under 18 overwhelmingly express that they have been more lenient throughout the pandemic (72%), and most say they will keep more relaxed screen time rules even after the pandemic ends (57%).
- Parents are looking forward to going back to the office: 64% of parents with children <18 living with them look forward to returning to a fully or mostly in-office role a year from now, compared to 35% who would prefer a mostly- or fully-remote role.

Streaming:

- Today, traffic on major streaming sites is currently 21% above pre-pandemic levels according to Verizon network data
- 2 in 5 say that discussing TV and streaming content has helped them feel connected to friends and family during the pandemic (44%).
- Those who currently stream content largely anticipate that they will be spending more or the same amount of time that they are now watching content through streaming services a year from now (82%).
- 2 in 3 US adults say that recently they have been spending at least 3 hours per week watching live TV (67%). More than half (59%) say the same about watching content through a streaming service.
- Most adults say they have binge watched shows at least once or twice since the start of the pandemic (70%). Nearly half (47%) say they have subscribed to a new streaming service.
- While there is no final verdict on American’s preference to “binge watch” versus watch episodic content, Gen Z prefers to binge (47%).
- Most US adult households currently subscribe to a cable or satellite television service (62%). Nearly 1 in 4 say they’ve cut the cord (23%). Among millennials, 1 in 5 say they have never subscribed to a cable or satellite television service (21%).
- One in five Americans who currently stream content anticipate they will be doing so more a year from now than they are today.

Gaming

- Mobile gaming really took off during the pandemic. 46% of survey respondents report that they have purchased or downloaded a mobile game at least once since the pandemic started; while 36% report doing the same for a computer or console game.
- Nearly a third of respondents said that they spend 3 or more hours a week playing games on their mobile devices (31%)
- About a third of adults who've spent time online gaming (32%) and talking to friends or family via video calls (32%) say they were spending more time doing these activities in the early months of the pandemic than they are now, while nearly half say they were spending about the same amount of time as they are now.

Staying Connected

- As the pandemic first took hold, Verizon network data showed phone calls increase by 20% as people were connecting more over the phone than in person. That percentage has remained steady with current phone calls coming in at almost 19% above pre-pandemic times.
- Today the duration of those calls also remains significantly higher, with people talking almost 29% longer on calls.
- The strongest increase in reported usage from before the pandemic to during the pandemic is observed for video calls (21% to 26% for friends; 25% to 31% for immediate family).
- Nearly 1 in 3 adults say they either upgraded or considered upgrading both their home internet bandwidth (32%) and their mobile data plan (32%) within the last year. Younger generations and those who are working at least partially remotely are more likely to say so compared to their counterparts.
- Among adults who use messaging apps, video calls, and social media to communicate, nearly 1 in 3 anticipate they will be using each respective form of communication more a year from now than they are now.
- 15% of respondents say they spend more time on the phone now than they did in the early months of the pandemic; 60% report no change.
- Nearly 1 in 5 are using video calls more often than they were during the early months of the pandemic.

Retail

- Most adults say they were shopping mostly in person pre-pandemic (60%), while just over a third say the same now (37%).
- Adults surveyed anticipate that a year from now, they will be shopping in person and online equally (42%).
- 1 in 4 adults say they've recently shopped mostly online, while 1 in 3 say they've recently shopped through an equal mix of in person and online (34%).

- Electronics & Technology (32%) and Gifts (31%) emerged as two categories that consumers most commonly report they are shopping for “mostly online” today. While online, contactless payments and non-traditional shopping experience
- About 1 in 3 adults say they either used or heard about contactless credit cards (36%), contactless mobile payments (33%), and grocery delivery services (38%) for the first time during the coronavirus pandemic.
- More than 1 in 5 adults anticipate they will be using self-checkout (23%), contactless credit cards (24%), and contactless mobile payments (22%) more a year from now than they are now.
- Only 16% expect they’ll be shopping mostly online a year from today, a 6-point increase from before the pandemic, and an 8-point drop from today.

Verizon commissioned this poll conducted by Morning Consult on March 12 to March 14, 2021 among a national sample of 3,000 adults in the United States. The interviews were conducted online and the data was weighted to approximate a target sample of adults based on gender, educational attainment, age, race, and region.

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