

US Voice Assistant Users Favor Their Smartphones

A study finds computers, tablets and standalone devices lag far behind

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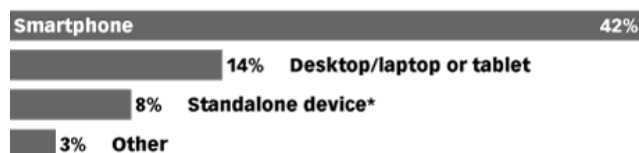
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While much attention has been paid to the launch of voice-activated standalone speakers from the likes of Amazon, Google and Apple, the technology underpinning such devices is filtering to consumers in a number of other ways.

And chief among them are smartphones, according to a new study from [Pew Research Center](#). The nonprofit organization polled US adult internet users in May 2017 to see how they used virtual assistants. It found that, out of those who used the services, 42% did so via a smartphone, more than any other type of device.

Devices on Which US Internet Users Use Virtual Assistants, May 2017

% of respondents



Note: ages 18+; *e.g., Amazon Echo, Google Home

Source: Pew Research Center as cited in company blog, Dec 12, 2017

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Significantly less used a virtual assistant on a PC or tablet. And even fewer, just 8%, used a standalone device, a category that included gadgets like Amazon Echo and Google Home, according to Pew Research Center.

So what's the overarching appeal of voice assistants? Hands-free use.

Turns out more than 80% of those polled liked the fact they could use voice assistants without having to touch a device. Another 62% just thought they were fun to use, while 60% found using spoken language a more natural way to interact with services than physical typing.

Pew Research Center's survey found that the majority of those who did not use voice assistants were simply indifferent to the technology. More than six in 10 of non-users cited that as a reason.

But a little more than one-quarter also said they avoided voice assistants out of security concerns, while nearly one in five said they were too complicated.

eMarketer estimates the number of US voice assistant users—those who use a voice-enabled digital assistant on any device—will reach 60.5 million in 2017, representing 18.5% of the overall population.

But eMarketer expects those figures will grow steadily, if not dramatically, over the next few years, hitting 75.5 million users by 2019.

And while Pew Research Center found a lukewarm reception among consumers to standalone voice assistants, other research indicates a friendlier attitude.

In October 2017, for example, [comScore Inc.](#) reported that smart speakers had hit a "critical adoption threshold" in the US.