

# The Majority of Americans' Mobile Time Spent Takes Place in Apps

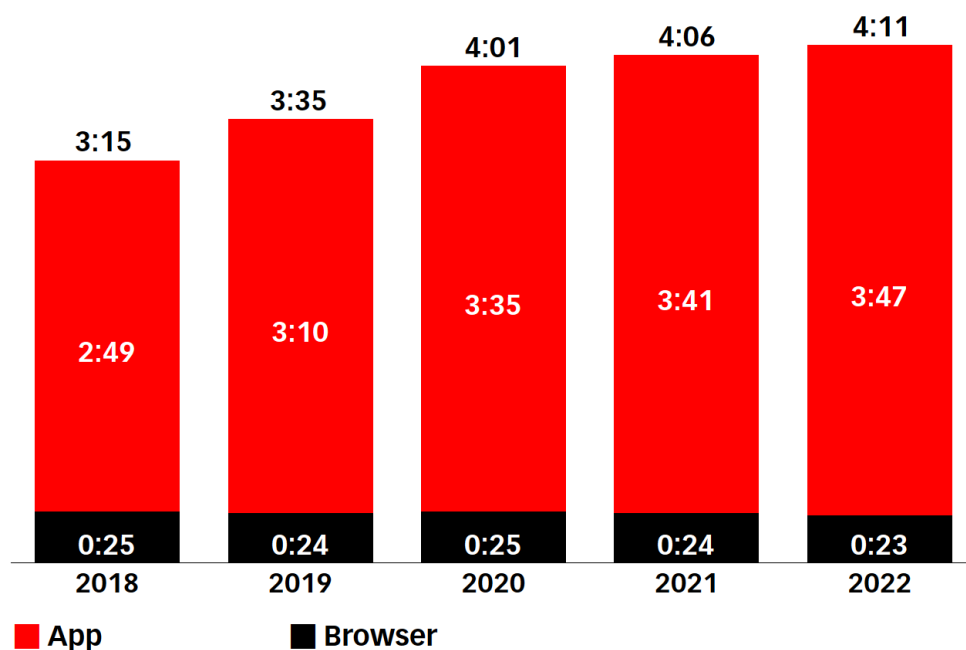
## ARTICLE |

**Yoram Wurmser**

The vast majority of mobile time is spent while connected to the internet. We estimate that US adults will spend, on average, more than 4 hours with mobile internet, with 88% of that time within apps. The app percentage continues to increase year over year—though our figures may undercount time in embedded mobile browsers, such as those within Facebook or Twitter.

## Mobile Internet: Average Daily Time Spent in the US, App vs. Browser, 2018-2022

hrs:mins per day among population



Note: ages 18+; includes all time spent with internet activities on mobile devices, regardless of multitasking; numbers may not add up to total due to rounding

Source: eMarketer, April 2020

T11005

www.eMarketer.com

This year, 83% of time spent with tablets will be in apps, a big increase from a few years ago but still less than the 90% of smartphone time in apps. The higher browser percentage for tablets likely comes from their continued role in shopping, which remains a primarily web-based activity.

The distinction between app and browser time, however, continues to blur. According to a 2019 study conducted by Kargo and Verto Analytics, at least 9% of time on Facebook took place within embedded browsers. Moreover, advanced websites can deliver an experience that's broadly similar to an app. Mobile users clearly prefer in-app experiences, but as the web continues to advance, many of those experiences may be based on JavaScript.

The pandemic has influenced the mix between apps and mobile web. Overall, a few key apps, such as those for social media, video and messaging, gained the most minutes. Beyond these, the impact is more ambiguous and may have driven more traffic to websites.

In April 2020, mobile web traffic was 11.4% higher than in April 2019, according to data from SimilarWeb. More than half (55.6%) of this mobile traffic (among the top 100 sites) went to computer, electronic and technology publishers, which include search and social media under SimilarWeb's definitions. The biggest percentage gains were on law and government sites and health sites, in which traffic grew 44.9% and 54.9%, respectively, year over year. The government site with the biggest year-over-year increase was cdc.gov: Traffic grew 1870% in March and 990% in April.

A study by Iterable, a company that provides messaging and other customer engagement services for marketers, found a similar bounce in mobile web activity. Web push notifications rose 37.5% between February and March, while app notifications decreased by 5.2%. Customer open rates for app notifications, on the other hand, grew strongly at 28.5%. "Our customers may be sending fewer in-app messages and relying more on mobile push and email, but mobile messages are getting clicked at a higher rate than before the pandemic started," said Alyssa Jarrett, Iterable's director of brand marketing.

For more insights on mobile time spent in the US, eMarketer PRO subscribers can read our recent report:

**Report** by Yoram Wurmser Jun 04, 2020

**US Mobile Time Spent 2020**

**US MOBILE  
TIME SPENT  
2020**

Lockdowns Augment Gains in  
Time Spent with Mobile Devices

Yoram Wurmser  
Contributor: Ben Rosen, Mark Subling, Chris Darling, Sean O'Keefe



*Not sure if your company subscribes? [You can find out here.](#)*