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New Zealanders unplug

Mobile access plays an increasingly important role as New Zealanders use the Internet both at home and away from home, Statistics New Zealand said today. In over half of households with the Internet in 2009, a laptop or a handheld computer was used to access the Internet at home, five times more than in 2006. One-quarter of Internet users in 2009 used mobile phones or wireless hotspots to access the Internet while they were away from home. This compared with 14 percent of users in 2006.

“The increase may be because laptops are much more affordable now, and wireless connection technology is increasingly a standard function for laptops, handheld devices, and mobile phones,” Statistics NZ manager Gary Dunnet said.

The unavailability of broadband was the most common reason for not having broadband in rural areas. Rural areas are those with a population of less than 300. In contrast, cost was the most common barrier to broadband for those living in urban areas and rural centres.

At December 2009, almost half of New Zealand households not planning to get digital TV in the next 12 months cited cost as a reason for remaining on analogue broadcasting. This was followed by over 40 percent of households who stated they simply do not want it. The move to digital TV by New Zealanders will allow analogue television to be switched off in the future. This will free up spectrum for other uses such as mobile broadband.

Over half of New Zealanders indicated they would vote online in general and local elections. Younger people and those earning higher incomes were more likely to vote online. These groups also have higher proportions of Internet users than other groups.

Detailed information on New Zealanders' use of mobile phones, computers, and the Internet was released today by Statistics NZ (see [Household Use of Information and Communication Technology: 2009 – Additional tables at www.stats.govt.nz](#)). This information is from the Household Use of Information and Communication Technology Survey run in late 2009. The survey, which was completed by 15,000 households from across New Zealand, was first run in 2006 and is due to be run again in 2012.

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