

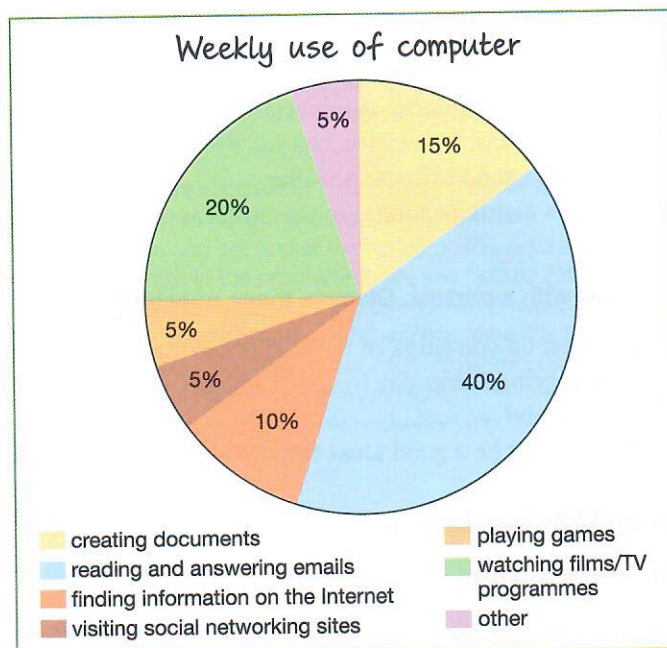
Online communication

Getting started

1 Read the following questions and note down your answers.

- How much time do you spend on the computer for work or study? Is this amount of time increasing? Why/Why not?
- Do you think you spend less or more time on the computer than your colleagues or friends?
- Think what you have done on the computer over the past seven days. Draw a pie chart to show approximately what percentage of time you spent on the following activities:

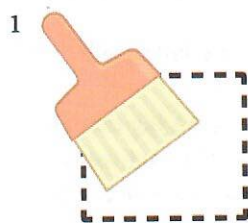
- creating documents
- reading and answering emails
- finding information on the Internet
- visiting social networking sites like Facebook
- playing games
- watching films or TV programmes
- other



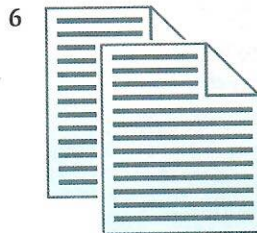
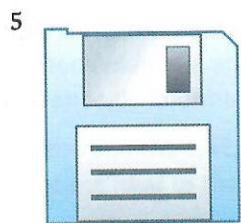
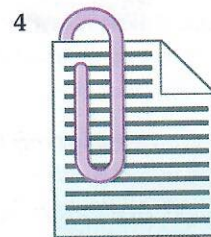
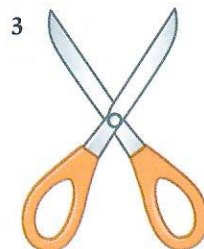
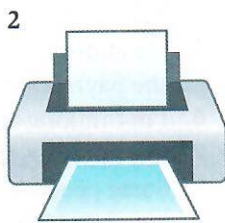
Compare your answers with a partner. How similar is your use of time on the computer?

2 Match the computer icons (1–7) with the correct verb from the box.

attach copy cut highlight paste print save



paste



3 Complete the definitions with the correct verb.

browse crash download drag log on post
restart upload

- 1 If you browse the Internet, you look around for information online.
 - 2 If you something, you move it from the Internet to your computer.
 - 3 If you, you start using a computer system, perhaps by typing in a password.
 - 4 If you the computer, you switch everything off and start it again.
 - 5 If computer systems, they suddenly stop working.
 - 6 If you click and a document, you move it to somewhere else on the system with the mouse.
 - 7 If you a message online, you put it on the Internet so other people can see it.
 - 8 If you something, you move it from your computer to the Internet or a network.
- 4 Choose three things you did on the computer recently and tell a partner about them using three of the verbs in Exercise 3.

Digital media

Reading

- 1 With a partner, discuss what you think *word of mouth* means in advertising.
- 2 The title of the article below changes the phrase to *word of mouse*. What do you think this means? Discuss with a partner, then skim the article quickly to see if you are right.
- 3 Scan the article for each of the names in the box. Then match each name with the correct sentence (1–5) below. There is one name you do not need.

Adam Brimo Dave Carroll Hugh Bainbridge
~~the Nielsen Company~~ Paul Patterson United Airlines

- 1 The Nielsen Company did research into different forms of marketing.
- 2 possibly caused a company's share price to fall.
- 3 believes that the rules for dealing with unhappy customers have not changed.
- 4 made a chief executive aware of his grievances by writing about them on a website.
- 5 suffered an unexpected crisis because of an online video.

THE POWER OF WORD OF MOUSE

People often say that the best form of promotion is by 'word of mouth'. After all, people normally trust a recommendation from someone they know. But in today's digital world, consumers don't just talk to friends and family members. By posting their opinions online, they can reach thousands of other consumers. What's more, this is a very good way of persuading people to buy things. A recent survey by the Nielsen Company revealed that 70 per cent of consumers trust opinions they find online, which is much higher than the figures for other advertising media, like TV and only slightly lower than opinions of friends.

The bad news for companies is that negative opinions can go online as well as good ones. When Adam Brimo, an Australian engineering graduate, was dissatisfied with his mobile phone provider, he decided to set up a website to talk about his experiences. It quickly filled up with posts from other dissatisfied customers. In the end, the company invited him to meet their chief executive, who then gave a public apology. When Dave Carroll, a US musician, took a flight with United Airlines, his guitar was broken during the trip. The airline company refused to pay for the damage, so he wrote three songs about it and uploaded them on YouTube. This was a public relations disaster for the airline, and possibly the reason why their share price dropped by 10 per cent that week.

Paul Patterson, a professor of marketing, agrees that companies now have less control over how the public view them but points out that the way to deal with dissatisfied customers is the same as always. Companies just need to react faster in case a customer decides to contact other customers online. Some analysts worry that a company's image could be damaged by a small number of dissatisfied customers. But Hugh Bainbridge from the Australian School of Business says consumers do not believe everything they see online, and that brands are only damaged when a large number of customers are clearly unhappy. Instead of seeing it as a threat, companies should treat this new medium as a useful source of customers' opinions.

Perhaps the biggest success story comes from Coca-Cola. In 2008, Dusty Sorg couldn't find a Coke fan page he could join on Facebook, so he downloaded a picture of a Coke can and created his own. Unexpectedly, it was a big hit with other fans. When Coca-Cola found out about it, they didn't try to get control over the page. Instead, they flew Dusty to Atlanta to meet their management team and told him to carry on the good work, with help from a few senior executives from the company. The result was a Facebook page run by a passionate fan and a good PR story for Coca-Cola. That really is a smart use of 'word of mouse'.

4 Choose the correct answer, A, B or C. Before you answer each question, use the underlined name to decide where to look in the text.

- According to the Nielsen Company's research, which is most likely to make someone buy a product?
 (A) a recommendation from a friend
 B a recommendation posted online
 C a TV advertisement
- According to Paul Patterson, in the digital age, companies need to
 A use different media to advertise products
 B respond more quickly to customer complaints
 C put satisfied customers in contact with each other
- What does Hugh Bainbridge feel about the effect of online opinions?
 A They give too much importance to a small number of complaints.
 B They allow customers to spread wrong information about brands.
 C They do not harm brands if there is no good cause for complaint.
- What point does the story about Coca-Cola illustrate?
 A Companies have lost most of their control over their brands.
 B Companies can use consumers to create online content for them.
 C Companies need to monitor online content very carefully.

5 Discuss with a partner.

- Do you know any websites where people post opinions online? Have you ever posted an opinion online?
- Do you look at online opinions before making a purchase (for example, before booking a hotel)? How much do they influence you?
- Do you visit any product or service fan pages (for example on Facebook)?

Emails

Vocabulary

1 Match each symbol from a website address (1–6) with its name (a–f)

- | | |
|-----|-----------------|
| 1 @ | a underscore |
| 2 . | b hyphen |
| 3 _ | c forward slash |
| 4 - | d dot |
| 5 / | e at |
| 6 \ | f backslash |

2 ① 03 Listen to the following parts of some common email addresses. Which are said as words and which as separate letters?

com uk org biz us ac co net

3 ① 04 Listen to these email addresses. Circle S if the spoken and written addresses are the same and D if they are different.

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| 1 gbrent_39@gmail.com | S/D |
| 2 sales@taylormills.co.es | S/D |
| 3 bendmurphy@hotmail.com | S/D |
| 4 natalieomar@blogspot.com | S/D |
| 5 www.glf.com\products | S/D |
| 6 Mary-Ann.Perkins@copeland.org.uk | S/D |
| 7 www.gaskelltraining.biz | S/D |
| 8 s.denham@dur.ac.uk | S/D |

4 Computer technology means there are some differences between the language used in emails and letters. Read the following sentences. Put E if the sentence could only be in an email, L if it could only be in a letter and B if it could be in both.

- Nice to hear from you. B
- I attach a copy of the relevant form.
- I enclose a copy of the relevant form.
- Your request was forwarded to me.
- I'm afraid I couldn't open the document.
- I am sorry for the delay in replying.
- I am copying James in on this message.
- Thank you for your message. I will be out of the office from 26 to 28 May inclusive.
- I am also sending a hard copy.
- I look forward to your reply.

