6 in 10 Irish people have used an emerging digital technology like smart appliances, mobile payments or augmented reality – Internet Day survey

Online dating, Bitcoin and diet tracking—Ireland's digital habits revealed in new IE Domain Registry Internet Day survey conducted among 1,000 people

- **Two-thirds of us buy consumer items online at least monthly, while 1 in 10 have purchased a cryptocurrency like Bitcoin**
- **83% say they have 'never' engaged in online dating**
- **Most people say their local town and local businesses are not equipped for the digital age; in areas outside Dublin, nearly 20% said their internet connection was too poor to facilitate e-commerce**
- **51% of people outside Dublin can't book appointments online for services in their local town**
- **IE Domain Registry hosting fourth annual Internet Day in Gorey, Co Wexford to promote digital skills, including use of e-commerce by SMEs**
- **CEO David Curtin calls for reprioritisation of National Broadband Plan following the near collapse of the project.**

6 in 10 Irish people have used an emerging digital technology, like smart appliances, mobile payments or augmented reality, according to a new survey commissioned by IE Domain Registry, the company that manages and maintains Ireland's country domain, .ie.

The survey, conducted by Core Research among 1,000 people, was published today to mark **Internet Day**, a celebration of the internet and its contribution to society and the economy, hosted annually by IE Domain Registry.

The research reveals Ireland's attitudes to and use of internet technology, our online shopping habits, and the digital behavioural divides between Dublin and Ireland's regional towns.

Key findings

- There are **4 internet-enabled devices in every Irish household.**
- **6 in 10 people have used an emerging digital technology**, like mobile payments, augmented reality, a digital assistant, a smart appliance, or a virtual address service (like Parcel Motel).
- 20% spend **more than 5 hours a day on the internet.**
- Almost **two-thirds (63%) buy consumer items** (like clothes and electronics) online at least monthly. Almost **half (49%) order food online** at least monthly.

- 1 in 10 have **purchased cryptocurrency**, like Bitcoin, at least once.
- Despite the prevalence of Tinder and Bumble, 83% say they have **never engaged in online dating.**
- **46% of Dubliners track their health data,** like diet, sleep and steps, online, **compared to 33% of people outside the capital.**
- 35% said the internet has **connected them with new friends**, 12% said it has helped them **become less introverted**, and 9% said that the internet has **helped them find love.**
- **Almost 2 in 10 people work remotely from home at least once per month** and **over 4 in 10 say that they can't,** because their **presence is required in the office.**

Ireland's internet economy

Irish citizens use the internet to stay connected with friends, family and the world—**and also to buy goods and services.** However, IE Domain Registry's Internet Day survey shows that most Irish businesses are not keeping up, particularly those in regional towns.

The **vast majority (68%) of Irish consumers believe that their local main street is _not_ equipped for the digital age.** When asked why, 40% said that **their local shops are not online**. 22% said that booking appointments or reservations online is not a priority for their local community. In areas outside of Dublin, 19% said their local town's **internet quality was too poor to facilitate e-commerce.**

65% said they **would buy more from their local shops if those shops had some form of click-and-collect service** which allowed them to order a product online and pick it up in store.

In total, 46% of people **can't book appointments online for services in their local town**. This figure drops to just a third (33%) in Dublin, but rises to more than half (51%) in areas outside the capital.

Hairdressers are the most likely to offer online booking (29% in total) while handymen and mechanics are the least likely (both 12%).

Celebrating the internet and inspiring change

Ireland's Internet Day will be officially celebrated in Gorey, Co Wexford today. Gorey was chosen as Ireland's first 'Digital Town' in a new IE Domain Registry initiative aimed at promoting digital skills and knowledge in regional areas.

Over the last four weeks, the company has worked with community organisations and businesses in Gorey to develop their digital skills and online presence, and showcase the digital achievements of Gorey.

Commenting today, David Curtin, Chief Executive of IE Domain Registry, said:

"Ireland is digital. We use multiple devices to access the internet, we are quick to try or adopt new technologies, and we use the internet in diverse ways, whether

to purchase goods and services, learn about the world, connect with friends, share our creative pursuits, or find love.

"The internet has also enabled an age of convenience. We can buy our weekly shop when we're on the bus to work, apply for a loan in bed, and book our holiday from the sofa. As consumers, we expect this kind of service and ease of use if we're buying from our local shop or from an international retailer.

"E-commerce is worth €12.3 billion to the Irish economy[1], but our SME Digital Health Index research shows that just 3 in 10 Irish SMEs can take sales orders online. This is despite the fact that Irish consumers are patriotic and want to support their local business more: two in three consumers would happily buy from their local shops if they had some kind of e-commerce service, like click-and-collect. Until that service is offered, however, consumers will simply continue to spend money with more convenient, user-friendly international retailers.

"Both industry and Government must recognise Irish SMEs' ongoing lack of e-commerce ability. To that end, in our most recent SME Digital Health Index, we have recommended the rollout of a national 'Digital Activation Campaign' designed specifically to provide leadership and direction. The campaign would entail the creation of a new online resource for SMEs, with simple, step-by-step guides to website and e-commerce development, as well as a nationwide interactive workshop programme to help SMEs bring their digital plans to life.

"For regional Ireland in particular, the National Broadband Plan must be redeveloped and reprioritised in favour of SMEs. Despite the near collapse of the current project, the Government must not lose sight of the fact that SME e-commerce is essential to not only balanced economic development across Ireland, but key to the future success of Ireland Inc in an increasingly competitive, globalised world. A short-term measure would be to fast-track the development of more regional 'digital hubs', like Gorey and Skibbereen, which act as magnets for local investment.

"IE Domain Registry is pleased to host this year's Internet Day in Gorey, and we know it will provide inspiration to more regional towns to develop their local community's digital skills."

For more visit: www.iedr.ie/internetday

Link to download supporting infographics:

IE Domain Registry – Digital trends in Ireland 2018 (JPEG)

IE Domain Registry – Digital trends in Ireland 2018 (PDF)

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[1] Source: Assessment of the macro-economic impact of the internet and digital on the Irish economy - https://www.dccae.gov.ie/en-ie/communications/topics/Digital-Strategy/Pages/default.aspx

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Internet Day note

Today (25 October 2018), Gorey residents and organisations will be able to attend a free event at the IE Domain Registry Digital Dome on Civic Square, The Avenue, Gorey, Co. Wexford.

All are invited to attend from 11:00-15:00, where a team of leading digital experts will be on hand to provide advice and answer questions on all matters digital.

There will be an opportunity to try out a mixed reality experience and attend a workshop on 'creating dynamic content for social media', demonstrating how to create engaging content for social media using a mobile device.

For more visit: www.iedr.ie/internetday

Research note

Research carried out by Core Research among 1,000 consumers on behalf of IE Domain Registry.

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About IE Domain Registry

IE Domain Registry is the national registry for .ie domain names and is responsible for the management and administration of Ireland's official internet domain, .ie, in the interest of the Irish and global internet communities. It operates the domain name system (DNS) for the .ie namespace, facilitates an independent dispute resolution service with WIPO, and operates a public WHOIS lookup service for .ie domains.

The company's mission is to provide unique, identifiably Irish domain names, along with registry and related services to the local and international internet community. Currently, there are over 250,000 registered .ie domain names.

The company is committed to being a digital advocate for the SME community. Through the OPTIMISE Programme and stakeholder engagement initiatives, the company works with and supports SMEs to improve their online presence and e-commerce capabilities. IE Domain Registry produces fact-based research for the business community and policymakers, such as the annual SME Digital Health Index, which provides key insights into the digital heath of SMEs.

The company is focused on providing excellence in customer service through its ongoing customer experience (CX) innovation and improvement programmes. Since March 2018, it is now easier and faster to register a .ie domain name.

Based in Dun Laoghaire, Co Dublin, IE Domain Registry employs 22 people.