

A fifth of Gen-Z de-activate social media to combat issues of being online

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- A survey by global communications company Dentsu Aegis Network shows that Gen-Z are taking steps to reduce their online profiles as concerns over data use and well-being take hold
- A fifth of 18-24 year-olds have deactivated their social media accounts in the past year, while a third are limiting time on their phones
- There is optimism for the future - two-thirds (62%) believe tech will help solve society's biggest challenges and 72% believe brands will need to demonstrate how their use of tech benefits society



The latest Digital Society Index (DSI) survey, by global media, digital and creative communications agency [Dentsu Aegis Network](#), reveals how 18-24 year olds (Gen-Z) are taking it upon themselves to reduce their online activity.

Analysis of more than 5,000 Gen-Zers is part of a worldwide study of 32,000 people conducted at the height of the Covid-19 pandemic, looking into our relationship with technology and brands. It shows that, despite lockdowns leading to a surge in online activity, a fifth (17%) of Gen-Zers have deactivated their social media accounts in the last 12 months. This trend is particularly noticeable across Europe, including the Finnish (34%) and Spaniards (30%). Globally, a third (31%) have limited the time they've spent online or looking at their smartphone and almost half (43%) have taken steps to reduce the amount of data they're sharing online, such as clearing their search history or opting out of geo-location services.

It is clear that these measures have been taken due to an acute awareness of how their data may be used as well as some of the perceived negative impacts of technology on society. More than half Gen Zers (58%) don't trust tech companies because of concerns over how they use their data, while four out of 10 (37%) believe social media is having a negative impact on political discourse in their country. The stats are revealing, showing this view to be highest in Hungary (56%), followed by Australia (50%) and the USA (48%).

Worryingly, with mental health issues a big concern for younger people, nearly half of Gen Z believe their personal use of tech has a negative impact on their health and wellbeing - this is particularly acute in Spain (59%), Australia (55%) and France (53%).

Despite these concerns, it appears that Gen Zers are confident that technology will do more good than bad in the future. Two-thirds (62%) are optimistic that digital technologies will help solve the world's most pressing challenges, and this sentiment is felt most in Hong Kong (78%) followed by Poland, Finland and Mexico (75%).

Half of Gen Zers also believe AI and robotics will create career opportunities for them in the next five-10 years, significantly above average. However, this brings new expectations with nearly three-quarters (72%) of Gen Z believing brands will need to demonstrate how their use of tech benefits society over the next five-10 years.

Masaya Nakamura, CEO Solutions at Dentsu Aegis Network, said: "Our survey reveals the digital consumer of the future. They are tech literate and are taking back control of their data and online activity, both to look after their well-being as well as address concerns about how organisations may misuse their data. However, they remain hugely positive about the wider impact of technology on society.

"Brands need to reassess how they build relationships with this cohort in a way that places a premium on transparency, empowerment and a clear value exchange when using consumer data. They also need to ensure they are using technology in a way that delivers wider societal benefit as expectations on brands increase to create helpful experiences and solutions. Gen Zers are tech champions – but you've got to earn their trust first."

For more information on the Dentsu Aegis Network survey and to download please click [here](#)

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