

Location services rising for smartphone users

WASHINGTON USA: Most US smartphone owners use their device's location service for directions or other purposes but only a small percentage share their location with friends and others, a survey released last week showed.



The Pew Research Center's Internet Project survey found 74% of adult smartphone owners said they use their phone to get directions or other information based on their current location.

Among social media users aged 18 and older, 30% say that at least one of their accounts is currently set up to include their location in their posts, up from 14% who said they had never done this in 2011.

The survey found a small drop in the number of smartphone owners who use "check in" location services: around 12% of adult smartphone owners said they use a geosocial service to "check in" to certain locations or share their location with friends, down from 18% in early 2012.

Among those who do check in with their locations, 39% said they did so on Facebook, 18% on Foursquare and 14% on Google Plus.

The survey highlights the increasing role of smartphones which can track users' locations, which raises privacy and safety concerns but also offers opportunities for technology firms to tell customers what is near them.

Some prior surveys indicate a number of mobile phone users have disabled the location-tracking features at some point due to privacy concerns.

The findings were based on a survey of 2,252 adults from surveyed between April and May. The margin of error was estimated at 2.3 percentage points.

Source: AFP via I-Net Bridge

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