



PUBLIC POLICY BLOG

The hidden truth about the addiction on the use of mobile phone

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The technological era that we live in now has taught many people new things. It has made life easy for the users. On the other hand, people are being programmed to live their lives according to the technology systems and applications. The design of the future by the artist, philosophers and teachers of the past have shown mankind that they knew what would happen today.

There are some programs that control and run the thoughts of human and drive people into the program's objectives.

The use of phones has become the new world order for some Papua New Guineans as it dictates their lives. The strange addiction habit has seen many women, men, and children crave to spend more time on the phone than any real event in life. The drive to use and see phones daily has completely changed the way of life for this sovereign nation.

Internet and social media users and mobile phone connections in PNG

Internet users, social media users and mobile phone connections as of January 2020 are (<https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2020-papua-new-guinea>) the following:

Internet users in Papua New Guinea (PNG)

- There were 1.10 million internet users in PNG in January 2020.
- The number of internet users in PNG have increased by 101,000 (+10%) between 2019 and 2020.
- Internet penetration in PNG stood at 12 percent in January 2020.

Social media users in Papua New Guinea

- There were 760,000 social media users in PNG in January 2020.
- The number of social media users in PNG increased by 105,000 (+16%) between April 2019 and January 2020.
- Social media penetration in PNG stood at 8.6 percent in January 2020.

Mobile connections in Papua New Guinea

- There were 2.87 million mobile connections in PNG in January 2020.
- The number of mobile connections in PNG increased by 136,000 (+5.0%) between January 2019 and January 2020.

The number of mobile connections in PNG as at of January 2020 was equivalent to 32 percent of the total population. For example, the average smartphone user rarely goes two hours without using his/her device, unlocks his/her device 50 or more times in a day, and swipes or taps on it as many as 2,617 times in the process. The young are particularly afflicted.

Some ways to reduce the use of mobile phones

The following are some ways that mobile phone users can use to break away from its addiction:

- Turn off notifications. Turning off notifications can help you concentrate more and give less time of it. The habit of quickly reacting to notifications can make you become addicted to using it. Switching the notification off helps to focus on the reality

and achieve more in daily tasks.

- Physically separate yourself from your mobile phone. Do not keep your phone in your room or in your work station. Keep it somewhere where you can use it when the time is right for it. People tend to bring their phone into their bedroom and it disturbs them during their night sleep or sometimes they are tempted to just check who is online.
- Avoid using your phone before going to bed because you may be tempted to check your phone over and over again when you are already in bed. It can reduce the quality of your sleep.
- Avoid using your phone after posting something in the social media else you may be tempted to continue checking your frequently to see whether internet users have commented on the post. Further, you may want to address the comments by replying to the comments, which may take your time to do so.
- Remove apps that often distract you especially apps associated with games and social media which are often tempting to use. Additive apps can be moved to the second page where it is difficult to open them at the same time.
- Avoid charging your phone in your bedroom. This can be used to address the issues associated with overuse of phone such as poor sleep, poor communication with spouse and children.

- Avoid having your phone with you when you walk in-doors. This will reduce the temptation of checking the phone at any slightest opportunity.
- One or two days of the week especially Saturday and or Sunday can be chosen as a “no phone use day(s)”. During the “no phone use day(s)” avoid using mobile phone at all.

Conclusion

The technology era has taught people many new things but it has also driven them into a new trend of becoming addicted to using their mobile phones. People cannot live without a phone in this technology era. Currently, men, women and children have a strong desire to use mobile phone and data for internet. However, mobile phone users must understand how to manage their time to avoid being addicted to the use of phones, which can reduce their productivity and physical interaction with their loved ones.

About the Author

Mr. Joseph Kaile is Research Intern under the Communications and Publication Section at PNG National Research Institute (PNG NRI). He has Bachelor of Arts- Major in Linguistics and Modern Languages and minor in Social Works from the University of Papua New Guinea. He also has a Diploma in Economic Policy Analysis from PNG NRI. His research interests include governance and political institutions in PNG..