# Mobile Device Use in e-Channel Programming

**Prepared by: Tamara Kaattari**

**For: Contact North | Contact Nord**

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# Executive Summary

The rise of mobile device use is meteoric and adult literacy programs – particularly those that rely on technology as a means for learners to access learning – need to consider the implications for program delivery and design presented by the increased use of mobile devices. This report, commissioned by Contact North | Contact Nord, is a first step towards examining the use of mobile devices within e-Channel programs and the context in which such programs are operating.

The trends in mobile device use that may have the greatest impact on e-Channel programming are ensuring that all forms of content are mobile-optimized – a challenging feat since most online content was not developed with mobile devices in mind. As the use of mobile devices continues to rise, e-Leads may wish to develop a deeper understanding of who is using what (in terms of devices) and why.

**Client Perspectives:**

This research provided an instrument to interact with the e-Leads (e-Channel lead delivery organizations) to create opportunities to ask learners about their current experiences in accessing learning via mobile devices and to assess learner desires regarding the use of mobile devices in the future. These are some highlights of the information received:

- For Good Learning Anywhere (GLA), 18.2% of survey respondents said they used a mobile device to access their Career Technical Education (CTE) courses.
- There is interest from Good Learning Anywhere clients in using a mobile device as 54.5% of respondents said that if they had a mobile device, they would use it to access e-Channel.
- For the LearningHUB, fewer clients are using mobile devices to access live classes (5%), but there is interest in that 35% of clients would consider using a mobile device. A quarter of respondents (25%) said they would consider using a mobile device to access Independent Study and about 1/3 or 33.64% of HUB short classes survey respondents said they would consider using a mobile device.
- Large number of learners are "not sure" if they would use a mobile device or not, demonstrating that mobile device use, while increasing and popular, may not yet have hit its zenith with adult learners.

**Program Perspectives:**

Many e-Channel learners access e-Channel programming as part of a blended approach – doing some learning independently with e-Channel and some on site with an adult learning program. Given that many e-Channel learners spend at least some of their time in community programs – literacy, employment services, or Ontario Works – Contact North | Contact Nord launched a survey to ask Employment Ontario (EO) services and Ontario Works organizations about the extent to which they encouraged mobile device use amongst clients. Here are some of the results:

- There is a trend towards agencies providing ways for clients/learners to provide feedback via social media or mobile device, with 42.9% of survey respondents citing that they are currently providing ways for clients/learners to provide feedback via social media or mobile device.

- When asked what methods programs are using to garner client feedback via social media, many survey respondents identified more than one method. Most programs are currently using Facebook with texting being the second most common method of connecting with learners. Twitter and email share the third spot.
- In terms of effectiveness, it appears that the use of social media and mobile devices to gather client/learner feedback, at present, is somewhat limited, with only 12.50% of respondents defining such use as "very effective," but under half of respondents (42.5%) considering their efforts in this area to be "somewhat effective."
- Survey respondents suggest that using social media and mobile devices to gather client/learner feedback may be more appropriate for some populations (i.e., youth).
- Respondents who have had positive results with the use of social media/mobile devices to get client feedback have noted several trends. These newer approaches are more client-centred, being about what works for the client and not for the agency or program. Other respondents noted that they receive more feedback and possibly higher-quality feedback because they are using social media/mobile devices to get client feedback.
- There are challenges to using social media/mobile device use. Just under half of respondents (44.3%) noted that they have to change the way they do business in order to maximize the use of social media/mobile device use amongst learners. A slightly lower percentage of respondents (39.3%) cited lack of time to research and investigate the use of these methods as the main challenge.
- Programs are still at various levels when it comes to adopting social media/mobile device use, although several respondents noted that such methods are becoming the "norm," regardless of the challenges related to implementation. The anticipated learning curve may be preventing some programs from adopting social media/mobile device use as it takes time to learn new programs and use them.

**Mobile Device Use and Current Learning Platforms for E-Channel:**

At present, the main learning platforms used by e-Channel leads are Saba Meeting, Learnscape, Moodle and Plato. Deaf Learn Now delivers its asynchronous programming for Deaf/Hard of Hearing students using the Desire2Learn (D2L) Brightspace Learning Management System. The compatibility of these learning platforms with mobile device use is a primary concern for some e-Channel lead organizations. All learning platforms are making strides to accommodate mobile device use. Saba Meeting has made a free mobile app available and Contact North | Contact Nord has made video and .PDF resources available to highlight this app. Moodle, Plato and Learnscape are also acknowledging the increased use in mobile device use.

**Recommendations for Planning:**

The purpose of this research was both to examine the current and potential use of mobile device use among adult learners, but also to assist e-Channel leads in preparing for the increased use of mobile device use. The following are recommendations that e-Leads and Contact North | Contact Nord may wish to consider:

- Encourage e-Leads to not just follow the mobile use of learners but to try to influence it. E-leads could put information on their websites to provide insight to learners about which mobile devices

work best with their programs. For example, add content to websites along the lines of "Are you considering buying a mobile device? We recommend the use of XXXX for our programs…"

- Are there key messages that all e-Leads may want to develop and incorporate into their websites, perhaps in the form of FAQ, that go beyond recommendations of purchases for learners?
- As a result of blended learning and the fact that many e-Channel learners are participating via a blended learning approach, e-Leads may want to review how they connect with other programs in the province around mobile device usage.
- Analyze e-Channel users – into demographic age groups. Research suggests that some demographics prefer different social media to communicate. Do e-Leads know who is using their services via mobile device use?
- Encourage e-Leads to review the section "Creating Moodle Mobile friendly courses" before they create new Moodle content:
  https://docs.moodle.org/30/en/Creating_Moodle_Mobile_friendly_courses
- E-leads that use Learnscape as a learning platform may want to look at how Learnscape is being used in Africa to facilitate learner involvement.
- The Desire2Learn (D2L) Brightspace Learning Management System appears to be making strides towards accommodating mobile device use. More information can be found here:
  https://community.brightspace.com/blogs/product/using_d2l_mobile_applications_on_android_devices
- A collective e-Channel effort could be mounted to identify and review potential feedback programs and perhaps apps (recognizing that the use of apps is on the decline amongst users) that could be made available to all upon the program selection.

**Conclusion:**

Mobile device use is on the rise – in life in general and in education. Ensuring that e-Channel learning programs are compatible with the most common mobile devices (smartphones and tablets) and that information about using mobile devices to access learning is available and promoted on e-Lead websites is critical. Certainly, the development of new online e-Channel programs should be undertaken with mobile device use in mind.

The use of mobile devices to access e-Channel programming offers opportunity as well as challenges. The opportunities lie in the realm of increasing access for learners, while the challenges lie in the area of programs changing business practices and keeping on top of rapid developments in the technological realm. Employment Ontario programs, including literacy, employment services and Ontario Works, are motivated to further explore the successful implementation of mobile device use, if not for the purposes of learning, then for the critical ability to maintain communication with clients.

Obviously, the use of mobile devices – both to assist clients in accessing learning activities and for programs to explore meaningful ways of staying connected to clients – is paramount. This conversation needs to be embraced and ongoing and e-Lead programs need to be more explicit in assisting learners in understanding the role of and directing the use of mobile device use in programming.

## Purpose

In fiscal 2015/2016, to examine the use of mobile devices within cultural streams for e-Channel access to provide planning and follow-up actions that can be made to best address mobile device-using LBS Learners' needs.

As there are five e-Leads that provide e-Channel synchronous and asynchronous learning to adult literacy learners in Ontario, the first step in working on this deliverable was to contact the e-Leads to ascertain their level of interest in examining this question and to what extent, if any, Contact North | Contact Nord could collaborate with them to get data on mobile device use. Through these discussions, it became clear that the use of mobile devices (and social media) is a topic of interest to e-Leads – particularly how mobile devices and social media could be better used to connect with adult learners.

While mobile device use among adult literacy learners is of interest to all of the e-Channel Leads, two in particular are examining this issue at present – Good Learning Anywhere and the LearningHUB. With cooperation from these two e-Leads, Contact North | Contact Nord was able to combine data from actual e-Channel users with an examination of trends and issues expressed by e-Leads and with best practices related to mobile device use derived from research on the Internet.

The result is this report, which has been divided into several sections:

- An overview of the trends in mobile device use in society and in learning
- A review of the data we were able to get from adult learners currently participating in e-Channel learning via Good Learning Anywhere and the LearningHUB
- A survey of programs throughout the Employment Ontario system in Ontario – to programs' perspectives on their use of mobile devices (and clients' and learners') as well as how such device use might be combined with social media to garner increased feedback from clients
- A check-in with Help Desk Technicians – to record their perceptions and experiences with assisting mobile device users
- The results of a literature review on workarounds or ways in which mobile devices can be made more user friendly in accessing synchronous Moodle, Plato and Learnscape platforms
- Suggestions for ways in which e-Channel Leads can increase learner feedback, including through the use of mobile devices
- Recommendations for Contact North | Contact Nord and for e-Leads related to mobile device use

The rise of mobile device use is meteoric and adult literacy programs – particularly those that rely on technology as a means for learners to access learning – need to consider the implications for program delivery and design presented by the increased use of mobile devices.

# Trends in Mobile Device Use

So just how popular is the use of mobile devices in Canada? Is the use of mobile devices among adult learners (both current and potential) a relevant issue for e-Channel Leads to be examining? The answer? Most definitely.

According to catalyst.ca, in 2014, 55% of Canadians owned a smartphone. In 2015, that number grew to 68%, showing a year-over-year growth of 24%. This report (http://catalyst.ca/2015-canadian-smartphone-market/) also shows that the market share of smartphone owners increased most in the 45-54 and 25-34 demographics, indicating that smartphones are not just for youth anymore and that people in the middle age range are embracing smartphone usage. Not to worry though – the Millennials (18-24) are still using smartphones! Here are some other interesting trends related to smartphones:

- At-home smartphone usage has risen while on-the-go activity has declined
- Users are opting for larger and larger screens
- The use of mobile applications is on the decline for all populations except youth (18-24)
- Among smartphone users who are using smartphones at home, youth (18-24) are using their devices far more for email than other demographics (63% for 18-24 year olds versus 11% for 25+)
- Youth using smartphones at home are also leading other demographics in the use of Facebook (30% for 18-24 year olds versus 13% for 25+)

So what does this information do for e-Channel Leads? It shows that any research and investment in examining mobile device use as it relates to e-Channel programming is a good investment. As catalyst.ca says, "All forms of content (long-form, short-form, video, images, etc.) should be mobile-optimized. Also, e-Leads may want to examine what percentage of e-Channel clients are in the 18-24 age range, as this demographic is driving at-home mobile usage.

So, smartphone usage is increasing for all kinds of tasks: finding a new restaurant, watching videos, checking the weather, getting directions…but are smartphones and other mobile devices also being used increasingly to access learning?

Most of the research that is available on this topic either looks at the K-12 system or at the postsecondary system – not the adult literacy system and certainly not the online learning segment of an adult literacy system. However, as mobile device use is increasing exponentially in both the K-12 system and in the postsecondary system, it's reasonable to believe that an increase in their usage must also be considered within the realm of adult literacy. All education systems though report both opportunities and challenges with the increased use of mobile devices.

And it's not just smartphones that are making their way into learning. According to the Horizon Report 2012 (http://www.nmc.org/pdf/2012-horizon-report-HE.pdf), tablets are quickly becoming a preferred mobile device, due their larger screens, great resolution, and minimize disruptions (they don't ring like a cell phone does!).

Part of 's goal in conducting research on mobile device usage within e-Channel synchronous and asynchronous programming was to gather information on the range of mobile devices that might be in

use among adult learners. The next section of this report provides some insight into actual mobile device use and potential mobile device use within two of the e-Channel programs in Ontario – Good Learning Anywhere (GLA) and the LearningHUB.

# Client Perspectives on Mobile Device Use

## Rationale

In addition to monitoring general trends in mobile device use, Contact North | Contact Nord was also interested in information from current e-Channel learners on mobile device use. How may e-Channel clients are currently using mobile devices to access e-Channel courses? For those clients who are not currently using mobile devices, how many would, if they had such devices to use? Several survey questions were developed and the e-Channel Reviewer contacted the e-Leads to see which ones were interested in or able to gather this type of data. Good Learning Anywhere (GLA) and The LearningHUB responded affirmatively and the survey questions were integrated into other surveys for their clients. Only those questions and comments pertaining to mobile device use have been included in this report.

## Methodology

Good Learning Anywhere (GLA) had already developed a survey for learners who were accessing Career Technical Education (CTE) courses, as the CTE courses are a new offering for Good Learning Anywhere. With Good Learning Anywhere's permission, Contact North | Contact Nord added some questions related to mobile device use to the learner survey and received 22 responses. Questions focused on whether or not current learners accessing CTE courses were using mobile devices, and, if so, which mobile devices they were using. These questions resulted in a snapshot of "now" but we also wanted to look to the future and asked learners whether or not they *would* use a mobile device to access their CTE courses via e-Channel. Here is a summary of the results.

## Results

### Good Learning Anywhere (GLA)

| CTE Courses – April 1, 2015 – December 31, 2015 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **No. of responses** | **Did you use a mobile device?** | **If so, what did you use?** | **If you had a mobile device, would you use it for e-Channel?** | **Comments** |
| Late Fall of 2015 – 22 responses | Yes – 4 (18.2%) <br> No – 18 (81.8%) | An iPad (2) <br> A tablet <br> An android phone | Yes – 12 (54.5%/44.4%)) <br> No – 3 (13.6%) <br> I'm not sure – 6 (27.3%) <br> No response – 1 (4.5%) | • Mobile phone only used to acquire grades and discussions |
| | | | | |

**Analysis:**

- Just under 1/5 of respondents (18.2%) said they used a mobile device to access their CTE courses between April 1, 2015 and December 31, 2015. The remaining 81.8% did not. Of those clients who did use a mobile device, three used a tablet of some kind (iPad or tablet) and the remaining individual used an android phone.
- There is certainly interest from clients in using a mobile device to access CTE courses. Over half (54.5%) said that if they had a mobile device, they would use it to access e-Channel. Even if the four clients who already said they used a mobile device are accounted for, then 36.4% of respondents are interested, in using a mobile device to access e-Channel, with almost another third of respondents (27.3%) saying they are "not sure." Only 1 respondent said they would not use a mobile device for e-Channel, even if they had one.

## The LearningHUB

**Response summary:**

| Type of Class Meeting | No. of Responses | % of Responses |
|---|---|---|
| Live Classes on Saba | 158 | 47.16% |
| Independent Study | 50 | 14.93% |
| Short Courses | 127 | 37.91% |
| **Total Responses** | **335** | **100%** |

## *Live Classes on Saba Meeting*

**Total number of responses = 158**

**Question 1: Did you use a mobile device to do your class?**

| Responses Type | No. of Responses | % of Responses |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 8 | 5.05% |
| No | 150 | 94.95% |

**Analysis:**

- Of the 158 respondents who were taking live classes on Saba Meeting, only 5% said they used a mobile device to do their class.

**Question 2: What device did you use?**

Of the 8 respondents who said they used mobile devices for the Live Classes on Saba Meeting, the breakdown of the devices they used was:

iPad – 1
Tablet – 2
iPhone – 1
Laptop – 2

No response – 2

**Analysis:**

- Of the 8 individuals who used a mobile device to access live classes on Saba Meeting, 3 used a tablet or iPad, 2 used laptops and 1 used an iPhone.

**Question 3: Would you consider using a mobile device is you had/have one and it was an effective way to do online learning with the LearningHUB?**

No. of responses = 150 (those respondents who already use a mobile device to do online learning with the HUB have been subtracted)

| Response Type | No. of Responses | % of Responses |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 52 | 34.67% |
| No | 43 | 28.67% |
| I'm not sure | 54 | 36.00% |
| No response | 1 | 0.66% |

**Comments:**

- Absolutely would be an asset.  Could use Wi-Fi anywhere to strengthen skills, instead of just at home.
- Not know how.

**Analysis:**
- There appears to be interest in using mobile devices to access live classes on Saba Meeting, with just short of 35% of respondents saying they would consider using a mobile device. A further 36% said they are "not sure" and about 1/3 of respondents (28.67%) said they would not use a mobile device to access live classes on Saba, even if they had one.

## *Independent Study*

**Total number of responses = 50**

**Question 1: Did you use a mobile device to do your class?**

| Responses Type | No. of Responses | % of Responses |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 10 | 20.0% |
| No | 40 | 80.0% |

**Analysis:**

- One fifth of respondents used a mobile device to access Independent Study courses via the HUB – almost 4 x the number that used a mobile device to access live classes on Saba.

**Question 2: What device did you use?**

Of the 10 respondents who said they used mobile devices for Independent Study, here is a breakdown of the devices they used:

iPad – 2
iPhone – 2
Cell phone – 1
LG3 phone – 1
Android – 1
Laptop – 2
Samsung Galaxy s5 – 1

**Analysis:**
- The most popular mobile devices are tablets, iPads, cell phones and laptops.

**Question 3: Would you consider using a mobile device is you had/have one and it was an effective way to do online learning with the LearningHUB?**

No. of responses = 40 (those respondents who already use a mobile device to do online learning with the HUB have been subtracted)

| Response Type | No. of Responses | % of Responses |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 10 | 25.00% |
| No | 12 | 30.00% |
| I'm not sure | 18 | 45.00% |

**Comments:**

- I like using a laptop or desktop, just my personal preference.
- Mobile is more flexible. I can use it any time, anywhere, so I was able to do more work. The problem, only the pre and post test were supported in my device and not the lesson.
- If I had a notepad, then yes, but I use my cell phone for some things. I use a computer for everything else.
- Yes – on my way home from work I can complete a lot of work. Thank you.
- I'm wordy…and far less dexterous on a phone or tablet than I am on my keyboard.
- I find it difficult to do the course by cell phone and tablet.  A laptop or computer would be best, which I am saving up to purchase.
- If it was on like an Apple iPad, then yes.
- I will be very happy if you can allow us to use mobile device to do our work. In fact, it will make me do my work on time and anywhere I am. For example, few days ago, I went to my doctor and it took two hours before it got to my turn. I wish mobile devices were allowed. I would have used my iPad to do my work while I as waiting. I will really appreciate it if you help us with it. Thank you.
- I don't have the $ to buy a mobile device. I would have no clue on how to use it.
- As for the mobile device I think I would have to learn to use it, but it would be a good idea to learn to use it. I like to learn new things, and maybe that is one new thing to learn, learning is something I look forward to. I keep my mind and well being alive.

**Analysis:**

- 70% of those who are not currently using mobile devices to access Independent Study either state they would use a device if they had one (25.0%) or they are not sure (45.0%). The remaining respondents (30.0%) stated they would not use a mobile device to access Independent Study, even if they had a mobile device to use.
- From the comments provided, with the exception of personal preference, a desire for larger keyboards, and uncertainty about how to use/afford a mobile device, it's not clear why HUB Independent Study learners would NOT use a mobile device.

## *Short Courses*

**Total number of responses = 127**

**Question 1: Did you use a mobile device to do your class?**

| Responses Type | No. of Responses | % of Responses |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 20 | 15.75% |
| No | 107 | 84.25% |

**Analysis:**

- To access Short Courses through the LearningHUB, only 15.75% of respondents used a mobile device. The remaining 84.25% did not.

**Question 2: What device did you use?**

Of the 20 respondents who said they used mobile devices for the Short Courses, this is a breakdown of the devices they used:

iPad – 1
Tablet – 6
Laptop – 2
Laptop and tablet – 1
Samsung s4 – 1
MacBook Air – 1
iPhone – 2
Cell phone – 1
LG phone – 1
Computer – 4 (one respondent specifically noted the computer in class)

**Analysis:**
- Again – the most frequently used mobile devices are tablets (including iPads) and phones.

**Question 3: Would you consider using a mobile device is you had/have one and it was an effective way to do online learning with the LearningHUB?**

No. of responses = 107 (those respondents who already use a mobile device to do online learning with the LearningHUB have been subtracted)

| Response Type | No. of Responses | % of Responses |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 36 | 33.64% |
| No | 31 | 28.97% |
| I'm not sure | 39 | 36.49% |
| No response | 1 | 0.90% |

**Comments:**

- I don't own a phone or a tablet. I like my laptop. It seems to do what I require.
- I dislike texting and would opt for a normal keyboard every time.
- …not sure I could afford it.
- Too small to work with.
- I prefer a bigger screen to view work.
- I really do not want to use any device in online learning because it has everything we need.
- If I could afford it.
- I'm much more comfortable with a traditional keyboard.
- I don't have a mobile device.
- The course does not work using my cell phone or else I would be doing all work on it. When I started doing courses with you guys, I had no computer and had to borrow a friend's because it would not work on my cell.
- I would use a laptop or a tablet but not a phone.
- I already have mobile devices but it would be great for others to have as well.
- I wouldn't. I am more comfortable at a keyboard than responding to questions with a mobile device.
- It depends if I had an iPad?
- I like doing Learning HUB here at school or the March of Dimes.
- I'd rather use a computer.
- I could only use my iPhone to watch the videos but did save time going out to my friends or the local office to use the computer.
- Sure would like to have one that I could do courses on because some of the work I cannot do on my mini pad.
- If it was easier to use on the tablet, I would be able to do more at home.
- I think that a mobile device's screen could be too small for an online course, but some might find it more preferable.
- When I am out of town or not at home I would use my smart phone to do courses.
- I would like to use on my iPad.
- I don't think it's important to use mobile devices to do online learning. When I can't understand something, I write to the teacher to explain my problems and to ask her or him for more explanations by email.

- I started out by using a tablet but the videos would not play even though the flash drive was updated.
- If I had a laptop at home.
- I would probably consider using a mobile device if there was an audio version of the course.
- I just got a new tablet after I was already doing this course. I used my laptop this time, but I may consider using my tablet for the next one. My phone is too small to be effective for me.

**Analysis:**

- In terms of whether or not Short Course clients *would* use mobile devices, if they had them, responses were split three ways. About 1/3 of respondents said they would (33.64%), just over 1/3 said they were not sure (36.49%) and just under 1/3 (28.97%) said they would not use a mobile device to access Short Courses.
- From the comments provided, respondents would not use a mobile device because they like keyboards, the like larger screen sizes, videos don't play well on mobile devices, or they just prefer the more traditional computer because it's what they're comfortable with.

## Program Perspectives on Mobile Device Use

### Rationale

Client desire (or not) to use mobile devices to access learning has been explored in two different ways in 2015/2016 as described above. Clients can also be encouraged to use mobile devices as a result of the policies and design of the programs they are participating in. Therefore, program perspectives on mobile device use were also investigated in 2015/2016 – not in course design, but in terms of staying in touch with clients and gathering client feedback.

### Methodology

As was mentioned earlier in this report, adult literacy programs and other programs that are working within and to support Employment Ontario are considering new and different ways to gather feedback from clients, including the use of mobile devices and social media. For the purposes of this report, Contact North | Contact Nord developed a survey and a survey link was distributed to regional literacy networks across Ontario, with the request that they circulate the link to adult literacy, employment service and Ontario Works organizations across their networking area.

A total of 71 responses to the survey were received, in which programs were asked to describe their efforts to use mobile devices and social media to gather feedback from clients. The results were:

### Results

**Question 1: Which sector best describes your work?**

| Response | Chart | Percentage | Count |
|---|---|---|---|
| Adult literacy | | 71.8% | 51 |
| Employment | | 21.1% | 15 |
| Apprenticeship | | 0.0% | 0 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Ontario Works/ODSP | | 4.2% | 3 |
| Other, please specify... | | 2.8% | 2 |
| | | **Total Responses** | **71** |
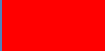
**Analysis:**

The majority (71.8%) of respondents were from the adult literacy sector, with a further 21.1% of respondents identifying with the employment sector. Respondents also represented Ontario Works/ODSP (4.2%). Two other respondents identified under "other" as being from the College sector.

**Question 2: Does your agency currently provide ways for clients/learners to provide feedback via social media or mobile device?**

| Response | Chart | Percentage | Count |
|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | | 42.9% | 30 |
| No | | 32.9% | 23 |
| No - but we're hoping to move in this direction | | 24.3% | 17 |
| | | **Total Responses** | **70** |

**Analysis:**

There is definitely a trend towards agencies providing ways for clients/learners to provide feedback via social media or mobile device. Of the 70 respondents who answered his question, 30 of them (or 42.9%) are currently providing ways for clients/learners to provide feedback via social media or mobile device. Another 17 respondents (or 24.3%) note that this is a direction in which they hope to move. The remaining 23 respondents (or 32.9%) do not provide ways for clients/learners to provide feedback via social media or mobile device and presumably do not have any immediate plans to do so.

**Question 3: Please tell us what programs or methods you are using.**

| Program of Method | # of Respondents |
|---|---|
| Texting | 10 |
| Facebook | 18 |
| Twitter | 7 |
| LinkedIn | 2 |
| Email | 7 |
| Cellphones | 2 |
| Phone | 1 |
| SurveyMonkey | 1 |
| Survey via Google Docs | 1 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Google Forms | 1 |
| Website | 3 |
| Call directly whenever time | 1 |

**Analysis:**

Survey respondents were able to identify more than one method for this question and several did so, showing that not only are some programs moving in the direction of using social media and mobile devices to gather client/learner feedback, but they are using multiple methods/programs in their efforts. Most programs are currently using Facebook to gather feedback from clients/learners, with texting coming in as the second most popular method. Twitter and email share the third spot for getting feedback from clients/and learners

**Question 4: Please tell us how effective these methods are in garnering customer feedback.**

| Response | Chart | Percentage | Count |
|---|---|---|---|
| Not at all effective | | 5.0% | 2 |
| Somewhat effective | | 42.5% | 17 |
| Very effective | | 12.5% | 5 |
| More effective than traditional methods | | 12.5% | 5 |
| We haven't had time to evaluate this yet | | 22.5% | 9 |
| Comments: | | 20.0% | 8 |
| | | **Total Responses** | **40** |

**Comments:**

| # | Response |
|---|---|
| 1. | We use Facebook because it is a constant contact where phone numbers often change with learners. |
| 2. | Especially for attendance or class cancellations |
| 3. | I'm not in a position to evaluate this |
| 4. | We receive comments on posts and tweets, also likes and shares. sometimes we ask a question, and we usually get responses. |
| 5. | For youth population, texting, and Facebook seem to be the preferred method. for older clients, traditional methods suffice. Different staff utilize social media or mobile devices to |

| # | |
|---|---|
| | different degrees. |
| 6. | Those clients who rely on texting are very easy to contact this way. |
| 7. | People like to complete the survey online.  It's quick for them to complete and easy to submit. |
| 8. | I have not had a direct hand in gathering and evaluating this feedback. Any feedback directed at my program is forwarded to me and dealt with on a case by case basis. |

**Analysis:**

Overall, it appears that the use of social media and mobile devices to gather client/learner feedback is limited in its effectiveness, with only 12.50% of respondents finding such use as "very effective". Just under half of the respondents (42.5%) consider their efforts in this area to be "somewhat effective", while 5.0 of respondents consider the use of social media and mobile devices to be "not at all effective."

A small number of respondents (12.50%) note that the use of social media and mobile devices to gather client/learner feedback is "more effective than traditional methods", and almost one quarter of respondents to this question (22.5%) note that they have not yet had time to evaluate the effectiveness of these approaches to gaining client feedback.

The comments provided to this question suggest that using social media and mobile devices to gather client/learner feedback may be more appropriate for some populations (i.e., youth) and that it might be a more efficient way to connect with clients/learners, as clients'/learners' phone number seem to change more rapidly than their Facebook accounts.

**Question 5: If you have seen any positive results from moving to the use of social media and/or mobile device usage for gaining feedback from clients, please tell us about the results.**

| # | Response |
|---|----------|
| 1. | Social media allows us to stay in contact with our clients on their preferred platform and not necessarily one that is convenient for us like telephone or email. |
| 2. | Easier to connect with |
| 3. | Easier for learners to contact us.  Less threatening |
| 4. | More likely to respond to texts than phone calls |
| 5. | Clients tend to respond better to a text than email |
| 6. | I am able to keep in touch with my clients for appointments, job postings and more |
| 7. | Has allowed us to reach people via text message that are not responding or no longer accessible by live telephone call or email. |
| 8. | Learners are more likely to respond to Facebook messages and text messages because it is less direct and allows them to reply on their terms. |
| 9. | Clients and learners appreciate being able to text |

| 10. | Faster to get results |
|-----|----------------------|
| 11. | It's not necessarily feedback that we get but more of an effective way to reach our clients. |
| 12. | Not really |
| 13. | From social media |
| 14. | Clients have posted some good suggestions |
| 15. | For the younger generation, I see this as essential - we definitely have more success using their preferred mode(s) of communication |
| 16. | Only through texting, and it is my last resort, actually.  It is a quick way to get a response, if a client is at all inclined to do texting. |
| 17. | Working with youth it is much easier to contact using a cell phone to text |
| 18. | I don't have access to this data but our program manager does. I don't know if Google forms is considered to be social media, but it can be accessed on a mobile device |
| 19. | It's easier to get people to fill out the online survey.  Since it can be done from any location, we can gather feedback from learners who have completed/left our program. |

**Analysis:**

Respondents who have had positive results with the use of social media/mobile devices to get client feedback, a number of trends are evolving. Several respondents noted that these newer approaches to gathering client feedback are more client-centred and programs are using them because it's more important to do what works for clients; not necessarily just what works for the agency. Other respondents note that they receive more feedback and possibly higher quality feedback because using social media/mobile devices to get feedback is less threatening for the clients. The use of such methods is not limited to just gathering client feedback. Some respondents are using social media/mobile devices for a range of purposes, including to set appointments with clients/remind them of appointments and to tell clients about jobs or other opportunities.

**Question 6: What, in your opinion, are some of the challenges in using social media and/or mobile devices to get feedback from clients?**

| Response | Chart | Percentage | Count |
|----------|-------|-----------|-------|
| We have no time to look into these new developments | | 39.3% | 24 |
| Our staff do not have access to social media at work | | 21.3% | 13 |
| Our staff do not have access to the technology required | | 11.5% | 7 |
| The costs are prohibitive | | 13.1% | 8 |
| We have to change the way we do business (e.g., make follow up calls after 6:00 pm when learners can receive texts and respond) | | 44.3% | 27 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Other, please specify... | ▮ | 42.6% | 26 |
| | | **Total Responses** | **61** |

**Analysis:**

A significant number of respondents (44.3%) noted that one of the challenges to using social media/mobile devices to gather client feedback is having to change the way the agency does business, while almost an equal number (39.3%) cited lack of time to research and investigate the use of these methods as the main challenge. A lack of access to the technology and to social media at work were identified as challenges by almost 30% of respondents (11.5% and 21.3% respectively). A further 13.1% of respondents identified costs as being a challenge.

Additional challenges that were identified through the comments part of this question included concerns about potentially rapid changes in technology and a program's ability to keep pace with this type of change. Some respondents indicated that their clients don't have physical access to social media/mobile devices or, and that those clients who do may struggle to use it/them to communicate with the program. Other concerns included a lack of policies around the use of social media/mobile devices as well as concerns related to privacy and confidentiality.

**Other, please specify...**

| # | Response |
|---|---|
| 1. | We do not use since clients' time is too costly for them to send us messages like this. |
| 2. | If they get rid of their cell, can't afford to maintain it; don't have computer at home so don't check messages frequently |
| 3. | Clients don't have "time" on their phones |
| 4. | Using personal cell to better able me to stay in touch with clients which gives clients my phone number but they are told they can only text |
| 5. | Which is the correct platform to use for surveys? Are they free? Will the technology change often? |
| 6. | The learning challenges faced by our clients/learners |
| 7. | Our learners have communication issues which results in delayed feedback. |
| 8. | Some of our students don't have access to different types of social media. |
| 9. | Ensuring that the mobile device is turned on each day and monitored |
| 10. | Our staff do not have access to mobile devices |
| 11. | Staff are using personal social media accounts/devices |
| 12. | In some cases, the costs are prohibitive |
| 13. | Need to have policies in place to ensure consistent and responsible use of social media for |

| | |
|---|---|
| | feedback |
| 14. | Privacy concerns client information on phones, phone taken offsite |
| 15. | Not all of our learners have access to social media or the desire to use it. |
| 16. | Twitter is the only form of social media used. |
| 17. | Unknown |
| 18. | Time/cost |
| 19. | We don't have any real challenges; we regularly use text to follow up |
| 20. | We have one mobile phone at work and a very generic Facebook page that covers all departments, not just employment, so our access to "work-related" social media is limited. Some staff use their own personal devices or Facebook pages. |
| 21. | Guidance staff required to maximize student service by working hours when most students physically in school, which is daytime. Paying support staff to work in evenings not effective or efficient customer service and contributes to corporate waste. |
| 22. | Maintaining confidentiality can be more difficult |
| 23. | Just haven't had the time to spend on it and don't know how much staff time it will require |
| 24. | Confidentiality |
| 25. | Sites like Facebook and Instagram are blocked at school board locations |
| 26. | We are not using Facebook at this time. |

**Question 7: If there are any new methods or programs that your organization is contemplating using or trying, to get client feedback, please tell us about them here.**

| # | Response |
|---|---|
| 1. | Facebook or email if they have access |
| 2. | We are attempting to use a texting software to reach clients. |
| 3. | We will be investing in a website and Facebook page |
| 4. | A text to keyboard application |
| 5. | Develop our own app with pertinent info and alerts on it |
| 6. | A social enterprise grocery store |
| 7. | We are still looking at paper customer service feedback questionnaires |
| 8. | Survey monkey |
| 9. | We are exploring options at this time |
| 10. | Twitter is accessible |

| 11. | Surveys on FB group |
|-----|---------------------|
| 12. | Staff are using their own cell phones on occasion, so we would like to get an "organization" cell phone |
| 13. | Text out survey |
| 14. | Not at this time |
| 15. | Nothing new for us |
| 16. | We have started trying LinkedIn |
| 17. | Hybrid (blend of teacher-led and some online) programming for learners - launch this in LBS February, in credit, April, in ESL ongoing (PBLA) |
| 18. | None that I am aware of |
| 19. | We survey in the traditional paper format at various points in service |
| 20. | Sorry I can't help with any new methods. We are currently on Twitter but haven't thought of using it for client feedback at this stage.  We ask our clients in LBS to give us feedback on paper.  We are thinking about creating a survey monkey to email it to those with email addresses. |
| 21. | Client Portal through SAMS |
| 22. | Not at present |
| 23. | We make phone calls after 4:00 PM and we have great results. |

**Analysis:**

Many respondents have plans to use social media/mobile devices in the future, most by adopting methods that were identified in Question #3. One respondent indicated that their program is looking to develop its own app.

**Question 8: If there is anything else you'd like us to know about your organization's experience in using social media/mobile devices to gather client feedback, please tell us here.**

| # | Response |
|---|----------|
| 1. | If clients have computer access social media is OK, if not they don't want to waste their minutes on non-essential texts, etc. |
| 2. | No |
| 3. | At times people can be more rude and disrespectful over social media/email because they aren't speaking to a real person. |
| 4. | None |
| 5. | Many clients request the use of social media/media devices |
| 6. | It is very time intensive |
| 7. | The response may not be timely |

| 8. | We haven't solicited for feedback on social media however the nature of the sites allows people to provide feedback/comment at any time. We haven't gathered much from social media but there have been some comments that we have been able to address/respond to directly within the social media platform |
|---|---|
| 9. | Until the funding is at a level that represents the challenges of the heavy administrative focus of LBS, we won't have the resources to do anything other than the basics to keep afloat. |
| 10. | Some learners, especially the ones on OW, cannot afford mobile devices, and yet mobile devices are almost a necessity for getting a job. |
| 11. | I love using my LBS Facebook group |
| 12. | Nothing has been done yet. |
| 13. | We are seeing an increase in learners that can be contacted by texting only |
| 14. | Pop ups on website have been effective but not through mobile devices |
| 15. | Social media is only effective if the learners "like" our page first. This does not help us with learners who don't do that. |
| 16. | We use social media to promote and inform. We do not use it to get gather feedback. We get the feedback by phone, e-mail or paper. |
| 17. | n/a |
| 18. | We have very little response in doing our 'follow up' using email. It would be great to figure out a way to get feedback through social media as it seems the way to go - but at this stage we would need help in how to even start. |
| 19. | By using google docs, learner responses appear in one place and can be easily viewed in a spreadsheet. It's a good way to get the "big picture" of how are learners are feeling about the LBS program. |
| 20. | We do not use social media |
| 21. | Few of our clients actually use social media for our program. They still use email, voicemail, and check for information on Blackboard (classroom learning platform) and Banner (the college program for everything related to RO, transcripts, etc.) |

**Analysis:**

Programs are still at various levels when it comes to adopting social media/mobile devices, although several respondents noted that such methods are becoming the "norm," regardless of the challenges related to implementation. The anticipated learning curve may be preventing some programs from adopting social media/mobile device use as it takes time to learn new programs and use them.

## Responses from Help Desk Technicians re: Mobile Device Usage

No. of responses: 3

## Methodology

The Help Desk Technicians at Contact North | Contact Nord are integral to Contact North | Contact Nord e-Channel learners having a positive experience with online learning. Given the trend towards increasing mobile device usage among Canadians, we wanted to see if this trend had been identified by the Help Desk Technicians at Contact North | Contact Nord and, if so, what types of devices and/or issues were coming to the fore.

Three of six Help Desk Technicians responded to our questions and the results are below.

## Results

**Question: Have you seen an increase over the past year in the number of calls that originate because the caller is using some sort of mobile device?**

- No
- No. It seems to be about the same as last year.
- Yes

**Question: What sorts of mobile devices are callers using?**

- iPad, Galaxy Tabs and Surfaces

**Question: in your opinion, what are the devices most commonly being used by callers to access e-Channel programming?**

- Laptops, iPhones and iPads
- iPad followed closely by iPhone and Android as a distant third
- iPads

**Question: Please tell us what type of issues mobile device users are seeking your help for.**

- Most of the issues users are experiencing is logging into the Saba application. The default settings need to be configured manually to point to the correct server.
- Most of those issues are signing into Saba which is usually resolved by talking the user through installing and setting up the Saba Meeting App. Of the unresolved issues for mobile users, the most common causes are network (cellular or WiFi in coffee shops, airports, hotels, etc.) or issues with the Saba client/server that Saba has not fixed.
- Users don't know the settings for the initial login

## Summary

The Contact North | Contact Nord Help Desk Technicians are aware of mobile device trends among learners and find that challenges that learners experience with mobile devices are most often associated with using the Saba Meeting App.

# Mobile Device Usage and Work-Arounds

The most commonly used learning platforms in e-Channel are Saba Meeting, Moodle, Plato and Learnscape. Contact North | Contact Nord, in anticipation of learners' increasing use of mobile devices to access e-Channel courses, is interested in learning more about "work-arounds" – ways to support learners in continuing to access e-Channel courses effectively and efficiently via mobile devices. For Saba Meeting, Contact North | Contact Nord has already created a Mobile Tour and a Quick Reference Card Mobile Option which can be found here:  http://e-channel.ca/student-resources

## Learnscape

There is very little literature on best practices related to work-arounds and Learnscape. However, an Internet site was found (from Uganda, Africa) that had this to say about Learnscape and mobile device use:

> Our mobile content delivery platform can be customized for learning purposes to provide functionality needed to deliver content to learners 'anytime, anywhere, any device'. The platform provides all required learning management, administration and support in order to deliver highly rewarding enriched learning experiences to users or learners on their devices be it of ios, Android or smartphones, tablets, laptops, or even desktops. This comes along with a good user-friendly display that appropriately resizes according to device screen in order to give a rich rewarding user-experience.

http://www.learnscapeafrica.com/mobile-learning-content-enablement-and-delivery/

## Moodle

Moodle has a significant amount of information online about how to use Moodle with mobile devices. This is the main site: https://docs.moodle.org/30/en/New_for_mobile

In addition to a section called Moodle Mobile FAQ, the following content areas are addressed:

- Moodle Mobile features
- New for mobile
- Moodle Mobile guide for admins
- Mobile app notifications
- Creating Moodle Mobile friendly courses

## PLATO

There is an app for teachers who use PLATO called the Plato Educator App (developed by Edmentum). More information can be found about this tool here: https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/plato-educator-app/id587188880?mt=8

It is compatible with iPhones, iPads and iPod touch, but it requires iOS 5.0 or later.

There is also an app that adult learns can use to make the use of Plato possible on mobile devices. It's called the Puffin Academy App. It functions like a typical web browser, except that it's made for mobile devices and it's ad free and free to use.

# Other Strategies for Getting Client Feedback

Customer Feedback: 19 Strategies To Get More Feedback

Customer Feedback, Customer Service - September 24, 2013 By Ross Beard.

http://blog.clientheartbeat.com/customer-feedback/

| Strategy | Advantages | How-to? |
|---|---|---|
| Client Surveys | • Get more accurate feedback from clients | Client Heartbeat |
| Behavioural Insight Surveys | • When visitors are viewing specific pages that are important to you, use Qualaroo to ask personalized questions to get feedback and then offer a solution to help. | Qualaroo; Google Consumer Surveys |
| Mobile Device Surveys | • This platform gives you the ability to build and deliver stunning mobile surveys that are distributed via a simple text message.<br>• It's estimated that people look at their cell phones 150 times a day<br>• Send surveys in real time to catch real-time feedback | mPoll.me |
| Usability Testing | • A tool that can help you conduct usability tests on your website, web-based app, or even mobile app - offers a range of services in which real people actually use your online product or website, actively record their screen and give you actionable feedback. | UserTesting.com |
| Monitor Social Media | • Hear what people are saying about your organization on social media – good indirect customer feedback<br>• Use key words related to your brand | Sprout Social; SocialBro; Google Alerts |
| Website Activity | • See where on your site visitors are getting stuck. If nothing else, target the FAQ | Google Analytics (free) KISSmetrics, Mixpanel and Hubspot can provide more |

| | part of your site | detailed information than page views and clicks |
|---|---|---|
| Customer Feedback Portals | • 24/7 feedback from customers | UserVoice; Get Satisfaction |
| In-App Feedback | • In-app customer feedback gives you insight into how your customers actually use your product. | Intercom.io |

## Recommendations for Planning

The purpose of this report was both to examine the current and potential use of mobile device use among adult learners, but also to assist e-Channel leads in preparing for the increased use of mobile device use. The following are recommendations that e-Leads and Contact North | Contact Nord may wish to consider:

• Encourage e-Leads to not just follow the mobile use of learners but to try to influence it. E-leads could put information on their websites to provide insight to learners about which mobile devices work best with their programs. For example, add content to websites along the lines of "Are you considering buying a mobile device? We recommend the use of XXXX for our programs…"
• Are there key messages that all e-Leads may want to develop and incorporate into their websites, perhaps in the form of FAQ, that go beyond recommendations of purchases for learners?
• As a result of blended learning and the fact that many e-Channel learners are participating via a blended learning approach, e-Leads may want to review how they connect with other programs in the province around mobile device usage.
• Analyze e-Channel users – into demographic age groups. Research suggests that some demographics prefer different social media to communicate. Do e-Leads know who is using their services via mobile device use?
• Encourage e-Leads to review the section "Creating Moodle Mobile friendly courses" before they create new content: https://docs.moodle.org/30/en/Creating_Moodle_Mobile_friendly_courses
• E-leads that use Learnscape as a learning platform may want to look at how Learnscape is being used in Africa to facilitate learner involvement.
• A collective e-Channel effort could be mounted to identify and review potential feedback programs and perhaps apps (recognizing that the use of apps is on the decline amongst users) that could be made available to all upon the program selection.

## Conclusion

Mobile device use is on the rise – in life in general and in education. Ensuring that e-Channel learning programs are compatible with the most common mobile devices (smartphones and tablets) and that information about using mobile devices to access learning is available and promoted on e-Lead websites is critical. Certainly, the development of new online e-Channel programs should be undertaken with mobile device use in mind.

The use of mobile devices to access e-Channel programming offers opportunity as well as challenges. The opportunities lie in the realm of increasing access for learners, while the challenges lie in the area of programs changing business practices and keeping on top of rapid developments in the technological realm. Employment Ontario programs, including literacy, employment services and Ontario Works, are motivated to further explore the successful implementation of mobile device use, if not for the purposes of learning, then for the critical ability to maintain communication with clients.

The use of mobile devices – both to assist clients in accessing learning activities and for programs to explore meaningful ways of staying connected to clients – is paramount. This conversation needs to be embraced and ongoing and e-Lead programs need to be more explicit in assisting learners in understanding the role of and directing the use of mobile device use in programming.