

## CHAPTER 1

# Technologies



## ◆ Background information

- **Technology addiction** is often described as a serious problem involving the inability to control the use of various kinds of technology, in particular the Internet, smartphones, tablets and social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

Information technology (IT) has made it fast, easy and effortless to text and access the Web and social media from almost anywhere, but this has made us dependent on communicating via the tiny computers we carry with us. This has led to a rise in addictive tendencies that involve technology.

The **addiction rates** are evolving quickly: in 2006, surveys in the US and Europe showed that between 1.5% and 8.2% of the population suffered from Internet addiction. In 2017, prevalence rates of internet addiction are as high as 8.2% in the general population. It could be as high as 18.5% in some regions. There were 3.7 billion internet users in March 2017.

Here are some key figures:

- 3.77 billion global internet users in 2017, equaling 50% penetration;
  - 2.80 billion global social media users in 2017, equaling 37% penetration;
  - 4.92 billion global mobile users in 2017, equaling 66% penetration;
  - 2.56 billion global mobile social media users in 2017, equaling 34% penetration;
  - 1.61 billion global e-commerce users in 2017, equaling 22% penetration.
- Technology addiction is not simply defined by the amount of time spent with the digital device, but by how it affects someone's **mental and physical health**, daily life, relationships and academic or job performance. Symptoms can include: compulsive checking of text messages, frequent changing of Facebook status and uploading of "selfies", a feeling of euphoria while on the web, social withdrawal, loss of interest in activities that don't involve

a computer, phone or gadget, feelings of restlessness when unable to go online, stress, sleep disorders and depression.

- The **internet of things** (IoT) refers to the connection of devices to the Internet. Cars, kitchen appliances, and even heart monitors can all be connected through the IoT. There might be more than 24 billion IoT devices on Earth by 2020. That's four devices for every human being on the planet.
- There are more than 80,000 **education apps** available for download through Apple's App Store; 72% of those are aimed at toddlers and preschoolers.
- On average, in 2015, Americans spent over 9 hours per day on media: 2.8 hours on mobiles, 2.4 on computers and 4.3 watching TV. In 2016, adults devoted about 10 hours and 39 minutes each day to consuming media. About 81% of adults in the US have smartphones.
- The most **popular social media** are: Facebook (1.86bn monthly active users), WhatsApp (1.2bn), YouTube (1bn), Instagram (600m) and Twitter (313 m).
- 1/3 kids feel they are more accepted on social media networks than in real life.

In 2016 in the US, 2/3 of American adults used social networking sites. 68% of all US adults are Facebook users. 34% of US students have experienced **cyberbullying**. 64% of those who experienced it said it affected their ability to learn and feel safe at school.

## ◆ The words to know

- ▶ **Absent-minded:** distrait
- ▶ **Absorbed = soaked up:** absorbé
- ▶ **Addicted to = hooked to:** accro à
- ▶ **At the expense of:** aux dépens de
- ▶ **Can't help + V-ing:** ne pas pouvoir s'empêcher de
- ▶ **Comment:** commentaire
- ▶ **Computer literate/savvy:** qui s'y connaît en informatique
- ▶ **Couch potato:** légume (sens figuré)
- ▶ **Cut off:** coupé de
- ▶ **Cyberbullying:** cyber-harcèlement
- ▶ **Dating site:** site de rencontre
- ▶ **Dependent on:** tributaire de
- ▶ **Depression = breakdown:** dépression
- ▶ **Digerati:** experts en informatique
- ▶ **Digital natives:** personnes nées avec le numérique
- ▶ **Distracted:** déconcentré
- ▶ **Flash mob:** mobilisation éclair
- ▶ **FoMo: fear of missing out:** peur de rater quelque chose
- ▶ **Glued to:** rivé à
- ▶ **Introvert:** introverti  
≠ **outgoing = extrovert**
- ▶ **MMORPG = massively multiplayer online role-playing game:** JDRMM jeu de rôle en ligne massivement multijoueur
- ▶ **Nerd = techie = computer geek:** mordu d'informatique
- ▶ **Netcoholic:** accro à internet
- ▶ **No life:** quelqu'un qui consacre sa vie à sa passion
- ▶ **Nomophobe (n)/nomophobic (adj):** quelqu'un qui ne peut pas se passer de son téléphone
- ▶ **Online:** en ligne
- ▶ **Relationship:** relation
- ▶ **Screen:** écran
- ▶ **Sense of belonging:** sentiment d'appartenance
- ▶ **Sense of community:** esprit de groupe
- ▶ **Shy:** timide
- ▶ **Social network:** réseau social
- ▶ **Spare time:** temps libre
- ▶ **Status update:** mise à jour du statut
- ▶ **Subscriber:** abonné
- ▶ **To be charged with:** être accusé de
- ▶ **To be the laughing stock of:** être la risée de
- ▶ **To broadcast:** diffuser
- ▶ **To bully:** brimer, tyranniser
- ▶ **To chat = chatter:** bavarder
- ▶ **To commit suicide:** se suicider
- ▶ **To distract:** distraire
- ▶ **To do without:** se passer de
- ▶ **To feel lonely:** se sentir seul
- ▶ **To feel part of:** se sentir partie prenante
- ▶ **To fiddle with:** tripoter
- ▶ **To go viral:** se propager très vite
- ▶ **To hang out with:** fréquenter
- ▶ **To harass:** harceler
- ▶ **To lifecast:** publier sa vie
- ▶ **To make fun of = laugh at = ridicule:** se moquer de
- ▶ **To mix with people:** côtoyer des gens
- ▶ **To post:** publier
- ▶ **To publicise:** faire connaître
- ▶ **To share:** partager
- ▶ **To shy away:** fuir
- ▶ **To socialise:** sociabiliser, fréquenter
- ▶ **To spend time:** passer du temps
- ▶ **To spread rumours:** répandre des rumeurs
- ▶ **To surf = browse the net:** consulter, surfer en ligne
- ▶ **To switch off:** éteindre
- ▶ **To take up time:** prendre du temps
- ▶ **To text:** envoyer des sms
- ▶ **To withdraw from = isolate oneself from:** s'isoler de
- ▶ **To withdraw into oneself:** se renfermer sur soi
- ▶ **Videogamer:** joueur de jeu vidéo
- ▶ **Vlog (video weblog):** blog où on publie des vidéos

## ● Entraînement • Texte 1

Lisez le texte, faites un plan de compte-rendu et de commentaire. Utilisez les pistes données si nécessaire.

🕒 Durée de préparation : 20 minutes.

### **Social media addiction**

Adapted from *The Express Tribune*, 11 May 2015

When we think of addicts, the picture that normally comes to mind is that of a gaunt man or woman, huddled in a corner, trying desperately to get his/her next fix of heroin.

But addiction isn't just about abusing substances. If a person practises an activity (gambling, for instance) to an extent where it becomes compulsive and infringes upon ordinary life, then that is considered as an addiction.

Now, if you are the parent of a teenager, your child is very likely to be so engrossed in his or her smartphone that he can't even give you the time of day. If you're a young adult, chances are that you live a large part of your life in the virtual world. This behaviour may seem normal but it has crossed the line over into addiction.

A growing number of people suffer from internet addiction, especially to social networking websites, like Facebook. A study concluded that the more people used social networking sites, the more likely they were to have problems like substance abuse.

It also found that women, extroverts and people who had trouble sleeping until very late at night were likely to become addicted to Facebook. Similarly, the compulsive use of social media websites such as Facebook led to changes in people's brains as those caused by drug addiction.

Like with other types of addiction, there are two types of behaviours found in internet addiction. The first is a constant or growing wish to interact with the object of the addiction. The second is feeling bad when that interaction isn't possible.

In the case of social media websites, what hooks people is the rush they get from social recognition, the thrill of getting a 'like' or a re-tweet. That 'social high' leads users to check their Facebook, Instagram and Twitter timelines all the time. But as soon as they hit one level of social recognition, they want to go one level higher.

But what's wrong with all this, you might ask? At the end of the day, nobody gets hurt if somebody spends too much time on Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat or Twitter.

Unfortunately, addictive behaviours prevent a person who is so obsessed with their Facebook status from being very productive at work. Very few people are really good at multitasking. There are other losses as well. Take, for example, the selfie obsession that has totally invaded social media. Unattractive and equally unnecessary, these selfies are taken anywhere and everywhere. No matter how shocking or inappropriate the picture is, people's self-esteem seems to hang on how many 'likes' their selfies get.

Obviously, Facebook can be great for catching up with your friends and family. The bottom line is that you need to know what you're dealing with and find a balance.

- ▶ **Pistes pour le compte-rendu :** *What are the characteristics of an addict? Why can internet be compared to a drug? What are its consequences?*
- ▶ **Pistes pour le commentaire :** *Why are young people addicted to social media? What are their positive and negative impacts?*

## ★ Suggestion de plan

Comparez ce plan de compte-rendu et de commentaire avec le vôtre et vérifiez que les points principaux y figurent. Puis faites votre présentation.

🕒 Durée de présentation : 4-5 + 4-5 minutes.

### ■ Introduction

- ▶ **Context:** Increasing number of subscribers to social media, but also increasing time spent online.
- ▶ **Text:** Social networking is considered as an addiction
- ▶ **Key question:** What makes social networking comparable to an addiction?
- ▶ **Axes:** Characteristics of an addict? Why an addiction? Consequences?

### ■ Summary

#### I. What are the characteristics of an addict?

1. Compulsive behaviour; obsession with the next fix
2. Feeling bad when deprived of the activity
3. Want always more
4. Infringe upon daily activities

#### II. Why can the internet be considered as an addiction?

1. Obsession with being on the internet; spend a lot of time online
2. Disconnection from the real world and real people
3. Excitement at getting a “like”; crave for social recognition
4. Obsession with selfies

#### III. What are its consequences?

1. Negative impact on work life: lack of productivity
2. Substance consumption
3. Self-esteem depends on the number of “likes”

### ■ Transition

- ▶ **Conclusion:** Impacts on daily activities, the brain, mentality and behaviour
- ▶ **Key question:** Why are social media so important to young people?
- ▶ **Axes:** A means to keep in touch and forge one’s identity; the threats

### ■ Commentary

#### I. A means to keep in touch

1. Have a social life and professional career
2. Be informed

#### II. Forging one’s identity

1. The ideal self
2. A sense of belonging

#### III. The threats

Lack of confidentiality, authenticity, security and social life

### ■ Conclusion

Essential sharing and socialising tool but need to keep safe

## ⊙ Correction du compte-rendu

Social media subscriptions have kept growing over the last decade, increasing the number of people connected together and to the world, but also the time spent online. This article, based on the findings of a recent study, was published in May 2015 and precisely tackles the addictive side of social networks and in particular Facebook. It analyses what makes social networking comparable to an addiction, by describing the characteristics of an addict, explaining why social networking is an addiction and highlighting the consequences.

A typical addict suffers from compulsive behaviour and an obsession with the next fix. He feels bad when he is deprived of the activity and wants always more. This obsession goes as far as infringing upon daily activities and disconnecting addicts from reality. They are often so engrossed in their bubble that they live as if on another planet.

Just like a typical drug addict, an internet addict shows compulsive signs: he spends a lot of time online checking accounts, he yearns to be on the internet, he feels a constant and immediate excitement at getting a “like” and he craves for social recognition. He is often obsessed with the image he gives, as his addiction to selfies shows. Lastly, a social media addict lives in a virtual world, usually totally disconnected from the real world and real people. Whether you are a child or a young adult, the symptoms are similar, and most concerned people are women, extroverts and people who have trouble sleeping until very late at night.

Not only are the symptoms similar, but the consequences are often the same too. Both types of addiction result in changes in people’s brains. But the obsession with being on social media also adversely impacts work life as it is very difficult to do many tasks at the same time; as a result it leads to a lack of productivity. Moreover, excessive use of online social networking websites like Facebook is associated with problems such as substance abuse. Finally, linking self-esteem to the number of “likes” an addict receives makes him emotionally dependent on others’ opinions.

Therefore, it clearly appears that social networks are rather addictive but if the symptoms are similar to those of a drug addiction, the consequences seem less tragic. It is a question of balance to avoid excessive use and just enjoy the communicational and informative assets of social media. So what are some solutions to avoid internet addiction? Restricting its use and changing habits might help.

### + *L’astuce en plus*

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Dans l’introduction, il n’est pas toujours bienvenu de présenter toutes les informations relatives à la publication de l’article, telles que le nom de l’auteur, la date exacte, la source et le titre. Il suffit d’en indiquer la date (mois et année) ; mentionnez les autres informations uniquement si elles présentent un intérêt particulier, par exemple le titre s’il donne l’opinion du journaliste, l’auteur s’il est connu ou la source si elle est susceptible d’orienter le point de vue de l’auteur : cela peut être le cas si l’article a été publié dans un magazine dédié à l’environnement. Evitez des formulations maladroites telles que “The title is...”, “the name of the journalist is...”, “the date of the article is...”. Dites plutôt: “The article is entitled...; it was written by...; it was published in May 2015/on 11 May 2015”.

## ⊙ Correction du commentaire

Social media are increasingly prevalent as a means of exchanging and keeping in touch with family, friends or colleagues. They are particularly popular among young adults and teenagers. So, how can we account for their prevalence among youths?

It is an essential means for them to keep in touch and have a social life: they can organise meetings and parties, and be informed about their friends' latest news.

It is also essential for their future professional life; the earlier they get used to exchanging and dealing with others, the better they will be at mastering this tool to create their profiles and have job interviews online. Facebook is an incredible tool to reach a maximum of people and be informed, as marketers have realised. 56% of consumers say they follow brands on social media to browse products for sale, and 31% say they use social media to look for new items to purchase.

Teens and children also love this network because they are able to create the image of themselves they want: so it is easier for them to be accepted and have more self-esteem. According to a survey, one kid out of three feels more accepted on social networks than in real life. It fosters a sense of belonging to a community; as a result they feel less isolated or different. Finally, social networks are not more dangerous than real life where children can come across malevolent people and face daily risks. So parents think their children are safer at home behind a screen than outside.

However, media have their share of risks. Children under 13 are not mature enough to know what is safe to say or not. They may reveal confidential information that could endanger the whole family. They do not realise that nothing really disappears from the internet. What they innocently post now may backfire later. Besides, on social networks they feel free to post fake information or an embellished image of themselves to boast. It leads to a competition to have more "likes" and as a result the most vulnerable children feel even lonelier. They become too dependent on what others think of them, which degrades their self-confidence. Still more worrying, children are easily influenced and are easy targets of cyberbullying, harassment and liars online. 34% of US students have experienced cyberbullying. 64% of those who experienced it said it affected their ability to learn and feel safe at school. Lastly, social networks are addictive and can become time-consuming; children have no real social life anymore; they no longer talk with parents; they do not do sports, as a consequence they have obesity problems and withdraw into themselves.

It clearly appears that social media are an essential sharing and socialising tool for youths; but it is essential to teach them how to keep safe as soon as possible so that they can use them more responsibly.

### ⊕ *L'astuce en plus*

Le commentaire a pour but d'**exprimer un point de vue ou une synthèse de points de vue** communément admis, en relation avec la thématique du texte. Il ne s'agit pas de donner uniquement un avis personnel ou une opinion telle que "*I agree*". Le commentaire doit ressembler à une **démonstration étayée d'arguments variés et surtout explicités de façon approfondie**. Il faut montrer les tenants et les aboutissants d'un problème, en expliquer l'origine, les causes, les conséquences ou/et les solutions. Il faut éviter de tourner autour d'une seule idée.

## → Pour aller plus loin

### Autres problématiques possibles pour le commentaire

- **What are the symptoms of internet addiction?** (Losing track of time, irritability when interrupted, feeling of guilt, isolation, sense of euphoria when online and panic when offline, weight gain, sleep disturbances...)
- **What are the other negative effects of social networking addiction?** (Social, personal, mental, educational and professional risks)
- **What can be done to reduce social media addiction?** (**Restrict the use:** decrease internet time little by little, set reasonable internet use goals, take frequent breaks, focus on why you need to connect to the net. **Change your routine:** engage in other activities, go out and hang out with real people)
- **Should Facebook be allowed to under 13 year olds?** (Yes because: already widely used by teens under 13; get used to exchanging with others; create the image of themselves they want: easier to accept themselves; sense of belonging to a community; feel less isolated/no because: not mature enough to know what is safe to say; nothing really disappears; fake image of themselves to boast; feel even lonelier; risk of cyber-bullying, harassment and liars online; become dependent on what others think of them; bad for self-confidence; time-consuming; no social life; obesity)

### Préparer l'entretien

Répondez aux questions suivantes.

1. Are text messages, social networks, forums, blogs ... the best way to exchange?
2. Are people well informed about the risks and security parameters?
3. Is Facebook more dangerous than the real world for children?
4. Why is Facebook important for youngsters?
5. Why could it be a handicap not to master social networks?
6. How do politicians relate to social networks?

### Suggestions de réponses aux questions

1. They are convenient especially for shy or remote people; they make it easier to keep connected to each other, but they do not foster true communication as it is easy to lie or fake feelings.
2. Most of them know the risks but they do not necessarily know how to change the security settings on their social media profiles.
3. They may meet bad people in the street and online, but online it is more insidious as it can impact their morale and lead to a downward spiral of depression.
4. It helps them keep in touch, share their lives, feel valued and integrated, and it enables them to be informed quickly about the latest news.
5. Social networks are becoming a key tool to promote oneself and look for jobs, so this is a tool they need to master if they do not want to be left behind.
6. Politicians are looking for new ways to attract attention and reach people, especially youngsters, who are increasingly consuming news via online platforms. As some youths distrust traditional news channels, politicians can now have unfiltered communication with online followers.