

MARKET BEAT

Consumer Technology Ownership Hits New Highs

What is the latest tech consumers are buying?

New research from CTA sets the benchmark for technology ownership in North America and provides fresh perspective on engagement with digital services. CTA's analysis reveals rising levels of technology ownership among households over the past year in multiple categories; echoing historic unit shipment volumes tracked by CTA in 2020. The research also shows purchase intentions remain elevated across U.S. households and Canada, portending another banner year for the industry. A deeper dive into the data reveals several key trends driving business opportunities.

Let's start by looking at the fastest growing technology products in terms of household ownership. CTA's *23rd Annual U.S. Consumer Technology Ownership & Market Potential Study* (May 2021) found among the 83 products measured, household ownership of 4K UHD TVs and two-in-one notebook PCs saw the largest gains. Self-reported ownership of 4K UHD TVs grew the fastest, leaping 16 points to land at 52% of households. Ownership of two-in-one notebook PCs grew 14 points to 46% of U.S. households. Other products making significant advances in ownership levels over the past year included smart home products and connected fitness equipment. The imprint of the health crisis on these gains is obvious.

TVs and Smartphones Vie for Dominance

TVs remain the flagship device in American homes, with 91% reporting they own at least one TV. However, household ownership of smartphones is nearly congruent at 90%. Likewise, ownership density of TVs and smartphones is similar with 2.3 and 2.1 products owned, in turn.

Purchase intentions for both products remain strong, inspired by new technologies like 5G smartphones and 8K UHD TVs. In terms of computing products, 81% of households own at least one notebook PC.

Smart home technologies are another category where ownership levels are gaining momentum. Ownership grew robustly across the nine smart home products included in CTA's survey — from smart speakers to smart door locks. 2021 should bring even more ownership gains as purchase intentions over the next 12 months continue to climb across all devices, including robotic vacuums. This is especially true among repeat purchasers as they seek to expand their connected home environments by adding more smart home products such as doorbells, locks, lights and/or centralized control through smart speakers.

Another product category on the rise is wireless personal audio — particularly wireless earbuds, which were popular even before the era of Zoom calls. Today, U.S. household ownership of wireless earbuds (47%) surpasses wired earbuds (45%). Expect wireless personal audio products,

TVs remain the flagship device in American homes, with 91% reporting they own at least one TV. However, household ownership of smartphones is nearly congruent at 90%.

including earbuds and headphones, to remain popular as one-third (33%) of households intend to purchase one of these products within the next 12 months.

Lifted by end demand for more entertainment options and innovative new models, the home video game console market is yet another category seeing substantial gains in household ownership. Today, more than half (53%) of U.S. households report owning at least one home video game console including 26% that own a 'next-gen' model such as Sony's Playstation 5 or Microsoft's Series X. Purchase plans are strong with 33% of U.S. households looking to buy a home video game console over the next year, with one in five planning to buy a next-gen game console.

More technology ownership trends plus a look at engagement with digital services like streaming video and online health care are contained in CTA's U.S. research report. And many of these same trends can be found in CTA's *6th Annual Canadian Consumer Technology Ownership & Market Potential Study*. Connect with these studies and more at cta.tech/Research. ■