DIGITAL UAE 2023 FACTSHEET
Introduction:

As the government acts as an enabler of society at large, a digital community represents the ideal environment for digital transformation to thrive and attain leadership. Amidst this formula, the UAE experience emerges as a model of digital harmony between the government, private sector and members of the public alike.

Such formula is embodied in the following fact: The UAE was one of the first countries to show a keen interest in the telecommunications infrastructure and digital transformation. Because of this, it became the first worldwide in the Fiber to the Home (FTTH) Index, thus facilitating its rise to the top rank globally in the use of the Internet. In this report, there are a lot of facts and figures that can provide similar facets of this causal relationship. Ultimately, a holistic and integrated digital life is a collective community effort involving the government, private sector and community members, and naturally benefits all.
DIGITAL LIFE FEATURES

9.38 million individuals
No. of Internet users in UAE

99%
Ratio of Internet users in UAE to population
Internet Uses

(Purposes for using the Internet in UAE)

Objectives of using the Internet in the UAE range from connecting with family to entertainment and learning. Such objectives were as follows:

- Connecting with family and friends: 58.8%
- Searching for information: 54.1%
- Discover new ideas: 49.2%
- Watching videos: 49.1%
- Researching how things are made: 45.5%
- Searching for products and brands: 45.1%
Watching the news and catching up with events: 44.6%

Education: 41.2%

Listening to music: 35.2%

Looking up health topics and products: 35.4%

Seeking out new friendships and relationships: 33.2%

Searching for: Places Vacations – Travel: 33.5%

Sharing opinions and ideas: 32.2%

Finding business-related topics: 32.7%
Devices Used

(Percentage of Internet users across all types of devices)

User preferences of the devices used to access the Internet vary according to the following percentages:

- **Smartphones**: 96.2%
- **Desktops and laptops**: 60.5%
- **Tablets**: 38%
- **Gaming Consoles**: 20.7%
- **VR headsets**: 8.2%
- **Televisions**: 17.7%
- **Smart home equipment**: 13.5%
- **Smartwatches**: 38.6%
Internet Speed

smartphones Download speed

161.15 MB/s
Annualized speed increase
+ 2.3%

Fixed Internet Download Speed

207.41 MB/s
Annualized speed increase
+ 80.1%
Internet Browsers
(Usage share of web browsers from across devices)

Internet users in the UAE browse the web using different browsers, according to the following percentages:

- **Chrome**: 68.72%
- **Safari**: 19.16%
- **Microsoft Edge**: 3%
- **Firefox**: 1.26%
- **Samsung Browser**: 2.34%
- **Opera**: 1.53%
- **Android Browser**: 0.12%
- **Other browsers**: 3.87%
Websites Visited
(Most visited sites on a monthly basis)

The most visited websites in the UAE were as follows:

- YouTube: 130 million
- Google: 129 million
- Facebook: 18.8 million
- Twitter: 11.6 million
- Instagram: 10.4 million
Unified Digital Platform U.ae

The digital presence front of the government of UAE, incorporating all information and services provided by government entities. The portal is managed by the Telecommunications and Digital Government Regulatory Authority (TDRA) in cooperation with all government entities.

World’s shortest government domain composed of one letter (u)

- 19 M visitors (in 2022)
- 30 M visits

90% Portal Content Happiness Meter

263k Searches performed on the portal (2022)

2,630 Digital services on the portal

221 Government entities offer their services through the portal
Unified Digital Platform U.ae

Generative AI-supported search of UAE’s Government Unified Digital Platform U.ae

launched by 25 May 2023

60,000
Searches by generative AI-supported version

98.5%
Percentage of customer satisfaction on the AI-supported version of U.ae.

Top search:

- Recruitment & jobs
- Entry permits (tourist, residency & golden visa)
- Education
- Transportation & driving licenses
Search Engines

(Search Engine Market Share)

Search engine preferences of Internet users vary, with the percentages as follows:

95.78%  
Google

3.09%  
Bing

0.43%  
Yahoo

0.70%  
Other
Searching Online

(Percentage of Internet users who used different methods to search for information)

Internet users in UAE confirmed that, in addition to direct searching, they used other ways of searching such as: Searching by image etc.

- 22.7% Searching by voice assistant (weekly)
- 46.7% Search through social networks (products - brands)
- 27.3% Searching by image (monthly)
Watching Digital Visual Content

(Percentage of Internet users who viewed different types of visual content on a weekly basis)

- All types of videos: 97.2%
- Comedy or entertainment clips: 47.7%
- Live feeds: 31.4%
- Music videos: 55%
- Educational videos or those that teach how to do things: 30.5%
- Academic education: 37.3%
- Sports videos: 36.9%
- Gaming videos: 28.6%
- Product intro videos: 29.8%
- Influencer videos and video blogs: 31.9%
Digital Video Broadcasting (DVB)

(Percentage of Internet users who watched any type of broadcast TV on a monthly basis)

94.6%

Percentage of Internet users who watched digital TV

54.1%

Percentage of time spent watching digital TV vs. traditional broadcast

1:40 hour

Average daily viewing of digital TV
Digital broadcasting

- Listening to digital radio stations: 26.3%
- Listening to digital music: 36.5%
- Listening to podcasts: 21.4%
- Listening to audio books: 17.7%
Digital Financial Services

(Percentage of Internet users who used any type of digital financial services on a monthly basis)

30% Use of mobile payment services (e.g. Apple Pay, Samsung Pay .. etc.)

24.3% Use of: Digital banking services – investment – insurance or digital apps

19.6% Digital currency ownership (any type of cryptocurrency)
Social Media

10 Million active accounts in UAE
Facts & Figures

Ratio of accounts (to population)  
105.5%  

Ratio of accounts (to Internet users)  
106.6%  

Average time spent on social media  
2:50 hrs. daily  

Average number of platforms used (monthly)  
8.2 platform
### Purposes for Using Social Media

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Connecting with family and friends</td>
<td>46.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding new stories</td>
<td>32.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding inspiring things (to simulate or buy)</td>
<td>30.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Following sports news</td>
<td>29.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching live feeds</td>
<td>29.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making new friends</td>
<td>28.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Purposes for Using Social Media

- Looking for varied content: 27.4%
- Searching for business-related topics: 27.1%
- Buying products: 26.9%
- Viewing branded content: 25.2%
- Following influencers: 23.1%
- Sharing opinions and ideas: 22.6%
- Sharing details of daily life: 21.7%
Top Used Platforms
(Platform utilization on a monthly basis)

- **WhatsApp**: 79.6%
- **Facebook**: 78.7%
- **Instagram**: 74.4%
- **TikTok**: 67.4%
- **Facebook Messenger**: 63.2%
- **Twitter**: 55%
- **LinkedIn**: 48.1%
- **Telegram**: 44.5%
- **Snapchat**: 41.2%
- **Pinterest**: 31.9%
- **Skype**: 24.9%
ADVERTISING ON SOCIAL MEDIA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Platform</th>
<th>Users</th>
<th>Advertising Reach Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>7.30 million</td>
<td>77.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YouTube</td>
<td>8.99 million</td>
<td>95.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instagram</td>
<td>4.95 million</td>
<td>52.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LinkedIn</td>
<td>6.6 million</td>
<td>70.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snapchat</td>
<td>4 million</td>
<td>42.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TikTok</td>
<td>8.23 million (18+ only)</td>
<td>87.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>3.05 million</td>
<td>32.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SMARTPHONES AND DIGITAL APPS

Number of Internet Phone Subscriptions

19.05 million

Smartphone Subscription Rate (per capita)

200.9%

Annualized gross increase

2.2M subscriptions

Rate of increase

13.3%
Digital apps
Total no. of app downloads
569 million

Increase of downloads

16.4% Rate of increase
+ 80 M downloads annual increase

1.587 B AED
SPENDING ON APP PURCHASES
(INCLUDES PURCHASING IN-APP FEATURES)

Annual Growth Rate
+ 321 M AED

Rate of increase
25.3%
Most Frequently Used Apps

WhatsApp
Facebook
Instagram
Facebook Messenger
TikTok
Amazon
Telegram
Botim
ALHOSN UAE
Twitter
Most Downloaded Apps

- TikTok
- WhatsApp Business
- Botim
- Instagram
- Facebook
- CapCut
- WhatsApp
- ALHOSN UAE
- (Emirati) Digital Identity
- imo
DIGITAL IDENTITY (UAE PASS)

The first digital national identity allowing all citizens, residents and visitors to access services of local, federal government entities and other service providers. It provides easy solutions to access services via smartphones without the need for a password or username, as well as the ability to digitally sign and validate documents without the need to visit service centers.

Key Advantages
- Unified and secure digital identification
- Mobile ID
- Digital signature for documents and transactions
- Digital vault to share official documents

Million users: 5
Services: 15,000
Government, semi-government and private entities: 216
Government entities: 35
Registration by face ID (AI): 4
National Domain of UAE (.ae)

.ae is the UAE code top-level domain (ccTLD). This means that if an internet address has .ae at the end of it, it’s registered in the United Arab Emirates and a part of the UAE national domains space, which the .aeDA regulates. Having the domain .ae enhances the website’s credibility as belonging to one of the most dynamic economies.

300K domains registered
46K new domains in 2022
20% UAE domains name increase ratio in 2022
National Domain of UAE (.ae)

Name idea:
Suggested by AI tools

Registered domains after the service launched in April 2023: 6,883
Registered domains increase ratio in April: 27%
Registered domains increase ratio in May: 65%
E-COMMERCE

Facts & Figures

75.1% Online bill payments
25.4% Digital purchases
15.9% Digital payments

11.5% Transferring money over the phone
13.3% Mobile wallet ownership

DIGITAL SHOPPING
(Weekly basis)

62.3% Buying products or services online
37% Buy groceries online
16% Buying used devices online
Online Purchase Drivers
Motives of Internet users to buy via digital commerce platforms range from a host of factors, of which the key ones are:

- **Free delivery**: 45.2%
- **Flexible return policy**: 32%
- **Discounts and offers**: 30%
- **Collecting customer loyalty points**: 29.7%
- **Cash on Delivery**: 26.2%
- **Fast, easy online payments**: 24.2%
- **24.2%**
- **26.2%**
- **17.5%**
- **26.2%**
- **29.7%**
- **30%**
- **32%**
- **45.2%**
Volume of online consumer goods trade

(Digital spending figures are limited to products and services sold from businesses to the end consumer only, not between companies)

42.267
AED, billion
Total spending on online consumer goods (2022)

70.5%
Percentage of goods purchases from total digital purchases via smartphones

6,000
AED
Average per capita digital spending on consumer goods

7
million
Number of digital buyers (who used the Internet to purchase services or consumer goods)
### Digital Commerce Sector Size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Size (AED, billion)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fashion</td>
<td>16.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal care</td>
<td>4.234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data and digital storage devices</td>
<td>2.420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaming &amp; hobbies</td>
<td>6.314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronics</td>
<td>7.081</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture</td>
<td>4.197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food industry</td>
<td>1.181</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Payment methods in digital commerce

- Digital vault/wallet (via smartphone): 23%
- Credit and debit cards: 48%
- Online wire transfer: 11%
- Purchases with cash on delivery: 10%
- Other methods: 8%
Travel and tourism services online

(Spending on tourism and travel in 2022)

- Airline flights: 1.567 billion (AED)
- Car rentals: 361 million (AED)
- Hotel reservations: 1.151 billion (AED)
- Vacation home rentals: 613.5 million (AED)
- Holiday packages: 1.115 billion (AED)
- Cruises: 8.6 million (AED)
Types of paid digital content

(Percentage of Internet users who paid for any type of digital content on a monthly basis)

- TV content services or movies: 29.7%
- Music services: 22.4%
- Digital apps: 22%
- Mobile games: 18.1%
Digital apps

- Music downloads: 21.1%
- In-app purchases: 11.5%
- News services users: 11.1%
- Movie downloads or live feeds: 15.8%
- Buying e-books: 9.7%
- Digital magazine subscriptions: 9.6%
Digital Media Spending

(Spending on downloads and digital media subscriptions)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total digital media spending</td>
<td>1.902 (AED, billion)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video on demand</td>
<td>592.7 (AED, million)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video games</td>
<td>1.05 (AED, billion)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital music</td>
<td>125.8 (AED, million)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-publishing</td>
<td>132.16 (AED, million)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### DIGITAL MARKETING

#### Channels for brand awareness

(Percentage of Internet users who have discovered new brands, products or services through different marketing channels)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Channel</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advertising on social media</td>
<td>28.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search engines</td>
<td>27.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online retail websites</td>
<td>24.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website ads</td>
<td>24.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV ads</td>
<td>24.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website Branding (websites of brands)</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-store deals</td>
<td>22.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations by family and friends</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising on smart phones or apps</td>
<td>20.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Series and movies</td>
<td>19.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product review websites</td>
<td>18.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External ads</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Interaction with digital marketing

48.5% Brand search before making a purchase

16.3% Clicking sponsored banners in websites

17.4% Clicking ad banners in websites

20.3% Downloading or using the brand’s app
Digital advertising spending

4.96 (AED, billion)
Total advertising spending (digital and traditional)

10.4% Growth rate

467 (AED, million)
Growth in advertising market size (digital and traditional)

12.1% Growth rate

3.72 (AED, billion)
Digital advertising market size

401.5 (AED, million)
Digital advertising market growth
HEALTH, DIGITALLY

(Digital healthcare refers to the adoption of digital devices and services in healthcare)

Facts & Figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Growth Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of users of health apps and services</td>
<td>4.55</td>
<td>million</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital healthcare services market size (2022)</td>
<td>909.2</td>
<td>(AED, million)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital healthcare services market growth (YoY)</td>
<td>160.6</td>
<td>(AED, million)</td>
<td>%21.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of digital fitness &amp; well-being service users</td>
<td>3.49</td>
<td>million</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital fitness &amp; well-being service market size</td>
<td>743.5</td>
<td>(AED, million)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital fitness &amp; well-being services market growth (YoY)</td>
<td>24.09</td>
<td>(AED, million)</td>
<td>%3.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>