

Cell Phones for Safety and Security in Case of an Emergency

Over the past decade, the number of subscribers in the United States mobile telephone sector has increased from roughly 16 million in 1994 to 184.7 million by December 2004, producing a nationwide penetration rate of 62 percent.¹ The wireless industry estimates that there are currently over 207 million wireless subscribers in the United States.²

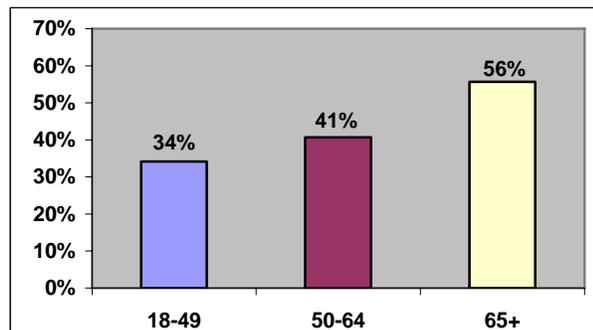
The large and growing number of subscribers, many of whom are age 50 and older, clearly suggests that the public finds value in having a wireless phone. Certainly consumers value the convenience of having the ability to make calls from almost anywhere, but many also purchase cell phone service for security reasons.

Many Cell Phone Users Want Safety and Security in Case of an Emergency

Findings from the AARP Cell Phone and VoIP Survey – Woelfel (2006)* indicate that women, consumers age 65+, those who have lower household incomes (<\$30K), or those living in the Northeast region of the United States are among the most likely cell phone users to cite safety and security as a reason for having cell phone service.

- A majority of cell phone users age 65 and older report that they have cell phone service for safety and security in case of an emergency. Cell phone users age 65 and older are more likely than younger cell phone users (i.e., ages 18-49 and 50-64) to cite safety and security as a reason for having cell phone service.

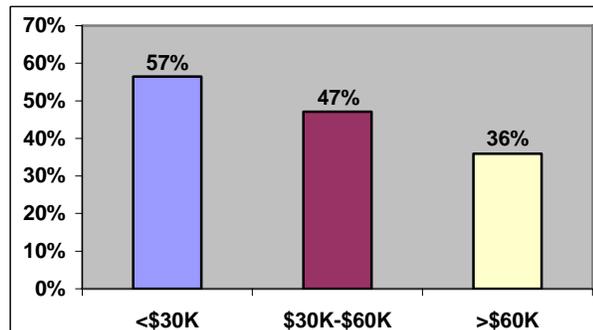
Figure 1: Cell Phone Users Who Cite Safety and Security as a Reason for Having Cell Phone Service, by Age



Source: AARP Cell Phone and VoIP Survey 2006. n=1,503.

- A majority of cell phone users (57%) who report that they have an annual household income of less than \$30,000 say that they have cell phone service for safety and security reasons. Lower income cell phone users are more likely than cell phone users with higher incomes to cite safety and security as a reason for having cell phone service.

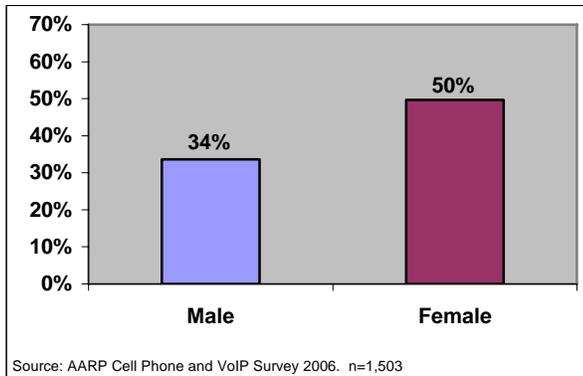
Figure 2: Cell Phone Users Who Cite Safety and Security as a Reason for Having Cell Phone Service, by Household Income



Source: AARP Cell Phone and VoIP Survey 2006. n=1,503.

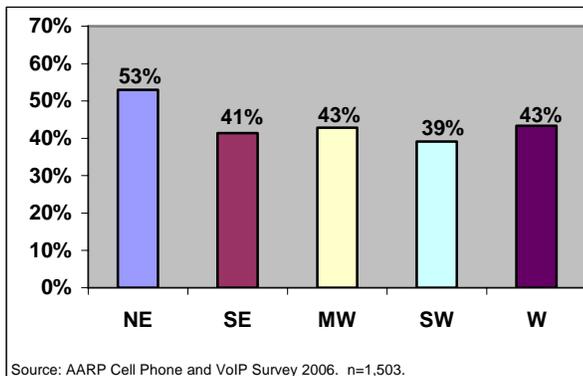
- Half of all female cell phone users say that they have cell phone service for safety and security reasons. Women who use cell phones are more likely than their male counterparts to identify safety and security as a reason for having cell phone service.

Figure 3: Cell Phone Users Who Cite Safety and Security as a Reason for Having Cell Phone Service, by Gender



- More than half of cell phone users living in the Northeast region of the United States report that they have cell phone service for safety and security reasons. Cell phone users living in the Northeast are more likely than cell phone users in other regions of the U.S. to cite safety and security as a reason for having cell phone service.

Figure 4: Cell Phone Users Who Cite Safety and Security as a Reason for Having Cell Phone Service, by Region of the U.S.



*Methodology

The Wireless/VoIP Survey, sponsored by AARP, obtained telephone interviews with a national random sample of 3,007 adult Americans ages 18 and older, including 1,503 cellular telephone users. The interviews were conducted in English by Woelfel Research, Inc. from February 22 to March 31, 2006. The sample was designed to allow for comparisons between cell phone users and non-users in three different age groups; 18-49, 50-64 and 65 plus. The results from the study were not weighted. The margin of sampling error for the complete set of data is $\pm 1.8\%$.

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¹ Federal Communications Commission (September 30, 2005). Annual Report and Analysis of Competitive Market Conditions With Respect to Commercial Mobile Services: 10th Report. Retrieved May 1, 2006 from http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/FCC-05-173A1.pdf.

² See *Wireless Quick Facts*, CTIA- The Wireless Association, April 2006. Retrieved May 1, 2006 from http://files.ctia.org/pdf/Wireless_Quick_Facts_April_06.pdf.