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## Millennials and Political News

### *Social Media – the Local TV for the Next Generation?*

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When it comes to where younger Americans get news about politics and government, social media look to be the local TV of the Millennial generation. About six-in-ten online Millennials (61%) report getting political news on Facebook in a given week, a much larger percentage than turn to any other news source, according to a new Pew Research Center analysis. This stands in stark contrast to internet-using Baby Boomers, for whom local TV tops the list of sources for political news at nearly the same reach (60%).

At the same time, Millennials' relatively low reliance on local TV for political news (37% see news there in a given week) almost mirrors Baby Boomers' comparatively low reliance on Facebook (39%).

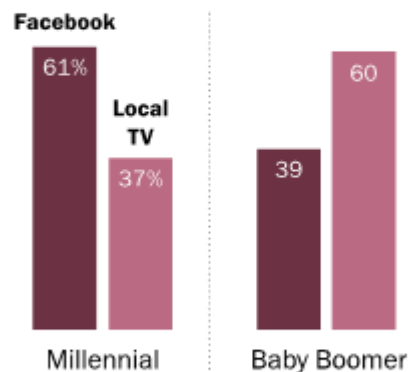
Gen Xers, who bridge the age gap between Millennials (ages 18-33 at the time of the 2014 survey) and Baby Boomers (ages 50-68), also bridge the gap between these news sources. Roughly half (51%) of online Gen Xers get political and government news on Facebook in a given week and about half (46%) do so on local TV.

This report, the latest in an ongoing study of political news and information habits, is based on an online survey conducted between March 19 and April 29, 2014, with 2,901 members of the Pew Research Center's American Trends Panel. An initial report on these data explored the ways news consumption differs across the ideological spectrum (<http://www.journalism.org/2014/10/21/political-polarization-media-habits/>). Here, we consider political news habits across three generations. Because this is a survey of online adults, data is not reported on those in the Silent generation, ages 69 to 86 at the time of survey. This age cohort is considerably less likely to use the internet and, as a result, those who are online may not be representative of the generation as a whole.

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### Millennials and Baby Boomers: A Generational Divide in Sources Relied on for Political News

*% who got news about politics and government in the previous week from...*



American Trends Panel (wave 1). Survey conducted March 19-April 29, 2014. Q22, Q24A. Based on online adults.

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Even looking just at members of each generation who are on Facebook, Millennials still stand out for seeing somewhat more political content on the site. Roughly a quarter (24%) of Millennials who use Facebook say at least half of the posts they see on the site relate to government and politics, higher than both Gen Xers (18%) and Baby Boomers (16%) who use the social networking site.

This occurs even though Millennials express less interest in political news. Roughly a quarter of Millennials (26%) select politics and government as one of the three topics they are most interested in (out of a list of nine). That is lower than both Gen Xers (34%) and Baby Boomers (45%). Millennials also are less familiar with many of the 36 sources asked about in the survey, which range from USA Today to Rush Limbaugh to Slate.

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## The Generations Defined

### **The Millennial Generation\***

Born: 1981 to 1996

Age of adults in 2014: 18-33

### **Generation X**

Born: 1965 to 1980

Age in 2014: 34-49

### **The Baby Boom Generation**

Born: 1946 to 1964

Age in 2014: 50-68

\* The youngest Millennials are in their teens. No chronological end point has been set for this group.

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