

Telecommunications Access Survey of Adults  
who are Hard of Hearing, Deaf or have Hearing Loss

The Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Telecommunications Access at Gallaudet University conducted a survey to learn about the experiences of adults who are hard of hearing, deaf or have hearing loss, in their use of voice telecommunications technology. Our goal was to better understand how such adults use current voice telecommunications technology, what barriers they face using it and what needs they have for improved accessibility.

In the survey, individuals were asked questions about their hearing loss, hearing device use, the telephone technology they use for personal and work-related calls and the barriers they face and needs they have in the use of the telephone. The survey took an average of 19 minutes to complete, depending on the extent of a respondent's telephone use.

To take this survey, respondents were screened for age and hearing status. Respondents were disqualified if they were not an adult (18 years or older) or did not have a hearing loss. Respondents were also screened for regular use of voice telecommunications (at least once a week). For the purposes of this survey, voice telecommunications was defined for respondents in the following way: "you **both listen and talk** for yourself during telephone calls, even if you also supplement your listening experience by using text (for example, relay or captioning) to read what the other person on the call is saying while you listen."

This was an anonymous, web-based, convenience survey hosted by Surveygizmo.com and was open for approximately one year closing in April 2015. Active recruitment was solicited twice during this time frame through national consumer organizations. A total of 653 individuals began the survey with 510 completing it for a 78% completion rate. The others were either disqualified or abandoned the survey before completing it. Of the 510 who completed the survey, 71 reported using voice telecommunications less than once a week. This left 439 respondents who met all the survey inclusion criteria.

The slide deck provided represents data from a portion of the survey questions. Branching logic was employed throughout the survey, so the number of respondents answering any given question varies depending on how they answered a previous question or questions. Therefore, the number of respondents is given for each question. Since this was a convenience survey, extensive demographic information was gathered in order to characterize the respondents as fully as possible, and is also provided in the slide deck.

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