Back in March of 2020, the world woke up to the grim reality of COVID-19. The pandemic forced everyone to spend the majority of their time at home, and the internet was put to the ultimate stress test.

Millions of people suddenly needed high-quality and uninterrupted internet simultaneously. Thankfully, the internet’s infrastructure bent but didn’t break. Internet service providers moved quickly to meet the needs of consumers and kept almost everyone online with minimal disruptions.

They did an admirable job at keeping the internet itself working, but the reality is most internet connections aren’t flawless. As we increasingly rely on them for our livelihoods its blatantly clear that a bare minimum connection just doesn’t cut it. The last mile is the biggest cause of internet failure, and even in an area that otherwise has fast, stable internet, a home or building may not be wired properly, or you may live in a cellular dead zone. A lot can go wrong.

According to prior research by HighSpeedInternet.com, 45% of Americans believe their internet speed is too slow. Yet only 16% have upgraded. Many people don’t have options, because they are either limited by financial resources or are limited in their choice of providers.

**STREAMERGENCIES ARE UBIQUITOUS**

Because of those flaws and general network congestion, there are enough dropped connections to cause chaos - streaming emergencies, or “streamergencies,” that disadvantage those who have poor connectivity.

To explore how everyone is using the internet as well as the types and frequency of streamergencies we’re facing, we conducted a survey of over 500 internet users who are representative of the general population.
THE IMPORTANCE OF RELIABILITY

People are generally satisfied with their home internet connections, however the majority (61%) are either only somewhat satisfied or have some degree of frustration with it. Rural internet users, who are less likely to have access to fast broadband, are nearly two times more likely to feel dissatisfied with their home internet compared to urban users.

We use the internet to do almost everything in our lives. The top three activities respondents most frequently cited that they use their home internet for include streaming videos, joining video conferences, and remote work.

Because of those activities, 94% of respondents feel it is very important to have a reliable internet connection. Remote workers are even more likely than the average respondent to feel it’s important, with 100% stating that.
Despite the importance of having reliable internet, people are unsure about their internet connectivity, causing many to worry about getting disconnected. In fact, 88% experience some degree of nervousness or frustration about their internet connection’s stability.

For some, that feeling is infrequent, but a streamergency can hit at exactly the wrong moment, ratcheting frustration up several notches.

The three situations respondents identified as being the most frustrating for the internet to fail include video conferencing, hosting a virtual event and talking to friends and family - all activities where we interface with people who are important to our lives.

And if streamergencies are a common occurrence, many are unable to change their provider, even if they have the financial means to do so, as 38% of consumers either have no choice of high-speed internet provider or are unsure about whether they do.
LIFE ON VIDEO

Video is at the center of our lives now, from streaming videos online to video conferences and video chats with loved ones.

Zoom is the video conferencing provider people are most likely to use, with 72% using the service, distantly followed by Webex, Microsoft Teams and Google Meet. Remote workers are even more likely to use Zoom than the average person, with 88% using it.

“CAN YOU HEAR ME?”

The majority (60%) of users are satisfied with their video conferencing provider. However, only 14% are very satisfied, indicating room for improvement in their experience - likely due to internet issues that impact the quality of video conferences.

Only 14% of respondents were very satisfied with their current video conferencing provider.
In fact, the internet has failed or performed poorly for nearly one in three video conferencing users (32%). Only 14% strongly disagree it has performed poorly or failed, showing that users have become accustomed to at least some level of glitchiness. And rural users are disproportionately affected, as they are 66% more likely to believe it has performed poorly compared to urban dwellers.
THE NEW WORKFORCE

Almost half (48%) of employed respondents are currently working from home, and as income increases, so too does the ability to work from home.

74% of respondents from households with over $200,000 in income stated they often use the internet at home for work, compared to only 20% of those making between $10,000 to $24,999. Between those ranges, significant portions of the workforce are working at home at least some of the time.
WHAT HAPPENS WHEN 10% OF THE WORKFORCE CAN’T STAY ONLINE?

We all need a reliable internet connection to stay productive. Yet more than two-thirds (68%) of Americans feel their productivity has been impacted to some degree due to internet speed or stability issues.

More than one in ten employees feel they have been impacted to a great extent by those issues. Remote workers are feeling the pain even more than average, as 77% feel they have been impacted to some degree, and 49% more likely to feel it has impacted them to a great extent.

BUSINESSES ARE NOT ENSURING WORKERS HAVE FAST INTERNET

Workers feel businesses need to do more to make their internet better. While remote workers are generally satisfied with the WFH life and feel their organization is helping them stay productive, more than half of workers believe organizations aren’t doing enough to ensure they have fast or stable internet.

Younger workers have greater expectations when it comes to working remotely - 72% of 18-29 year olds believe their organizations aren’t doing enough to give them fast internet.
PRIVACY IN REMOTE ACCESS IS LACKING

Most organizations are not offering connectivity tools like VPNs to their workers in order improve internet connectivity or privacy. The majority (57%) of remote workers don’t currently use them, meaning most workers don’t have private, encrypted internet connections, much less connectivity tools that bring all available internet connections together.

However, workers who do have them are satisfied, as indicated by 73% of VPN-using remote workers. Yet nearly half (44%) feel their internet speeds are slower when using a VPN, indicating that many VPNs they currently have access to are unable to improve connectivity.
THE WAY FORWARD

Streamergencies are a fact of life now, but they don’t have to be.

Internet service providers should continue building their networks to provide faster internet to places that currently lack it, and upgrade infrastructure to make those connections more reliable.

In the meantime, there are several steps people can take to reduce the impact of streamergencies. The first is to upgrade your equipment, such as using routers with the latest standards and adding range extenders or repeaters in larger spaces. Next, shop around providers to see if one offers better connectivity in your area.

Lastly, software. We all typically have access to more than one internet connection but can only use one at a time. Consumers can take advantage of connectivity tools like Speedify to bring together all available internet connections to have faster speeds and more reliability.

Remote work is here to stay. By following those steps, streamergencies don’t need to be.
ABOUT SPEEDIFY

Speedify is the only VPN and connectivity tool that lets you use all of your internet connections at once. It is designed to stop streamergencies, by seamlessly transitioning data from a connection that stops working to others that are. It solves the challenges remote workers and other heavy internet users face in the current environment, and automatically detects and prioritizes real-time streams such as video calls, live streaming and VoIP to optimize performance.

Speedify is brought to you by Connectify, Inc. Connectify makes complex networking tasks easy by developing apps that deliver faster, more reliable, and more secure Internet to users all across the globe. Our suite of products empowers users to analyze, share, combine, encrypt, and ultimately unlock the full potential of their Internet connections.

CONTACT US

Feel free to contact us if you have questions about the research or any internet connectivity issues you may have.

Email: press@speedify.com

Download Speedify at: https://speedify.com/download/
METHODODOLOGY

**Adults**
18+ / Heavy internet users (11+ hours of internet usage per week)

**How Many**
US: n=524, Margin of error: ±4.369%

**When**
November 11 - 22, 2020

**How**
26 question online quantitative survey