

## Electronic Subcommittee Survey (Final report)

July 20, 2011

N=124

### Of the 124 surveys submitted

65 came from the website survey

40 came from the surveymonkey.com site

19 were mailed in and manually entered (one meeting clearly did this in an adult ed as all the results were mailed together!)

107 were complete surveys (86.3%)

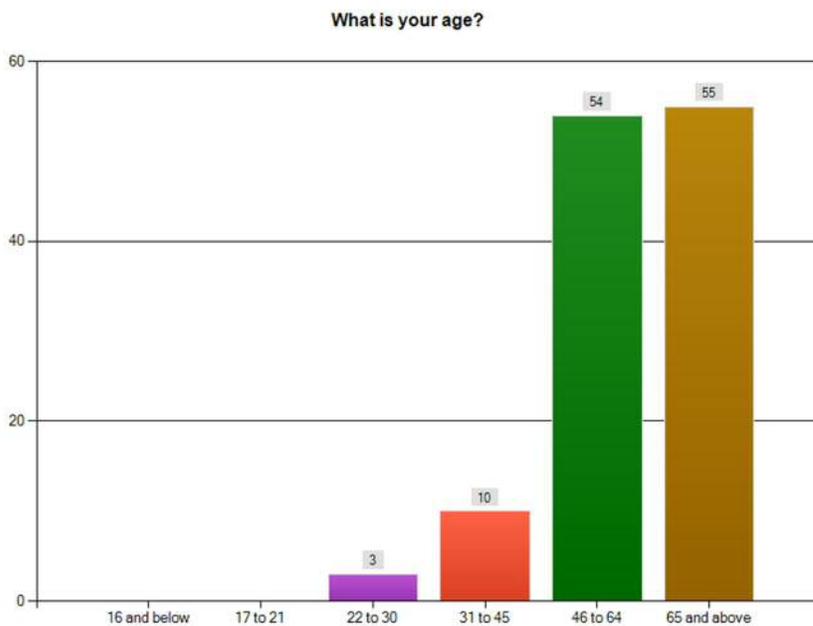
### Regarding gender (2 people suggested gender didn't fall into just 2 categories):

47 were male

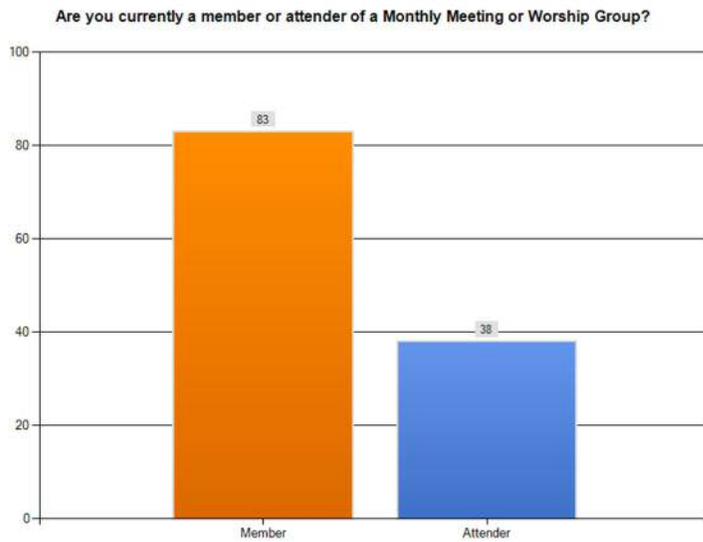
75 were female

2 no answer

### Ages:



## Member or Attender:



## Meetings or Worship Groups:

Berkeley = 10

Napa = 4

Central Coast = 6

Ojai = 3

Chico = 2

Orange County = 1

Claremont = 8

Orange Grove = 14

Conejo Valley = 1

Palo Alto = 2

Honolulu = 6

Redwood Forrest = 1

Humboldt = 1

San Diego = 2

Inland Valley = 3

San Francisco = 1

La Jolla = 7

Santa Barbara = 4

Las Vegas = 1

Santa Monica = 6

Marin = 3

Strawberry Creek = 20

Mexico City = 1

Redding = 1

Monterey = 2

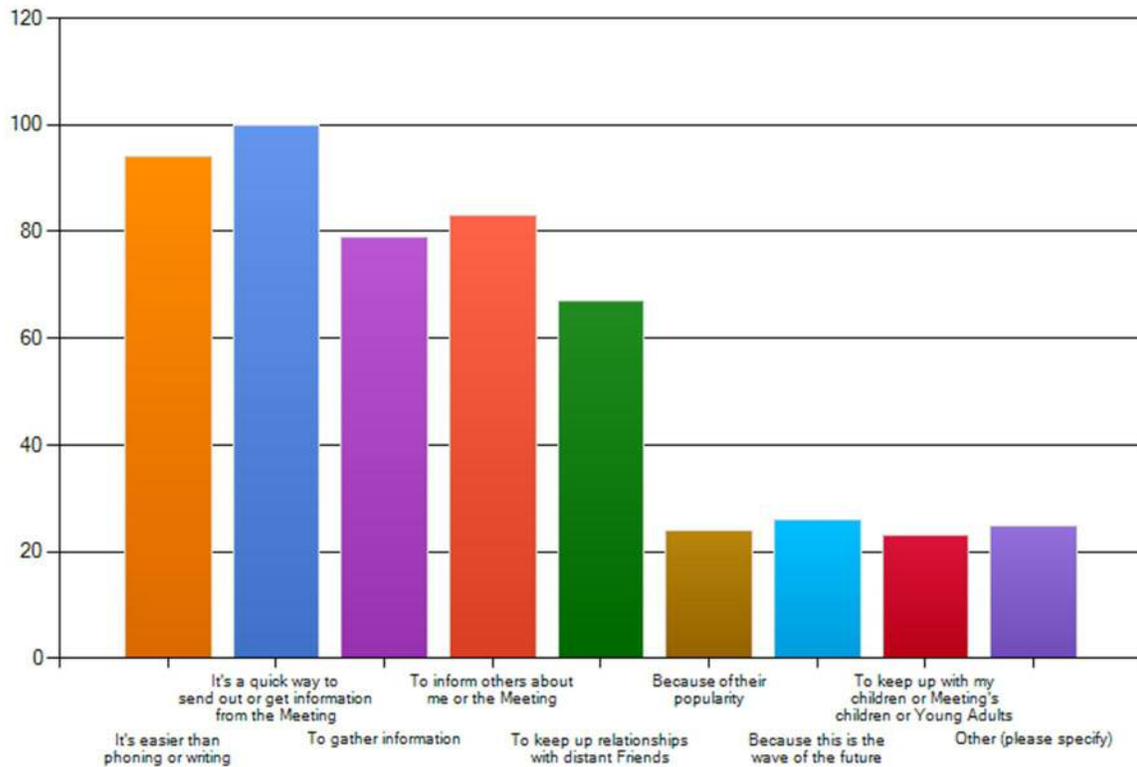
Uncategorized = 2

Los Angeles = 1

This is an amazingly wide response throughout the Yearly Meeting!



**What do you think are the reasons that lead many Friends or Meetings to use these services?  
(Please choose all that apply)**



**Comments (textual responses):**

Sharing information about the meeting and making it available to others  
to make a living teaching these services to others  
I do not think a lot of Friends use these things outside of email.  
Provides a good record of communication sent.  
requested to do so by others  
It magnifies their status  
Meeting Newsletter sent by email.  
Committee correspondence  
This new technology allows for a genuine equality of participation that is aimed at, but not so easily achieved, in a typical (face to face) Quaker Meeting.  
To exchange documents for criticism and correction. To receive newsletters from the Meeting. To communicate about schedules of committee meetings and other activities.  
For easier record-keeping, and searching functions  
Note, however, that I explicitly refuse to be on my own meeting's listserv nor do I use these for conduct of meeting business.  
I use a blogging service for my daily journaling because i enjoy the community of sharing and support it creates. My work life has used email and other mediated communication since college. "Wave of the future" doesn't make sense to me: this is the now.  
gives people confirmation of oral announcements in written form that they can refer to, and or calendar when needed. Immediate accessibility when a question arises. Nominating committee uses access to meeting directories both as a list of suggestions for future PYM service and the phone number needed to call a member of interest. to connect with Friends internationally and nationally  
As a Quaker witness to the world; to let those who are not Friends to know who we are and what we do.

It's both sane, sensible, and simple to receive and send information via these methods.

Saves time and provides an easy record of communication and information...

To solicit requests to hold Friends in the light who are in immediate need. It obviates waiting until the next Meeting for Worship.

It's much quicker than regular mail and avoids 'telephone tag' and answering machines.

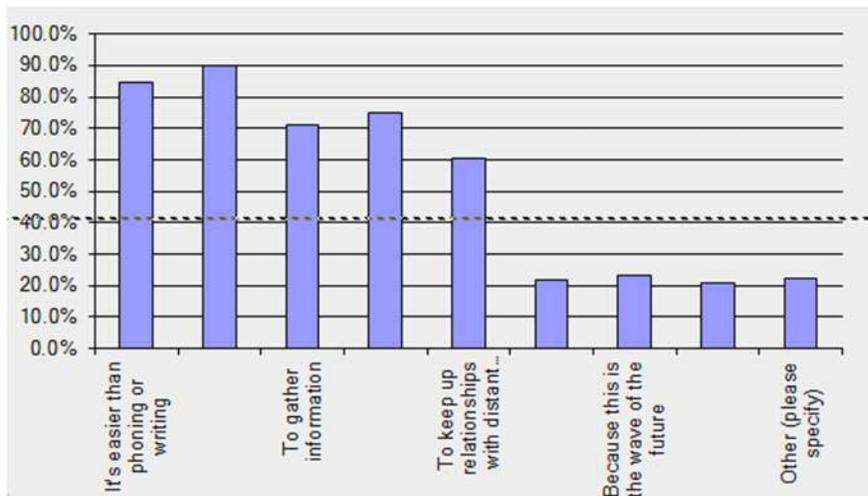
I am not a fan -- not a user -- of social networking. If that becomes the only (or primary) way of communicating with Friends I guess I would have to learn.

It's a way to advertise my business

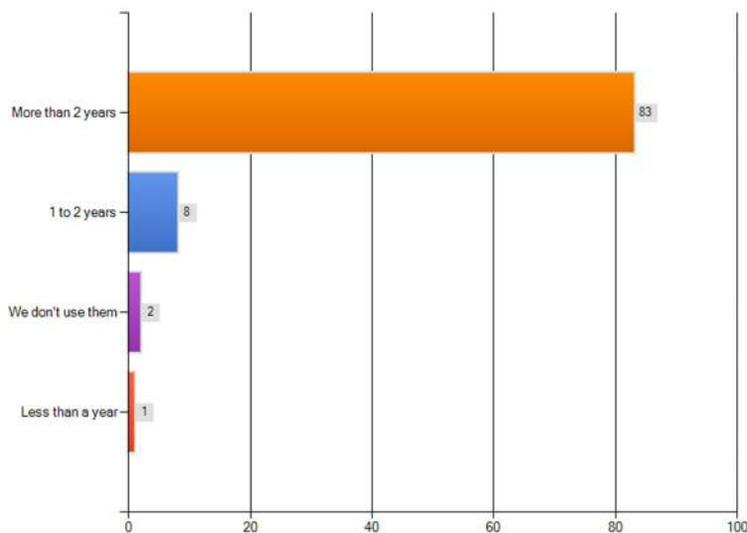
It's a way to have fun

I do not use Facebook or other social web sites for privacy and security concerns. Too much personal information is shared with too many strangers, commercial and possibly government entities.

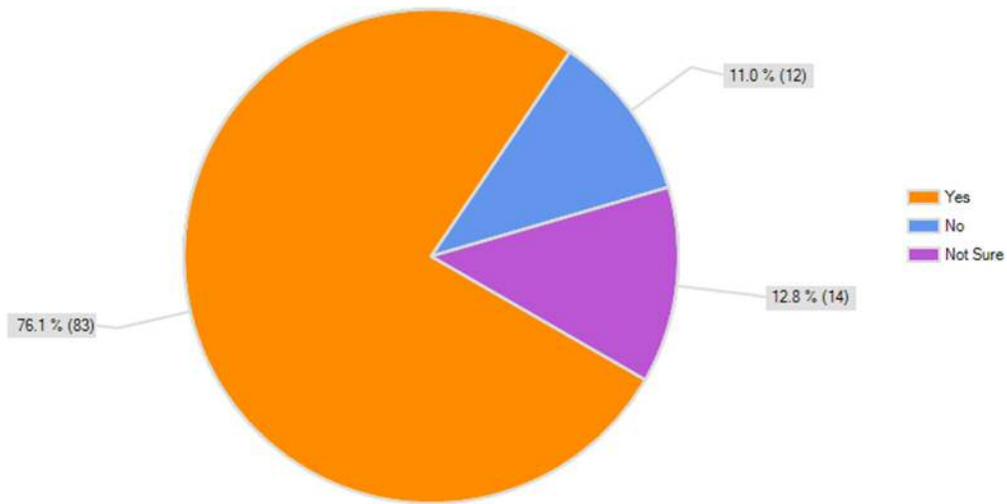
Many Santa Monica Friends do not see each other except on First Day; the list serve keeps even irregular attenders informed about meeting activities, and Friends' events. Also simpler to arrange committee meetings and distribute minutes than making several phone calls. I.e., electronic services are for information sharing.



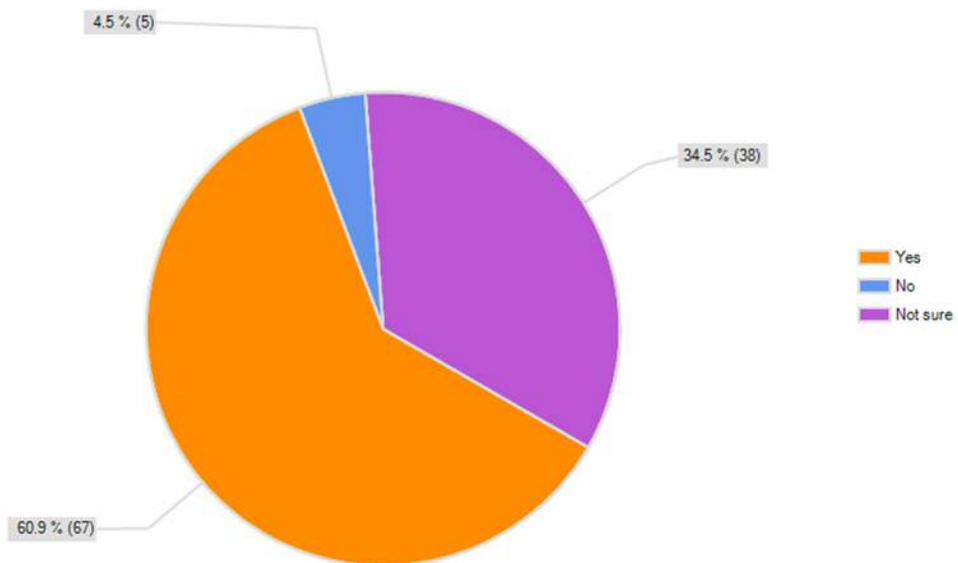
If your Meeting uses any of the services in question 4, how long has it used them?



Has your Meeting posted a website?

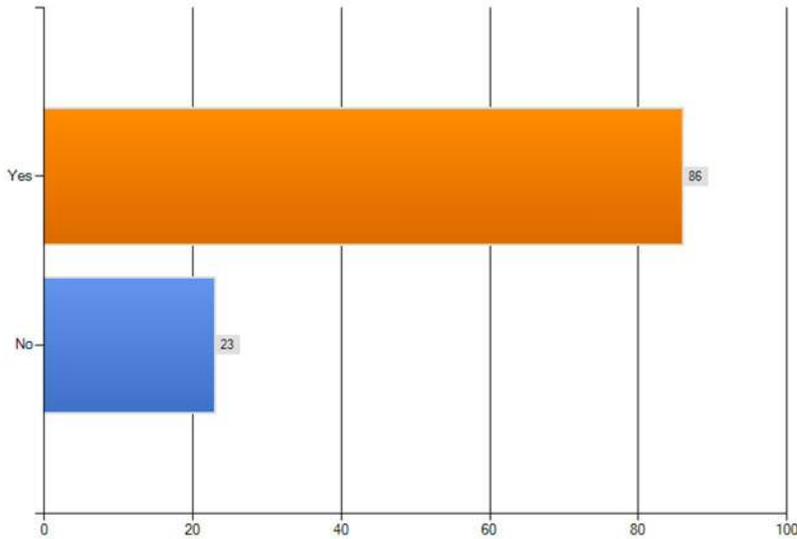


Has your Meeting had visitors who say they've found your Meeting because they found the address on the internet?

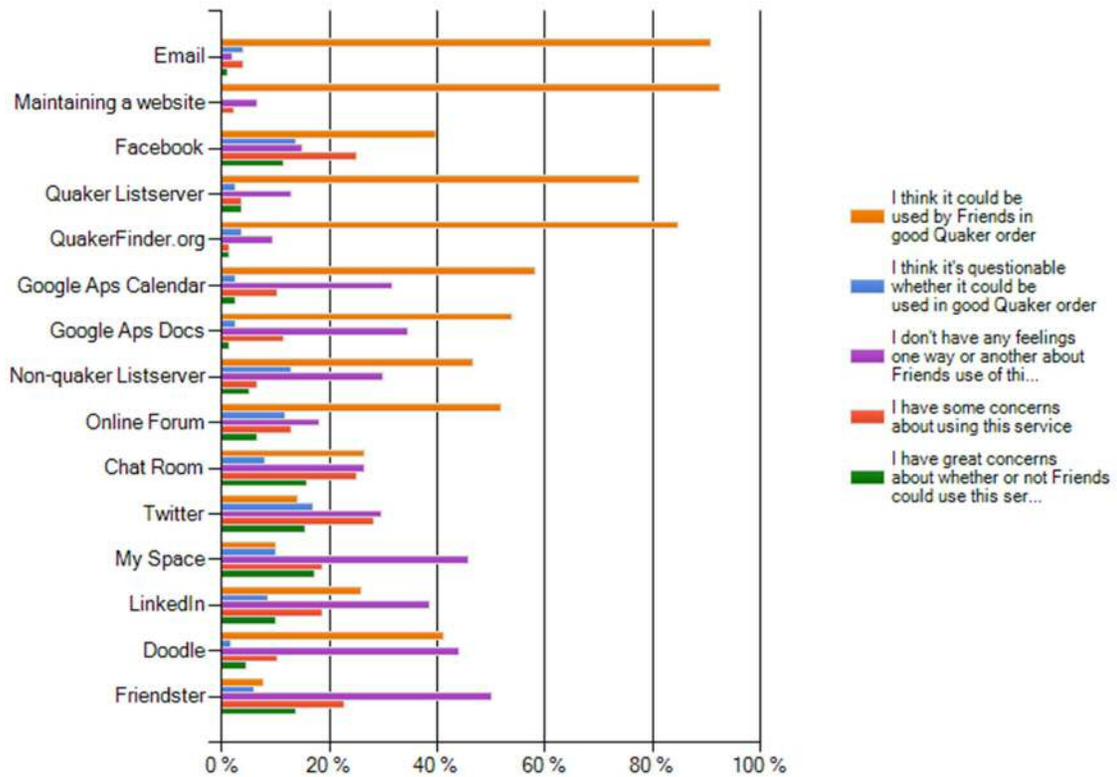


## What is your feeling about the appropriateness of Friends using the following services

Have you ever found a Meeting address or a Friend by searching for them on the internet?

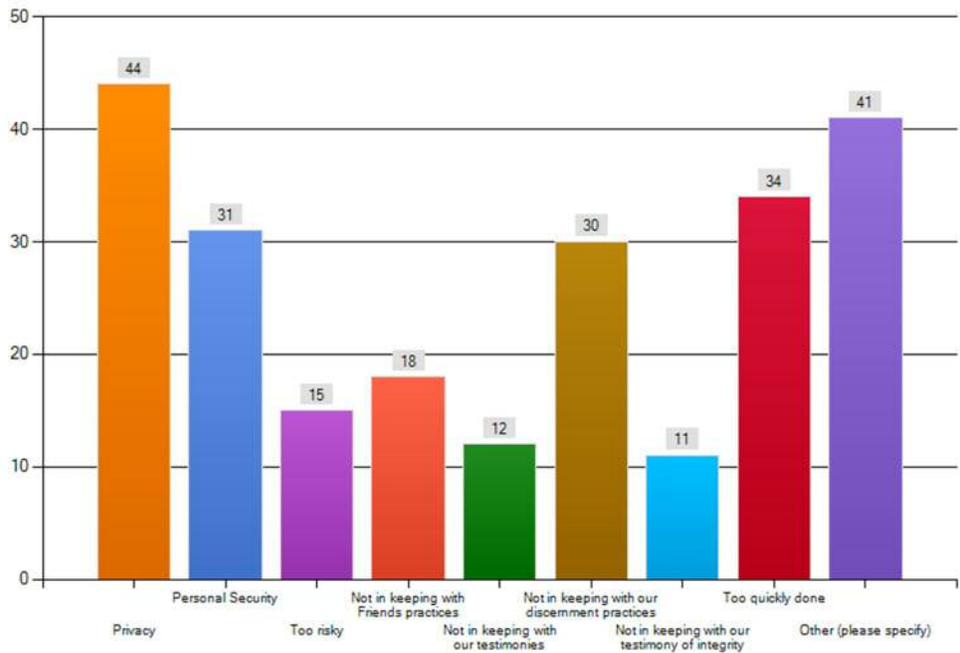


## What is your feeling about the appropriateness of Friends using the following services



Answer Options	I think it could be used by Friends in good Quaker order	I think it's questionable whether it could be used in good Quaker order	I don't have any feelings one way or another about Friends use of this service	I have some concerns about using this service	I have great concerns about whether or not Friends could use this service in good order	Response Count
Google Aps Docs	42	2	27	9	1	78
Google Aps Calendar	46	2	25	8	2	79
Doodle	28	1	30	7	3	68
Chat Room	20	6	20	19	12	76
Quaker Listserver	66	2	11	3	3	85
Non-quaker Listserver	36	10	23	5	4	77
QuakerFinder.org	72	3	8	1	1	85
Online Forum	40	9	14	10	5	77
Email	90	4	2	4	1	99
My Space	7	7	32	13	12	70
Friendster	5	4	33	15	9	66
Facebook	35	12	13	22	10	88
LinkedIn	18	6	27	13	7	70
Twitter	10	12	21	20	11	71
Maintaining a website	87	0	6	2	0	94
<i>answered question</i>						101
<i>skipped question</i>						23

If you have concerns about using any of these services, what kinds of concerns are they?



Textual Responses:

Can be used well or misused

I don't believe that one can achieve a sense of the meeting through electronic communications.

i believe that one can achieve a non-spiritual consensus, but not a spiritual unity.

collecting personal information for undisclosed commercial purposes

ownership and control of personal information

Having to go through a for profit organization with questionable business practices (Facebook).

Not being inclusive (many people are not on or choose not to use these services).

I have concerns about an attender who uses the meeting list for their own political agenda, or just irresponsibly despite requests.

I'm not familiar with all of them.

We need to remember that some folks do not use electronic media.

people who use email regularly feel like they have communicated with me by sending me an email message.

I read email infrequently so you can't assume I've been contacted. Can we really have a discussion electronically?

how can we refuse to adjust in a quakerly fashion to the common practices of our time? We can not continue to exist and be effective if we keep our heads in the sand! After all, driving a car, using a telephone, etc., are not in keeping with the quaker practices of the 1700's!

Many are useful for information sharing, but bad idea for decision-making. Bad in general, as entries are sequential, but esp. bad for Quaker decision-making, which requires direct interaction and paying attention to each other and the spirit.

Can be efficient for info exchange but risk of using in lieu of group discernment. Social networking can be helpful for Friends at a distance but also can be all-consuming and discourage face-to-face interactions.

Unlike most of the technologies listed above, twitter and chatrooms do tend to encourage a quick and rather thoughtless mode of communication that can easily lead to words being exchanged in an unQuakerly manner.

1. Internet anonymity--consistent with our testimony on integrity? Sometimes? Never?

2. Newness. We've already accommodated writing, and now THIS? It may be too early to pronounce judgment.

3. Equality. Who does and does not have Internet access worldwide?

In terms of getting on to people, email works. Websites are useful, but privacy issues and the algorithms issues associated with Google etc (see "The Filter Bubble" by Pariser) make me wary of social networking

I worry about using advertising supported services and not paying for the actual service. I also worry about some of the terms and conditions, which often restrict an account to an individual's use, and whether these ought to be shared. Again: it's more expensive and requires more expertise for a meeting to not use "free" services, but i do think there's greater integrity in paying for what is used.

It depends what you are using these for. Most can be used effectively for something. You have left out SKype, which I think is a very important omission which may allow on line meetings with video.

Some services mandate a facilitator/moderator, and this takes time.

I think anytime we don't meet face to face it gets complicated. It may be a matter of How we use applications, less the fact that we use them.

spammers

I have seen Friends reveal information that I consider confidential/private via email, so I think this would be more easily done (and more invasive to the persons involved) through social networking media.

Unequal Access. Some have better access to technology than others. Some may not have the experience to learn these tools as easily as others. People can lose their capacity to learn new technology as they get older.

It would depend on the specifics of the case, especially the matter being discussed.

I do think we should be aware and concerned about how easy it is to compromise someone's privacy, send an email to the wrong person, try to discuss things better discussed in person, etc. But it's still a good tool for some things.

Unfamiliarity

Any of them \*can\* be done in good order. But some of them are harder than others, and take more mindfulness than others.

Too time-consuming, except for email.

Too few people are regular users.

Tendency for people to be unfriendly in conversational tone when out of real-time contact.

May leave some people out of the loop. Not sure worshipful discernment is possible.

Harder to distinguish "official" statements from personal statements

I believe there is a computer-generated divide between older and younger friends, wealthy and struggling friends, and educated and less educated friends.

The ones that I marked as having concerns about are social networking sites. I do not see how these could benefit an organization, regardless of what it is.

These technological innovations are simply tools! They can be used in ways that violate our testimonies or they can be used to reinforce our testimonies. We, individually and collectively choose by what we do to either live out our testimonies or not. Tools are just that. Tools! It's what we do with them that determines whether we are walking in light or darkness.

Unnecessary

None

I am most concerned about the volume of information.

I think that each service has its place, and each service could potentially be misused. We can learn to use telephone meetings, email and chat room in ways that fit our practices--but we need to be willing to try and to see what we learn.

Excludes some members, such as myself, who do not choose to use Facebook, etc.

I have two concerns. One is that electronic dialog can tend to replace face-to-face dialog, which can jeopardize our traditional methods of careful consideration and coming to unity. The other concern is that the use of electronic media can tend to exclude people who do not use it. However, proper care in the use of these media can mitigate these concerns.

I feel that the discussion format of some of these media or the social nature of some of these media are not a good fit for Quaker process. I don't object to their use per se, I simply cannot see how it would work out. It may be that Friends with greater vision and clarity could find a creative way to adapt them to Quaker process and practice. Other than email, which always has the risk of sending out a message before it has been seasoned, or to an unintended audience, I have no experience using these types of media. I could say that ALL of the concerns listed above have occurred to me, but I remember when the mere fact of computerizing our data bases felt threatening.

I would rely on others to discern when/whether one or more of these social networks was appropriate for Friends' business.

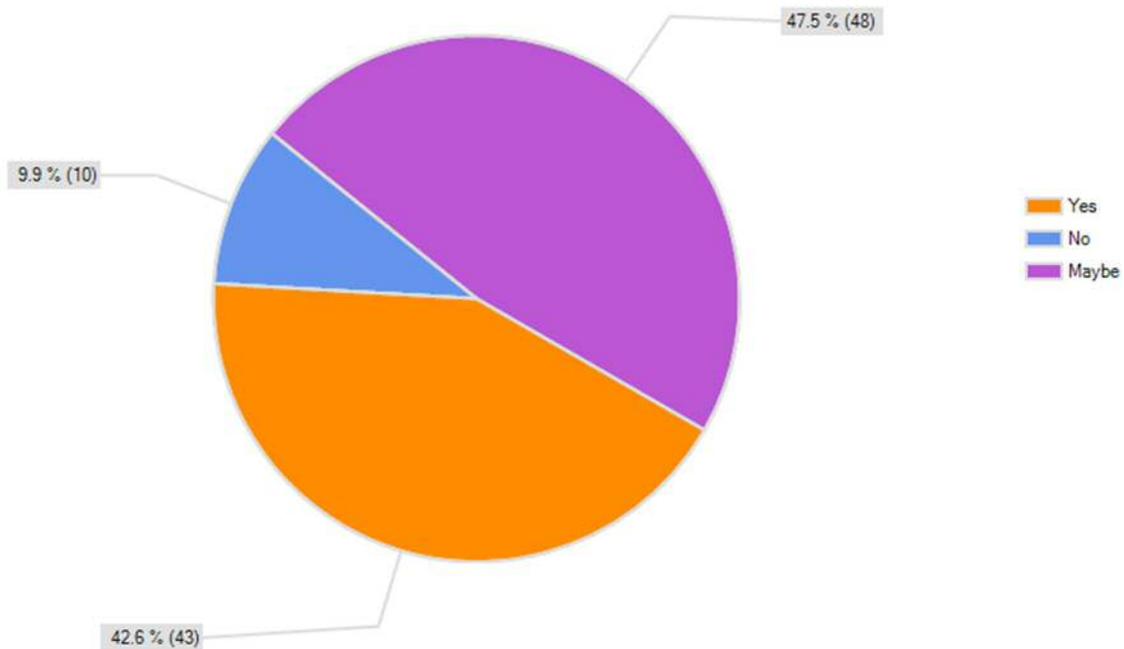
Not everyone has access to these on-line services.

A militant organization in PA received state funding to spy on PA Quakers and their peaceful protests last year. That organizations like this are not condemned and prosecuted is outrageous and I do not understand why Quakers have not expressed outrage at being victimized in this way. Opposition to never-ending war is wide spread in this country and Quakers have historically opposed war and violence. I feel strongly that this Quaker fundamental should receive more prominence. Stop hiding our "light" under a bushel!

In our Meeting, we allow ourselves the luxury of email communication for details, setting meeting times, informing about upcoming issues and things like that. We have said that we have a general, shared feeling about what would be appropriate (change of meeting time) and what wouldn't be appropriate (concerns about a member's behavior) for email communication. We had one person in our Meeting who didn't use email and was always uncomfortable with the level of email communication. That was ONE of the reasons he left, but it was definitely a concern.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
The Internet is a good place and a good medium for exploring Quaker Faith	34.0% (35)	37.9% (39)	17.5% (18)	6.8% (7)	2.9% (3)	1.0% (1)	2.06	103
The Internet is a good place and a good medium for exploring new Friends practices	31.1% (32)	35.0% (36)	29.1% (30)	1.9% (2)	1.9% (2)	1.0% (1)	2.08	103
The Internet should be used by Friends	35.3% (36)	36.3% (37)	25.5% (26)	1.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	2.0% (2)	1.92	102
It's possible to use the Internet in a way that's consistent with Friends testimonies and practices	48.5% (50)	37.9% (39)	10.7% (11)	1.9% (2)	1.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	1.69	103
There is a clear difference in my Meeting between JYM, YF, and adult Friends in the use of the Internet	11.8% (11)	20.4% (19)	33.3% (31)	8.6% (8)	1.1% (1)	24.7% (23)	2.56	93
						answered question		104
						skipped question		20

**Would it be a good idea for your Meeting to hold an adult education or a threshing session on this topic to discuss the results of this survey when the results are available?**



Anything else you'd like to pass onto the committee?



group discernment, especially for committee work. "Ranters" who are impatient with Quaker process, new to Quakers, or just want to be center stage, too often take over electronic discussion groups. [REDACTED] The enthusiasm some feel towards internet communications is inimical to what attracted me to Quakerism in the first place, namely group mysticism welcoming the presence of God.

I enjoy exploring all kinds of Quaker websites, forums and blogs, i.e. Quaker Ranter, etc. and have learned much, since I'm a fairly new attender (2 years)...I think these are of more value than sites such as Facebook, etc.

Signed, [REDACTED]

I normally attend the Hong Kong Monthly Meeting, though my membership is in Santa Barbara. Some of my answers above are drawn from my experiences with Hong Kong Friends more than with SB Friends. I would like to share the results of this survey with HK Friends. If that is appropriate, please send an update to me at (if email is still deemed to be Quakerly, after the survey is completed!) [REDACTED]

I am a minimal email user, so have little experience on these issues, but I understand that information is quickly disseminated by computer and many use it. It is important, Friends are already using it. [REDACTED]

In response to a question above I challenged Internet anonymity, but I agree that "anonymous surveys are also fine", so the survey itself stands as a good counterexample.

Signed, Anonymous [REDACTED]

Most social media (Facebook, Twitter...) is vulnerable to mis-use, invasion of privacy, and impulsiveness. Young people are more likely to push boundaries and post impulsive messages. Older adults who were not raised with the internet often have little knowledge about the ability of strangers...or even acquaintances...to use posted information indiscriminately and destructively [REDACTED]

I work best from paper copy; I can carry them around and read/study when I have time.

I wonder if you could reconsider asking binary gender question. Posing a binary excludes those in our community who are gender queer or intersex and who are not comfortable identifying in one way or another.

And does this information really assist in your planning and decision making behavior? If you are worried about excluded communities why don't you ask about income or educational background or racial identity?

I think asking what region someone lives in would be far more helpful than gender in discerning whether there separate communities of use in the Yearly Meeting.

[REDACTED]

In question 12, if the statements had read '...can be a good place...', it would have possibly been an Agree statement for me. I have been house bound for quite a while, and appreciate being able to keep in touch through email - both personal and through the monthly minutes. I am grateful to the internet for that. Our meeting does nearly all announcements by e-mail, in addition to at meeting. If one does not attend meeting, and does not have e-mail, it is a burden on the meeting to get the announcement to that person. I have actually given a computer to such a person. Meeting has made an effort to provide paper copies and calls, but these people are sometimes out of the loop. E-mail is the primary medium for getting out messages between meetings. Use of electronic services should always be only an adjunct to face-to-face interpersonal communication. It can facilitate clarity b/c drafts require written word.

would like to see more concern about non-violence/ kindness to animals. Don't kill and eat them.

Facebook has been used to spur peaceful demonstrations and democratic actions all over the world; the internet is a tool, like a typewriter or a handshake. When used appropriately, and in concert with other tools, it can support any thoughtful endeavor. It should not replace human contact, however. It should support the efforts of peaceful, genuine human community.

Our Meeting has many old people, including me. I am computer literate, but many aren't so computer can never be the exclusive form of communication

[REDACTED]

While we are loath to proselytize the internet provides an opportunity for seekers to discover our existence and locations. We have tried defining policies for sharing documents on the internet and using our website for sharing sensitive information such as phone numbers with members and attenders. We have gotten bogged down on such things as backups and security of information.

We are still figuring out the value of the internet. Mostly, I currently use it to exchange information easily. Occasionally I use it to explore new ideas. It does not replace direct, experiential Friends' meetings, but it gives us a tool to explore new ways to communicate, and it allows us to more easily stay in contact with distant Friends. It is also much easier to communicate simple information (scheduling meetings, distributing minutes, etc) within Quaker committees. Just be very careful not to provide alternatives as much as possible for people who choose not to have Internet access (or can't use computers for vision, financial, or other reasons).

I am finding resistance in my meeting to filling out this survey online. I waited until after College Park Quarterly Meeting to fill out the final version so I could give it all of my attention. I did forward Don Bean's message announcing the survey



mind, that medium, while also useful, has problems as well which have not been considered. I think it very difficult to hold a quakerly conversation with silences and pauses on a conference call, and the half-duplex of the medium means only person can be heard at a time, even if that person is merely breathing heavily. A person can try to jump in and add something, and even that they want to be heard won't get noticed.

Without oversight, our meeting's use of the two listserves, (one for notices, the other for discussion), tend to be dominated by one or two individuals with very strong opinions. They can also be "wordy", dominating the discussion of any issue. Established guidelines for each of the listserves have been frequently ignored. Subsequently, the listserves reflect the points of view of a couple of strong-minded individuals, discouraging participation from opposing points of view. I am undecided about the value of these online discussions.

Re survey question #12: The position of JYM and YF has not been communicated to me (and possibly to the general meeting body), so I have no idea whether a difference exists.

I am very glad that the YM is reaching out to individuals in this way. As seniors on a fixed income and who live a considerable distance from either meeting in our area, we are not able to attend Meeting and the functions regularly. These electronic communications enable us to feel part of the Quaker community when we cannot participate in person.

Using remote means to share information actually brings Friends together and can strengthen community - phones, mailed newsletters, listserves and the like. Coming to an awareness of God's will in the world, and discerning right actions, has proven to be effective when Friends come together in worshipful personal interaction; electronic media cannot substitute for that.

We did have such a session, and our clerk even created a smaller but similar survey to this one to find out about how people felt about using email for Committee and Meeting communication.

You needn't contact me, but this was submitted by [REDACTED]...who wonders if anonymous submissions are in keeping with Quaker testimony for plain speech...

#### Brief Summary:

The response to this survey was incredible. Just a glance at the list of Meetings and Worship Groups that responded indicates the wide participation. Clearly the response was biased toward older members, though there was good participation by older attenders. Young Friends barely responded. Not sure why that is.

Looking at the textual responses, you can see that those who turned this in gave the survey much thought. It appears from the responses that web pages for Meetings and the use of email are fairly ubiquitous. There was a great deal of concern about social networking sites and the ability to use them in keeping with Friends testimonies and values. It's also clear that many Friends were concerned with Friends who don't have access to the use of computers and who would be disadvantaged if all communication were via that route.

One of the surprising results was that while older Friends often felt a lack of confidence in using the media, most actually used internet services a great deal and with some degree of competency.

We clearly are moving into greater use of the internet to do our business, though everyone agrees that a sense of the meeting is almost impossible to get over the internet and consequently the internet should only be used for the most mundane of decisions. Almost all Friends felt that Spirit still needs us to be in the same room when we try to reach unity with the divine.

Respectfully submitted,

Joe Franko