

Gadget gran Dianne is plugged in

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SHE'S A MODEM GIRL: Dianne Casley-Smith is officially Australia's most tech savvy senior after winning a Telstra contest and netting herself \$10,000. Picture: Peter McNamara

Source: The Courier-Mail

AUSTRALIA'S multi-billion dollar technology industry has a new spokesmodel - a 67-year-old great-grandmother from Queensland.

Dianne Casley-Smith from Sandstone Point was today named the winner of Telstra's Retired and Wired campaign to find the Australia's most tech-savvy senior.

Ms Casley-Smith, a recent iPad adopter who regularly Skypes her friends and reads Facebook updates from her grandchildren, won the title and \$10,000 after completing a series of challenges to test her tech literacy.

Finalists had to create and upload videos, use a wireless modem and create a blog - which was something new for the grandmother of 11 and great-gran of seven.

Most technology is not new to the former employment agency worker, however, who discovered a love for gadgets at work and now spends much of her time using them.

"First thing in the morning when I go for a walk I plug the iPod into my ears and I usually listen to some of my favourite podcasts," she said.

"I also go bike-riding regularly and I take my iPhone with me, place it in the basket and video where I'm going."

She uses her laptop to book holidays and peruse eBay, plays Scrabble online and recently got an iPad as an anniversary gift; which she said can be "quite addictive".

Telstra's competition was designed to highlight the increasing number of retired people using technology. The most recent AustraliaSCAN Grey Market Report showed seniors were most likely to email friends, read the news and use social media, while the Australian Government Intergenerational Report found the average senior sent at least one text message per day.

But Ms Casley-Smith said many seniors are still reticent to adopt new technology for fear of "breaking or ruining something" - a fear she says is unfounded.

"If you want to maintain communication with your family just grab the bull by the horns and embrace technological change," she said.

Ms Casley-Smith says her next technological challenge will be joining Twitter, though she does still have to decide how she is going to spend her prize.

"I foolishly said if I win there'd be iPads all round! I wonder if Apple would give me a discount if I bought a dozen."

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