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WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A SENIOR IN THE GIG ECONOMY

Older workers who participate in digital platforms like Uber are more reliant on the income than younger peers

By Eric Morath
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Miss Daisy could be your next **Uber** driver.

More than 400,000 Americans ages 65 and older earn income from digital platforms such as Uber and **Airbnb**, and those seniors are more reliant on such gigs than their younger peers, according to [a new report from the JPMorgan Chase Institute](#).

The report, which uses anonymized data from millions of **JPMorgan Chase** customers, found that just less than 1% of those older than 65 used apps and other online platforms to earn income during the year ended in September 2015. That's a smaller share than the 3.1% of the general population earning at least a portion of their income from what's often called the gig economy.

But seniors who do participate count on the earnings for a larger share of their total income.

Those 65 and older working through labor platforms such as Lyft and TaskRabbit relied on those jobs for 28% of their income, slightly higher than the 26% share for all workers. Similarly, seniors using capital platforms such as Airbnb or eBay, tapped such apps and websites for 11.5% of their total income, versus 10.7% for all workers.

"For most people, online platforms provide a supplemental form of income," said Diana Farrell, chief executive officer of the institute. "Seniors are less likely to have other jobs, and therefore have the flexibility to spend more time on this work, and derive more income from it."

Many older Americans are not fully retired, still relying on work to provide some income. The JPMorgan data showed that 25% of income for Americans 65 or older came from labor. Social Security checks provided 43% of their income.

Older Americans working in the gig economy are most frequently involved in capital-intensive platforms. That could suggest seniors are in a better position to leverage existing assets, such as a vacation home, to earn additional income, compared with seeking to provide physical labor, Ms. Farrell said.