



Marketing Messages

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Your company needs to know who's consuming media on either side of the 35 divide

In 1964 a student at the University of California Berkeley named Jack Weinberg coined the immortal phrase, "Don't trust anyone over 30." When he invoked that sentiment in 1964, Mr. Weinberg was a civil rights activist frustrated by bureaucratic inaction. Yet today, curiously that line still exists, in particular with respect to technology. I call it the 35-divide.

My company recently completed a study on media use habits with TNS Canadian Facts. Results were based on 1,017 responses from across Canada. We looked at where the primary sources of news and information were, as well as measuring the growth of various online digital activities. Although there were exceptions in many areas, there was a definite line in the sand at 35 years. Those under 35 have different media habits from those over 35. We also busted some myths around just how important (or not) some digital media vehicles actually are. The Coles notes? Before abandoning traditional media for the digital bandwagon, consider your target group carefully.

What is your primary source of news and information?

	Overall	18-24yrs	25-34yrs	35-49yrs	50-64yrs
TV	42%	22%	35%	40%	49%
Newspaper	20%	22%	12%	17%	23%
Online news sites	18%	30%	31%	23%	8%
Radio	16%	7%	13%	19%	18%
Social networks	1%	10%	0.8%	0.4%	0

What is your secondary source of news and information?

	Overall	18-24yrs	25-34yrs	35-49yrs	50-64yrs
TV	27%	15%	36%	24%	26%
Newspaper	27%	28%	16%	26%	34%
Radio	19%	7%	8%	24%	23%
Online news sites	17%	22%	28%	18%	11%
Social networks	2%	4%	2%	2%	1%

TV ranked highest overall as both a primary and secondary source followed by newspapers. Online news sites were third highest followed by radio as a primary source. The strength of online news sites was considerable for those 18-34yrs. The question then becomes; which side of the sandy line does your primary target fall? If it falls under 35yrs, online is your growth area, but TV and newspapers are still a very viable vehicle. If it falls over 35yrs, online has its merits, but TV, newspapers and radio are still your best primary vehicle.

Are you all a twitter about Twitter? Consider the 35-divide again and your primary target audience. We asked respondents if they were spending more, the same or less time than a year ago micro blogging with Twitter. Overall 2% were spending more time, 6% the same, and 13% were spending less time. 33% of those 18-34yrs and 37% of those 25-34yrs used Twitter. Contrast this to 19% of 35-49yrs and 16% of 50-64yrs who Tweet. The use of Twitter with its limit of 140 characters clearly favours mobile devices, and it appears to be a tool dominated by young urban audiences in our research. The question then becomes; is that your audience?

Are you busting your butt to post to your blog regularly? Consider this fact: 73% of Canadians don't blog. Those that do are spending less time on it than a year ago. However for the 27% of the population who do, the largest number are found under 35yrs. 63% of those 18-24yrs and 39% of those 25-34yrs engage in this activity. "There is a perception that blogging and using Twitter are bigger than they actually are," notes Raymond Gee, Senior Researcher, TNS Canadian Facts. Text messaging has grown, but is still a technology divided by age. While 53% of Canadians overall are sending text messages, 85% of 18-24yrs and 80% of 25-34yrs are doing it.

The trend towards smart phones such as the iPhone and Blackberry has gowning tremendously. In fact a recent Deloitte study estimates that smart phones will out number computers in the US by the first half of 2010. So just who is accessing information and news on their mobile device? Overall 40% of Canadians engage in this activity. But here again the 35-divide plays out. 70% of 18-24yrs and 57% of 25-34yrs are doing it. Instinctively I would have thought more professionals, and a greater representation of those over 35yrs, would be relying on their device for news information. The take away here? Digital tools offer tremendous opportunity, but the euphoria over them shouldn't cloud the assessment of whether they are the right choice to reach your target group. Want more insights? Visit my website: www.charleson.ca and hit the newsletter subscribe button top left. Marketing trends and research will be delivered to your inbox weekly. Or you can join the conversation on my blog: www.fiveminutemarketing.com

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