

Survey shows young Asians fit 38 hours of activities into one day (but still manage eight hours...

Contributed by Synovate
Thursday, 27 March 2008
Last Updated Monday, 14 July 2008

Survey shows young Asians fit 38 hours of activities into one day (but still manage eight hours sleep!)12 March 2008

HONG KONG — Leading global research firm Synovate today released data that shows multitasking, media-rich lifestyles are the norm among 8-24 year olds in Asia, with these on-the-pulse consumers fitting 38 hours of activities into every 24 hour period.

The third annual Synovate Young Asians study looks at what's in the hearts and minds of the region's youth, revealing their media consumption, purchase habits, attitudes, favourite brands and heroes. It covers 11 markets across Asia Pacific, including Australia for the first time.

Associate Director of Synovate in Hong Kong, Susanna Lam, said that Synovate, in conjunction with the research sponsors — Microsoft Digital Advertising Solutions, MTV, SingTel, Star TV and Yahoo!, had uncovered a connected and community-minded youth.

"It's not a huge surprise that this digitally-nimble generation places great stock in online time, but it was gratifying to uncover they are just as committed to personal communication and relationships, prioritising family above all else.

"It's these contrasts that smart marketers need to understand before they can build and maintain a loyal consumer base in a notoriously trend-aware and media-savvy generation," she said. Multi-tasking in a media-saturated world

Of the 38 hours of activities Asia's youth manage to squeeze into a day, 10 are spent on some form of media.

Lam said that, in part, this accounts for the extreme multi-tasking capabilities of the region's youth.

"The frenetic pace of a digitally-driven society has been embraced by Asia's young people. Kids are watching the TV, but also talking on the phone. They are on the internet with the radio on in the background. Or they may be sending email, texting on their mobile phone and playing an online game all at the one time.

"It's definitely the age of perpetual partial attention, meaning marketers have to work even harder to get the message through. The great news is that young people are using a wide variety of media and spending a good part of the day doing so," she said.

The biggest media junkies can be found in Malaysia (12.9 hours a day), Thailand (12.8) and Hong Kong (12.2). This covers time spent on the internet, watching TV or DVD/VCD/videos, reading newspapers or magazines and listening to the radio.

Over the past twelve months, more than half of all respondents reported an increase in their internet use and 37% listen to more music than they used to. Attention! Screens are best for getting noticed

The study asked the older respondents, those who are 15-24 years, just how much attention they were paying to each medium and found the internet came out on top. Thirty-one percent of respondents say they pay 100% attention to the internet when they are online and a further 38% give it 75% of their attention. Television is the next most involving medium, with 18% giving it their full attention and 31% at a 75% attention-level.

"When you're fighting for a young person's attention, it might be best if your message was on a screen. They are far more likely to notice it (something that all parents out there might need to make note of!)," said Lam.

"But when it comes to how people feel about media, it's the internet and mobile phones that are most often rated an absolute necessity. Indeed, the mobile phone is fast making inroads as the 'third screen' in people's lives," she said.

Thirty-seven percent of the region's connected youth said they could not live without the internet and 29% would be unable to function without their mobile phones.

Overall, the internet was seen as the best source for staying up-to-date, useful information, entertainment and enjoyment. Television still has a major role in young people's lives when it comes to entertainment and leisure with a quarter of respondents preferring it for this pursuit. Mobiles on the move

"It's one thing for mobile phones to have features, but another thing entirely as to whether they are used. The Young

Asians survey makes it clear that, as far as young people go, the mobile is taking off as an all-in-one portable device. Coupled with young Asian's dependency on their phones, this means the mobile is rapidly becoming a vital part of the media mix for brands seeking to interact with young consumers," Lam said.

The two most popular features remain SMS (64% do it, with young Indonesians leading the way at 85%) and taking pictures (55%).

Perhaps more indicative of the increasing importance of the mobile, many other features are getting used in significant numbers. Half of all 8-24 year olds who have mobiles are now using them to listen to music and 47% are playing games; 26% are taking video footage, 19% downloading and 12% are connecting to the internet via their phones. This is particularly popular in China with 22% going online courtesy of their mobiles.

When asked how they will listen to music in the future, 21% of young Asians said they expect to be using their mobile. Hanging on the telephone

On average, Asians aged 15-24 years are spending 1.6 hours a day, every day, on the phone. Just shy of one hour is spent on their mobile (59 minutes) and another 38 minutes is on a landline. The biggest chatterboxes are the Thais, who spend a total of two hours 47 minutes a day on the phone, more than two hours of which is on their mobiles. The next most talkative are the Filipinos and the Singaporeans who also spend over two hours a day on the end of the line. Game on

"Older people sometimes say the younger generation lives in their own world. They are right," Lam said.

"Asia's youth is spending an average of four hours 23 minutes a week playing games, be they TV console, portable electronic or online."

Young Thais top the table, spending over one hour per day (61 minutes) playing games, followed by Singaporeans at 59 minutes a day and Hong Kong gamers at 56 minutes. Loving life... or not

Synovate also asked young people one of life's big questions - are you happy with your life right now?

Despite the effects of teen angst, 79% of Asia Pacific's 8-24 year olds classify themselves as very or quite happy. The region's happiest young people can be found in India (with a near universal happiness rating of 98%), the Philippines (92%) and Indonesia (89%). Less satisfied with their lives were the Koreans where 13% of respondents rated themselves unhappy, Hong Kong at 11% unhappy and Taiwan and Singapore (both 7%).

- Hong Kong Young Asians fact sheet (PDF, 35kb)

- Singapore Young Asians fact sheet (PDF, 96kb) Â Contact for this press release Pia Wong

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