

Internet Penetration in Jordan Doubles to 36% in Two Years

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Results show Yahoo! is dominant email provider

Strategies, a member of the Harris Interactive Global Network of Independent Market Research Firms, in its second annual independent media survey in Jordan reveals new trends in radio listening, new media, mobile phones, Internet and news websites, as well as reporting advances by Jordan's independent print media.

Strategies represents Jordan in the Global Network.

The findings were released at three different events: New Media: Mobile and Internet, Radio Listenership, and Print Media. For the first time in Jordan this survey gauges popularity of news websites.

The findings offer new insights on how the media scene in Jordan is evolving. It is being produced as part of the USAID funded Jordan Media Strengthening Program in conjunction with IREX (www.irex.org) in a nationwide poll of 3,600 Jordanians, aged 15 and above during the first two weeks of December 2008.

Penetration Doubles

The findings show a substantial increase in Internet usage. Thirty-six percent of Jordanians use the Internet, an increase of 100% from 2007. Two-thirds of the users are male, 29 years of age and below.

Almost 33% use Internet from home, including relatives and friends, 27% from Internet cafes, 17% from university/schools and just 17% from office/work.

Only 11% of Jordanian homes have an ADSL subscription, making up 75% of all Internet subscriptions. High Internet subscription fees are viewed as an obstacle to increased penetration.

This increase in Internet usage, however, shows only a small increase in email usage which stands at 21%, up from 18% in 2007 in a breakout that is composed of 71% males of which 64% are under 29 years of age.

Worth noting is that 54% of all Jordanian email users do not think their prior consent is required when their address is targeted by marketing campaigns. Sixty-nine percent believe email spam is not a nuisance.

Yahoo! Dominant Email Provider

Yahoo! comes out the winner in terms of email providers with a share of 51%, followed by 28% for Hotmail®, 6% for Gmail®, and the regional Arabic email/news portal, Maktoob at 7%.

Other Internet Usage; Early Days

Social media groups are starting to catch on with 9% of the respondents using Facebook, and 3% using MySpace. The findings show that for online language only one third of Internet users are comfortable using English or just 12% of the population which limits the amount of news, information and entertainment being accessed.

Online home banking and e-trade do not account each for more than 2% of all Internet usage by adult Jordanians. Internet users spend most of their time browsing the web, downloading video clips and chatting.

Other serious endeavors such as research and data collection also rank high on the Internet use agenda. An elite sector of society, measuring no more than 4% has Mobile Internet Service.

Visiting blogs is still a novelty with only 3% usage and commenting on articles still a little developed form of expression, standing at only 5% of Internet users. Another 4% of Jordan's population listens to radio via the Internet.

Online News Sites and Print Media

The survey reveals that 17% of Jordanians or 46% of Internet users visited news websites during the last 30 days. Al Jazeera holds first place, at 11% of the adult population, followed by 6% for Al Arabiya. Both CNN, BBC and Maktoob, were at 3%.

While newspapers all over the world are often facing a financial downturn there were slight increases in readership in Jordan.

Results show that daily paper yesterday readership increased to 20% by a slight margin from 19% in 2007.

Electronic readership for the last 30 days for local Jordanian newspapers increased considerably. Electronic readership

is on the rise and may potentially start to affect home subscriptions and street sales.

Mobiles

Jordan has a mobile penetration of 85% among adults 15 years and above, who own one or more mobile subscriptions.

Mobile provider Zain has a 39% market share, Orange 31%, Umniah 30% and Express 0.5%. The majority of all subscribers, regardless of the carrier are pre-paid customers.

Radio Listening

An interesting finding in this year's survey is that 19% of the population listens to radio through mobiles, amounting to 23% of all mobile subscribers.

This has contributed to an indirect increase in radio listenership. These mobile-radio listeners are spread all over the country, but predominantly are males aged 15-24 years old.

Radio continues to expand its penetration across all ages. Radio listenership among ages 30 and above accounts this year for 54% of total radio listeners compared to 46% in 2007.

Young adults, aged 15-29 years, make up 46% of radio listeners down from 54% last year. However, the drop is offset through the growing trend of listening to radio through mobile telephones and Internet.

While the traditional top radio stations have not scored any major gains from last year, Amen FM 89.5, owned by the Public Security Department in Jordan has increased its penetration almost three times within one year.

Smaller, Arabic and English speaking

radio stations, in particular those that target Greater Amman areas, have also made considerable gains, almost doubling their penetration.

Forty percent of radio listeners, 57% of them males, switch to their favorite station during the morning hours from 6 a.m. to 10 a.m. The majority of female listeners, 54%, tend to listen to radio between 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. when total listenership drops to 19%.

Morning listening hours tend to be favorite for those aged 30 years and above or 58% of morning listeners. The young adults, aged 15-29, make up the majority of late afternoon into the late evening listeners. Fifty five percent of radio listeners tune-in at home, followed by 34% in the car, 8% at work and 3% on the bus.

SMS and Mobile Advertising

Finally, SMS Bulk vendors have seen increased business with 53% of mobile subscribers receiving SMS Bulk transmissions between many times, to once per day, to several times a week.

Sixty-seven percent of respondents claim they always read text commercials while 16% sometimes look at them.

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This amounts to a total of 83% of all mobile subscribers who can be accessed by telephone advertisers. Mobile phone subscribers do not think their prior consent is required before adverts are sent to them, up from 55% in 2007 to 63% in 2008. And again, a considerable high number of subscribers do not think these advertisements are a nuisance, 66%, up 12% points from 2007.

The Jordan Media Strengthening Program is a three-year USAID program with a U.S. \$5 million budget. IREX Country Director Samuel Compton stressed the importance of "independent, reliable, updated and free data" to boosting competition and sustainability of media organizations.

"Not all media outlets can afford to buy data and studies," says Compton. "I trust this free survey will be helpful to emerging media outlets. To larger media outlets, this survey will provide an opportunity to compare market data from different sources and improve the quality of their service, making sure they fine-tune their products to suit the needs of Jordanians."

About the Harris Interactive Global Network

The Harris Interactive Global Network, an international network of affiliate market research firms, was established in 1992 by Humphrey Taylor, now Chairman of The Harris Poll.

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Today, there are more than a dozen global network members, representing Australia, the Caribbean, Europe, Central/South/North America, the Middle East and South Africa. Member firms exchange research expertise and provide the resourcefulness of local-country knowledge. Though affiliated with Harris Interactive, global network members operate as totally independent market- and opinion-research firms.

About Harris Interactive

Harris Interactive is a global leader in custom market research. With a long and rich history in multimodal research that is powered by our science and technology, we assist clients in achieving business results.

Harris Interactive serves clients globally through our North American, European and Asian offices and a network of independent market research firms.

For more information, please visit www.harrisinteractive.com

About Strategies

Strategies, originally established in 1997 as an advertising agency, now offers executive level leadership based on the combined experiences of 22 years in communications and more than 40 years in research. The Company serves local and multinational clients, international governmental bodies and agencies, as well as the Jordanian government.

Strategies specializes in public policy, socioeconomic research and opinion-polling services. In addition, Strategies conducts face-to-face quantitative and qualitative research in various Middle Eastern countries, both in the Levant as well as the Gulf.

About IREX

IREX is an international nonprofit organization providing leadership and innovative programs to improve the quality of education, strengthen independent media, and foster pluralistic civil society development.

Founded in 1968, IREX has an annual portfolio of \$50 million and a staff of over 500 professionals worldwide. IREX and its partner IREX Europe deliver cross-cutting programs and consulting expertise in more than 50 countries.

About USAID

USAID is an independent federal government agency that receives overall foreign policy guidance from the Secretary of State. Their work supports long-term and equitable economic growth and advances U.S. foreign policy objectives by supporting economic growth, agriculture and trade, global health, democracy, conflict prevention and humanitarian assistance.

They provide assistance in Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia and the Near East, Latin America and the Caribbean, Europe and Eurasia.

With headquarters in Washington, D.C., USAID has field offices around the world working in close partnership with private voluntary organizations, indigenous organizations, universities, American businesses, international agencies, other governments, and other U.S. government agencies.

USAID has working relationships with more than 3,500 American companies and over 300 U.S.-based private voluntary organizations.

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