

Convenience Trumps Social Features For Online Video Viewers

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Quick, easy viewing more important than social experience

Online video viewing is on the rise around the world. In the US, eMarketer estimates 158.1 million internet users will watch video online at least monthly in 2011, up from 145.6 million last year.

And at least one in five web users across the US, UK, Australia, Brazil, Germany, Italy and Spain told Accenture in March 2011 they were watching more video on desktop and laptop computers than a year earlier.

The survey found that convenience is the key to online video viewing around the globe.

Two in five internet users surveyed said the ability to catch up with episodes by pausing and watching at their leisure was the most important feature of online video.

Another 24% said being able to use online video like a personal video recorder was the top feature.

Interactivity and social features were the least popular choice, cited by only 11% of internet users.

Video viewers also indicated their priorities when asked about the frustrations that remain with online video.

Buffering and poor video quality were two of the top three problems. Advertising was also an annoyance.

At least in the US, some television watchers do want to interact socially. According to a March 2011 survey by Harris Interactive and 24/7 Wall St., 17% of US web users use the internet or social media during a TV show to post or read about the show. About twice as many web users interact online after watching, however.

As online TV services, from subscriptions like Netflix to network websites to joint ventures like Hulu, look to improve and update their offerings, they should keep the basics in mind before hoping to increase engagement with services most viewers still consider just a â€œnice to have.â€•

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