

Gen Y Embraces Smaller Screens For TV And Online Video Viewing

Contributed by eMarketer
Thursday, 29 September 2011
Last Updated Thursday, 29 September 2011

Gen Y tunes in to mobile video four times more often than boomers

Although over-the-top video usage continues to surge across age groups, younger consumers are leading the charge in online video streaming and mobile video viewing.

Surpassing their older counterparts in over-the-top activity, members of Generation Y in particular are displaying an aptitude for alternative methods for viewing television and movies.

According to online research provider Knowledge Networks, 56% of Gen Y internet users stream video on a weekly basis—twice as many as among boomers. Gen Y is also four times more likely to watch video via mobile than boomers.

Although the 13-to-31 age group may be leading the charge, digital video viewing is increasing among web users of all ages. Knowledge Networks research indicates that monthly use of an alternative method for movie and television viewing increased from 26% in 2010 to 35% in 2011. Use of streaming video rental services has doubled since 2010, and so has video viewing via internet-connected video game consoles and on mobile devices.

A Nielsen survey supports some of the Knowledge Networks demographics findings. According to Nielsen, consumers ages 18 to 49 watch more than twice as much television content on the internet as those older than 50. Gen Y and Gen X males are especially heavy internet video users, watching more than 7 hours a month. When it comes to mobile, males and females ages 18 to 49 watch roughly the same amount of video on their mobile devices, about 4 hours, surpassing those older than 50, who watch 2 to 3 hours of mobile video a month.

comScore data provides a contrast, indicating that more males than females watch mobile video content, regardless of time spent. According to comScore, 62% of males viewed mobile TV or video in June 2011, compared to 38% of females. comScore's generational data largely lines up with that of Knowledge Networks, and adoption by consumers older than 45 makes up only a sliver of overall usage. The majority of mobile TV and video viewers are younger than 44.

Marketers should take note of the 18-to-34 age group as a sweet spot for over-the-top video marketing. As online and mobile video content continues to proliferate, consumer usage of alternative viewing channels will continue to climb. eMarketer predicts that by 2015, 76% of internet users, or 195.5 million people, will watch video content online each month.

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