

Internet Addiction Sets As Brics Countries Benefit From Online Confidence Boost

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Global report from world's largest research consultancy, TNS, shows most avid internet users are now found in countries like Brazil, Russia, India and China

Consumers in fast-growth markets are hungry for greater access to the Internet and once they have it, find it quickly begins to change their lives " according to the latest findings released from Digital Life, a global study by TNS, a Kantar company and part of WPP [NASDAQ:WPPGY].

The findings show that as advances in infrastructure open up these markets to the wonders of the web, newcomers to the Internet embrace its potential to expand their world and the opportunities available to them. When asked if the Internet helped to improve their self-confidence, just 12 per cent of those online in France and Germany agreed, compared to 42 per cent of Internet users in China, 52 per cent in India and 55 per cent in Vietnam. This peaks in Saudi Arabia where almost four out of five Internet users (79 per cent) feel more confident online.

With this new-found confidence, people in fast-growth markets are finding their voice online " 44 per cent of the Internet population in Turkey are writing their own blog every week, as are 43 per cent in China and Mexico and 39 per cent in India. The only developed market to come close in terms of sharing their views is Italy, where 40 per cent of online Italians update their blog each week, compared to 14 per cent in the US and UK.

"We have seen that the Internet can become addictive; some of the most engaged are those people in markets where Internet access has been limited - as soon as the infrastructure becomes available people make the most of it," said Matthew Froggatt, chief development officer, TNS. He continued, "Really understanding this emotional connection to the Internet presents significant opportunity for companies who need to reach consumers in new markets to build their business."

The findings were revealed by TNS's Digital Life study, the most comprehensive view of how more than 72,000 consumers in 60 countries behave online and why they do what they do, which was conducted during 2011. Interactive data visualisations of the key findings can be found at www.tnsdigitallife.com.

Spending time online has a big impact for consumption of other media. As Internet access has opened up, so TV viewing is starting to drop off. In China and Brazil, approximately 20 per cent more Internet users will go online each day than will watch TV. Conversely, where online infrastructure is still in development, TV maintains a hold and in Egypt, Thailand and the Philippines people are much more likely to watch TV every day than go online***. Â

"We have shifted from brands interrupting consumers to needing to engage with them," says Froggatt. He continues, "change in media consumption from passive TV viewing to actively searching and commenting online presents a real opportunity for brands who can truly understand this shift and develop appropriate ways to interact in this environment," commented Froggatt. Â

Mobile broadband has been a significant catalyst in accelerating Internet access in many fast growth markets. Whilst 36 per cent of people surveyed by TNS globally said they had accessed the Internet via mobile in the past week, the figure was 49 per cent in China, 53 per cent in Singapore and 68 per cent in South Africa. This is particularly true in Africa, where people going online in South Africa, Nigeria and Kenya are more likely to use a mobile phone than a PC****.

Froggatt comments, "Introducing people to the Internet for the first time in its mobile format has a huge bearing on their response and engagement with it. Their experience of the Internet is imbued with all the other benefits and excitement these markets see in mobile: opportunities to develop new business models, make new connections, participate in new markets and access infrastructure like banking."

Internet users in fast-growth markets are also amongst the most enthusiastic adopters of new products and services.Â While only nine per cent of the global Internet population are not currently banking online and are keen to try it, the figure is 20 per cent in Chile, 24 per cent in Vietnam and a striking 62 per cent in Nigeria. Other services with the potential to do well in fast-growth markets include timeshifted TV " 27 per cent of those online in India, 29 per cent in Vietnam and 30 per cent in Brazil and Indonesia want to try selecting programmes already broadcast to watch over the internet, compared to the global average of 22 per cent.

"This new enthusiasm for the Internet among later adopters is opening up a huge potential market to brands and businesses who can understand their needs. However, while our research unearths opportunities it also comes with a warning; consumers in more developed markets are already feeling jaded by volumes of 'digital waste' thrown at them by

brands in social networks. Companies need to find a way to cut through this noise with more personalised approaches based on attitudes and behaviours of online users in different markets,â€• concludes Froggatt. Â

* Fast growth markets: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, China, Columbia, Egypt, Estonia, Ghana, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Tanzania, Thailand, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, Vietnam.

**Developed markets: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Slovak Republic, Spain, Switzerland, Sweden, Taiwan, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States.

*** Daily media consumption:

Egypt (TV â€“ 91 per cent; online for leisure â€“ 62 per cent)

Thailand (TV â€“ 88 per cent; online for leisure â€“ 64 per cent)

The Philippines (TV â€“ 89 per cent; online â€“ 38 per cent) Â

**** Weekly Internet access by device:

South Africa (PC â€“ six hours per week; phone â€“ seven hours per week)

Nigeria (PC â€“ six hours per week; phone - 11 hours per week)

Kenya (PC â€“ five hours per week; phone â€“ six hours per week)

TNS has made some of the key findings from this study available to the public via an interactive data visualisation that can be found at www.tnsdigitallife.com. The visualisations were developed in partnership with Digit.

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About TNS Digital Life

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