

America's Affluent Crave Content

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Last week, Ipsos MediaCT released findings from the 2012 Mendelsohn Affluent Survey. Now in its 36th consecutive year, the survey tracks the lives, lifestyles and media habits of Affluent Americans (defined as the 59 million adults with \$100K+ annual household income).

One of our key findings is that Affluent hunger for content and connectivity continues to grow – both in print and digital formats.

Affluents read an average of 18.7 issues of print publications from an average of 8.2 titles, with 82% of Affluents reading at least one of the 150 measured and reported print publications – all of these metrics are very stable from 2011, and all are substantially higher among Ultra Affluents (\$250K+ HHI). Moreover, the six national daily newspapers measured showed a substantial 3.9% increase in overall readership.

At the same time, Affluent interest in digital devices and media continues to grow. The 2012 Mendelsohn Affluent survey finds that tablet ownership essentially tripled from 2011, to 26%, with smartphone ownership also rising significantly, to 55%. Hours online weekly rose 14%, to 37.4 hours a week, with the largest growth related to social media, entertainment and shopping.

The stability in print readership, and the growth in national newspaper readership, is particularly remarkable given the sharp increases in Affluent downloading of magazine and newspaper apps. In 2012, 4.7 million Affluents downloaded a magazine app, nearly doubling from 2.4 million in 2011; 7.0 million downloaded a newspaper app, up more than 50% from 4.6 million in 2011.

Economic anxiety remains prevalent, but there are signs of a broad Affluent engagement in the marketplace. For example, 65% of Affluents agree, “Sometimes I treat myself to something, even though I don’t need it,” and 63% agree “I still have some money left over for a little indulgence.” These conclusions are complemented by findings from the Mendelsohn Affluent Barometer tracking survey, which suggests growing luxury interest among Affluents in general, and Ultra Affluents in particular.

As a whole, the survey suggests considerable opportunities for marketers, advertisers and media brands focused on the Affluent market. The day may come when Affluents are saturated and satiated with media, but that day is not yet here.

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