

Heroes, hopes and digital lives of connected Young Asians

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Synovate survey illuminates the heroes, hopes and digital lives of connected Young Asians

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HONG KONG – Jackie Chan is young Asians' favourite movie star, David Beckham their favourite sports star and family the most important factor for happiness according to a study released today by leading global market research company, Synovate.

Synovate Research Director, Betty Wu, said the second annual Synovate Young Asians survey provided a comprehensive picture of the lives of young Asians aged eight to 24, revealing their product ownership patterns, spending habits, favourite brands, idols and aspirations.

"Conducted in conjunction with MTV, Microsoft Digital Advertising Solutions and Yahoo!, Young Asians is a wide-ranging study now covering ten countries in Asia that reveals the hearts and habits of Asia's connected youth," she said.

The survey was officially launched at the Youth Marketing Summit 2006 in Singapore. Speaking at the event, MTV Networks Asia-Pacific's Vice President of Research & Planning, Ian Stewart, said that MTV is proud to support this annual survey.

"Young Asians provides a great deal of critical benchmarking information that we see as the standard currency on youth lifestyles in the region," he said.

An entirely digital generation, today's young Asian accepts computers, mobile phones and MP3 players as the norm and views the internet as fundamental to their lives.

Fuelling their desire to stay connected and central to their communication with peers, the web enables young Asians to exchange music, keep in touch with friends and news, and make product purchase decisions. This is especially prevalent among 15-24 year olds.

This group use it to search for information (81%), correspond interactively (76%), download music, videos or software (72%), access search engines (68%), listen to the radio or music (52%) and play online games (41%).

Ivy Wong, Senior Director, Asia Pacific Sales, Yahoo! Asia said: "As the internet is now an inevitable part of the lives of Asia's youth, advertisers need to communicate with them through fresh, new ways. With its interactive and targeting capabilities, the internet provides an ideal brand and promotion platform to target and engage with youth," she said.

Celia Fan, Regional Media Analyst, Asia Pacific, Greater China & Japan for Microsoft Digital Advertising Solutions, said that with its multiple platforms and products, the company is well positioned to help brands reach and engage this important audience.

"It's key for marketers to further integrate online media as driving factors of their brand campaigns as more young Asians consider the internet indispensable for information and daily interaction with their peers," she said.

The average young Asian spends three hours instant messaging a day, one and half hours on emails and 1.4 hours participating in various online community activities. The average young Asian accesses the internet 4.8 times a week; while two thirds of young Asians aged 15 to 24 use it on a daily basis.

Requiring the hardware to support their digital drive, 46% own a desktop computer or laptop, 19% have their own TV game console and 16% have their own digital still camera. A further 56% own a mobile phone and 34% own an MP3 player.

And it's clear that for this generation much of their media is new, with 48% of 15 to 24 year olds viewing or contributing to a blog in the past 30 days, 45% having accessed a personal homepage and 14% of young Asians participating in online dating in the past month.

A group who know who they are, what they want, and how they plan to get it, 71% believe education is more for personal development than preparing for a career, 60% agree that they feel a great sense of personal freedom, and another 60%

agree that they prefer to be the leader of a group rather than a follower.

Just under half of all young Asians (47%) agree that they are easily bored, a figure that highlights the challenges for marketers in connecting with these important consumers.

In line with their well developed sense of self, this generation of young Asians are financially savvy. Fifty six per cent of full time workers save some or all of their income and 54% of 15 to 24 year olds who work part time or receive pocket money do the same.

Forty six per cent of young Asians will finance an expensive product by saving until they have enough to buy it later, but consumption clout is still strong, with 34% of young Asians indicating that they would finance such a purchase by asking their Mum or Dad for the money.

Relationships are key, with family, friends and the future the three areas that young Asians rate as most important to their lives. And while online communication helps keep many of these vital relationships going, when it comes to connecting, phone calls, face-to-face time and SMS are the preferred options.

Only 1% of young Asians will now take the time to write a letter to connect with friends or family.

This generation are most happy with their family, least happy in love and harbour dreams of being a writer, a musician, an inventor or performing on stage. While happiness comes in all shapes and sizes, just under a third of young Asians (32%) believe they need money to keep them content.

Despite their digital life, some things in young Asian worlds are the same as it was for their predecessors. Although 52% turned to the internet for entertainment purposes in the past 30 days, a greater number had turned on the television (87%), listened to music (66%), participated in some form of sport (64%) or read a book or magazine (61%).

Most activities occur with family or friends but young Asians are also comfortable with their own company and 36% engage in indoor sport on their own, 30% watch DVDs while alone and 15% have gone to see live theatre on their own. Perhaps singing to an imaginary audience in front of a mirror, 36% of young Asians happily claim that they dance alone.

When it comes to their idols, David Beckham is number one for sports, Jackie Chan the favourite movie star, Jay Chou the number one music idol and Doraemon the favourite cartoon character – with Tom and Jerry a close second.

"The new section on celebrities and idols sheds more light on the interplay between global icons and the growing interest in stars from within the region, clearly highlighting the growing 'Asia loving Asia' trend that MTV has been tracking for some time," said MTV's Stewart.

Ms Wu said that while there was plenty of general discussion about Generation Y, Synovate's Young Asians survey provided concrete information on the lives and desires of this important group.

"Companies hoping to win the minds and wallets of this unique generation of consumers need to understand how they think, why they act and what they buy. This survey arms marketers and advertisers with this complex information, enabling them to make savvy, targeted marketing decisions," Ms Wu said.

About Young Asians

Synovate Young Asians is an industry-wide tracking survey that provides credible, relevant information on the media, purchasing and leisure habits of Asians aged eight to 24.

Conducted across ten Asian countries including China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, South Korea, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan and Thailand, Young Asians provides detailed information on consumption and attitudes from childhood to early adulthood to meet the needs of regional media, marketing and advertising specialists.

About MTV Networks

MTV Networks, a unit of Viacom (NYSE: VIA, VIA.B), is one of the world's leading creators of programming and content across all media platforms. MTV Networks, with 133 channels worldwide, owns and operates the following television programming services – MTV: MUSIC TELEVISION, MTV2, VH1, mtvU, NICKELODEON, NICK at NITE, COMEDY CENTRAL, TV LAND, SPIKE TV, CMT, NOGGIN, VH1 CLASSIC, LOGO, MTVN INTERNATIONAL and THE DIGITAL SUITE FROM MTV NETWORKS, a package of 13 digital services, with all of these networks trademarks of MTV Networks. MTV Networks connects with its audiences through its robust consumer products businesses and its more than 150 interactive properties worldwide, including online, broadband, wireless and interactive television services and also has licensing agreements, joint ventures, and syndication deals whereby all of its programming services can be seen worldwide.

About Microsoft Digital Advertising Solutions

Microsoft Digital Advertising Solutions is a robust set of global advertising products and services designed to effectively connect advertisers with their target audiences across multiple digital touch points. Advertisers can actively engage with their consumers through a suite of high-impact advertising products and platforms, reaching a global audience of more than 465 million unique users per month across the MSN network, as well as millions more through Windows Live, Xbox, Microsoft Office and Live Search. Advertisers can feel confident they will achieve measurable results through groundbreaking research, advertising innovation, strategic planning and excellence in execution. More information about Microsoft Digital Advertising Solutions is available at <http://advertising.microsoft.com/>

About Yahoo!

Yahoo! Inc. (NASDAQ: YHOO " News) is a leading provider of comprehensive online products and services to consumers and businesses worldwide. Yahoo! is the No. 1 internet brand globally and the most trafficked internet destination worldwide. Headquartered in Sunnyvale, California, USA, Yahoo!'s global network includes 25 world properties and is available in 13 languages.

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