



NEWS

SOCIAL MEDIA'S INFLUENCE ON TV VIEWING CURRENTLY IS SMALL— BUT RESEARCH SUGGESTS GROWTH POTENTIAL

Findings of Study, from Council for Research Excellence, to be Presented at Advertising Research Foundation Conference

New York, NY, June 10, 2013 – Consumers' interaction with social media in relation to their television viewing is relatively modest compared to other forms of communication and lags behind other online media, TV promotions and, especially, offline communication, according to a new study. Only 12% of respondents use social media one or more times per day concerning TV.

However, the number jumps to 37% using social media one or more times per week – suggesting growth potential for social media as an influence on TV viewing. Half of these respondents report viewing TV concurrently with using social media.

The research also identified several groups who are highly connected to social media and television, and who represent an important opportunity for marketers.

These are among numerous findings from an extensive, multi-pronged study, entitled “Talking Social TV,” to help determine how social media interaction impacts television viewing.

The research was spearheaded by the Social Media Committee of the **Council for Research Excellence (CRE)**, and included a quantitative study by the Keller Fay Group, an ethnographic study by Nielsen Life360, and social media analyses by NM Incite and Bluefin Labs. An academic team including Peter Fader of The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, Mitch Lovett of the Simon School of Business at the University of Rochester, and Renana Peres of The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, was engaged to undertake statistical modeling.

A formal presentation of the findings, by a group led by Beth Rockwood, senior vice president, market resources of Discovery Communications, who chairs the CRE's Social Media Committee, is scheduled for the [Advertising Research Foundation's \(ARF\) Audience Measurement 8.0 conference](#), June 10-11, 2013. A subsequent event will be held on June 25 offering a fuller presentation of findings, featuring some insights uncovered by advanced analytics performed by the academic team.

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Among the study's many findings:

- In terms of social-media influence, only 1.5% of study respondents report being drawn to *existing* TV shows by social media – but that number increases to 6% when asked about *new* shows;
- Social media use varies by genre; Sci-Fi, Sports and Talk/News show strong interaction overall, both while people are watching and while they are not watching. Reality programming's interaction is much stronger while people are watching, less so before or after the program. Comedy follows an opposite pattern, with less interaction during the program and more interaction in reaction to the program;
- "Super Connectors," defined as those most actively involved in social media usage related to TV viewing, are 12% of the public, and tend to be younger and are more likely female. Other groups also are active, although Super Connectors are not well represented among adults over 45 years of age;
- Super Connectors are far more likely to be involved with all means of communication about television (online, marketing and word of mouth). They were two-to-three times as likely to interact with social media related to television as the general population;
- Hispanics are more involved with social media than the general population, especially while watching television. However, they did not approach the level of interaction of the Super Connectors. While watching, Hispanics are 50% more likely to interact with social media related to television, and to interact with most television genres, led by sports programming;
- Mobile device ownership (smartphones and tablets) increases social media interaction; in on-demand and online watching occasions, social media played a role twice as often;
- People use social media to discuss TV shows even when others are watching with them;

"There has been a lot of buzz about the relationship between social-media usage and TV consumption, but until now there has not been a lot of thorough analysis," Rockwood said. "As was our objective, this study has helped us gain insights about the increased role of social media in television viewing and the impact that has on consumer behaviors. It also has given us a better understanding of how measurement of consumer behaviors can be improved, as well as the characteristics of the 'Super Connectors,' the most active and influential users of social media."

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The research comprised four component studies, employing a mix of methodologies in order to provide a complete picture of social media behavior related to TV viewing.

A quantitative study was conducted, by the Keller Fay Group, among a sample of more than 1,700 adults, ages 18 to 54. Respondents were asked to participate in a two-phase research exercise, first completing an online profiling survey and then a seven-day diary via use of a mobile-app from Nielsen Life360. They used the diary to “check in” and report on content, motivation and engagement levels, every time they came across a touchpoint relating to primetime television or late local news – while they were watching as well as when they were not watching. More than 25,000 “check-ins” were recorded by the respondents over this seven-day period.

Ethnographies were then conducted by Nielsen Life360 among a sub-segment of 200 heavy social-media users who charted their “Day in the Life” interactions via mobile app for an extra seven days, recording social media activity simultaneous with other media activity. To complete the ethnography, a group of 40 respondents from the primary quantitative phase charted all their social media and TV behavior for seven days using video cameras.

The social media analytics phase, under NM Incite, combined listening, analytics and insights to determine volume, trends and topics of conversation relating to nine different genres of TV programming.

The academic team has just concluded statistical modeling to determine the relative impact of social media on program viewing. The team integrated complex, extensive data sets and employed a choice modeling approach to develop additional learning.

The presentation on the “Talking Social TV” study findings can be [found on the Social Media Committee page](#) of the CRE website, under “New Research.”

About the **Council for Research Excellence**

The **Council for Research Excellence** (CRE) is an independent research group created (in 2005) and funded by Nielsen. The CRE is dedicated to advancing the knowledge and practice of audience measurement methodology and comprises senior-level industry researchers representing advertisers, agencies, broadcast networks, cable, syndicators, local stations, and industry associations.

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CRE members represent advertising agencies and media-buying firms including GroupM, Horizon Media, Media Storm, Omnicom, Starcom MediaVest and TargetCast tcm; media companies including ABC, AMC Networks, CBS, Comcast, Cox, Discovery, Disney, Google, Hulu LLC, LIN Media, NBC Universal, News Corporation, Raycom Media, Scripps Networks Interactive, Time Warner, Univision and Viacom; industry organizations including the Media Rating Council, the National Association of Broadcasters, the Syndicated Network Television Association and the Television Bureau of Advertising; the investment bank Nomura Securities; and Nielsen.

For more information about the Council for Research Excellence, please visit:
<http://www.researchexcellence.com/>

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