

This Just In... reports are a quick summary of new health marketing and communication research and trends. These brief “nuggets” spotlight new findings with communication practice implications for CDC and its public health partners.

Brought to you by the Marketing and Communication Strategy Branch in the Division of Health Communication and Marketing, National Center for Health Marketing, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

New survey on news consumption finds key news audiences now blend online and traditional sources

Research objective: This study examined from what sources audiences get their news and if we can segment the audience depending on their preferred source for news.

Methods: Telephone interviews were conducted under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International among a nationwide sample of 3,615 adults, 18 years of age or older (2,802 respondents by landline and 813 respondents by cell phone). Both samples were provided by Survey Sampling International.

Findings: The findings reveal four distinct segments in today’s news audience: (1) Integrators; (2) Net-Newsters; (3) Traditionalists; and (4) Disengaged.

Integrators--Comprise 23% of the public and are well-educated and affluent with a median age of 44. They get the news from both traditional sources and the Internet but television is their main news source and many get news online on a typical day. They spend the most time with the news on a typical day as opposed to other types of programming. Integrators show greater interest in political news and sports than other audience segments. They share some characteristics with Net-Newsters.

Net-Newsters--Comprise 13% of the public with a median age of 35. This segment is affluent, even better educated than the Integrators (more than eight in ten have attended college), and 58% are men. They more regularly read political blogs than watch network news and web news use soars during the day. Net-Newsters are frequent online news viewers and heavy into tech usage, with a strong interest in tech news.

Traditionalists--The largest news segment comprising 46% of the public, this group is the oldest with a median age of 52, and is less educated and less affluent. They are heavily reliant on television news (morning, daytime, evening, and at night). Most have a computer but few get news online on a typical day. They understand news better by seeing pictures rather than reading or hearing, and have a strong interest in the weather but relatively little interest in science and tech news.

Disengaged--Comprise 14% of the public and are the least affluent (35% say their annual income is less than \$30,000) and least educated (69% have not attended college). More than six-in-ten are women (61%). This segment exhibits extremely low interest in and knowledge of current events: Just 55% of this group gets any news on a typical day.

Practice implications for health marketers and communication professionals

This research illustrates that far more people have access to high-speed Internet connections in their homes today than had a home computer a decade ago. This is just one of the ways that new and evolving technologies are changing the way people get the news. With this in mind, marketers should consider focusing group specific health messages using different media channels. For example, develop a series of visual health messages broadcast on television news targeting Traditionalists. Consider more in-depth health-related messages using traditional and online sources targeting Integrators and Net-Newsters. Finally, mail health related messages to those who are Disengaged.

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