

Roy Morgan: TV's not dead, Nielsen's wrong

Roy Morgan has launched a spirited attack on Nielsen Online's latest Internet & Technology report, claiming its figures for TV usage are wrong and an "inexcusable error".

Nielsen Online's recently released report claims time spent online has overtaken TV viewing for the first time, with the average Australian spending 13.7 hours online versus 13.3 hours in front of the TV.

But Roy Morgan said Nielsen's figures were taken from an unrepresentative sample and were misleading.

"The Internet is being used more often and by more people," said William Burlace, research director of media services at Roy Morgan. "However, to say the Internet is the number one media for Australians . . . is just wrong."

According to Roy Morgan's Single Source survey, Australians spend 21.8 hours watching commercial TV, while only 9.4 hours on the Internet. "It is clear that the Internet is becoming more and more a part of Australians' lives, but TV is not a dead medium," said Burlace.

"When advertisers make their media investment decision, it is imperative they have reliable and robust data that accurately reflect media consumption usage of their target consumers. Roy Morgan Single Source is the only data that allows this analysis in Australia." The Single Source survey covers 21,846 people aged over 14.

Only "heavy" internet users (8+ times per week) aged 14 to 24 (7.8% of all Australians), spend more time online (22.5 hours) than they do watching commercial TV (15.7 hours), according to Roy Morgan's figures.

Tony Marlow, associate research director at Nielsen Online stood by the report's numbers and said Nielsen Online goes to great lengths to ensure not only the representativeness but also the reliability of its research information.

"The key objective of the Internet & Technology Report is to provide a reliable comparison of Australians' attitudes and behaviours surrounding various media and this report is highly effective in this regard," said Marlow.

"It is in this vein that it is crucial for content publishers across all media as well as their advertisers to understand that the internet is playing an increasingly large role in the lives of the vast majority of Australians and the media time metrics we provide use a consistent comparison across the media measured and we stand by that information," said Marlow.

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