

TV, not internet, is most consumed media

Research giant Roy Morgan has criticised Nielsen Online for its “skewed” research methodologies, releasing a study which concludes that television, not the internet, is the most consumed medium.

Roy Morgan’s survey of almost 21,000 Australians from January to December last year revealed that an average of 21.5 hours are spent watching television each week, more than double the time spent on the internet (10.7 hours). Radio consumption also topped internet use with an average of 14.2 hours spent listening each week.

These results are at odds with Nielsen Online’s Internet and Technology report earlier this week which concluded that weekly internet consumption was significantly higher than other media including radio and newspapers. The study of 2000 consumers, who were majority internet users, revealed the internet secured 16.1 hours of consumers’ time in 2008, up from 13.7 hours in the previous year. Meanwhile TV consumption nose dived to 12.9 hours per week compared to 13.3 hours in 2007.

William Burlace, research director media services at Roy Morgan Research, said Nielsen Online’s use of an online panel with majority internet users made the results misleading. “As Nielsen use an online panel, their results are obviously skewed because their sample will be over represented with heavy internet users,” he said. “With 68.6% of households having internet access, we see growing uptake but there remain many for whom it is not yet an important option. It is surprising how easy it is to fall into the self-projection trap of thinking that everyone is just like us.”

The breakdown of Roy Morgan’s survey, which involved participants 14 years and over from both regional and metropolitan areas, into age brackets and different demographic groups including “heavy internet users” revealed in-depth insight into consumption habits.

Only those in the 14 to 24 year old category who were “heavy” internet users (more than 8 hours per week) were more likely to spend more time online than watching television. Those under 35 were more likely to spend most of their time watching television and then the internet, with the over 35’s turning to radio after television.

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