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MARKETING DAILY TOP STORY

New Chinese Canadians prefer Internet to TV: Diversity Study

Daily Internet use among recent Chinese immigrants exceeds that of TV and radio combined, according to new data from **Solutions Research Group's** ongoing Diversity Study.

The study found that 89% of recent Mandarin-speaking immigrants from Mainland China use the Internet weekly, spending an average of 2.6 hours each day online—more than TV (1.6 hours a day) and radio (less than one hour a day) combined.

The findings are based on 1,609 telephone interviews with people of Chinese and South Asian heritage, including new immigrants, those who have lived in Canada for several years, and those who are Canadian-born.

The Internet provides a means of communicating with friends and family in their homeland, as well as accessing news and entertainment from their native country. Google is the top search destination among Chinese Canadians, while Yahoo tops MSN when it comes to instant messaging. YouTube and Facebook are also among their top 10 online destinations.

Household computer penetration among Canadians of South Asian and Chinese descent is 88%, compared with 83% for the general population.

"We knew the importance of the Internet, but we didn't quite realize the depth of use—in particular in the more recent Chinese immigrant group, where it's 2 to 1 against other media," said Solutions Research Group president **Kaan Yigit**. "There's a real big difference between immigrants of the '70s and '80s versus immigrants of the past 10 years, in terms of how sophisticated they are and how much technology they use in their day-to-day lives."

The findings underscore the importance of a diverse marketing approach, said Yigit. "A multi-media approach to marketing, which is covering not just radio and television but also Internet, [is important]. Especially if you're interested in younger life-stage new immigrants who have a lot of major decisions to make over the next 10 to 20 years—buying a house, new cars, putting children through school. That's a lot of marketing decisions over a lifetime."

Among traditional media sources, Fairchild Radio was the top station in Toronto and Vancouver among Cantonese speakers, while the English-language news stations 680 News in Toronto and News 1130 in Vancouver were most popular among Mandarin-speaking Chinese. In Toronto, Fairchild TV was the top TV channel among Cantonese speakers, while Citytv, Fairchild, CBC and the OMNI stations were the most popular among Mandarin speakers.

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The study also found that 89% of South Asian Canadians age 15-29 are weekly Internet users, while 71% of people age 30-49 use the net on a weekly basis. Google, Yahoo, Hotmail, MSN, Facebook and YouTube were the top online destinations, as were South Asian and BBC sites.

In Vancouver, the new Red-FM was the leading radio destination for South Asians, with a 43% reach, while *Alpha Punjabi* was the leading TV brand and *The Province* the leading newspaper. In Toronto, South Asians favour 680 News, Citytv and ATN and the *Toronto Star*.

The study also found that both groups appreciate advertising delivered in their native tongue, with 80% of Chinese Canadians and 78% of South Asian Canadians saying they find advertising in their first language “useful,” and more than 50% saying it’s “very useful.”

“There’s a certain emotional connection a person makes when somebody speaks their own language,” said Yigit. “It speaks to the issue of showing respect or feeling like you’re being acknowledged.”

–Chris Powell

