

## **Do Consumers Trust You? How News Habits Are Changing As Media Evolves**

With more choice, power and information at their fingertips than ever before, today's consumers are making quicker, more connected decisions about everything from how to spend their money to which media they consume.

This has placed an onus on brands to use technology to not only make things faster, easier and more productive, but to ensure audiences feel part of something meaningful. It is vital for brands today to make experiences personal to audiences and to deliver them at the moments when they are going to resonate the most.

When and where content will be the most receptive to viewers is continually changing, as evidenced by a dramatic shift in the last five years of where consumers are spending their time. People spend on average over 11 hours a day consuming media in some form across platforms, marking a 10% increase in consumption compared to 2012 data.

TV continues to remain an important part of this mix, but unsurprisingly we are seeing a shift in people spending more time online, especially in non-English speaking countries. Time spent on mobiles is now at over three hours 15 minutes per day on average according to the Global Web Index Q1 2019. In a tech-savvy region such as the Middle East, which also has a disproportionately younger population and higher smartphone penetration, the drivers for consuming content on mobile are even more pronounced.

These changes in consumer behavior are affecting where and how often people find their news, with smartphones becoming the primary device and start point for news consumption. 67% of audiences generally use websites and apps for their news consumption, with social (58%) and search (42%). National TV (61%) and dedicated TV news channels (55%) still playing a critical role in following the story according to a bespoke study for CNN conducted earlier this year.

All this insight speaks to the rapid change of the news cycle, but also the need for brands and publishers to focus on providing audiences with content that matters to them.

Driven by concerns of misinformation, in 2019 people (especially younger audiences) are using Facebook less for their news. According to the Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2019, 68% of international news audiences have used Facebook for news, less than a quarter of the audience trusts news from the platform. There can be an exception here though when news is clearly provided on social media by a trusted news brand that the audience is already familiar with.

Audiences today have higher expectations and lower attention spans when it comes to content. Moreover, in the "Amazon era" of easy access and fast delivery, audiences demand that media and news brands meet their expectations for what they want, when they want it and where they need it. This is driven by three points:

1. **Build credibility and favorability through accuracy and trust**—Being responsible not just with audience’s data but in the caliber of the content delivered to them.
2. **Have a deep and enriched knowledge of audiences**—Understanding and treating them as people with real life interests and behaviors, not proxies defined by general demographics.
3. **Provide audiences with relevant and meaningful content**—Identifying the key moments when content is going to resonate the most.

Every news organization must embrace these points because trust translates into loyalty, and vice versa. This is a theme that permeated throughout the recent Reuters Institute Digital News Report, which found that consumers are relying more on “reputable brands” as trust in news more generally continues to fall with rising concerns of negativity, fake news and overload of information. In the global study, nearly a quarter of people (24%) said that they would stop using sources that had a “less accurate reputation”.

Linked directly to this need for trust is an appetite for enterprising and informed journalism. Audiences place most value on journalists who display a depth of knowledge and passion, an ability and drive for the truth and a willingness to go to wherever the heart of the story is to report the facts first-hand.

Advertisers and audiences have just as much to gain from creating deeper experiences. Consumers expect a two-way relationship with brands and furthermore expect experiences to be consistent across all touchpoints of their journey.

Listening to consumers, understanding their behavior, interacting with them and responding to their wants and needs (all in a data responsible and safe environment of course) is the only way this is achieved.

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<https://forbesmiddleeast.com/do-consumers-trust-you-how-news-habits-are-changing-as-media-evolves>