

Students are media multi-taskers

The future of marketing lies in future generations

By Maria Petousis, Ask Afrika's Director of TGi

Music is central to students' lives and as is DStv, but if they are going to watch movies, they prefer to do so at the cinema. They embrace new technology and enjoy watching entertaining television commercials as much as the programmes. Students are media multi-taskers and confident daily internet users. They often access the internet on their phones and social media plays an important role in their lives. The internet is their first port of call when looking for information and they are likely to shop online.

Ask Afrika, that conducts the internationally-acclaimed *Target Group Index (TGi)* data in South Africa, reveals this enlightening research about the 18 to 25 year olds. According to this research, this age group spend on average R1 183 on clothing every three months and around R475 on a pair of jeans. They also spend around R 141 per week on take away foods. Their monthly expenditure on cell phones averages R187, while the average value of a pre-paid voucher amounts to R41, generally they recharge four times a month.

It should be noted that the analysis includes individuals aged 18-25 who are currently studying either full time or part time. They are significantly more likely to fall into LSM 7 – 10 although 86.9% are not working due to studying full time and the majority have no personal income. They are 67.4% are dependent and still living with their parents and on average they have a monthly household income of R10 891.

The youth are important influencers on both peers and parents. Brands that are able to foster an engagement with students (or those in this market, are likely to establish long-term relationships with this group as they grows older. The key lies in starting a conversation and finding useful ways of interacting with or appealing to young people.

Choice and variety are important for them as they like the idea of having a large selection of TV channels to choose from. They cannot live without DStv (20.87%) and embrace newer technologies such as video-on-demand and digital television. They enjoy watching sports programmes such as Soccer and WWE wrestling entertainment. Advertising needs to be interesting for this audience. While they find television adverts as enjoyable as the actual programmes, the advertising has to be entertaining so as not to annoy them.

Music forms a big part of students' lives and they love listening to hip hop (27.86%), kwaito (24%), rap (17%) and pop music (16%). They are mostly medium users of radio (33.1%) and are likely to listen to radio for



between half-an-hour to an hour during weekdays. Their favourite stations are Gagasi FM (30.42%) and YFM (21.09%). However, students are also listening to 5FM and Metro FM regularly.

Students are avid internet users, being great at media multi-tasking and confident internet users. Sixty percent of this age group have accessed the internet in the last 12 months and are most likely to do so every day. Internet access via mobile devices play a big role in how the youth market uses the internet, with as many as 65% using their cell phones to visit the internet. More than half (52%) of them have used applications on their phones in the last month, while 50% have used MXIT on their phones. This group mostly makes their decision on which phone to choose depending on advertising and they are more likely than most to own a Blackberry.

The internet is an important source of information for them and is usually the first place they look when they need information. This indicates that although they are light users of print, they make up for it on digital platforms to obtain information and news. They also use the internet for educational purposes, online purchases, downloading computer software and games as well as music.

Online advertising gives them access to information about brands and is their guide in planning their purchases. This market is open to online shopping as they believe the internet creates a more convenient shopping experience and provides more choice and variety of things to buy. They are also confident in the safety of online shopping and banking.

The internet plays a big role in their social lives. Socialising and maintaining friendships are of great importance to them and they mostly facilitate this through Facebook and Twitter. They use social media to give or get the opinions of 'friends', and believe that social networking sites are good for personal relationships, for socialising, to help rekindle old friendships and to keep in touch with family.

Students enjoy the cinema, 37.4% have watched a movie on the big screen in the last year and they are significantly more likely to be heavy or medium users of cinema. They watch movies at cinemas as they enjoy the whole cinema experience. They are sold on the whole experience, which includes snacking on popcorn and drinking Coke. It is also clear that price is an important influencer on their decision. They are significantly more likely to belong to Ster Kinekor's movie club and feel that the benefit of this offerings is good value for money. They are also more likely to travel further to a cinema that is more cost effective and are happy to wait to watch a movie in its second week if tickets are cheaper. They also find enjoy advertising on the big screen.

Print media is the least consumed media platform by students who are mostly light users of magazines (37.2%) and newspapers (25.1%). This market is mostly interested in reading about entertainment (33%), music (32%) and celebrities (32%). The vernacular newspaper title *Isolezwe* is the most read among students, 67% are most likely to read it once or twice a week. Students enjoy the lifestyle sections in the newspapers, believing this to make newspapers more interesting. They read the Motoring section and Classifieds supplements. They prefer entertainment to heavy news in newspapers. Magazines play a friendship and guidance role for them which they enjoy for the advice and tips on health, beauty, fashion and relationships.

Brand owners and advertisers would be prudent to understand that the youth are an integral market. It is essential to start communication with this group through appropriate brand positioning within our ever-

changing media landscape. Understanding the media consumption habits of 18 to 25 year old students is vital to a brand targeting to create loyalty that could last a lifetime.

TGI research, for which Ask Afrika own the South African copyright, uses a single source sample of 15 000 (fifteen thousand), it has a global geographic coverage of 67 markets and measures services and products, media and brands. Ask Afrika's knowledge of brands is extensive and, as owners of the local TGI license, they are leaders in brand expertise in South Africa. TGI can provide a commercial alternative to industry media measurements and is the perfect vehicle for brand positioning. The TGI Icon Brand Awards have been published consecutively for 5 years and are setting a new benchmark in innovative brand thinking and assessment.

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About Ask Afrika:

Over a period of almost two decades, Ask Afrika has grown to be the largest independent South African market research company. The company focuses on local relevance, benchmarked against the global context. Apart from its large South African footprint, Ask Africa also operates in a dozen African continental territories. Their exclusive product suite includes the Orange Index, Trust Barometer, Radio Moods, TGI Icon Brands and TGI (the Target Group Index).

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Issued on behalf of Ask Afrika by Stone Soup Public Relations

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