

‘User Behaviours and Intentions in Digital Media in Australia’

Paper for the Communications Policy & Research Forum
19 + 20 November 2009, University of Technology, Sydney

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Abstract

This paper reports findings from a study of user behaviours and intentions towards online news and information in Australia, undertaken by the Queensland University of Technology Creative Industries Faculty and the Smart Services Cooperative Research Centre. It has used a literature review, online survey, focus groups and interviews to explore attitudes and behaviours towards online news and information.

The literature review on consumer user of online media highlighted emerging technical opportunities, and flagged existing barriers to access experienced by consumers in the Australian digital media sector. The literature review highlighted multiple disconnects between consumer interests in online news and their ability to fulfil them. This presents an opportunity for news entities to appraise and resolve. Doing so may enhance their service offering, attract consumers and improve loyalty. These themes were further explored by the survey.

The survey results revealed three typologies of user, described as 'convenience', 'loyal' and 'customising'. Convenience users tend to access news by default, for example when they log out of email. Loyal users seek out a trusted brand such as mainstream news mastheads. Customising users tend to tailor news to their preferences, and be the first to use leading edge media. Respondents to the survey were then invited to participate in focus groups, which aimed to test the survey results.

Consumer perceptions and attitudes are important factors in progression towards an information economy, because ultimately consumers are customers. By segmenting the online news market according to customer typology, media providers may identify new opportunities to attract and retain customers.