

Is TV on the decrease?

Current findings on children's TV consumption

Today's children are media multi-taskers, and expect to interact with their favourite content and characters across a variety of platforms. Yet, new results of a Eurodata TV Worldwide survey show that these media savvy youngsters are far from abandoning the TV in favour of new technology.

More time for TV

The daily viewing time results of the first half-year of 2010 confirm: time spent by kids watching TV has increased across all the territories studied in comparison with 2009 and in several countries the growth is striking.

In Spain, for example, children spent a whole 9 minutes more a day in front of their TVs in the first half-year of 2010. This increase may have been driven partly by extra viewing during the FIFA World Cup, in the year the football mad Spanish became World Champions (cf. ill. 1).

The situation was similar in Italy, where children spent even more time watching their heroes in 2010, with an extra 8 minutes a day bringing their total daily viewing time to 2 hours and 44 minutes in the first half-year of 2010.

In France, the figure rose more steadily, with an additional minute a day in the first 6 months of 2010, taking the average daily viewing time of children to 2 hours and 11 minutes.



Ill. 1: Children's daily viewing time between January and June 2010 in comparison to 2009

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Choice, control, and content

These increases seem to be driven by a twofold influence: an increased channel offer, meaning that children have far more options when it comes to live television, combined with the ability to access their favourite shows whenever they want via catch up. The increasing dominance of the dedicated channels over traditional children's blocks on the generalist channels is more than ever in evidence, with public and private broadcasters alike focussing their attention on their dedicated children's programming platforms.

Meanwhile, children are also consuming content in other ways, extending their viewing experience online with catch up TV, games, and other web offers (see also Childs and Bult in this issue). The UK, an early adopter of time shifted television, has shown the way forward in this area with its dedicated CBBC and CBeebies catch up platforms, while Clan TVE in Spain also offers a wide choice of videos on its site. In addition to these catch up offers, transmedia content, when handled creatively, can create genuine cross pollination between TV and web, with a healthy online brand presence feeding back into TV viewing figures. ■

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