



THE USAGE OF THE INTERNET AMONG MEN AND WOMEN IN SERBIA

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Abstract:

According to the official statistics from Serbian Bureau of Statistics, more than one half of the population have the Internet and more than one half of the population have used the Internet in the last three months. When it comes to more specific statistics, 48.64% of those users are male, and 51.31% are female. Therefore, we must not neglect the fact that there are gender differences in wishes, needs and activities, as well as the differences which might be noticed in the Internet usage. This paper represents the difference between men and women regarding the Internet usage, the purpose of the Internet usage (news, sport, entertainment, social networks, online shopping), as well as the difference in time management online. The aim of the paper is to create more effective marketing campaigns and offer better products and services according to the needs of both men and women which have to be perceived separately and understood thoroughly.

Key words:

consumer behavior,
men,
women,
viral marketing.

INTRODUCTION

There has been a significant difference between men and women in the past regarding their shopping habits. Traditionally, women were more decisive about food products, clothes and household products [1]. However, there is an increasing number of employed women nowadays and their influence has significantly increased when it comes to shopping which was traditionally performed by men. Furthermore, the research has shown that women buy even more high tech products when compared to men [1]. Today, women spend around 5 trillion dollars per year, which is half of GDP. In other words, they affect the purchase of around 80 % of household products [2].

Berthon and authors regard the Internet as the phenomenon of the late XX century; in the beginning, the Internet was used as an advertising medium, and the common theoretical models of consumer behavior were applied in purchasing process, both in the final and in the industrial aspect. After that, the model of efficient communication was created, which represented a type of power, as consumers became the interactive users of the Internet, instead of being just passive browsers [3]. Therefore, the Internet has become the most growing medium for advertising in the first part of 21st century. Interac-

tive Advertising Bureau has stated that the revenues from advertising in the USA soared from 10,8 billion dollars in 1998 to 20 billion dollars in 2007[4].

According to Internet Advertising Revenue Report, in the first half of 2013, online advertising revenue totaled \$20.1 billion, an 18-percent increase from the same period in the previous year [5].

According to the research, 45 % of the Internet users in Serbia have stated that they find the information they need about certain products they want to buy online[6].

Mobile phone is a relatively new medium for the communication between companies and users, or potential users. Namely, the original purpose of mobile telecommunication was to transfer voice messages. However, due to the development of information and communication technology, and primarily due to the development of the Internet, mobile telecommunication system provided its users with various services.

We can state that the appearance of iPhone has contributed a lot to the development of mobile advertising [7]. The iPhone's multifunctional display which is touch sensitive has changed the perception about mobile phones. Apart from transferring voice, these phones can also be used for text and multimedia content transfer. According to the Internet Advertising Revenue Report, mobile



ad revenue reached \$3 billion in the first six months of 2013, a whopping 145 percent increase from the previous year[8].

The hypotheses which are the basis of the research are:

1. There is a difference in the time frame of the Internet usage between men and women
2. When compared to men, women spend more time on social networks.
3. When compared to men, women use e-mail more often.
4. The usual way of purchasing goods and products for both genders is cash on delivery.

METHODOLOGY

Non - standardized questionnaire has been created for this research. There are nine questions in the questionnaire, five of which had multiple choice answers. There search was conducted in the period from 15th February 2014 till 15th March 2014. The interviewees are aged from 19 to 22. The data received from the research have been statistically analyzed in SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). The research has 94 interviewees- 34 males and 60 females.

RESEARCH RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Based on the question ‘How much time per day do you spend on the Internet?’, the results show that men generally spend around 107 minutes more on the Internet when compared to women. On average, both men and women spend 4 hours and 6 minutes per day online.

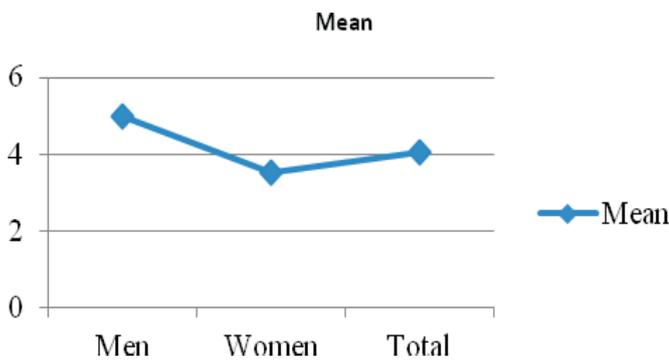


CHART 1-TIME SPENT ON THE INTERNET

The aim of the research is to discover why users use the Internet. The offered answers in the questionnaire were: because of social networks, reading the news (current affairs), shopping, sport news, fashion, fashion blogs, health, politics, finance, maps and directions, astrology, religion, e-mail, watching videos, listening to the music. The interviewees had the possibility to circle more than one answer. Differences have been noticed in the following categories: social networks, sport news, fashion, health, politics, astrology, e-mail and watching video content. Female interviewees spend more time on social networks, fashion blogs, health issues, reading astrology and writing e-mails. Male interviewees spend more time watching

video contents, as well as reading the contents regarding political and sport events. What is interesting is that not even one female interviewee use sthe Internet for religious purposes, while 2% of male interviewees do.

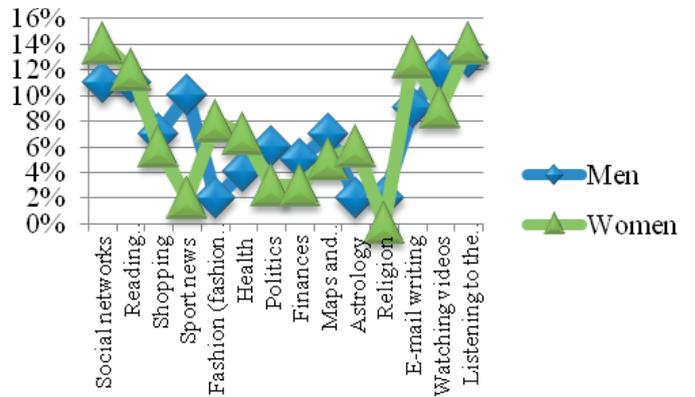


CHART 2-THE PURPOSE OF THE INTERNET USAGE

What we can also notice is that a number of research have shown that women use social networks more than men. Precisely, according to one research, 71% of females and 62% of males use social networks. Furthermore, according to the research conducted by Nielsen, women talk more and send messages more than men every month. The difference in percentage is 28% for females and 14% for males[10] .

The aim of the further research was to state how much time the interviewees spend on specific websites. Statistically significant differences, which are in compliance with the previous question, have been noticed only in Instagram usage and the usage of Sportal.rs. In other words, women use Instagram more, while men use Sportal.rs. Women spend most of their time on the following websites: Facebook, Google and YouTube, while men use these websites in the following order: YouTube, Facebook and Google. These results are presented in chart 3.

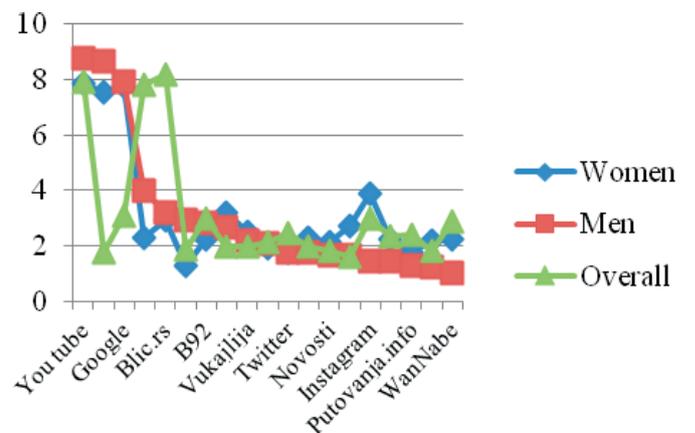


CHART 3-TIME SPENT ON SPECIFIC WEBSITES

In their next question, the authors’ aim was to discover whether there is a difference in the means for using the Internet. The results have shown that men use personal computer more often, while women most often use the Internet from their laptops and mobile phones. Women and men both use tablets as a means to use the Internet.

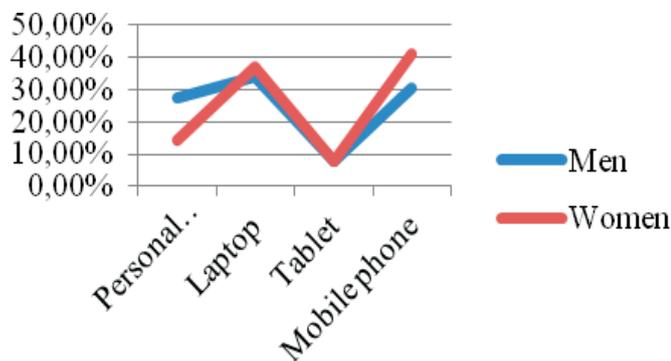


CHART 4 - TECHNOLOGY USAGE

The aim of the research is also to state whether and how much the interviewees use other media channels while being online. The research has shown that all interviewees watch TV online, listen to the radio and read papers. However, there are differences in the usage of other media: men watch TV more, while women listen to the radio and read papers more often than men do.

One of the opportunities that the Internet offers is online shopping. According to the report from Serbian Bureau of Statistics, the Internet is not used for that purpose in great amounts in Serbia: in 2012, even 73.3% of examinees have never done shopping online [12]. However, in the period from 2008 till 2012, it has been noticed that the number of Internet users for purchasing purposes is constantly increasing. When it comes to online shopping in Serbia, it is more interesting to find out how the users perform this shopping. [12]

Based on the conducted research, it has been concluded that 62.22% of interviewees do online shopping. The most usual way of purchasing online is paying cash on delivery. Namely, 60% of women and 50% of men pay in this way. The other way of purchasing goods is by credit cards- 30% women and 35% men. What is interesting is that female interviewees never pay by their mobile phones.

CONCLUSION

According to the research, we can conclude that there are significant statistic differences in time management online and in the Internet usage between men and women. In other words, there is a difference in the usage of the two websites: Sportal.rs and Instagram. From marketing perspective, it is crucial to know that women spend more time on social networks and communicate online more than men. This is especially important for companies which use Word of Mouth advertising, which implies transfer of experience about certain products both orally and online.

Moreover, the conducted research has shown that e-shopping is still not present enough when compared to other EU countries, as well as that the usual way of payment is by cash on delivery and not credit card, which is the usual way of payment in EU countries. One of the reasons for this might be the lack of trust in online banking.

As the research has shown, even though there are similarities, there are also significant differences in the Internet usage between men and women. These differences include: time spent online, time spent on social networks and e-mail usage.

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