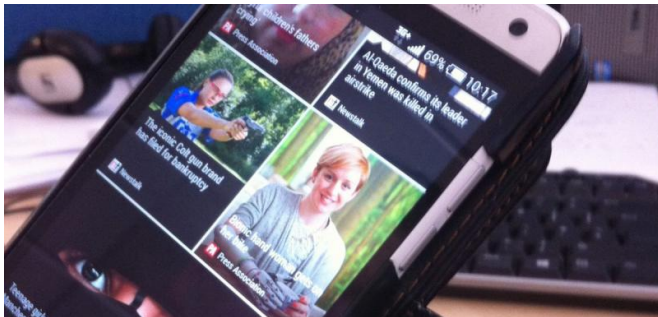


Mobile users 'resist use of ads' in news

16 June 2015



As the smartphone becomes the defining device for online news, publishers will increasingly struggle to make money, according to the latest Digital News Report from the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism (RISJ).

The report finds that many news brands are struggling to cut through on mobile with access to content increasingly mediated by third-parties such as Facebook, Apple and Google. These problems are compounded by the difficulty of selling effective advertising space on small screens, and the increasing use of ad-blocker technology. More widely, news providers have seen little increase in the number of people who are willing to pay for their journalism while there is evidence of audience resistance to so-called sponsored content – seen as a possible cure to the ailing ad business in digital news.

Director of Research at the RISJ, Dr Rasmus Kleis Nielsen, said: 'Our research documents that most people like news and use news, but they don't want to pay for it, don't want to see advertising around it, and don't want to see it mixed up with sponsored content. This means sustainable business models remain elusive even for those who succeed in building an audience.'

The report, based on research conducted in 12

countries, shows a quickening of the pace towards [social media](#) platforms as routes to audiences, together with a surge in the use of mobile phones for news, a decline in the desktop internet and significant growth in video news consumption online.

News accessed from smartphones has jumped significantly over the last year with average weekly usage in all countries growing from 37% to 46% (31% to 44% in the US and from 33 to 42% in the UK). This growth does not benefit all providers equally. The report suggests that smartphone news is often dominated by a few successful brands, with others struggling to reach a wider audience, both via apps and browsers.

On average, people use a small number of trusted news sources on the [mobile phone](#) – just 1.5 per person - significantly fewer than on a tablet or computer. Although 70% of smartphone users have downloaded a news app, only one third use news apps on a weekly basis, says the report.

Mobile news consumption is heavily weighted to under 45s who are also more likely to discover news through social networks and other mobile aggregators than go directly to news brands.

Lead author Nic Newman said: 'It is getting harder and harder for news brands to earn a place on the home screen. The reality is that only the most loyal users are downloading and using apps. For others social media, messaging apps, email and mobile notifications are becoming an increasingly important route to news.'

The RISJ data shows that, across all platforms, significantly fewer people are accessing the front page of a [news](#) website where a list of stories is displayed. More people are going directly to stories via search or social media.

Provided by Oxford University

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