

Consumers across Asia actively engage in social networking

The GfK Group

Over one in four from this 'Super Connected' group actively share their opinions online

December 6, 2012, SINGAPORE – New research from GfK shows that 23 percent of today's most digitally savvy people live in the Asia Pacific region. These 'Super Connected' APAC consumers are distinguished by unusually high engagement with social media – global sites such as Facebook and LinkedIn, as well as regional networks.

In its latest Roper Reports® Worldwide consumer trends study, GfK polled over 37,500 consumers aged 15+ across 25 countries, including eight from Asia Pacific – Australia, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and Thailand, where respondents were surveyed on their attitudes, behaviors and values across a range of topics.

“Super Connected consumers are not the mainly male, youthful ‘techies’ that we might have stereotyped them as in the past,” commented Ms. Jodie Roberts, APAC Regional Director for GfK Consumer Trends. “Across the region, almost one in every two is a female, although there are certainly differences when we go by individual markets. For instance, while Super Connected consumers are predominantly (59%) females in Australia, they are largely males in India (70%).”

In Asia Pacific, the largest groups of Super Connected consumers reside in South Korea (24%) and Taiwan (37%), where Internet infrastructure is well established and technology is deeply embedded in the lives of the population. Some 45 percent of these highly connected consumers in the region are over the age of 30, and over half (56%) have a university or higher level of education, while 54 percent belong to the medium-high or high income brackets. In addition, nearly half (48%) are women.

The study by GfK Consumer Trends established some common online behavioral patterns exhibited by Super Connected consumers in Asia Pacific. Over a quarter (28%) of them post reviews of products and services they have engaged, while over two in five (44%) spend time reading reviews posted by others as an integral part of their decision-making process.

Moreover Super Connected consumers are also twice as likely to use instant messaging (IM) tools compared to the general population. This is particularly so for those in Taiwan, where over three-quarters (76%) of consumers fall into this group of extremely active mobile phones users. For instance, four in five of them send and receive photos frequently and well over half download and use mobile apps. They

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are also over three times more likely to save money by using coupons, proving that they are indeed a savvy group.

“We are witnessing a new and exciting type of influential Super Connected consumer who is more technically adept than we have seen before,” said Ms. Roberts. “They fully embrace technology and use these systems to network, form and expand relationships, as well as to consult and express opinions on purchases, topical events and political viewpoints.”

“Super Connected consumers impact businesses in a range of ways, aided by the burgeoning technology industry that enables these consumers to connect faster, more frequently and more powerfully than ever before – undoubtedly, they will be a formidable spender,” said Ms. Roberts. “In order for businesses to succeed, it is imperative to recognize this super connected connectivity and most importantly understand how to engage this growing and exciting group of consumers,” she concluded.

The GfK Roper Reports® Worldwide survey will be expanded to cover Malaysia, Singapore and Vietnam as well in 2013.

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GfK is one of the world’s largest research companies, with more than 11,500 experts working to discover new insights into the way people live, think and shop, in over 100 markets, every day. GfK is constantly innovating and using the latest technologies and the most intelligent methodologies to give its clients the clearest understanding of the most important people in the world: their customers. In 2011, GfK’s sales amounted to EUR 1.37 billion.

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