Telematics and Informatics 28 (2011) 77–85

Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Telematics and Informatics

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/tele

New media adoption and usage among Flemish youngsters

Dimitri Schuurman *, Cédric Courtois, Lieven De Marez

Department of Communication Sciences, MICT-IBBT, Ghent University, Belgium

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:
Received 2 October 2010
Accepted 10 October 2010

Keywords:
New media and ICT
Adoption
Usage
Diffusion of innovations
Domestication

ABSTRACT

This article presents a study on the adoption and usage of new media among a representative sample of Flemish youngsters. Some major findings include the dominant role of computers and Internet in the media behavior of these youngsters, challenging traditional media such as TV and radio. However, the supposed popularity of mobile applications and gaming among youngsters was not universally present in our sample, which led us to look for different profiles within the data. Based on the adoption of new media technology and devices, the studied sample could be divided into four distinct profiles by means of a latent class analysis.

The first profile is the youngest and shows high adoption rates of new media devices and technology. Their usage is clearly oriented towards entertainment and includes gaming and various mobile applications. The second profile has a female and working profile with an average usage and adoption of new media. The usage is mostly professional and convenience-oriented in nature, without interest in gaming or mobile applications. The third profile is distinctively male and focuses its media usage on computer, Internet and mobile applications, but clearly show no interest in (mobile) gaming consoles. The fourth and final profile is the oldest and counts the least students. It is the least equipped in terms of new media. However, they are more likely to use their less advanced devices to their full potential. By this, this article challenges the stereotypical view of young people as 'homogenous mass' of early adopters of new media devices and technologies by showing that there are different types of media users and usage among youngsters.

© 2010 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

1. Introduction

If you take into account the dazzling speed by which new devices and applications come to the market, it seems like new media technologies are taking over the command of the old media. These innovations introduce new media practices to the user, extending the consumption of media content beyond the borders of time and space. The introduction strategies are in most cases clearly oriented towards the younger segments of the population, as they are believed to be the most open to change. This results in a stereotypical and unidimensional representation of young people as active, media-hungry multi-taskers that want their media content anytime anywhere. However, a lot of innovations are prematurely put to sleep or do not reach the expected market share. Some recent examples include the disinterest of the user in mobile services such as MMS or mobile TV, despite a strong belief of the sector in the success of them (cf. e.g. Hsu et al., 2007; Schuurman et al., 2009).

Therefore, we believe it is necessary to keep track of the actual adoption and usage of new media technologies so that a nuanced image of the media behavior of young people can be constructed. Within this article, we present an analysis of the adoption and usage of media of Flemish youngsters (aged 15–30). The data come from a subset of 354 respondents from a

* Corresponding author. Address: Department of Communication Sciences, MICT-IBBT, Ghent University, Korte Meer 7-9-11, 9000 Gent, Belgium. Tel.: +32 9 264 91 54; fax: +32 9 264 68 85.
E-mail address: Dimitri.Schuurman@UGent.be (D. Schuurman).

0736-5853/$ - see front matter © 2010 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.
doi:10.1016/j.tele.2010.10.001

representative survey on new media adoption and usage. In order to get a more nuanced view of the surveyed youngsters, a clustering based on the adoption of media devices was performed. This resulted in four distinct adoption profiles with each their specific media practices.

2. Adoption diffusion vs. use diffusion

Two major paradigms can be distinguished by which innovations tend to be studied: the diffusion of innovations (adoption diffusion) and the domestication of innovations (use diffusion). The former is the oldest and most studied of the two (Mahajan, Muller, & Wind, 2000). Numerous studies have showed that in most cases the diffusion curve is S-shaped. This is caused by a slow take-off, followed by a strong increase (at the so-called 'tipping point'), and then slowing down again once a certain level of market saturation is reached (Rogers, 2003). Initially, this perspective assumed that the diffusion of innovations in a social system always follows a bell-shaped, normal distribution where five adopter-categories can successively be distinguished with fixed segment sizes (Rogers, 2003). More recently, these assumptions have been criticized, leading to alternative views on the diffusion, such as a product or innovation specific adoption curve (cf. De Marez and Verleye, 2004). Besides some modifications to the theory itself, there was also a lot of criticism regarding the supposed technological deterministic nature and the lack of attention to the eventual usage of the innovation (Robertson, 1984). This has led to the rise of a second paradigm: domestication. This perspective is closely related to the idea of the 'social shaping of technology'. Its point of view steered away from the traditional deterministic approaches which took for granted the character and direction of technological advance and put the focus on the content of technology and to the processes involved in innovation (Bijker and Law, 1992; Williams and Edge, 1996). Contributors to the domestication-approach argue that the ICT-innovation can be shaped by social factors such as class, gender, culture or lifestyle as well (Silverstone and Haddon, 1996). This process of integration within everyday's context is also known as 'domestication' and was initially based on a social deterministic point of view (Jankowski and Van Selm, 2001).

As is the case with most scientific dichotomous disputes, both paradigms were eventually considered as complementary, with the diffusion of innovations as the more quantitative tradition with the focus on acceptance and adoption decisions, and the domestication tradition as more qualitative with a focus on the usage and appropriation of technologies (Punie, 2000). It was also argued that both processes flow into each other and that only when both are completed, an innovation can be considered as a success (Boczkowski, 2004; Green, 2002). The dialectical approach, integrating insights from both research traditions, is referred to as the mutual shaping-stance. This has for instance triggered a successful translation from insights from the domestication-framework into quantitative research into the use diffusion of ICT-innovations (Shih and Venkatesh, 2004). This research focuses on the range and intensity of applications that is used on ICT-devices.

Regarding new media and ICT-content and devices, the convergence debate has also gained a lot of attention lately. Media content used to be highly dependent on a specific technology as the broadcasting, telecommunication, publishing and information technology industries were overall characterized by their 'silo structures', referring to their rigid separation (Dwyer, 2010). Nowadays, the (new) media are characterized by the blurring of lines between media and communications, which enables services that used to be provided in different physical ways to be delivered on multiple devices. This process of convergence shatters the tight relationship between a medium and its content. Due to the far-reaching process of digitization, media content has been increasingly the subject of convergence. The same was believed to be true for technology, where it was expected that different media consumption devices would converge into a single central device. However, this idea is now referred to as the 'black box fallacy', as an opposite trend is observed. Nowadays, there is a large variety of (compatible) devices available where users can use and consume multiple media services and a broad variety of content (Dwyer, 2010; Jenkins, 2006).

3. Methodology

The data for this study are taken from IBBT's[1] Digimeter. This is a survey, representative for Flanders, which is intended as a yearly monitor for the possession and usage of media and ICT. Respondents are surveyed using the CAPI[2]-method and the quota for representativity are based on the NIS/ADSEI[3]-statistics for 2008 and include province, sex and age. Only respondents of fifteen or older were selected. A weighted total of 1212 respondents filled out the survey from November 2009 through March 2010. The survey started with a list of 35 technologies. The respondents were asked if they had these technologies available in their homes. 'Home' was defined as the place where the largest part of their time was spent. Based on the answers for the initial 35 technologies, the respondents had to answer more specific questions regarding the usage of the media and ICT they owned. To avoid confusion regarding the interpretation of the surveyed technologies, a trained interviewer was always present to answer questions and every participant also had a booklet with illustrations and a short explanation about every surveyed technology or device.

[1] Interdisciplinary Institute for Broadband Technology, an independent research institute founded by the Flemish government to stimulate ICT innovation.
[2] Computer Assisted Personal Interview.
[3] Nationaal Instituut voor de Statistiek (NIS) or Algemene Directie Statistiek en Economische Informatie (ADSEI).

Download English Version:

https://daneshyari.com/en/article/466583

Download Persian Version:

https://daneshyari.com/article/466583

Daneshyari.com