



Social games give brands opportunity to engage with consumers for longer

Basking Ridge, NJ, 29th April 2010: The rising popularity of games played on social networking sites is well documented, but findings from the Global Web Index (www.globalwebindex.net), a collaboration between online market research provider Lightspeed Research and Trendstream, reveal who is playing them, and for how long.

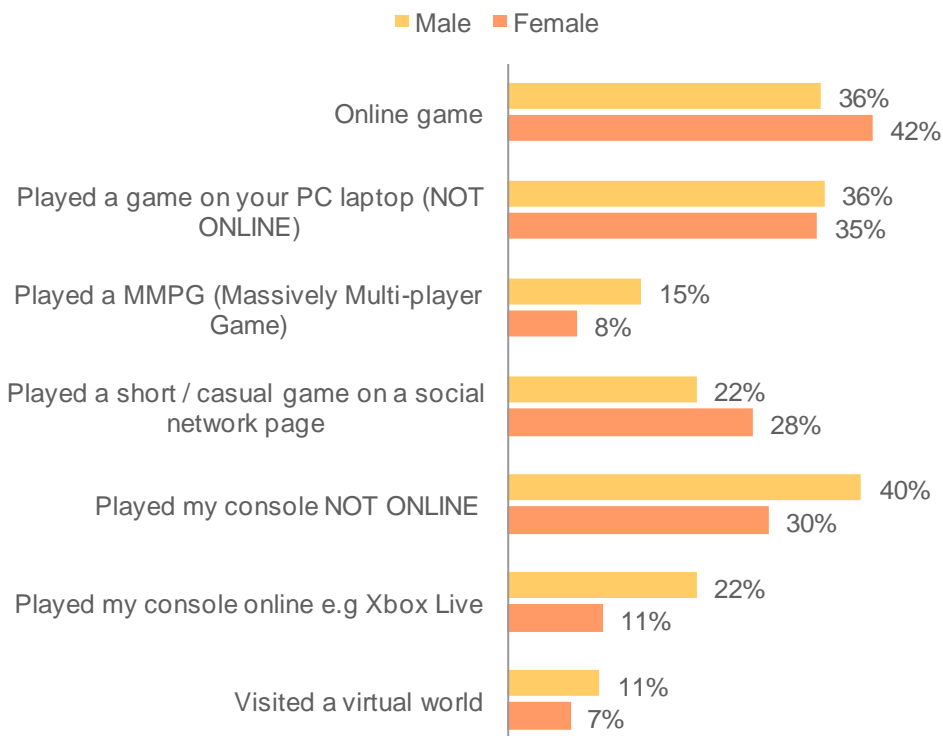
The stereotype of 'geeky' teenage boys obsessed with computer games certainly doesn't fit social gaming which appeals to large families, divorcees and women - all embracing the new 'geek chic' attitude. By engaging with a more diverse and larger audience, social gaming is not only revolutionising the gaming market, but also offering brands the opportunity to communicate their message in a fun way and keep players attention for longer than other ways of spreading their message, including traditional advertising channels.

Online games compete with more traditional PC games

One quarter of US respondents (24%) claim that playing games is a very important reason for using the internet. The US is second only to Brazil (25%) in all 16 countries studied. Online games compete head-on with PC games: 36% of respondents said they had played a PC game (not online) in the past month, but 39% had played an online game. 35% of people had played a game in a social network – a high penetration rate when we consider how new social gaming is.

Women are more likely to play social games than men (28% vs 22%). Tom Smith, Managing Director of Trendstream, says "Women are particularly attracted to short, casual games involving an active community like Farmville, Cafe Wars or Pet Society. Women also spend more time on social networks in general. Social games are accessible, free and they don't take up much time. Plus they are distributed through the network, which is a key factor driving their take up."

Gaming Demographics



Source: Global Web Index Feb 2010

If emailing and sending messages to friends remains the main activity conducted on social networks for two thirds of users, playing games is now the fifth most popular activity (47%), ranked higher than watching videos (45%). According to the Global Web Index, social networkers are also more likely to play games than to search for new contacts (44%) or send a digital gift (23%).

The new 'geek' chic

The research also reveals interesting facts about the most active social games players:

- Half of the most active users, those who spend more than four hours per day online, played social games in the last month
- Those in a relationship are more likely to play than others (53% vs 43%)
- Although those aged 55-64 are the least likely to have played, more than one third (37%) of this group said they had played a social game in the last month
- The research shows that social games are more popular in the US (47%) than they are in Europe (40%), but social games are even more popular across the border in Mexico (53%).

Tom Smith concludes "The transformation of the gaming market towards casual social concepts has already changed the way that games are created and distributed. The market is now much more open to anyone who wants to create games. This gives brands a huge

opportunity to engage with consumers through casual games much more cost effectively than through other forms of advertising.”

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About Global Web Index

Trendstream created the Global Web Index to derive insights on the global impact of web usage and social web involvement. It is a collaboration between Trendstream and panel provider Lightspeed Research. The research programme interviews 16,000 web users twice a year in 16 markets to provide a unique perspective on web behaviour and its impact on consumer behaviour, technology involvement, purchasing, content consumption, the effectiveness of marketing communications and the role for brands. It provides detailed insight into how web behaviour and the value of consumer driven communications differs by country, category and different consumer segments. www.globalwebindex.net

About Lightspeed Research

Through proprietary global panels and research products and services, Lightspeed Research delivers valuable research to help businesses make informed decisions. From recruitment, to activity level, to ongoing profiling, Lightspeed Research’s panels are actively managed to provide engaged survey respondents and support studies that range in scope and complexity across industry sectors. Deeply profiled specialty panels including automotive, B2B, beverage, family and household, finance, health and wellness, media consumption, mobile phone, beauty and personal care, sports and hobbies, and travel and leisure, provide quick access to target audiences. As a leader in quality, Lightspeed Research has implemented extensive measures to prevent fraudulent panel registrations and poor survey data. Lightspeed Research is part of Kantar, the information, insight and consultancy division of WPP (NASDAQ: WPPGY), one of the world's leading communications services companies. www.lightspeedresearch.com

About Trendstream

Trendstream is a research consultancy dedicated to understanding the global impact of technology change. The company produces primary and secondary research to help clients understand the impact of the web, social technologies, mobile and consumer electronics and

the resulting implications for consumer behaviour, marketing communications, content and business models. The company also advises clients on social web strategy, business models and monetising content online.