

## **Teens Tune out TV, Log on Instead: Young People Spend an Average of 16.7 Hours Online a Week**

By Jane Weaver

- (1)** “Teens and young adults spend more time online than watching TV or talking on the phone, according to a new study from Yahoo! and ad agency Carat Interactive. The Internet has passed television in the amount of time spent a week, the Web portal and media firm found in a report called “Born to Be Wired” released Thursday.
- (2)** Young people, ages 13–24, spend an average of 16.7 hours a week online, excluding e-mail, compared to 13.6 hours watching TV. After TV viewing, they listened to radio for 12 hours, talked on the phone for 7.7 hours and spent six hours reading books and magazines for personal entertainment.
- (3)** For young people, the Internet is the primary media choice. Being in “control” of how they surf the Web and the ability to personalize their media content online is most appealing to them.
- (4)** On a typical day, the average young person can be confronted with at least 200 cable channels, more than 5,000 consumer magazines, thousands of radio stations and millions of Web sites.
- (5)** But young people don’t feel overwhelmed by the abundance of media choices available to them, the study, which polled more than 2,500 teens, found.
- (6)** According to Yahoo!, which relies on advertising revenues, the media preferences of the “wired” generation are significant to consumer marketers who want to reach young people. Already a growing number of youth-oriented industries such as movie studios, video games and snack foods have embraced the Internet as an important marketing tool to reach their customers.
- (7)** Moreover, the Yahoo! study counters data from Nielsen Media Research, the leading audience measurement firm for the TV industry, which says the average person watches television an estimated 28 hours a week.
- (8)** Yet Yahoo!’s findings match numerous other studies tracking the cyber-habits of young Americans.
- (9)** Earlier this year an AOL survey said that U.S. teens spend an average of 12 hours a week online. The AOL study also found that nearly 81 percent of teens age 12 to 17 use the Internet for e-mail and almost 70 percent use instant messaging when they’re online.
- (10)** In May, Pew Internet and American Life Research found that one-third of all American teens are online.
- (11)** Pew director Lee Rainie says the Yahoo! research appears “credible,” adding that it’s not so much about the horse race of online usage versus the Internet, but how young people multitask and consume a wide variety of media at the same time.
- (12)** In a 2000 study, Pew found that one-third of young people said multitasking was a common activity.
- (13)** In other words, teen life is about juggling numerous instant messages, answering e-mail and researching school papers, while watching TV and calling in to vote for their favorite “American Idol” contestant, all at the same time.
- (14)** “The media permeates all they do except when they’re sleeping,” says Rainie. “Theirs is a multimedia life.”

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