

# Asia is Digitally Different

DIGITAL FUTURE OF TV GLOBAL

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Until recently marketers in Asia had struggled to explain to their colleagues in the West how different their region was when it came to digital. While they all could appreciate the larger 'quantity' of usage, it was harder to relay the higher 'quality' of usage. However, the evidence is now becoming clearer.

China has without question the biggest internet population in the world with 420 million people online. It has 180 million more users than the US, which has the second largest internet population.

But Asia is not only significant because of its large population. The way Asia consumes

digital content is also very different to the rest of the world and it shows a continent hungry for digital engagement. Compared to the Western world, Asians are far more involved with online content and is leading the way for both online and mobile video use.

### Digital involvement scores: Bird's-eye-view

At MediaCom, we have developed the “Digital Involvement Score” to explain digital involvement in a simple way, market by market, audience by audience. It provides an easy to use but essential digital bird's-eye-view of the market and of consumer groups. However, the framework also provides an excellent way to illustrate the higher digital engagement of most of Asia.

To derive the metrics, we separate the online population into levels resembling Forrester's digital involvement ladder, from the less involved ‘joiners/spectators’ up to the ‘creators’; those uploading video and written material.

In the illustrated “Digital Involvement Score” you can already see the difference in shape between developed and developing markets, with the latter producing a characteristic ‘inverted pyramid’ with most people being ‘Creators’ instead of ‘Joiners/Spectators’ opposed to the pyramid shaped developed markets. In fact we found that generally, developed markets are less involved in digital (even Japan shows much lower scores). However, overall Asia showed the highest engagement levels of any region in the world.

For Brand owners there are two key learnings from this:

- Firstly, it is important to note that within all the regions and within markets, large differences in digital involvement can exist. In order to understand these differences Digital Involvement Scores and similar relative frameworks are important tools that will allow faster and clearer justification and guidance for allocation of digital budgets.
- Secondly, it is now an undeniable fact that Asia is the leading region in regards to digital involvement, led not by the developed markets like

Japan, but by the massive user base of China. Any company who fails to grasp this, presuming the Asian internet population to be like their domestic populations, or worse, less sophisticated, are likely to make costly mistakes.

Sources:

<http://www.internetworldstats.com>

Global web index

The Nielsen Company, Global Online Survey, March 2011

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