

MediaCom UK's Real World Insight reveals new sense of identity for UK consumers

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27 JAN 2017

A new study by MediaCom UK's research division, Real World Insight (RWI), into the attitudes and behaviours of the UK, suggests that brands need to invest in becoming part of the communities that consumers inhabit – in order to succeed in a fragmenting nation. Key findings in RWI's research suggest that the UK population does not see itself as first and foremost "British" but as English, Scottish or Welsh instead – with 54% of respondents saying that national identity was more important in defining their personal identity. The results show that there are geographical differences too, with higher national pride in Scotland and Wales (63% of Scots and 60% of Welsh favouring national to personal identity), while people in England define themselves more according to regional heritage. RWI's research also reveals three key meanings of "community" across the UK: 'physically local' – amenities and people nearby; 'shared interest' – communities of interest who may not live close by; and 'trust' – in information, institutions or people. These manifest differently depending on where in the country people live.

Josh Krichefski, CEO of MediaCom UK comments: “There was a lot of talk in 2016 about how the London bubble was skewing Business’ view of consumer opinion. However, this research clearly shows that the sense of identity and community across the entire UK is evolving, and brands and Business cannot afford to ignore this. Some brands – like Direct Line – have started to act already but with an increasing desire from consumers for hyperconnectivity to hyperlocal, personalised content that seamlessly integrates into their lives, brands cannot sit still.”

Direct Line Group’s ‘Lollipoppers’ campaign – showcasing the need to deploy more lollipoppers across the UK – highlights the brand’s continued investment in being part of the community and giving something back.

The research by RWI also revealed clear differences in media consumption across the UK despite a shared love of the smartphone. Urbanites are more socially connected, with Instagram and Tumblr being their channels of choice for self-expression (Instagram use being 35% in London compared to 15% in the rest of the UK; while Tumblr use was nearly three times as much in London compared to elsewhere in the country). Urbanites also prefer being cocooned from their commute with 58% of Londoners using their mobile internet during commuting hours vs. 36% in the North East and 35% in Wales.

RWI’s research further highlights that a one size fits all approach to media campaigns is becoming less relevant.

Krichefski concludes: “Consumers want brands to help them express their identities better and better connect to like-minded people. We believe – and our RWI research has proved – that the best way for brands to do this is to invest in right place, right time marketing that creates collective cultural moments that can be enjoyed by communities.”

MediaCom is “The Content + Connections Agency”, working on behalf of its clients to leverage their brands’ entire system of communications across paid, owned and earned channels to step change their business outcomes.

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