

Report on the survey "Internet and the Cinema"

The increase that has taken place over the past few years in the use of new information and communication technologies and the growing use by cinemas of one-to-one marketing techniques (using e-mail and SMS messages) is creating considerable interest in the profiles of the cinema-going public that is more familiar with the new technologies.

MEDIA Salles has thus launched a new research project in order to gain a deeper knowledge of one particular segment of the cinema-going public – Internet users – which often coincides with younger audiences, already the subject of numerous studies by MEDIA Salles in recent years.

The research has a dual objective:

- from the point of view of **gaining knowledge**, to collocate the cinema-going of young people in clearly defined profiles regarding the use of the Internet and the new technologies;
- from a **practical point of view**, to evaluate the opportunities offered by Internet to spread information on promotional initiatives by cinemas.

More precisely, the research sets out to analyse, by means of a structured questionnaire:

- the frequency of cinema-going, Internet access and the use of SMS;
- the basic attitude towards use of the Internet;
- the use of the Internet to access information regarding the world of cinema;
- the particular motives for visiting film sites and cinema sites;
- the attitudes and expectations regarding the use of the new technologies for receiving information or promotional material on initiatives by cinemas;
- the degree of interest in seeing more European or arthouse films.

The distribution of the questionnaires to a group of young people in Genoa acted as an extremely useful pilot survey for testing the questionnaire itself. From the analysis of the 213 respondents, the following basic aspects emerged:

- 40% of the young people interviewed go to the cinema very rarely or only a few times a year, 46% once or several times a month and 14% once a week or more;
- just 4% of the young people go to the Club Amici del Cinema only, 17% also go to another cinema, 52% go to two other cinemas and 27% to 3 cinemas or more;
- 36% of the interviewees never access Internet from a home computer, 41% access from 1 to 6 times a week and 23% access once a day or more;
- the attitude towards use of the Internet is one of discovery, both for accessing a large body of information, and linked to particularly keen interests and hobbies;
- the length of the Internet connection is fairly prolonged, from 45 to 60 minutes for 14% of the young people and over one hour for 16%;
- only 9% of the young people access the Internet through a mobile phone; in around 50% of cases once a day only;
- only 6% of the young people do not receive a single SMS message during the day, whilst 42% receive from 1 to 9 messages, 32% from 10 to 19 messages and 19% 20 or more messages;
- the most frequently visited sites regarding the cinema are the official sites of films (which are regularly accessed by 15% of the respondents), the sites of actors or directors (3.8%) and of cinema clubs (3.7%) and the sites of producers (2%);
- very few official sites of films are mentioned: only the sites of 'The Matrix' and 'Lord of the Rings' emerge, confirming that, rather than directly visiting the official site of the film, young

people tend to visit portals on films or on the cinema in general (amongst the most frequently mentioned portals we can quote *www.comingsoon.it*, *www.cinema/supereva.it*, *www.filmup.com*, *www.filmitaliani.it*);

- young people visit the film sites mainly to read the synopsis of the film (in 67% of cases), to watch the trailer/clip (52%) and to read reviews, interviews or news (42%). The Internet is considered a means of gaining quite a lot more knowledge of films and making it possible to find out about films that are not widely advertised in the traditional media;
- the respondents visit specific cinema sites mainly to gain information on screening times (in 60% of cases), to find out about the programmes (54%), to read fact cards and/or reviews of the films (44%) and to find out about prices and promotional offers (35%);
- 17% of the respondents receive newsletters on the cinema and the same percentage receive programmes and information on events and pre-screenings at their favourite cinemas; the percentage of those who receive information from cinemas via SMS is not dissimilar (11-12%);
- the young people stated that they were interested in receiving information and/or promotional material from the Club Amici del Cinema by e-mail in 23% of cases and by SMS in 33% of cases;
- there is a high degree of interest in seeing more European films (expressed by 60% of respondents), but a fairly low interest in seeing arthouse movies (26%).

It is interesting to note that, although access to cinema sites is generally rather limited, it is more significant amongst young people who visit the cinema more frequently. In particular, frequent cinema-goers visit cinema sites far more in order to find out about programming, read the film fact/cards or reviews, obtain information on prices and promotional offers, find out about events and initiatives and book seats online; less frequent cinema-goers, instead, visit cinema sites more to obtain information on the location of the cinema and programming for young people.

Head of research: Elisabetta Brunella

Statistics Consultant: Paola Bensi – Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore

Research Team: Dori Agrosi, Laura Bonfante, Maria Grazia Moretti