
CHANGE OF MEDIA ENVIRONMENT FOR CONSUMING SPORT NEWS: A NICHE ANALYSIS AMONG MOBILE DEVICES, PERSONAL COMPUTERS, AND TELEVISION

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Synopsis:

Abstract:

As smartphone and tablet technology continue to grow in popularity, more people use their mobile devices to follow sport news. Therefore, it is necessary to understand how new media platforms such as smartphones and tablets influence individual patterns of media use. The purpose of this research is to explore sport news audiences' media usage among various media devices. More specifically, this study will investigate whether the new medium takes over some of the older medium's roles and competes with the older medium for consumer satisfaction and the amount of usage time. The theory of the niche, which explains the competitive dynamics of the multimedia environment, was adopted in this study. The following research questions were developed:

RQ #1: What are the gratifications for mobile devices, personal computers (PCs), and television (TV) when consuming sport news?

RQ #2: What is the magnitude of the niche breadth, niche overlap, and competitive superiority of mobile devices, PCs, and TVs on sport news audiences' gratification dimensions?

RQ #3: What is the competitive displacement of PCs and TV by each mobile device among sport news consumers?

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The theory of the niche demonstrates the competitive dynamics between new medium and existing media (Dimmick, Patterson, & Albarran, 1992). This theory also predicts the existence, displacement, and extinction of players in the digital media, along with indices of niche breadth, niche overlap, and competitive superiority. Niche breadth concerns whether a medium is capable of gratifying a relatively broad or narrow range of need statements on a

gratification-utility dimension (Dimmick, 1993). The perceived similarity or overlap in audience gratification obtained from two media is calculated by Dimmick's (1993) formula. The higher the overlap value, the less competitive and substitutable the two media are. Competitive superiority is designed to answer which of two competitive media provides greater gratification utility. A medium that obtains a significantly higher superiority score than the other (by t-test on the means of two media) is perceived to be superior in gratifying audiences.

METHODOLOGY

Data were collected through an online survey using Mturk.com recruiting people who have ever followed sport news using a mobile device, PC, or TV. MTurk respondents are much more demographically varied than participants recruited through traditional methods and slightly more diverse even than other sampling methods (Casler, Bickel, & Hackett, 2013). A total of 215 responses were used for the analysis. Gratification was measured using seven items—three items to measure the cognitive dimension (to locate exactly what I'm looking for, to get information quickly, to learn more about current issues or events); four items to measure the affective dimension (for fun, to relax from daily pressure, to relieve stress, to look at famous people). Niche breadth, Niche overlap, Competitive superiority were calculated by Dimmick's formula (1993), using Gratification items. Competitive displacement was the degree to which users think they use a PC and TV more or less since they started using a mobile device and measured with a 3-point Likert scale.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results show that mobile devices provided the highest level of gratification, whereas TV had the narrowest niche breadth. This means that the mobile device is a generalist medium that may satisfy the needs of sport news audiences in all dimensions. The results also show that the amount of time spent using the PC and TV to follow sport news was decreased by the use of mobile devices. These findings demonstrate that mobile devices have an important role as a substitute in individuals' sport news consumption. The study's results suggest that sport media content providers need to focus more on mobile devices. Mobile devices are gaining popularity and expanding into new niches. Furthermore, the results here indicate that users' decisions regarding the use of mobile devices, PCs, and TV may be based on aspects that are related to the user gratification needs. These findings suggest that sport media content providers should focus on the media environment and try to produce and provide sport media content that can be consumed on various media devices.

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