

A Network For Every Interest

How People Actively Manage their Social Profiles Across Multiple Platforms

Presented by



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Methodology

To better understand why people choose to maintain profiles on multiple networks and the implications of this behavior for marketers, we executed a combination of quantitative and qualitative research. With our research partners, we fielded surveys, collected personal diaries, and conducted one-on-one interviews. Where possible, findings were cross-checked against relevant data from Pew Research Center and comScore.

Qualitative:

Social media diaries and one-on-one interviews with eight multi-platform users

Quantitative:

Online survey of 500 online and mobile users aged 18-59 who are active on two or more social platforms



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Background and Objectives

According to comScore, 52 percent of the US adult online population uses more than one social network – which means that approximately 107 million people consider themselves to be multi-platform users. It is important for marketers to understand how consumers organize and manage their various social platforms, as well as the implications derived from these behaviors, in order to best communicate with them.

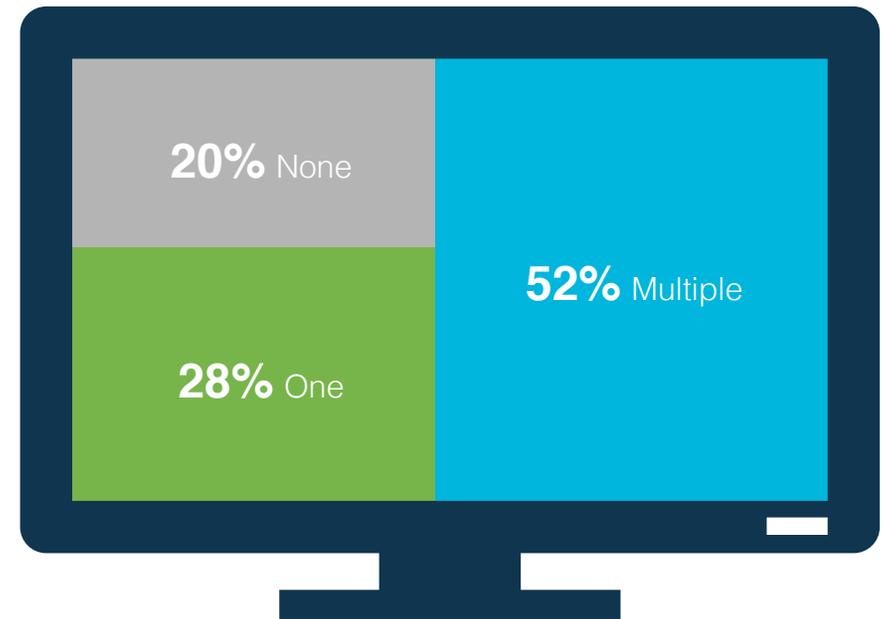
In this study, we wanted to answer the following questions:

1. Who do users connect with across many social networks?
2. How does behavior vary on each social network?
3. Do users behave differently on each social network?
Do they engage with and share different types of content?
4. Do users actively perform 'maintenance' on their social presence?
5. How do users access social networks on mobile devices?

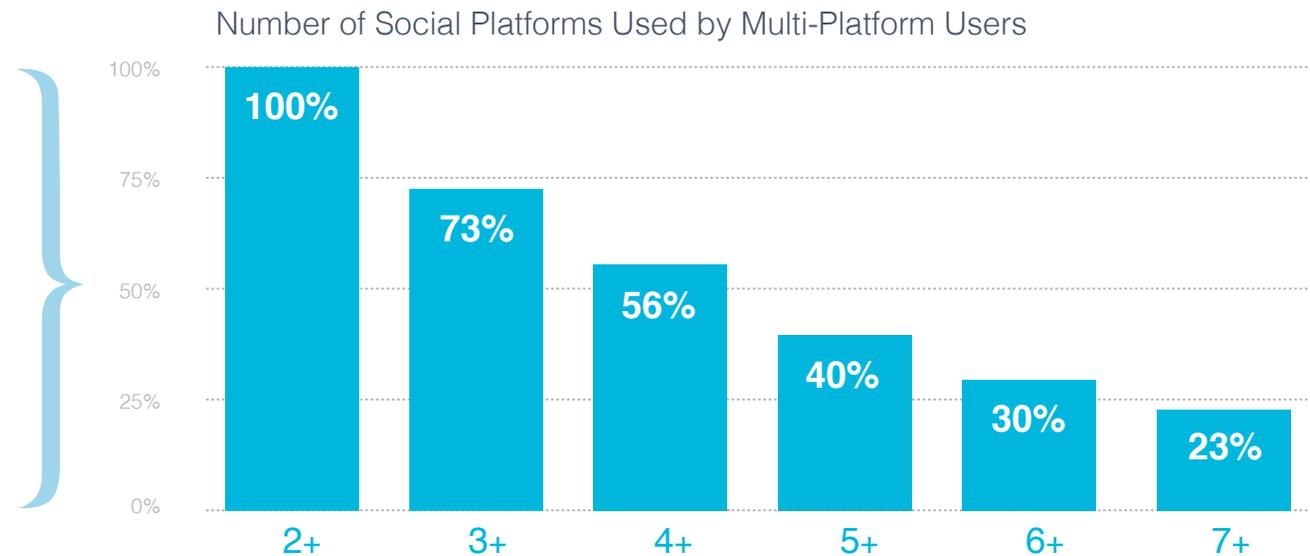
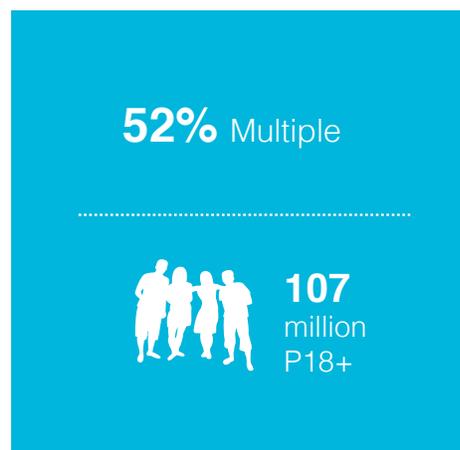


Use of Multiple Platforms **Only Starts at Two**

Of the 107 million US adults who use two or more social platforms, more than half use four or more. With the emergence of new platforms like Snapchat and Pinterest over the last two years, it is reasonable to expect that new social networks with specific use cases will continue to be introduced, leading to increased use of multiple platforms.

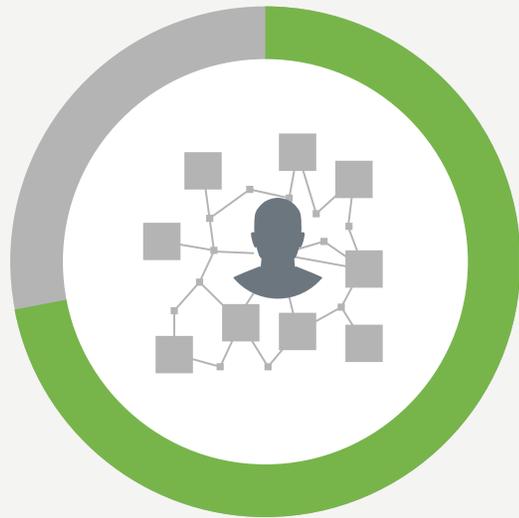


Source: comScore online universe; P18-49, March 2014



Using Multiple Platforms Requires "Social Hygiene"

People do not use social networks for the same purposes. The nature of different platforms makes each suited for connecting with different types of people, engaging with different types of content, and pursuing different interests. People using multiple platforms engage in social hygiene, which means that they are conscious of their activities on each and make intentional decisions to expose different aspects of their identity on different social networks.



72% Agree

"Certain platforms are better suited to different interests of mine."



60% Agree

"I connect with different types of people, media and brands on different social platforms."

People Convey Different Interests on Different Platforms

People are complex and have a number of interests. Multi-platform users find different platforms best suited to certain topic areas. For marketers seeking a complete picture of a person's interests, a view of only one platform proves insufficient.

Percentage of Platform Users Engaging With Each Topic Area

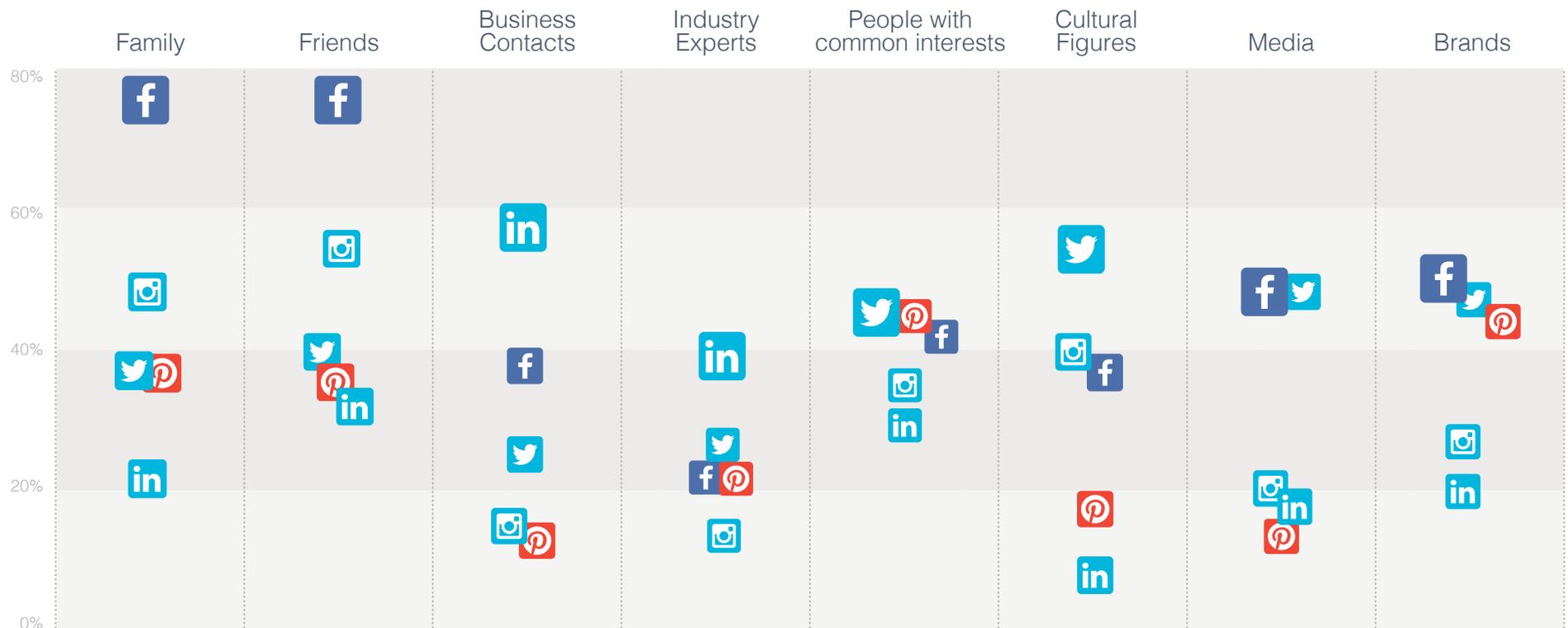


Social Connections

Are Fully Visible Across Platforms

People form different relationships across different social platforms. The strength of bonds between people, the nature of relationships, and the degree to which the relationship includes two-way communication are factors in choosing the appropriate network on which to connect. The full picture of an individual's connections and influence can only be viewed by seeing their relationships across platforms. Marketers should keep in mind that one network alone will not reveal all facets of a person's connections.

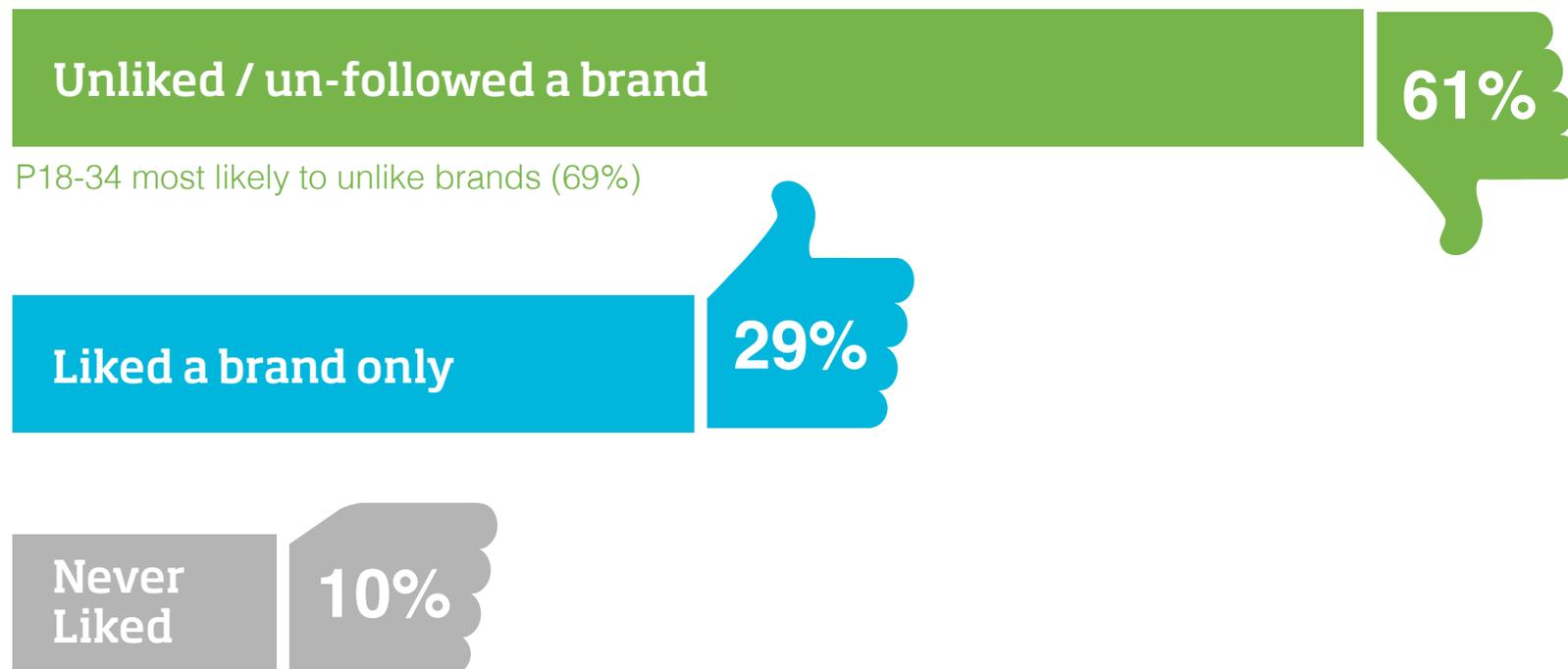
Percentage of Platform Users Connecting With Different Types of Accounts



“Likes” and “Follows” Aren’t Forever

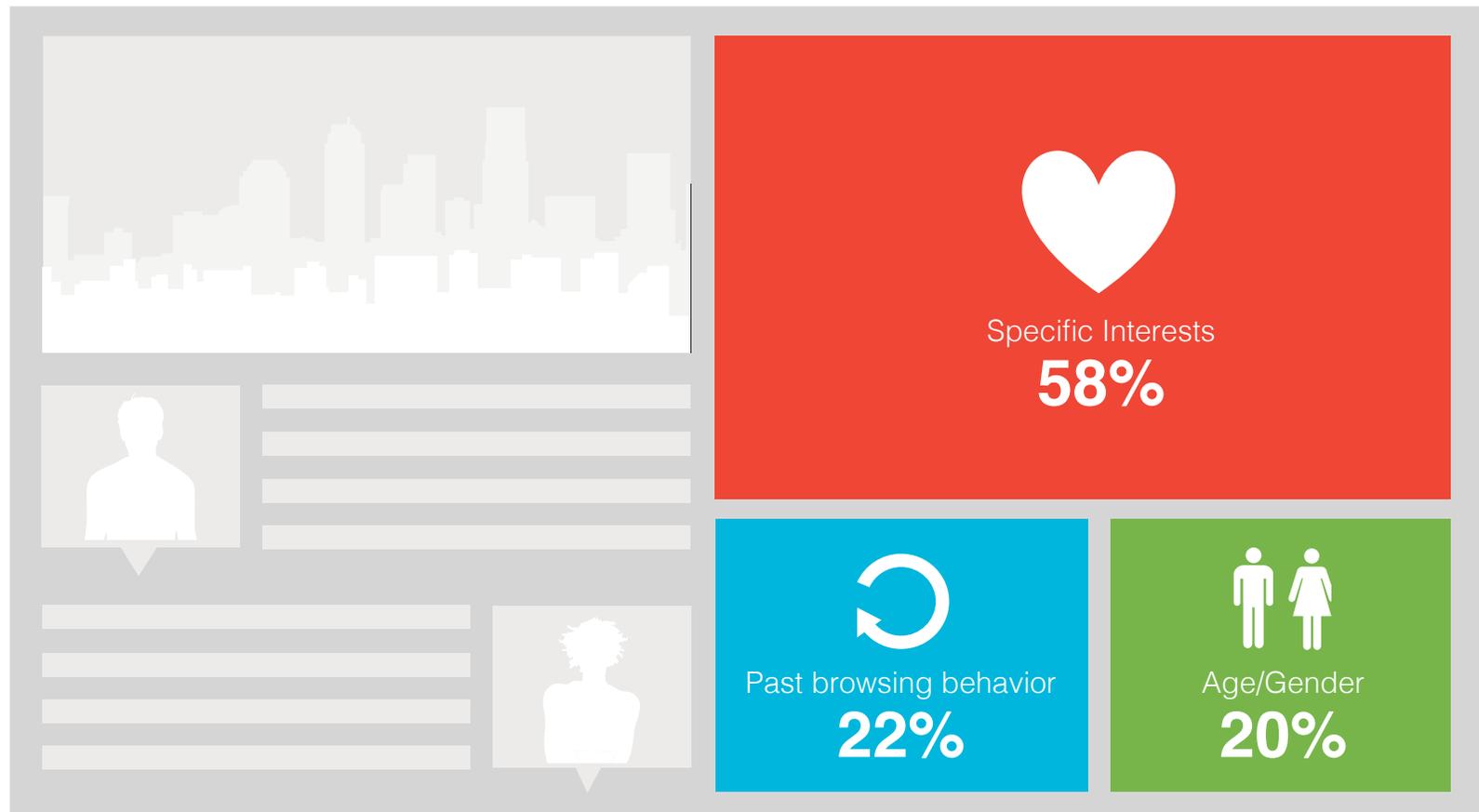
Social hygiene includes removing connections that are no longer relevant. Respondents indicated that they actively manage their connections with brands, severing connections they no longer find useful. Reasons for ending these brand connections include loss of relevance to their lifestyle, the desire to switch to a new brand, or a contest coming to an end.

This finding dispels the myth that people continuously add to their friends and follows over time and that their profiles grow stale. In fact, the opposite is true – multi-platform users take the time to keep their social presence current, thus revealing an accurate portrayal of their interests and connections. For marketers, this is significant because it allows for a level of confidence when marketing to a person’s stated preferences and likes.



Preference for Ads Targeted to Interests

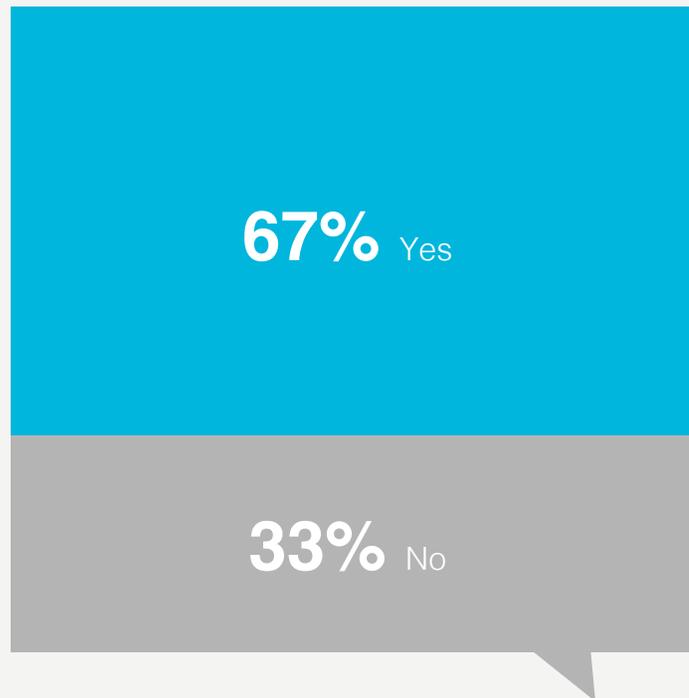
Brand advertisers typically find audiences online and in mobile either by demographics or by lookalike models based on previous browsing behavior. However, respondents express a clear preference for seeing ads based on their individual interests, information that is best accessed through social data.



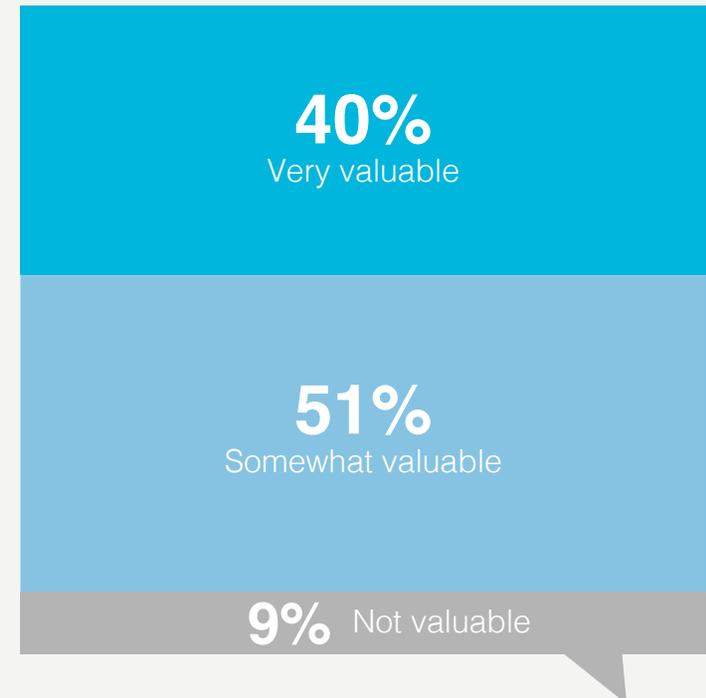
Everything is Social

An increasing number of mobile apps encourage or require people to sign in using a social account. For some, there are obvious benefits to doing so – for example, games you want to play with your friends. With others, social accounts are simply useful as master passwords. The majority of people are comfortable using social accounts to authenticate, and those who do overwhelmingly feel positive about the value of connecting in this way. This allows social data to be used even in apps that are not primary social networks.

Percentage of people who log in to other apps with their social accounts



Value of connecting apps to social accounts



Implications for Marketers

Based on the findings of this study, marketers should consider the following implications.

Data suggests that using content and environment as proxies for audience psychographics can be improved upon. Marketers should instead identify their intended audience's interests and craft messages that appeal to them across their entire communications plan.

Tracking potential customers across just one social network will not paint a complete picture of their interests; rather, marketers should use an individual's social activity to understand their various interests.

The social ID allows for tracking a user across platforms to form a cohesive image of their identity, personal history, and interests. This ID, or set of IDs, will replace the cookie as the primary means of ad targeting.

We predict that "Big Data" currently reliant on browsing behavior and demographics for audience targeting will need to include a layer of social data in order to maintain its usefulness.

Publishers who do not incorporate social data into their advertising offering will see the devaluation of their inventory as advertisers find it less useful.

Questions/Comments

For more data from this study or to discuss the results,
please contact:

Matt Rosenberg

SVP Marketing, 140 Proof
matt@140proof.com

Kara Manatt

VP Consumer Research Strategy, IPG Media Lab
Kara.Manatt@ipglab.com

