

The impact of word of mouse



EXCLUSIVE RESEARCH INTO CONSUMER USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA SITES SHOWS THAT THEY OFFER SIGNIFICANT OPPORTUNITIES FOR MARKETERS, MARTIN CROFT DISCOVERS

Nearly half of all UK consumers – 44% – have posted a positive recommendation about a product, service or retailer on a social media site in the last year, exclusive new research for Sales Promotion magazine reveals.

A similar figure (41%) says they have bought a product or service because of online recommendations or reviews in the same period.

Online research company fast.MAP polled a panel of consumers whose profile mirrors the UK adult demographic about their use of social media. Facebook was the most

popular site, with 59% having used it in the last 12 months and 23% using it daily. Only 42% have never used it.

Second favourite YouTube was used by 51% at least once in the last 12 months, and is used daily by 4%; 16% have used MySpace in the last 12 months, with 1% using it daily; 15% have used Twitter in the last year, and 2% use it every day.

Over a 12 month period, 9% says they have used Bebo and LinkedIn, 8% Flickr and 8% other sites.

Half use the sites mainly to look at images, videos and other user-generated content

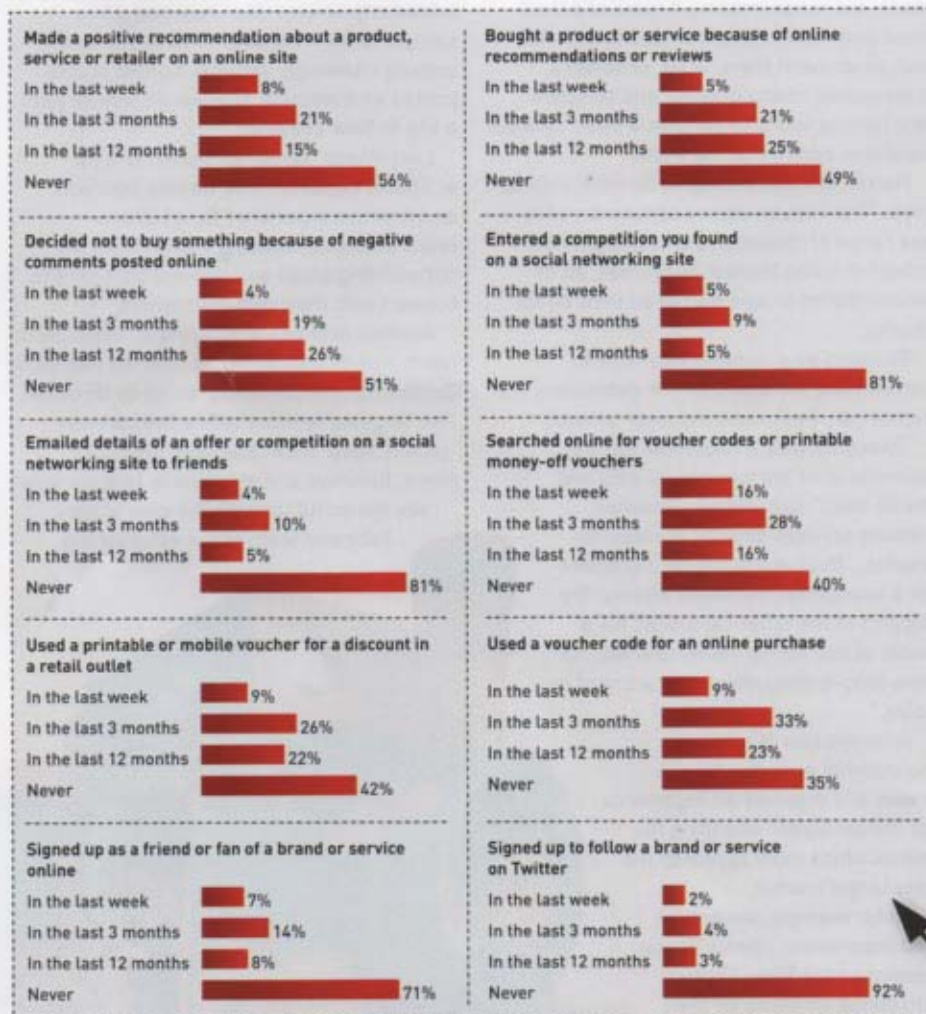
uploaded by others, while 40% have uploaded images in the last year (8% in the last week) and 19% have uploaded video (2% in the last week).

One in 10 of the consumers surveyed have Tweeted in the last year and almost as many (9%) have signed up to follow a brand or service on Twitter.

Just under a third (29%) have signed up as a friend or fan of a brand or service on an online site; 12% have blogged and 21% have commented on someone else's blog.

Consumers are also actively searching for money-off deals online, with 16% doing so in the last week; 9% of the survey sample have used a voucher code for an online purchase in the last week, while the same percentage have used a printable or mobile money-off coupon or voucher in a retail outlet in the last week.

Have you done any of the following?



Source: fast.MAP, Sales Promotion, April 2010.

Even in a social environment, people are seeking information as well as opinion

David Cole

David Cole, managing director of fast.MAP, says: "It is revealing that more people have signed up as the friend or fan of a brand or service via the social network sites they frequent than follow blogs, and that almost as many have signed up to follow a brand or service on Twitter as have Tweeted."

Cole adds: "This shows that, even in a social environment, people are seeking information as well as opinion. While many dream that their use of social sites will help them to achieve their moment of fame, few of us lead interesting enough lives or have the communicational ability to attract the ongoing attention of the masses to our outpourings. However, this shows that some brands have honed the skills to continually attract, inform and entertain their followers."