

## Television Ads Considered Most Helpful to Americans

### *Internet banner ads most ignored*

**ROCHESTER, N.Y. – July 1, 2009** – One of the main purposes of advertising is to help consumers decide what products and services they should buy or use. With so many different types of advertising being used today the question becomes what types are considered most helpful, that is they help people decide what products or services to actually purchase and which ones are most likely to be ignored or disregarded?

These are some of the results of a new **AdweekMedia/The Harris Poll** of 2,521 adults surveyed online by Harris Interactive between June 4 and 8, 2009.

### **What Ads Are Most Helpful?**

Over one-third of Americans (37%) say that television ads are most helpful in making their purchase decision while 17% say newspaper ads are most helpful and 14% say the same about Internet search engine ads. Radio ads (3%) and Internet banner ads (1%) are not considered helpful by many people. Over one-quarter of Americans (28%), however, say that none of these types of advertisements are helpful to them in the purchase decision making process.

Half of people aged 18-34 (50%) say television ads are most helpful while three in ten (31%) of those aged 55 and older say they find newspaper ads to be most helpful. There is also a slight regional difference. Two in five Southerners (40%) say they find television ads most helpful, while only one-third (33%) of Midwesterners feel the same.

### **What Ads do People Ignore?**

Almost half of Americans (46%) say they tend to ignore Internet banner ads. Much further down the list are Internet search engine ads (17% of people ignore), television ads (13%), radio ads (9%), and newspaper ads (6%). One in ten Americans (9%) say they do not ignore any of these types of ads.

There are age and regional differences. Half of those aged 35-44 (50%) and 51% of Midwesterners say they ignore Internet banner ads compared to 43% of 18-34 year olds as well as Easterners and Southerners. One in five Americans 18-34 years old (20%) say they ignore Internet search engine ads while 20% of those aged 55 and older say they ignore television ads.

### **So What?**

While advertisers scramble to create their ad campaigns, one thing they need to remember is that, even if viewership may be down and even with the increased use of digital video recorders so people can fast forward through commercials, television ads are the most helpful to consumers. Also, while an Internet strategy is essential for a comprehensive ad campaign, Internet banner ads are not considered helpful by few and are ignored the most. People are more likely to ignore ads on their computers but are more likely to pay attention to those on their television.

**TABLE 1  
MOST HELPFUL ADS**

“There are many different types of ads and many venues for them. Which one of the following do you find most helpful in helping you decide what products or services to purchase?”

Base: All U.S. adults

	Total	Age				Region			
		18-34	35-44	45-54	55+	East	Midwest	South	West
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Television ads	37	50	38	35	23	39	33	40	35
Newspaper ads	17	6	13	14	31	16	20	14	17
Internet search engine ads	14	10	15	16	16	14	13	14	15
Radio ads	3	3	4	3	2	3	2	3	3
Internet banner ads	1	4	1	1	*	2	2	1	1
None of these	28	27	29	31	27	25	29	29	29

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding; \* indicates less than 0.5%

**TABLE 2  
ADS PEOPLE IGNORE**

“Which one of the following types of ads do you tend to ignore or disregard the most?”

Base: All U.S. adults

	Total	Age				Region			
		18-34	35-44	45-54	55+	East	Midwest	South	West
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Internet banner ads	46	43	50	48	45	43	51	43	48
Internet search engine ads	17	20	14	17	15	16	17	18	15
Television ads	13	7	10	15	20	12	13	13	14
Radio ads	9	11	10	9	7	11	7	9	10
Newspaper ads	6	7	7	5	5	9	5	6	4
None of these	9	13	9	6	8	10	8	10	8

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding;

**Methodology**

This *AdweekMedia/The Harris Poll* was conducted online within the United States June 4 and 8, 2009 among 2,521 adults (aged 18 and over). Figures for age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, region and household income were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents’ propensity to be online.

All sample surveys and polls, whether or not they use probability sampling, are subject to multiple sources of error which are most often not possible to quantify or estimate, including sampling error, coverage error, error associated with nonresponse, error associated with question wording and response options, and post-survey weighting and adjustments. Therefore, Harris Interactive avoids the words “margin of error” as they are misleading. All that can be calculated are different possible sampling errors with different

probabilities for pure, unweighted, random samples with 100% response rates. These are only theoretical because no published polls come close to this ideal.

Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in Harris Interactive surveys. The data have been weighted to reflect the composition of the adult population. Because the sample is based on those who agreed to participate in the Harris Interactive panel, no estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

***These statements conform to the principles of disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.***

***The Harris Poll*<sup>®</sup> #72, July 1, 2009**

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