

Trends & TudesSM

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Keeping you informed of current topics in youth and education research.

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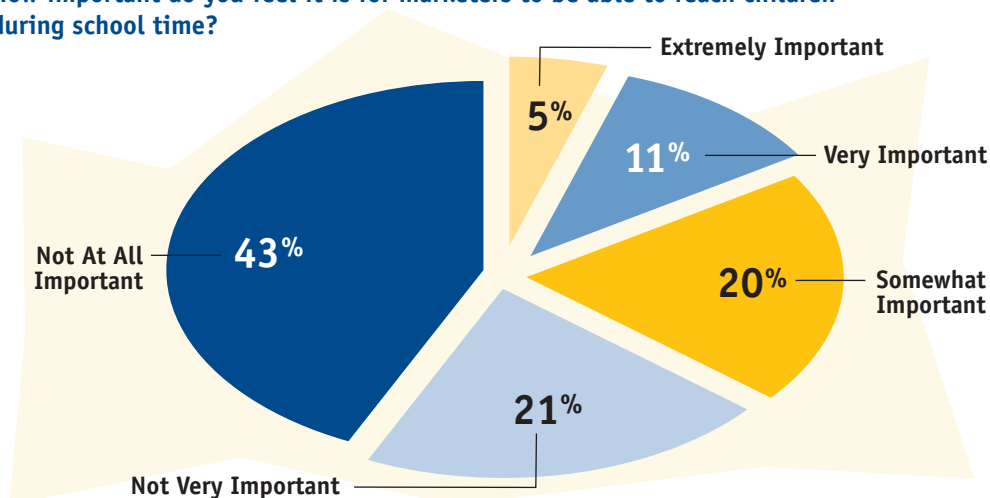
Marketing In Schools: A Sign Of The Times Or A Necessary Evil?

The past decade has seen a confluence of two trends. Youth marketers have faced an increasingly fragmented media landscape and have sought new methods and media for communicating with their consumers. At the same time, U.S. public school districts have faced fiscal shortfalls, as state and local governments have struggled to balance budgets and have had difficulty supporting the revenue needs of school districts. The result has been an increased desire among marketers to reach children during school time at the same time that school districts have needed to look more to the private sector for support.

Harris Interactive's recent study of youth marketers and others working in youth-related fields (which surveyed 878 individuals) posed many questions regarding marketing in schools. The subject of marketing in school environments brought forth strong reactions and very little agreement among the youth marketers we interviewed.

On the whole, reaching young people during school time was not seen as important to those working in youth fields. Even among youth marketers specifically, just 16% felt it was extremely or very important to reach young people in school. Many more felt it was unimportant than felt it was important.

How important do you feel it is for marketers to be able to reach children during school time?



Source: Harris Interactive/Kid Power Poll of Youth Marketers, February 2004

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YOUTH AND EDUCATION
The Harris Poll[®] PEOPLE

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Editorial: Our Take On It

John Geraci

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Harris Interactive's recent survey of those working in the youth marketing field revealed many fascinating findings. The poll provided a unique glimpse into the world of youth marketing – as well as a better understanding of who works in youth-related fields.

For instance, did you know that 63% of youth marketers are female? That 57% have kids of their own? Or that 85% have experience working in non-youth related fields? Those working in youth fields are highly educated (92% have a four-year degree, or are educated beyond four) but few (18%) have specific academic training in working with children. Most didn't actively choose to work in occupations that relate to youth – two thirds (66%) tell us that their work in youth fields is the result of luck.

We also found that 43% of youth marketers come from the Baby Boom Generation while 54% come from Generation X. The vast majority of today's youth marketers are aged between 30 and 44. As might be expected, this is a field that attracts young professionals.

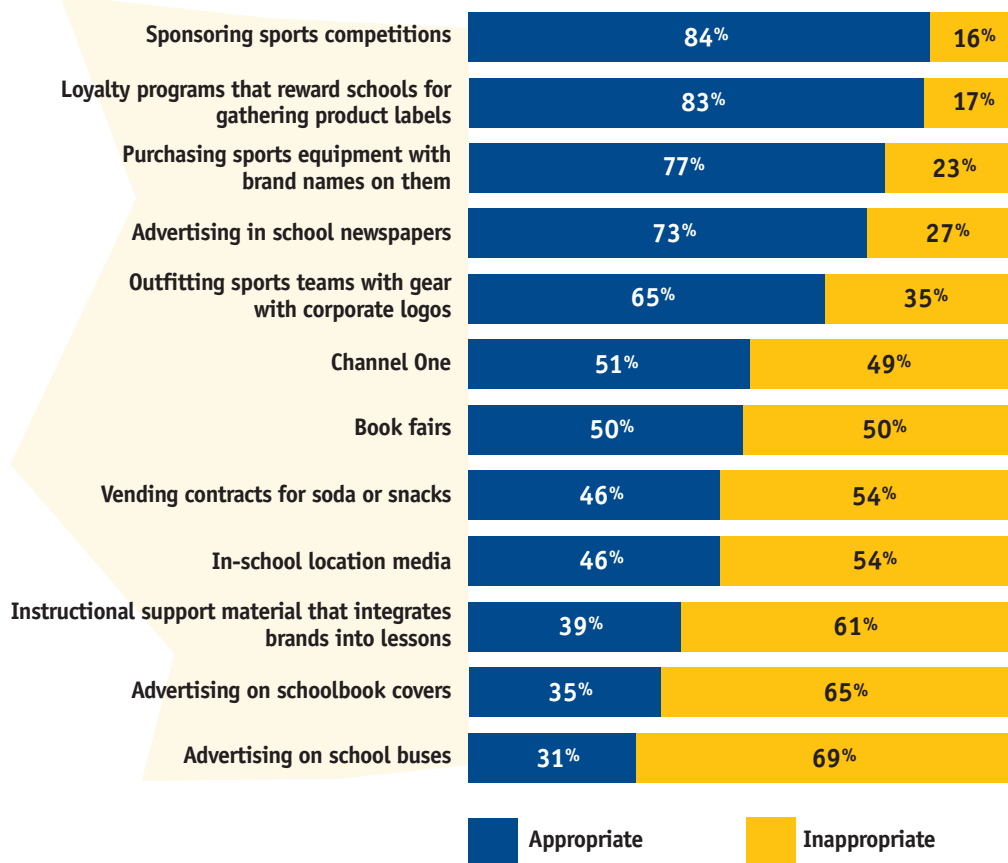
Why do we mention this? Because danger can lurk for

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Youth marketers feel that some ways of reaching young people in schools are more appropriate than others. Sponsoring school sports competitions, providing loyalty programs that reward schools for gathering product labels, purchasing brand-name sports equipment, and advertising in school newspapers were all seen as highly appropriate tactics to reach children in schools.

Less appropriate tactics included advertising on school buses, advertising on schoolbook covers, and integrating brands into instructional support material and lessons. Respondents were split as to the appropriateness of book fairs and school vending machine contracts.

Do you feel this is an appropriate or inappropriate way to reach children in school environments?



Source: Harris Interactive/Kid Power Poll of Youth Marketers, February 2004

Despite saying marketing in schools is not important, youth marketers see marketing in school as here to stay. Three in four respondents (74%) agreed that there will be increased advertising in schools in the future. Although those working in youth fields do say that school marketing has to be done thoughtfully, they also feel that advertising in schools helps provide schools with needed funds and equipment and keeps many important school programs from being cut.

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Gen Xers who market to Gen Y! There may not be a time period when we will have fewer interactions with teenagers than when we are aged 30 to 44. Enough time has passed since youth marketers themselves were teenagers that a selective memory comes into play – Gen X often thinks it can identify with the current youth generation without understanding how youth life has changed. Gen Xers tend to be still young enough not yet to be the parents of tweens and teens, and so day-to-day contact with them is limited. Yet, this is the very demographic we seek to connect with and understand.

It is challenging to distance ourselves from our own recollections of tween and teen life. Memories of our own youth are inclined to be episodic. We recall good and bad events, but rarely can we accurately recall the totality of the youth experience. Even if we could it would be of limited value: the current youth generation is living in unique times, with a complex mix of expectations, influences, and pressures tugging at them. Even if we could recall our own youth precisely, this may not aid us much in understanding today's youth. Their environment is different than ours was at their age.

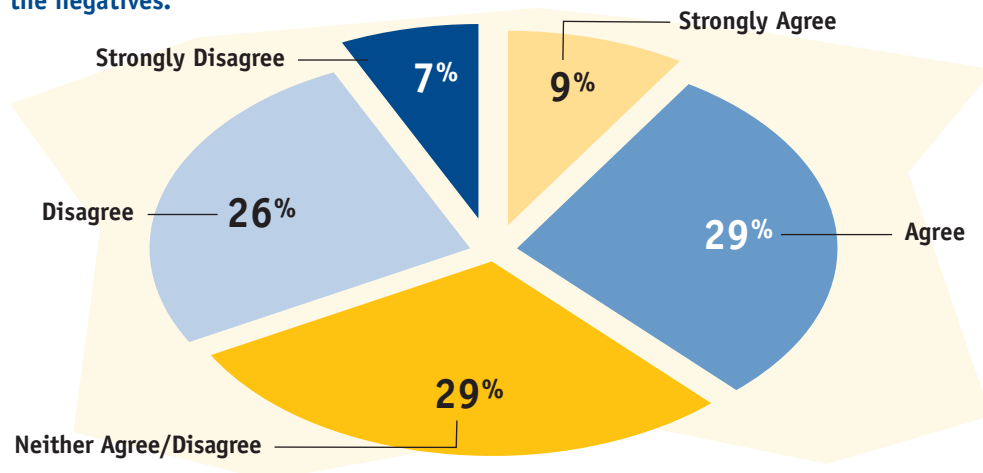
We often see a disconnection between youth marketers and

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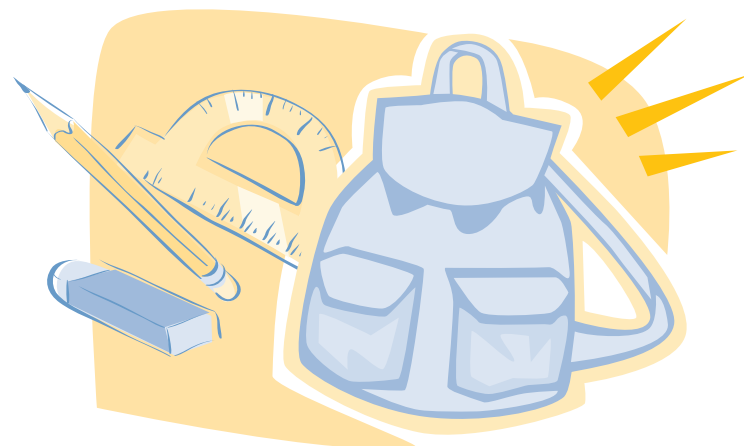
When asked directly, this respondent base was split as to whether in-school marketing creates more benefits or negatives. We tend to see two camps: those who feel that today's children live in a very commercial world and have adjusted well to it, and others that see schools as a sanctuary that should be protected from outside influences.

The benefits that schools receive from in-school marketing programs far outweigh the negatives.



Source: Harris Interactive/Kid Power Poll of Youth Marketers, February 2004

Harris Interactive has an interesting perspective on this issue. We work with youth marketers and youth media companies. We also work with more than 250 U.S. public school districts, helping them stay in touch with the needs of their communities. School leaders we speak with are more likely to embrace the necessity of corporate support of the schools. However, they wish to see more appropriate types of support – for corporations to support the educational mission of the district. Corporations are seen as part of the “village” it takes to raise a child and school leaders want and need corporate resources to continue to offer some educational programs. But, they do not seek the controversies that often accompany accepting corporate support, and seek ways to garner corporate support in a more widely accepted manner.



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the population they serve. I was recently in a meeting with a group of marketers, and I asked each to write down the last time they had a live, one-on-one conversation with a tween or a teen. Of the 10 marketers, only one had talked to a tween or a teen in the past month, while four couldn't recall the last time they had. Sure, they had commissioned surveys, seen focus groups, and attended conferences and events. But none had actually gone into an environment where their product is sold or used and talked to a young customer about that person's experience.

Conversely, I have worked with an organization that commissions no market research with teens but spends a substantial amount of time out on "the street," hanging out with teenagers in the places they gather. This organization felt no need for formal market research because their day-to-day contact was so frequent.

When marketers lack direct experience they rely solely on the market research they have or what they learn about young people from the media. Category-specific research and media portrayals can be helpful, but must be placed in a broader context. When marketers have direct experience they can, erroneously, project the findings from the limited group of young consumers they talk to onto the segment as a whole.

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Recent Research for Public Release

Widespread Belief that Antidepressants are Prescribed Too Often, Particularly for Teens and Children

Many Americans think that well-known drugs – such as Celexa, Effexor, Lexapro, Paxil, Prozac, Wellbutrin, and Zoloft – which are used to treat depression are safe and effective for adults. It is also widely believed that antidepressants are prescribed too often for everyone, especially teenagers and children.

Perceived Effectiveness of Antidepressants

- A 61 percent majority thinks that antidepressants are effective for adults (33% say "very effective," 28% say "somewhat effective"). A tiny six percent believes they are "not very effective" (4%) and "not at all effective" (2%).
- For treating teenagers with antidepressants, 36 percent think the drugs are effective (11% say very effective, 25% say somewhat effective).
- For treating children under 13, only three percent think that antidepressants are very effective; the percentage rises 10 points for those who think the drugs may be somewhat effective for treating children.
- Many more are "not sure" about the effectiveness of using antidepressants to treat people with depression (31% unsure about adults, 51% about teenagers, and 63% about children under 13).

Perceived Safety of Antidepressants

- More people think that treating adults with antidepressants is safer than treating teenagers or children under 13 with these drugs – 22% say that treating adults is "very safe" and 38% say "somewhat safe"; 6% say that treating teenagers is very safe and 26% say somewhat safe; while only 2% say that treating children under 13 is very safe and 10% say somewhat safe.
- One-half (49%) of adult Americans think that it is "not at all safe" for adults (6%), teenagers (13%) and children under 13 (30%) to be treated with antidepressants.

Frequency of Prescribing Antidepressants

- A 46% majority believes that antidepressants are prescribed too often for adults, and more than half of U.S. adults think that antidepressants are prescribed too often for teenagers (57%) and for children under 13 (57%).

These are the results of a new Harris Interactive poll of 2,408 U.S. adults conducted online between June 8 and 10, 2004 for The Wall Street Journal Online's Health Industry Edition.

"While majorities of the public believe that antidepressants are safe and effective for adults, there is a lot of uncertainty about their safety and efficacy for teenagers and children, which is probably fueling the common belief that they are prescribed too often," says Humphrey Taylor, chairman of *The Harris Poll*® at Harris Interactive.

For more information, please visit:

http://www.harrisinteractive.com/news/newsletters/wsjhealthnews/WSJOnline_HI_Health-CarePoll2004vol3_iss12.pdf

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We sometimes ask clients what they think about the current status of violence in schools, teenage pregnancy, drug use by the young, or our nation's educational progress. The typical response is one of grave concern. However, did you know that all of these issues have been trending positively for quite some time among the youth we survey? That the positive trends correspond to when the current youth generation began to come of age? That our schools are safer, teen pregnancy rates are on the decline, drug use is decreasing, and student achievement is showing signs of improvement?

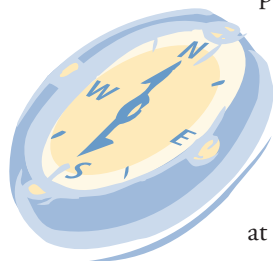
Effectively understanding youth is complex yet worthwhile. Direct interactions with your consumer are essential. Intelligently designed research can lead you down a path to true insight. Poorly designed research can lead you astray. At the end of the day, those who best understand the relationships between youth and their brands are those who can disconnect themselves from their own experiences and view the generation objectively.

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360 Youth College Explorer: 2003-2004

Powered by Harris Interactive is Now Available!

You can now subscribe to 360 Youth College Explorer, the annual study of college students powered by Harris Interactive. This is the only study of its kind to provide marketers with insights about the entire college market of 18- to 30-year-olds, including: full- and part-time students, students at 2- and 4-year institutions, and undergraduate and graduate students. This year's topics cover income and spending, financial services, online behavior, technology and wireless, entertainment, food and dining, and much more. Contact us at 877.919.4765 or info@harrisinteractive.com for details.



The 2004 Wave Of YouthPulseSM

YouthPulse, Harris Interactive's lifestyle and attitude study of 8- to 21-year-olds, will be available September 1 on a subscription basis. YouthPulse provides important insights to youth marketers and can help connect your organization with the Millennial generation. Contact us at 877.919.4765 or info@harrisinteractive.com for details.

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