Why is it important to understand media usage?

Media landscapes are ever changing, so it’s important to know how people use and access TV, radio, mobile and newspapers when choosing how to communicate to people. It is often not as straightforward as it seems.

This case study uses Myanmar data on the data portal to show how insights can be generated to help choose the right way to effectively communicate with people in Myanmar.

How do people use and access media?

How people are using and consuming media is changing rapidly. This is particularly true in Myanmar;

- In 2013, only 30% of people had access to mobile phones, now everyone has access (99%).
- In 2013, radio was the main way to reach people with 91% having access to one. However, in 2015 TV became the most popular media source with 99% having access to it.
- There has also been an increase in internet access since 2013, from 20% of the population in 2013 to 62% in 2015.

Do all media types work for everyone?

The type of media people use often depends on a number of factors i.e. their age, where they live and their education.

Although radio was the third most accessed media platform in Myanmar, it is still the most important platform for connecting with rural and older audiences. 65% of respondents aged over 45 living in rural areas tuned in daily,

- In the last few years, Mobile phone ownership in Myanmar has also increased; 58% of respondents used it frequently. However, usage is more among younger audiences: 73% of 15–24-year-olds said that they had used it daily, falling to just under half (49%) of those aged 45 years and older.
How often do people use mobile phones?

- TV and Internet are the most popular and the most frequently accessed form of media across all age groups – internet access is much higher for younger age groups (73%). Both media platforms are predominantly accessed by people in urban areas.

**How do people use these different forms of media?**

When looking at how to communicate to a target audience, it is important to understand how and why people are using media. For example, for mobile phones, it is important to understand the features they use the most.

In Myanmar, most people use their mobile phones to make and receive calls; only 11% of people use them to send texts.

As the table below shows, 21% of people use their mobile to access the radio, this indicates a new audience for radio. However, only 18% of people use their mobile for social networking.
The revise is the case for main use of the internet; most people use this platform for social networking, reading the news and general surfing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>0.29% (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emailing</td>
<td>1.3% (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaming</td>
<td>11.74% (81)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General surfing</td>
<td>31.59% (218)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job searching</td>
<td>1.3% (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>20.26% (202)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading news</td>
<td>52.03% (350)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping</td>
<td>1.2% (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social networking</td>
<td>70.56% (487)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studying</td>
<td>0.58% (4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**What sources of information do people use and do they trust them?**

Understanding what media platforms people use as sources of information and how much they trust them is also important.

Information presented by TV and radio seem to be the most trusted when compared with other media sources. Over half of respondents say these platforms are very trustworthy – 57% (TV) and 54% (Radio).

Findings indicate that people in rural areas trust radio most for information – this is especially the case for aged 45 and over.

**How does this data help?**

This data is useful when putting together a communication strategy for Myanmar – we know that:

- TV and Radio are the best ways to reach people of different age groups
- Radio is a good way to reach people living in rural areas
- Everyone has a mobile phone, but only a small percentage of people trust them. Also, most people mainly use their mobile phones to make calls, so Facebook pages, text services and radio
on the mobile phone will only be accessed by some people. Therefore to communicate to the majority of people in Myanmar through mobile, an audio based approach such as that used by BBC Media Action in India can be used.

Click here to watch the video on the audio based approach adopted in India

Video link -  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6e7tMMFvMg