

Paid-For vs Free - Consumer Attitudes to Pricing in Media and Music - UK - April 2010

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What is this report about?

The rise of a generation of online, multimedia consumers has given birth to an 'everything is free' mindset in which media content struggles to retain a sense of value. But if consumers no longer pay, producers no longer get paid, stop producing and ultimately much content will inevitably suffer.

This report analyses market trends and consumer attitudes as regards the issues around paid versus free newspaper, magazine, TV and music content, investigating the core market factors, strengths and weaknesses, consumer dynamics, illustrative case studies and likely future developments.

What have we found out?

- Half of 16-24s and 43% of 25-34s have a 'mostly free newspaper' habit, but half of over-45s still pay for most of their papers, compared to around a fifth of under-35s.
- Over three quarters of readers are currently unwilling to pay anything for online newspapers/magazines. Those who are prepared to pay are unwilling to exceed £5 per month for a subscription or 25p for an individual article.
- A fifth of consumers prefer the idea of TV on-demand services where you only pay for what you watch. These are more popular than subscription services, which are seen as good value by just 14%.
- Less than a quarter of consumers agree that the BBC is worth the licence fee, and four in ten would prefer an ad-funded BBC. ABC1s are twice as likely to support the licence fee as C2DEs.
- The 'tangibility' of CDs is preferred to downloads by 30% of under-35s but by over half of over-45s.
- Almost a fifth of all music listeners would rather put up with free, ad-interrupted streaming services than pay for ad-free online streaming. However almost a quarter of 16-24s agree that a monthly subscription with unlimited downloads/streaming is good value for money compared to 14% of music listeners overall.

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